

THE INFLUENCE OF DESTINATION IMAGE ON SHORT-STAY TOURIST'S PERCEPTION

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ABSTRACT

Developing destination images has been one of the top priorities to increase tourist arrival in recent years in any country. The nature of tourism destination itself, which is very competitive, requires tourist destination to be developed with effective marketing plans and proper strategies. Understanding why tourists make an effort to travel and factors influencing their behavioural perception of choosing a travel destination also benefits the tourism planning and marketing. The influence of destination image on consumer behaviour has been studied by many researchers. Many of them pointed out the effects of destination image on quality perceived by tourists and on their satisfaction. This study was conducted with the purpose of studying the relationship between the image of a destination and short stay tourists' perception and identifying which of the destination image components – cognitive, affective and conative factors has the most influence on short stay tourist perception. The exploratory study was conducted randomly in 4 destination areas in Malaysia. A self-field questionnaire was used to collect information. The findings suggest a practical means for destination marketers and developers faced with the challenge of identifying the one or few features from their diverse and multi-attributed attraction range that could be developed to differentiate these destinations in a meaningful way for short-stay tourists.

Keywords: Destination image, short stay tourist, tourist's perception,

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Introduction

The impressive performance of the tourism industry in Malaysia for the past few years can be attributed to the popularity of Malaysia as a holiday destination either as primary destination or secondary destination for international tourists. Tourists, depending on destination images to travel, has turned destination images to be an important area of study in the tourism literature for years since 1970s based on early literature by Gunt (1975). The

nature of tourism destination itself which is very competitive requires tourist destination to be developed with effective marketing plan and proper strategy. Understanding why tourists make an effort to travel and factors determining their behavioural perception of choosing a travel destination, also benefits the tourism planning and marketing. This, as we called them the push and pull factor model is one popular typology for understanding travel motivation (Crompton, 1979). According to Baloglu & Mangaloglu (2001), images represent a more “objective” perception than travellers, that is why this perception inputs should be taken seriously by tourist destinations in improving and enhancing their offerings in future times.

Destination image is highly influenced by a number of factors and according to (Brokaw 1990, cited by Baloglu and MacCleary, 1999), it is important to understand these factors as they play a crucial role in image formation. Goodall (1990) stated that by knowing these factors would facilitate identification of target market. These factors which are broadly categorized into cognitive, affective and conative components play an important role in the formation of image. As stated by Um and Crompton (1990), beliefs about the attributes of a destination are formed by individuals who are exposed to external stimuli; however the nature of these beliefs depends on the internal factors of the individuals. Thus, the perceived image formed is a combination of the image projected by the destination and the individual’s own needs, motivations, prior knowledge, preferences and other personal characteristics. As excerpted by Keller (2008), consumers often don’t buy products; they buy the images associated with products. The power of the images and its ultimate value to the firm resides with the customers.

The tourism industry is based on people having to leave their home towns to become a customer and as such, the traditional “home market” does not exist (Prebensen, 2007). According to her study, the destination thus has to attract customers from other places, regions, countries and even from other continents. Previous studies (Brusse, 2002; Anholt, 2009; Gaggiotti, Low, Yunak, 2008 & Saraneimi, 2009) have shown that destination image, or the way people perceive a specific destination affects consumer behaviours and their perceptions of the destination. There are many reasons why people travel, but according to Walker (2009), the two main reasons are for pleasure and for business. The travel pattern for tourists according to him is either travel to the primary destinations or secondary destination. Lau and McKercher (2006) in their study found out factors affecting tourists choices of itineraries give reasons to support the shaping of the patterns and these factors includes human factors, trip factors and time factors – length of stay in destinations. Thus, it is important for destination marketing authority to ensure that short-stay tourist stay longer in particular destination and convert their secondary destination to primary destination in order to increase the destination revenue.

"Marketing Malaysia as a destination of excellence and to make the tourism industry a major contributor to the socio-economic development of the nation" is the mission statement of Tourism Malaysia. According to Tourism Malaysia (2011), its objective is to promote Malaysia as an outstanding tourist destination. Tourism Malaysia aims to showcase Malaysia's unique wonders, attractions and cultures; develop domestic tourism and enhance Malaysia's share of the market for meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE). The ultimate goal is to increase the number of foreign tourists to Malaysia, extend the average length of their stay (ALS) and so increase Malaysia's tourism revenue. Therefore, there are necessities to understand short staying tourists who spend less than four days in the destination to improve their average length of stay (ALS).

This paper sought to further examine the relationship between destination images in Malaysia and short-stay tourist perceptions, to investigate which of the components in destination image that most influenced the perception of the short-stay tourist in Malaysia context. In order to gain a better understanding of this relationship, a group of short-stay tourists will be interviewed about their currently held destination images of Malaysia as well as the information sources, which assumedly influenced their perception that they had been exposed to (place, campaign and people). The answers of participants were then assessed in order to discern if there is any trace of likeliness to visit Malaysian destination because of the one of the destination images factors – Cognitive, Affective or Conative.

Research Problem

In recent years, many researchers has studied the relationship between tourist perception and destination image but the relationship between short-stay tourist perception and destination image is yet to be established. Some of the sources from literature include Prayag (2010) on international tourist segmentation due to the pull factors of destination images; perceived image of tourist destinations as in Beerli & Martin (2004) and also in Choi et al. (2011) which focus on Russian tourists on destination image in Korea to name a few. This study started to identify which components in destination image influence the short-stay tourist's perception for them to visit and revisit the destination. It is very important to identify these components of destination image as this will gain a better understanding of the short-stay tourist market and an in-depth knowledge of the views of short-stay tourist should, not only help increase the number of short-stay tourist, but also help to improve the quality of their travel experience and to improve the average length of stay at the destination in Malaysia.

To look at the positive and negative outcomes of these components is very important for destination marketers and tourism planning and development officials. For this reason, coupled with extensive literature review analysis, the researchers believe that there is no similar research conducted in this area in Malaysia tourism context. Hence, due to the absence of study made on all of the above factors as evident from literature review on short-stay tourist, this would be a major contribution to the tourism literature for the short-stay tourist and destination image segment.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the short-stay tourists' perception on the importance level attached to destination image components which give rise to their overall destination perception in Malaysia. Specific objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To examine the relationship between the cognitive factors and short-stay tourist perception.
2. To examine the relationship between the affective factors and short-stay tourist perception.
3. To examine the relationship between the conative factors and short-stay tourist perception.
4. To investigate which of the factors has the greatest influence for short-stay tourist's perception.

Research Questions

It is noted that there is no previous research conducted pertaining to the relationship between the destination image factors and short-stay tourist perception in Malaysian context as evident from the literature search; hence it would be constructive for the researcher to further investigate this within the Malaysian tourism industry as a whole.

In order to achieve the aim of the study, four major questions have been addressed:

1. To what extent is the short-stay tourist's perception influenced by the destination image cognitive factors?
2. To what extent is the short-stay tourist's perception influenced by the destination image affective factors?
3. To what extent is the short-stay tourist's perception influenced by the destination image conative factors?
4. Which of the destination image factors has the greatest influence on short-stay tourist's perception?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Relevance Theory

The study of destination image is a relatively recent addition to the field of tourism research (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003) with several studies have illustrated that destination images do influence tourist behaviour (Hunt, 1975; Pearce, 1982). As a result, various researchers in early decades like Schmoll (1977), Moutinho (1984) and Woodside & Lysons (1989) discovered that destination image has an important role in the various models of travel decision making developed to date. Chon (1990) in Echtner and Ritchie (2003) suggests that upon arrival at the destination, tourists' satisfaction largely depends upon a comparison of expectations based on previously held images and the actual reality encountered at the destination. Influential "pull" factors in selection of destination for vacation on the other hands, as discussed in Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Gartner (1993) and Um & Crompton (1990) have been accepted since decades ago to define the relationship between the tourist perception and destination image.

Destination image symbolic attributes are shaped by the destination's cognitive and affective attributes (Gnoth, 2002). Consequently, these two elements, cognitive and affective, along with a holistic component constitute the structure of destination image as perceived by visitors (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Jenkins, 1999). Gartner (1993, p. 45) defines "the cognitive image component as the evaluation of the known attributes of the product according to fact". The affective component relates to motives (Gartner, 1993) while the holistic component represents the essence of the brand, summarising its functional and symbolic image attributes (Morgan et al., 2002). Baloglu and McCleary (1999, p. 870) have equated this holistic component to a "global impression about an object or destination". Therefore, a hierarchical relationship exists between the three components of destination image where the affective is dependent on the cognitive while the holistic is dependent on the other two components.

Some research by Goodrich (1978) has demonstrated that the more favourable the perception towards a destination, the greater the likelihood of choice from among similar alternatives. In other words, there are strong links between destinations most memorable in consumers' minds as places to visit and attitudes and intentions toward actually visiting these destinations (Thompson and Cooper 1979). Thus, the literature suggest that there are traces of relationship between cognitive, affective and conative components as mentioned in Boo and Busser (2005) who also commented that the affective images are considered to be more relevant in determining overall image and future behaviour which also confirms the relationship of complexity of the components construction. While Yuksel et al. (2010) has studied that tourists may develop attachment to a destination because of its ability in fulfilling specific goals or activity needs and/or because of its symbolic meaning and thus, attachment could be an important measure of forming action (Han et al. 2011) tourist satisfaction and loyalty. This likely influence emotional associations or meanings tourists attach to the places they visit based on their cognitive, affective and conative factors. Unfortunately, while numerous researchers documented in hospitality and tourism has examined usefulness and applications of perceptible, cognitive and affective, studies on loyalty and its relations to other constructs are still lacking (Back & Parks, 2003; Lee, Graefe & Burns, 2007; Oppermann, 2000). Therefore, this study focuses on all of the destination image factors, aiming to clarify the gap found in previous study to clarify its factors in order to offer a structure that can be applied regardless of research context.

For this reason, identifying the destination images as perceived by the short-stay tourists could be the cornerstone of successful destination marketing and tourism product development. By understanding the relationships between destination image components and its determinants, destination tourism managers would be better equipped with the knowledge to build up an attractive image and improve their marketing efforts to maximize their use of resources (Chen & Tsai, 2007).

Definitions and Theoretical Background

There are many contributions in literature to the destination image concept. Such terms like 'expression' and 'impression' (Baloglu & McCreary, 1999a; Chon, 1990; Crompton, 1979; Dadgostar & Isotalo, 1992; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Fesenmaier, 1997; Kim & Richardson, 2003; Gartner & Hunt, 1987; Milman & Pizam, 1995; Laywon & Baud-Bovy, 1977; Tapachai & Waryszak, 2000), 'perceptions' (Assael, 1984; Calantone et al., 1989; Coshall, 2000; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Murphy, Pritchard & Smith, 2000 and Phelps, 1986) of a tourist destination are generally used in order to conceptualize destination image in tourism research. Destination images are defined by Baloglu and McCleary (1999) as an attitudinal construct consisting of an individual's mental representation of knowledge or beliefs, feelings and global impression about an object or in this case, destination. Images according to Prayag (2010) are generally accepted to be based on the knowledge of certain attributes (cognitive components), feeling towards these attributes (affective components) and the resulting intended behaviour (conative components). As cited in Prayag (2010) who refer to Ashworth and Goodall (1990) mentioned that this process of choosing a destination based on its attributes has been termed "discursive processing".

Destination images as interpreted by Gartner (1993, 1996) are developed by three hierarchically interrelated components: cognitive, affective and conative. Previously, the researchers has come out with early definition of destination images as the impressions that

a person or persons hold about a state in which they do not reside (Hunt, 1975) which derive from our own personalized, internalized and conceptualizing understanding of what we know (Markin, 1974) like the sum of belief, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination (Crompton, 1979) or of that a person holds of it (Kotler et al., 1994). Complex images can be derived as a result of direct experience of the destination (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991). Since Gunn's ground-breaking work on destination image, many researchers have defined and conceptualized destination image in the context of tourism. Thus, we can conclude that the definition of Gartner (1996) is accumulatively derived from these earlier definitions which completely fall into these three components of cognitive, affective and conative. Supporting this, Beerli and Martin (2004) have found that primary and secondary information, and stimuli influencing the forming or perceptions and evaluations of destinations pre- and post-visit respectively, and motivation, accumulated touristic experiences and socio demographic characteristics.

Early and more recent study provides evidence that the image of destination influences touristic decision as in Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Hunt (1975) and Tapachai and Waryszak (2000) which of all has defined destination image as an attitudinal construct consisting of an individual's mental representation of knowledge, feeling and global impression about an object or destination. The most recent studies as in Baloglu & Brinberg (1997), Baloglu & McCleary (1999), Gartner (1993) and Walmsley & Young (1998) emphasized that image as a concept formed by the consumer's reasoned and emotional interpretation as the consequence of two closely interrelated components: perceptive/cognitive evaluations, affective appraisals relating to an individual's feeling towards objects and in Yuksel et al. (2010) conative loyalty. When travellers discover a destination, both their general and tourist images may be impacted.

Decrop & Snelders (2004) found out as cited by Gokovali et al. (2007) that the literature considers the length of stay as one of the major issues that need to be resolved in a visitor's decision making process. A serious definition was formulated by Hunkizer (1952) as he cited that tourism is the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity. Yet, this definition is certainly not a perfect one as it does not solve several problems due to the exclusion of day tour, earning activity and a clear demarcation of residence and non-residence. Another definition was by Leiper (1990) stating that tourism is the set of ideas, the theories or ideologies, for being of tourism, and is the behaviour of people in touristic roles, when the idea are put into practice. This enhanced from Jafari (1977) which expanding the ideas that tourism is the study of man away from his usual habitat, of the industry which responds to his needs and of the impacts that both he and the industry have on the hosts' socio-cultural, economic and physical environments. Thus, from this definition we can say that tourist has been defined based on length of stay, ideas about his or her trip decisions and the behavioural outcomes.

According to Gokovali et al. (2007), the length of stay and its effective analysis could be an indicator of the profile of tourists visiting one destination and their prosperity to spend while on vacation. As cited by Kozak (2004) in his works, considering the length of stay as a substantial part of quantitative measures in estimating tourism performance could provide destinations with some advantages. Thus, understanding the definition short-stay tourist could be beneficial to develop destination facilities for them.

The definition of Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) (2009), which based on length of stay, refers to 'Short Breaker' as visiting the destination for 2-4 days with 1-3 overnight stays and 'Overnight Visitors' is someone who stays for one night only in collective or private accommodation at a destination. Thus, if we want to define short stay tourist based on the length of stay, we can say that short stay tourist is an overnight visitor at any destination between two to four days for one to three nights.

There exist no known published studies on the survival analysis or duration analysis explaining specific determinants of length of tourists' vacations (Gokovali et al., 2007). Similarly, no study on the relationship between short stay tourist and destination image perception has been discovered in the literature.

Short-Stay Tourist's Perception

Tourists recorded an image of a destination in their mind after experiencing a process which, based to Gunn (1988) study consists of these seven stages; (1) accumulating mental images of the destination i.e. Forming an organic image; (2) modifying the initial image after more information i.e. forming an induced image; (3) deciding to visit the destination; (4) visiting the destination; (5) sharing the destination; (6) returning home, and (7) modifying the image on the experience in the destination. Thus, when tourists perceived an adequate positive attributes level, they will develop favourable attitude towards destination image. Likewise, unfavourable negative attitude perceived develops into unfavourable destination image. According to Kozak and Rimmington (2000), tourist perceptions about a holiday destination can help to determine the destination's success or failure since loyal customers act as "information channels that informally link networks of friends, relatives and other potential travellers to a destination" (Reid and Reid, 1993). Perception according to Reisinger and Turner (2003) can be created without experience and knowledge of the object/person. Therefore, by fulfilling tourists' perception and expectation through destination images attributes development can attracts tourists to return to a holiday destination. Additionally, according to Vogt and Andereck (2003) destination perceptions change during the course of a tourist's vacation leading to the image sharing that held by one tourist which is commonly shared by other members and influenced by other members' image of the certain market segment.

Consequently, it is necessary for us to understand the components (perceptions) that tourists use to form their destination images especially short stay tourist – since the reality of destination images can differ significantly from its perceived image (Gartner, 1993) as well as the role of psychological factors in their formation (San Martin & Rodriquez del Bosque, 2008) in order to improve the positioning of tourist destinations in the target market like short-stay tourist market segmentation. Given the significance of a relationship between tourists' overall perception and the intention of making frequent visits, the researcher believe that the assessment of tourists' perception can play a significant role in identifying the strongest component in destination image that can contribute to the development of the destination's positioning/repositioning strategy (Ibrahim & Gill, 2005).

Destination Image Factors Constructs and Relationships

A review of the literature reveals the existence of a set of factors that influence the tourist perception towards the destination image which, following the research done by Prayag (2010); Bosque & San Martin (2008); Ankomah, Crompton & Baker (1996); San Martin & Bosque (2008) on cognitive, affective and conative factors by Han et al. (2011); Yuksel et al. (2010) as pull factors which related to tourist perception on destination images. In this study, the researcher will focus only on the short stay tourist before they fly to their final destination or back to their country of origin. As discussed in Shoval & Raveh (2003) and Nicolai & Ma's (2005), these short stay tourist usually just stay for one, two or three days and it is impossible for them to visit the whole tourism products on an average of 2-to 3-day visit.

Since two decades ago, the most studied attribute in destination images is residents receptiveness among researchers as early as Goodrich in 1982; Stemquist, 1985; Gartner & Hunt, 1987; Calantone and al., 1989; Ahmed, 1991, 1996; Crompton et al., 1992; Chon, 1992; Muller, 1995; Schroeder, 1996; and among the latest studied by Baloglu, 1997 and Baloglu & McCleary, 1999 to name a few. Other most popular attributes studied are landscapes and surroundings (Goodrich,1982; Haahti, 1986; Gartner, 1989; Fakeyes & Crompton, 1991; Chon, 1992; Driscoll and al., 1994; Muller, 1995; Oppermann , 1996; Baloglu, 1997), cultural attractiveness (Goodrich,1982; Haahti, 1986; Gartner, 1989; Embacher & Buttle, 1989; Fakeyes & Crompton, 1991; Chon, 1992; Driscoll and al., 1994; Muller, 1995; Oppermann , 1996; Ahmed, 1996; Baloglu, 1997), nightlife and entertainment (Haahti, 1986; Gartner, 1989; Fakeyes & Crompton, 1991; Driscoll and al., 1994; Muller, 1995; Oppermann , 1996; Ahmed, 1996; Baloglu, 1997; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999), sports facilities (Stemquist, 1985; Haahti, 1986; Gartner, 1989; Fakeyes & Crompton, 1991; Oppermann , 1996; Ahmed, 1996; Baloglu, 1997; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999) and price, value and cost are some of the highest score of attritubes studied as cited in Gallarza, Gil and Calderon (2002). Prayag (2010) has studied that the only two factors in destination images focused are cognitive and affective to determine as a pull factors for the tourist revisitation through their image perception on that particular destination. The other factor in destination image components' is conative which is rarely studied on destination images to define the perception of tourists, especially short-stay tourists. Nevertheless, there are researchers that have studied on these factors like Yuksel, Yuksel & Bilim (2010) and Han, Kim & Kim (2011).

Destination image, as an overall assessment of a destination as well as a composite of its elements – cognitive and affective components has influential on various tourists behaviour variables (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Chen & Hsu 2000; Echtner & Ritchie 1993; Fakeye & Crompton 1991; Gardner 1993; Murphy 1999) and conative loyalty (Yuksel, Yuksel & Bilim 2010; Han, Kim & Kim 2011).

Cognitive Factors

Numerous researchers across fields and disciplines agree that image is mainly caused or formed by two major forces: stimulus factors and personal factors (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999) which later also agreed by other researchers like Fakeye and Crompton (1991), Gartner (1993), and Walmsley and Young (1998) whom tend to consider image being formed by the reasoning and the emotional interpretation of the receiver and as the

consequence of two closely interrelated component. They are; (1) the perspective/cognitive evaluations, which refer to the individual's own knowledge and beliefs about the object and (2) affective appraisals, which refer to the individuals feelings towards the object (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Generally from the research that has been done previously by above researchers including Stabler (1995), the tourist destination image is assessed on a set of attributes that correspond to the resources or attractions that a tourist destination has at its disposal. According to del Bosque and San Martin (2008) individuals would process external information of the tourist experience in order to form their own beliefs and judgements. They found out that there is support for the impact of expectations and emotions on satisfaction, which has a significant influence on behavioural intentions. In their study, they have found that Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1993) agreed that most previous studies have used a cognitive approach, defining consumer satisfaction as a post consumption evaluation that a chosen alternative at least meets or exceeds expectations. Therefore, certain attributes of cognitive factor is very important and will influence the destination image creation (Fig. 1). Thus, based on the literature of this component, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Cognitive factors are positively correlated to the short stay tourist's overall image of a destination.

Affective Factors

Tourist may develop attachment to a destination because of its ability in fulfilling specific goals or activity needs and/or because of its symbolic meaning and thus, attachment according to Yuksel, Yuksel and Bilim (2010) could be an important measure of tourist satisfaction and loyalty. They have found that despite its significance, only limited research has been conducted to determine the likely influences of emotional associations or meanings tourist attach to the places they visit on their satisfaction and future behaviours. However, affective factors according to Bigne, Garcia and Blas (2009) are considered to be more relevant in determining overall image and future behaviour. These relationships as studied by Gallarza, Saura and Garcia (2002) confirmed the complexity of the construct and the inherent difficulties in its measurement. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Affective factors are positively correlated to the short stay tourist's overall image of a destination.

Conative Factors

According to Oliver (1999), loyalty is defined as "a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviours". Conative loyalty, consumer's behavioural intention to keep on using the brand (destination) in the future (Pedersen & Nysveen, 2001), is argued to be the strongest predictor of behavioural loyalty compared to cognitive and affective loyalty. Despite the many attempts to consider links between different loyalty phases, relatively little empirical research has been conducted on testing the relationship between attachment, satisfaction and sequential loyalty in tourism (Yuksel et al, 2010). Tourists may develop attachment to a destination because of its ability in fulfilling

specific goals or activity needs and/or because of its symbolic meaning and thus, as found in Yuksel et al. (2010) study, attachment could be an important measure of tourist satisfaction and loyalty. According to Yuksel et al. (2010), despite its significance, only limited research has been conducted to determine the likely influence of emotional associations or meanings tourists attach to the places they visit on their satisfaction and future behaviour. It shows that positive emotional and cognitive bonds with a place could indeed affect an individual's critical assessment of a destination and his/her loyalty to the place. The causal relationship between satisfaction and loyalty which related to conative component was also established in the literature (Back & Parks, 2003; Sui & Baloglu, 2003; Yuksel, 2008). Based on previous research, the model claims that the conative component directly and indirectly relates to destination image perception. Therefore, it is hypothesized that;

H3: Conative factors are positively correlated to the short stay tourist's overall image of a destination.

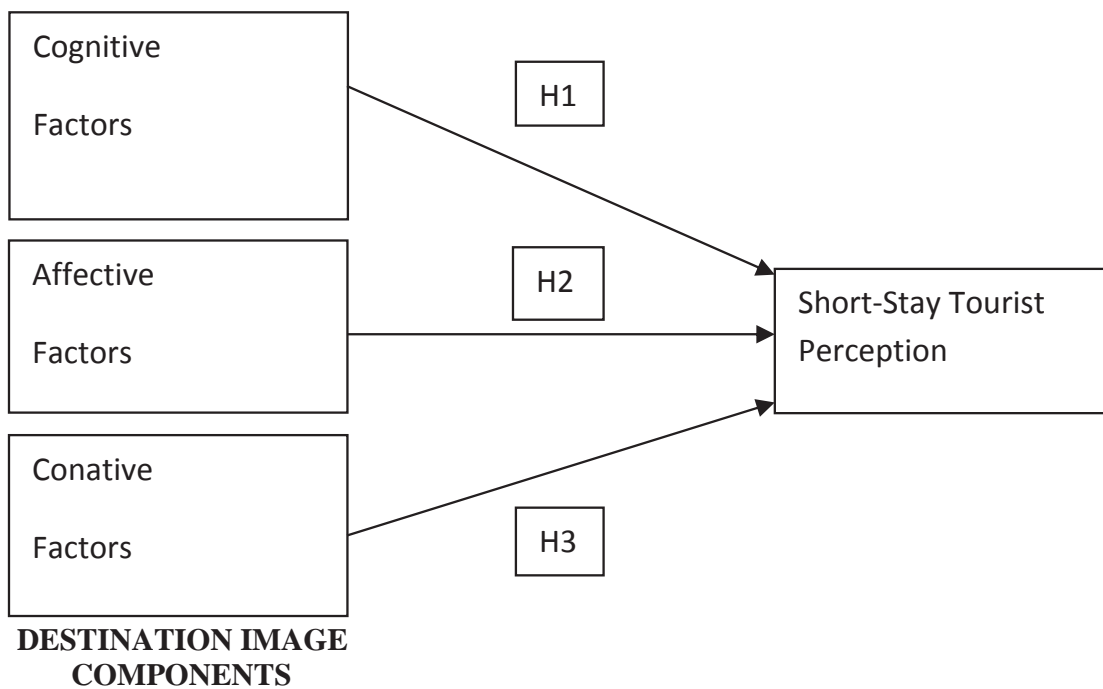


Figure 1: Proposed Theoretical Framework Model of the Relationship between the Short Stay Tourist Perceptions on Destination Image.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Measurement

The questionnaire was developed as the survey instrument to investigate the hypotheses of research interest. The questionnaire consisted of five components: tourists' destination expectation on perceived value and service quality, travel affection and perception, intention and commitment of visitation or their destination loyalty, overall tourist perception on

destination and destination image and finally a set of demographic variables. To generate a complete list of the respondent's perceptions of overall image toward Malaysia as a travel destination, a method used by Echtner & Ritchie (1993) was adapted.

In this study, the quantitative phase involved 275 questionnaires were completed by respondents approached. The questionnaire consists of four major parts. Part 1 deals with the destination expectation (perceptual/cognitive image) with 24 attributes extracted from previous studies using 5-point Likert scale (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Chaudhary, 2000; Echtner & Ritchie, 1993 and Hanzaee & Saeedi, 2011). Responses were measured by asking respondents to indicate the importance attributed to these items in their expectation of the destination. Part 2 deals with the measurement of tourist affective image evaluation on current destination which related to their knowledge about the destinations and the image of these destinations in their mind with ten attributes extracted from previous studies including comfort and satisfaction (Schneider & Sonmez, 1999 and Chen & Tsai, 2007). Responses were retained and measured to see the tourist travel affection of the destination. Part 3 deals the measurement of destination loyalty (conative image), such as purpose of visit, likeliness to revisit, willingness to recommend and factors attracting tourist to visit this current destination (Bigne et al., 2001; Sirakaya, Petrick, & Choi, 2004; Tian-Cole et al., 2002; Yuksel et al., 2010). Responses were retained and measured to see tourist destination loyalty such as their commitment, intention and action on the current destination. Part 4 deals with the measurement of short-stay tourist overall perception such as the overall decision that has been made, perceived value including time value, money value and effort value (Bolton & Drew, 1991). Additionally, Roth and Romeo (1992) has commented that overall perception consumers (tourists) form of products from a particular country, based on their prior perceptions of the country's production and marketing strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, six items were used to measure the short-stay tourist overall perception of destination were concerned. Respondents are asked to indicate their agreement level for each item, for the first part on a five-point Likert-type scale, from 'not important (=1)' to 'very important (=5)'. Part two until part four on a five-point Likert-type scale, from 'strongly disagree (=1)' to 'strongly agree (=5)'. Part 5 presents respondents socio-demographic characteristic with the variables refer to gender, age, level of education, marital status, occupation, country of origin and total annual household income (del Bosque & San Martin, 2008; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Alcaniz, Garcia, & Blas, 2009). The characteristics of tourists are important factors when the researcher analyses satisfaction with destinations (Huh, Uysal & McCleary, 2006). Since the study has been carried out to examine the perception of short-stay tourist, the questionnaire distributed in such way of screening the tourist's length of stay at particular destination in order to identify and targeted the short stay tourist only.

Sample Design and Data Collection

This study has been carried out to examine the perception of short-stay tourist on destination image through three components of destination images; cognitive, affective and conative factors. A special emphasis is placed on these components where from there we can decide which of them will be the most influenced component in determining the short-stay tourist perception. This exploratory study has been carried out through a quantitative method to explore the interrelationship between these variables (destination components) and short-stay tourist perception in this process. Collecting the data will be through survey (questionnaires) as a primary data.

The survey questionnaire planned will consist of five sections of closed-ended questions on the following aspects: cognitive factors, affective factors, conative factors, overall short-stay tourist perception and finally the questionnaire focused on the background information about the respondents.

The data were collected from a sample of 275 questionnaires which were completed by respondents approached over a period of 3 months at four randomly selected areas nearby the KL International Airport, which identified convenient for short stay tourist to visit. The survey point covered both the town and historic city to capture the socio-demographic diversity of the population under this research which took place in and around Kuala Lumpur city centre, KLIA International Airport, Seremban City Centre and Malacca City Centre. The respondents selected at the airport will be those who are waiting for their flight, while the respondents at other destinations will be those who are having their short holiday trips and those who are stopping by at the destination before visiting their primary destination. These destinations were chosen as sampling points because they attracted a substantial number of visitors that are seeking different benefits from the destination experience – due to their short stay visit.

Tourists were screened on the basis of the number of days spent in these destinations for inclusion in the sample (short-stay with minimum of 1 night and maximum 3 nights) as well as their status as international tourists. The sampling procedure was stratified by days of the week to ensure that a sufficient number of questionnaires were obtained, given that weekends were the busiest days at these destinations.

Data Analysis

The SPSS statistical computer package, Version 17.0 was used to analyse all the data. Data were analysed in three stages. First, the Cronbach's Alpha score was conducted to test for reliability in terms of internal consistency. Next, Repeated Measures ANOVA was conducted to test and compare mean between the factors. Repeated measures were used because the different factors were scored by the same respondents. Finally, correlation analyses between the three components and tourists' overall image were conducted. The Spearman's correlation coefficient was used to determine the degree of monotonic association between any of these three components and short-stay tourists' perceptions. Spearman's correlation was used as it is more robust to normality assumption.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Demographic Profile and Travelling Characteristics of Respondents

Of the 275 respondents, the majority of them came from Singapore (45%), UK (34%) and sharing the number of percentages are Australia and Thailand with 16%. Among the participants, it is noted that there are almost equal proportion of males (53.5%) and females (46.5%). More than half of them (64.7%) are in the age group 24 – 35 years old. Professional and Executive/Manager seem to dominate the group (57.1%). Many of them (77.1%) received university education. It is interesting to observe that 53.5% are single while 37.1% are married. It also noted that majority of respondents (31.6%) were informed about Malaysia through friends and relatives and the lowest is 2.2% through Malaysian

Official websites. As expected, 17.5% respondents were visiting the current destination for rest, relaxation and holiday purposes and the lowest is 1.1% for honeymoon and other purposes respectively.

Reliability Analysis

In order to test the reliability via internal consistency of each factor in the proposed model, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. The results reveal that the Cronbach's alpha values for all three factors as well as the overall image perspective are greater than 0.7 which indicates that the scales have a high degree of internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978). Values of the Cronbach's alpha coefficients are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items
Cognitive	0.767	24
Affective	0.729	8
Conative	0.701	4
Perspective	0.701	6

Composite Mean Scores

The composite mean scores of destination image on each of the four locations were computed and the respondents answered at the average of around 4 for all factors. Therefore, the responses on all the factors are affirmative (4 being slightly important and 5 being very important). This is somewhat expected from this study because all three factors are important contributors to the overall perception of destination image. The composite mean differences are significant which will be shown later. This analysis is particularly important for the development of a niche-based positioning strategy since it indicates which destination can be marketed together to allow for multiple 'niching' (Wilson & Gilligan, 1997).

Table 2: Composite Means

Mean for location	Cognitive / Average	Affective / Average	Conative / Average
Malacca	3.99	4.31	3.98
KLIA	3.74	4.04	3.60
Seremban	3.85	4.15	3.78
KL City Centre	3.80	3.99	3.41
Total Average Mean	3.85	4.12	3.69

Repeated-Measures ANOVA

A repeated measure ANOVA was performed for the composite means of all three factors *viz.* cognitive, affective and conative. The results are shown in Table 3 below. It is found there are significant differences among the composite means for the three factors. The test is significant at α level of 0.05 (all p-values < 0.05) for the tests whether sphericity is assumed or not (Greenhouse-Geisser and Huynh-Feldt). The power is also close to one. According to the results, the affective factor scored the highest composite mean (4.12) and conative the lowest (3.69) which indicates that the purpose of their visit is more influenced by affective domain than cognitive or conative.

Table 3: Repeated Measures ANOVA on the Three Factors

Source	Degrees of Freedom	F	p-values	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power (at $\alpha = 0.05$)
Sphericity Assumed	2	71.583	.000	.207	1.000
Greenhouse-Geisser	1.789	71.583	.000	.207	1.000
Huynh-Feldt	1.800	71.583	.000	.207	1.000

Factor Correlations

The correlations between cognitive, affective and conative to short-stay tourist's perception were computed using Spearman's rho to identify which of these factors has the strongest correlation to short-stay tourist's perception. Spearman's rho correlation was used because it can be used in both ordinal and ratio data sets, it is robust to normality assumption and it can detect monotonic relationship as well as linear relationship. The values of the Spearman's rho and their significance are shown in Table 4 below.

The Spearman's rho coefficients are significant for the correlations between all of the factors (cognitive, affective and conative) to short stay tourist's perception (p-values < 0.05). This indicates that all of the factors are important and are statistically significant contributors to short-stay tourist's perception. The signs of the correlations are also positive which indicates that all the three factors (cognitive, affective and conative) are positively correlated to short-stay tourist's perception. Hence, we have enough evidence not to reject the first three of our hypotheses namely:

- H1: Cognitive factors are positively correlated to the short stay tourist's overall image of a destination.*
- H2: Affective factors are positively correlated to the short stay tourist's overall image of a destination*
- H3: Conative factors are positively correlated to the short stay tourist's overall image of a destination*

The Spearman's correlation itself can be used as a standardized measure of effect size and hence, can be used to compare the effects of all the factors. All of the Spearman's correlations are relatively low indicating that although the factors have significant contribution toward short-stay tourist's perception, the strength of the correlation is low. However, by comparison, the highest correlation from among the three factors is cognitive factor which gives a Spearman's correlation of 0.394. Hence, we would stipulate that any model that predicts overall image of a destination should be strongly correlated to the cognitive factors.

Table 4: Bivariate Correlation Analysis using Spearman's Rho

Construct	Perspective	
	Spearman's Rho	p-values
Cognitive	0.394	<0.001
Affective	0.182	0.002
Conative	0.192	0.001

CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

From an academic point of view, this study has attempted to provide a conceptual framework that permits continued advances in the development of destination image in order to allow a greater understanding of the image-formation process in the minds of short-stay tourists. The objectives of the study were to measure the perceptions of short-stay tourists in Malaysia's tourism destination, identifying the most significant destination image factors that could in the future can be identified as a niche market that can be used in the development of its positioning strategy and might be broadly transferable to other cases.

All the constructs used in this study (cognitive, affective and conative) have been used in the previous study for the normal tourists who spend a significantly longer period in a destination. The normal tourists would have different perception on different destinations based on their length of stay. In this case, the situation is very different from normal tourists. Therefore, it is beneficial to test whether the constructs that were previously used to study normal tourists could be used to measure the short-stay tourist perception. Yuksel et. al. (2010) in their study found that, place attachment influences formation of loyalty intentions towards a destination directly and also indirectly through customer satisfaction.

To test whether they have a relationship with the short-stay tourist perception, three main hypotheses from each construct have been tested, and the results confirmed that there is statistically significant relationship between the three components of destination image to short-stay tourists' perceptions but the correlations are low. The results also showed that cognitive component has the highest correlation to short-stay tourist image perception on the destinations in Malaysia. In this study, it is also observed that tourists interviewed at one destination are not different from those interviewed at the other three destinations in terms of their image perception in general.

It can be concluded that the result of the study shows that the level of cognitive components are significantly correlated to short-stay tourist perception of current experiences with a destination image. The extent of the influence induced these destination

image factors on destination image perception differs and this indicates that destination authorities need to take into account certain issues in order to improve tourists' particular cognitive perceptions. This is supported by Yuksel et al. (2010) who claimed that positive emotional and cognitive bonds with a place (destination) should indeed affect individual's critical assessment of a setting. They discovered that a strong significant relationship between place identity and customer satisfaction exists which implies cognitive connection between the self and the destination influences satisfaction and loyalty intentions. According to the present results, conative component has a slightly stronger effect on short-stay tourists' perception than affective component. This suggests that believing destination images through their commitment, intention and action will increase conative component. However, the extent of the increase is expected to be slightly equally the affective component influence since the result shows that the paths between short-stay tourists' perception and both component doesn't show much difference. Destination authorities are advised to invest on cognitive components of the destination, as capability of the destination to induce positive perception seems to result in greater likelihood of becoming the short-stay tourists' first choice the next time they return to these destinations. The results also provide a strong evidence for a significant link between short-stay tourists' perception and these three components. The statistically significant links between short-stay tourists' perception and these three components suggest that tourists believing superiority of the cognitive component compared to the others two; affective and conative are likely to hold more favourable perceived value and service quality on the chosen destination.

The overall analysis indicates that Malaysia – particularly current studied destination can develop its image by focusing on cognitive attributes to cater short-stay tourists with an image which is fairly well established.

Managerial Implications

This research will contribute ideas and information to the particular agencies and bodies as mentioned earlier on the short stay tourist perception on tourist destination image during their short stay. Based on these findings and also suggestions, particular agencies and bodies may have ideas to plan, develop and market the destination through the improvement of the destination image.

Research Limitations

The major limitation of the study is the relatively small sample size. Four destinations will be selected out of various popular destinations in Malaysia. The source of information that will be used to obtain this sample may not be complete. This may affect the generalizability of the study to other destination in Malaysia. Population and sample might have limitation as the survey will be done in various places in Malaysia and worldwide. This is much relying on availability of enumerators who will travel to various destinations. It might take some time for the enumerators to complete and return the completed survey forms. Limitation for the interviews as this research much relies on the self-disclosure of the person being interviewed. Measurement of destination image was limited to the short-stay tourists currently visiting the destination and excluded the potential tourists. Thus, the perception of the short-stay tourists were based on the feelings during/after exposure to the destination attributes. The questionnaires were prepared accordingly so that they won't go against the

ethics and sensitivity of the person interviewed. Individual results are based on a volunteer sample and do not necessarily define the population to which the individuals belong.

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