MARKETING MALAYSIA AS A TOURISM DESTINATION; THE INFLUENCE OF MARKETING MIX VARIABLES ON TOURIST TRAVEL PATTERN

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia's tourism industry is emerging healthily over the years, with a steady growth of tourism receipts. This creates the need to study on how to further improve and develop the tourism industry in Malaysia, especially marketing Malaysia's tourism worldwide, as the region has become more competitive with the emergence of new tourist destinations. Therefore, it is essential to study the relationship between these two aspects in Malaysian context in order to identify the effective marketing mix tools used by tourist, so that relevant marketing strategies could be implemented to encourage longer stays and repeat visitation. Hence this study is to identify the different marketing mix tools used by tourist visiting Malaysia and the relationship between marketing mix tools and tourist travel pattern. A random sampling technique has been used in this study by using questionnaires distributed to international travellers visiting Malaysia. The result of the study reveals that there is significant relationship between place, product, price and promotion and tourist length of stay and duration of stay in Malaysia. This would enable marketers to identify and implement the most strategic form of marketing Malaysia to the international tourist in order to encourage longer stays and repeat visitation to the country. The finding identifies that there are significant relationship between the marketing mix tool and the traveller's duration of stay and intention to re-visit.

Keywords: Destination marketing, marketing mix, travel pattern, decision making.

INTRODUCTION

The Global Tourism Forecasts to the Year 2000 and Beyond (1995), published by World Tourism Organization (WTO), has projected that tourist arrivals in the Asia-Pacific region will increase by 6.8 percent a year to reach 101 million by 2000 and 190 million by 2010. Malaysia tourism industry has enjoyed rapid increase in tourist arrival from 1987 until 1995 due to successful events such as Visit Malaysia Year in 1990 and 1994. However, in the mid- 1996, Malaysia faces various problems such as the extensive publicity of cholera, Coxsackie's epidemic, haze incident as well as the Japanese Encephalitis (JE) virus and political instability due to the removal of Deputy Prime Minister. The number of people arriving in Malaysia surpassed the 20 million in 2007. A total of 24.6 million tourists arrived in Malaysia and spent RM56.5 billion in 2010 compared with 23.6 million tourists spent

RM53.4 billion in 2009. Visitors from key Asian markets accounted for 84% of total arrivals. Singapore continued to represent the largest number of arrivals, followed by Indonesia, Thailand and Brunei. Arrivals from China saw the highest growth in 2007, reaching 769 people; India also saw very high growth due to strong outbound flows of its affluent consumers. Ever since the September 11 event, Malaysia has become an oasis for tourists from the Middle East as it is able to provide a safe haven for Muslim tourists as an alternative to their traditional escapade to London (and Western Europe) during their hot and humid summer months. The West Asian market is a lucrative and much sought-after market as they are reportedly high spenders.

The potential in inbound tourism has attained the attention of many tourism stakeholders in the country, especially the government sector. Recently, the Malaysian tourism industry saw greater development in many areas especially on tourist infrastructure and tourism products. Travel accommodation saw high occupancy in 2007 due to strong arrivals and domestic demand in Visit Malaysia Year 2007 -2008. Apart from hotels, other travel accommodation also grew mainly due to budget tourists from regional countries; guest houses, motels, 2- and 3-star hotels and other budget travel accommodation appeared in key locations. Some niches, such as home stays, Malaysia My Second Home, culture tourism, farm/rural tourism etc., also saw a good response. Other key niches include MICE, medical tourism (due to the unique advantages of the country's economic prices; well-trained English-speaking internationally-comparable medical specialists and many health & wellness and spa facilities), golf tourism and honeymoon tourism. As for the prospects, the air transportation's growth continues, driven largely by low cost carriers. Low fares from Air Asia are forcing Malaysian Airline System to reduce prices on international and domestic flights and this trend is expected to intensify further, driving volume growth.

Therefore, there is a need to study the approach on how to further improve and develop the tourism industry in Malaysia. The main concern of the research study will be on marketing of tourism destinations as destinations are important component of the tourism industry. Many research conducted emphasis on the marketing of the tourism destinations as marketing is always associated with promoting tourism destinations in order to attract higher number of tourists and economic gain. Another dimension is the vacation decision making, whereby researchers and marketers try to understand the decision making of tourist in order to initiate tourism developments and marketing campaigns to suit their traveling pattern. In Malaysian context, few researches have been conducted to identify the relationship between marketing campaigns and the tourist decision making, especially on the travel pattern. Two variables are tested for tourist travel pattern that is duration of stay and intention to re-visit. Marketing mix is used as it is the fundamental concept in marketing a tourism product. The concept draws the marketer's attention to the fact that, in offering anything for public consumption, it is necessary to manage four key areas; that is the product, place, price and promotion. Therefore, recommendation could be made for these four components of marketing mix which complete marketing for the entire destination. Meanwhile, duration or length of stay leads to choice of other tourism elements such as choice of accommodation, activities involved and expenditure at a tourism destination. Therefore, it is important to highlight the duration spent by tourist in Malaysia and to study how marketing mix influences the duration of stay in the country. This is due to the fact that the longer the travellers spend in a destination, chances for them to explore the destination is higher which could encourage them to spend more and contribute to the local economy growth. In addition, identifying the intention to re-visit will help marketers to plan suitable marketing activities to attract the repeat visitors, especially Malaysia which heavily depends

on regional tourist who visits Malaysia several times. Therefore, it is important here to estimate the key marketing mix determinants on tourist length of stay and intention to revisit Malaysia. Once the relation is studied and analysed, policy drawing would be possible so that socio-economic benefits could be maximized.

The model adopted in this study, Woodside and Lysonski (1989) model of traveller destination and choice is said to be the most popular conceptualization to date. Destination awareness and more particularly the categorization process of four sets, is evident to be influenced by both marketing mix and the travellers own variables. Preferences are positively influenced by affective associations and choice is predicted to be affected by the interaction of intention to visit and situational variables. Therefore, this study adopts Woodside and Lysonski (1989) model of traveller destination and choice and the model have been simplified as per Figure 1 in order to critically analyse the relationship between marketing mix and tourist travel pattern, applied in Malaysian context.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the different marketing mix tools preferred by tourist visiting Malaysia.

2. To identify the relationship between marketing mix tools and tourist travel pattern.

Destination Marketing Mix

Tourism destination marketing is now widely recognized as an essential component in the management of destinations, an integral part of developing and retaining a particular location's popularity. It is important to note here that marketers need to understand those people and institutions which have a stake in the organization such as visitors, suppliers, central, regional, or local government, financial backers (shareholders, banks, and other similar institutions), pressure groups and trade organizations, local community, owners and management and employees (Les Lumdon, 1997). Therefore, tourism industry is made complex with this many stakeholders whom are equally important in every marketing policies drawn. The World Tourism Organization (2004) defines DMOs as the organizations responsible for the management and/or marketing of destinations. DMOs tend to be part of the local, regional or national government and have political and legislative power as well as the financial means to manage resources rationally and destination promotion is normally the DMOs' major activity and budget item (Lynne Dore and Geoffrey I. Crouch, 2002).

The ubiquity of the destination concept effectively means that the tourism product for each prospective traveller is very subjective and depends heavily on his/her image and expectations of the place (Dimitrios Buhalis, 1999). Related study in this area would be the one conducted by (Mo, Howard & Havitz, 1993) whom showed that the destination's environment was the primary factor (Destination Orientation Dimension: e.g. social and culture features) and the destination's service infrastructure the secondary factor (Travel Service Dimension: e.g. transportation, food and lodging services) in an international tourist's experiential desires of the destination product. Physical elements of the destination could include features like a site or facility, natural resources such as scenic landforms, flora and fauna, or physical conditions such as the weather (Dunn & Iso-Ahola, 1991; Buckley, 1994). Social factors like the friendliness of the local people, the language spoken, family

structures, occupations, urban layout and population density, are also attributes of the destination that can form part of the macro- environment (Canestrelli & Costa, 1991; Machlis & Burch, 1983). The level, use, or lack of infrastructure and technology in a destination (e.g., water and power supply, use of computer technology and communications etc.) are also visible features of developed and under-developed tourism products that can factor into the visitors' trip experience (Choy, 1992; Johnson & Edwards, 1994). The economic conditions and structural features that characterize a country, such as currency exchange, market behaviour and pricing, are further attributes of the product that can influence traveller experiences and thoughts about a destination (Dieke, 1991; Stevens, 1992).Authentic local culture, its history, institutions and customs can provide a rich experiential tapestry for the visiting tourist (Cohen, 1988; Prentice, 1993). Finally, the political dimension such as the political stability, foreign policy, or government policy on important issues such as human rights or democratic elections can determine tourist perceptions and behaviour. Furthermore, government control, responsiveness to tourism, and the treatment of tourists (e.g. visa applications, ports of entry, industry support, etc.) can also select the destination environment that tourists experience.

One more concept related to tourism product is the quality and its relation to intention to re-visit a particular destination. In consumer settings, Gotlieb, Grewal and Brown (1994) found that both service and the environmental dimensions of a product played significant roles in determining quality. Based on consumer research and work by Stevens, perceived value is also thought to be a significant determinant of whether a traveller would intend to return and visit a destination again. Murphy and Pritchard found that a high sense of trip value corresponded with a traveller's intent to return to a destination. Therefore, the notion of visitors returning is an important outcome measure for destination marketing organizations to consider (Gitelson & Crompton, 1984; Godbey & Graefe, 1991) as all businesses, including destinations, strive to create customer loyalty.

A wide range of pricing techniques are applicable to tourism destinations (Meidan, 1995; Kotler et al., 1996). Both macro and microeconomics determine the pricing function of tourism organizations locally and destinations. Factors such as the cost of living and employment, inflation rate, exchange rates and local efficiency and competition all contribute to the pricing equation. Therefore, pricing of the destination and all the individual elements of the local tourism product is a very complex process. Distribution or marketing channels are defined as sets of interdependent organizations involved in the process of making a product or service available for use or consumption (Dimitrios Buhalis, 1999). Stern et al (1996) state that channels should be viewed as an orchestrated network that creates value for end users by generating form, possession, time and place utilities. Most of the time tour operator acts as middlemen or intermediaries in the distribution channel within the tourism industry. There are several important stakeholders in the tourism distribution chain such as travel agents, airlines and suppliers on site and all of them are all expected to increase their influence on the industry's wealth creating process. The role of tour operator is expected to decline. Airline will continue to dominate the industry's value chain. The linkages between the suppliers of these products and their customer are still imperfect, therefore wholesalers and travel agencies perform an important function in smoothing out the imperfections (Jacob R and Michael B, 1998). However, according to Jacob R and Michael B, (1998) most of the functions of the travel agents can to a greater or lesser degree carried out by existing electronic resources.

Two main categories of travellers exists, according to the purpose of traveling are the business travellers and leisure travellers. Business travellers have strict schedules and use intermediaries to organize their itineraries. Leisure travellers, on the other hand, use a much more complex set of criteria in selecting their destination. They tend to have much greater flexibility and price elasticity; therefore, price is a key element in the decision making process (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981). The availability of information on the Internet and the emergence of electronic intermediaries revolutionize travel distribution networks.). There are two broad types of communication channel; as discussed in this study, personal and non- personal. Personal influence carries great weight for products that are expensive, risky, or highly visible (Kotler, 2005). This is relevant to tourism products as tourism products are considered risky because of it intangible nature and expensive components. Examples of personal communication channels would be family, friends, neighbours and acquaintances (Kotler, 2005). Direct experience and personal recommendations are often cited as the most credible sources of information on the destination (Sussmann and Ünel 1999). Zeithaml (1990) supports consumers seek and rely more on information from personal sources than from non-personal sources when evaluating services prior to purchase. Baloglu & Brinberg (1997); Chon, (1991, 1992); and Chacko, (1997) also argues that past experience of the destination or the companies involved (i.e., airlines, hotels, tour operators); descriptions by friends and relatives; general information; and marketing campaigns develop expectations and perception.

Meanwhile, non-personal or impersonal communication channels are media that carry messages without personal contact or feedback. They include major media, atmospheres and events. Important media consist of print media (newspapers, magazines, and direct mail), broadcast media (radio, television), display media (billboards, signs, posters) and online and electronic media (online services, websites, CD's, DVD's) (Kotler, 2005). According to Bonham & Mak (1996), above the line promotional activity such as advertising on television, radio, and press as well as using poster campaigns, can assist the development of the destination brand as well as influence a large number to visitors to travel to the destination or to extend their visit. In addition, Dann's (2005) analysis of the applications of tourism research explores the variety of media examined in tourism research, from written communication (e.g., travelogues, brochures, national tourist office (NTO) catalogues, guidebooks and notice boards) to broadcast communication (e.g., television holiday programs, videos, and film), and the use of propaganda and publicity in creating myth, nostalgia, and notions of sacred or authentic.

A subset of media-related tourism is movie-induced tourism (Hall, Croy, and Walker, 2003); thus, research on its effects on destinations has been receiving increasing interest in recent years (Beeton, 2005). Movies have been found to influence both travel behavior and image perceptions.

Vacation Decision Making

Decision making has received attention from various fields such as economics, psychology, sociology and also management sciences (Alain Decrop, 2006). The tourism literature has proposed a large number of typologies of vacationers, tourists and travellers. Widely used are demographic criteria, such as age (Anderson & Langmeyer, 1982), the family life cycle (Fodness, 1992) and vacationers' predispositions such as benefits sought (Shoemaker, 1994; Woodside & Jacobs, 1985). A lot of attention has also been given to behavioural variables,

such as vacation activities (Hsieh, O'Leary, & Morrison, 1992; Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang, & O'Leary, 1996), amount of expenditure (Spotts & Mahoney, 1991), chosen destination (Lang et al., 1997), distance travelled (Etzel & Woodside, 1982) and frequency of travel (Woodside, Cook, & Mindak, 1987). The conceptual work by John C.Crotts and Chris A. Ryan (1997) suggests that destination choices were associated with a variety of internal, (such as tourist motivation and background) and external (such as trip related characteristics) variables.

Factors as geographic distance, previous personal visitation experience, and the level of overall knowledge about a destination, plays an important role in influencing an individual's perceptions of (and, therefore, the attractiveness of) a particular destination. Goodrich (1978) notes that it is well known in marketing, psychology, and sociology that perceptions of (familiarity or knowledge about) an idea, product, or service play an important role in an individual's choice (preference or non-choice) of that particular idea, product, or service. Past travel experience also influence the post-visit perceived image of the destination, since, as Schreyer, Lime and Willams (1984) suggest present situations are interpreted in comparison with past experiences, due to the connection between information coming from past experiences and the subjective interpretation of a leisure trip. (Mazursky, 1989) also indicates that past experience may be more important than information obtained from external sources since individuals tend to place more weight on their past experience than on information from external sources.

One important model is the Mathieson and Wall (1982) tourist decision making process which argues that travel desire is a function of the tourist profile and his or her awareness of the destination resources and characteristics. Woodside and Lysonski (1989) model of traveller destination and choice is probably the most popular conceptualization to date. Destination awareness and more particularly the categorization process of four sets, is influenced by both marketing mix and the travellers own variables. The authors argue that preferences are positively influenced by affective associations, and are also affected by some of the traveller's variables and choice is predicted to be affected by the interaction of intention to visit and situational variables. Gilbert (1991) suggested that there are two levels of factors which have an effect on consumers; the first level of influence is psychological influence such as perception and learning that influences them to travel. The second level of influences includes those which have been developed during the socialization and include reference groups and family influences (figure 1.3). Meanwhile, Les Lumdon (1997) characterized the factors influencing motivation and purchase into three groups; internal driving forces, external driving forces and the nature of the buying situations. The prime external factors include culture, age, gender, social class, lifestyle, life cycle and reference groups.

Daniel R Fesenmaier, Karl W. Wöber, H. Werthner (2006) dictates that the variables used to explain and predict one's destination choice can be classified into two broad categories; decision makers' personal characteristics and travel characteristics (figure 1.4). Personal characteristics encompass socio-economic characteristics, psychological and cognitive traits. Travel characteristics include situational factors that make the travel distinguishable from others. The models are drawn based on travellers personal traits or characteristics and also to certain extend marketing stimuli's comes into picture. Here personal traits refer to the traveller's interest and other psychological factors that influence the choice of destination. Perception and destination image awareness has always been discussed as one of the motivating factor for decision making process.

Length of Stay and Intention to Re-Visit

One important destination choice variable tested in this study is the length of stay spent by tourist in Malaysia. Despite the fact that the length of stay takes among the first stage of vacation decision making, it has received little attention in the academic world (Decrop & Snelders, 2004. There are many factors associated with tourists' length of stay in a particular destination. According to Stevens (1992), consumer perceptions may influence the choice of a destination, the consumption of goods and services while on vacation and the decision to stay for a certain period of time. Alegre & Pou, (2006) argued that a visitor's socio demographic profile (age, income and family status) and psychographic attributes (e.g., motivations or preferences) are important personal factors in choosing a location for a vacation and the length of stay. The length of stay may change according to socio demographic profiles of tourists on the demand side as well as based on their holiday characteristics on the supply side. The literature also suggests that different factors contribute towards reduction in the length of stay, including changes in tourists' habits such as a preference to go on more than one vacation per year (Alegre & Pou, 2006).Fleischer & Pizam (2002) confirmed that income has a positive influence on the length of stay.

The length of vacations may also reflect the attractiveness of a destination; however, several other factors may also influence the length of vacation, such as the availability of free time that can be devoted, the availability of flexible package tour deals, the level of prices, the number of people in the party, familiarity, etc. (Metin Kozak, 2006). One interesting finding, according to tourism literature, the length of stay has a critical role in total tourist spending on a vacation. Findings of some studies support the proposition that those staying longer spend more than those with shorter visits (Mules, 1998; Spotts & Mahoney, 1991). In contrast, those with shorter stays are likely to spend more than longer-staying visitors (Mok & Iverson, 2000). According to the rule of basic economics theory, as income rises, demand for luxury goods is expected to increase in a greater proportion (Varian, 1990). Therefore, Akis (1998), Croes & Vanegas (2005), Dritsakis (2004), Song, Wong & Chon (2003) dictates that as the demand for tourism is viewed as luxury consumption (which means not a utilitarian consumption to satisfy basic human needs), then increase in per capita income results in an increase in tourism demand Taking this argument as a reference point, one can assume that those with their higher annual income tend to stay longer. The relationship between the familiarity and the probability of staying longer is a further implication of their study. One series of studies suggests that familiarity dominates one's propensity to visit the destination (Bargeman & van der Poel, 2006; Court & Lupton, 1997), their overall trip satisfaction (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000), the level of their spending (Perez & Sampol, 2000) and activity participation (Lehto, O'Leary, & Morrison, 2004).

In terms of services and tourism products, better perception of hospitality leads to taking a shorter vacation. From a pessimistic point of view, this finding could be used as a marketing strategy to attract those visitors with the intention of staying shorter (Kozak, 2001). It is interesting to report that the recommendation of friends and relatives, in spite of its contribution on destination choice (Mill & Morrison, 1992; Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005), has no impact on the length of stay. As for the intention to re-visit, Pritchard and Howard (1997) revealed that satisfaction and product image are two of the important factors impacting customer's loyalty to brand and product. Therefore, quality of services and product are important in order to attract repeat visitors.

METHODOLOGY

An explanatory research conducted in order to prove the objectives. The research is designed after taking into consideration the application of marketing mix in destination marketing. Ten hypotheses have been constructed, to test the relationship between marketing tools and tourist travel pattern. The research instrument used in this study is questionnaires as this tool allows a huge amount of respondent to take part in the study, contributing to a reliable analysis. 300 questionnaires were distributed, extracting 240 valid responses. The respondents of this survey would be the international tourist visiting Malaysia aged 16-25 as Malaysia receives tourist from different parts of the world. Majority of the respondents are from neighbouring Asian countries such as Singapore. Street and mail survey are undertaken in this study due to convenience of obtaining respondents. The major tourist attractions areas especially the Bukit Bintang and Chinatown area has been selected to distribute the questionnaires as these are the places commonly visited by foreign tourists. A simple random- sampling technique was used within these areas with travellers having equal chance of being selected and no a priori conditions in selection. Furthermore, conducting the survey at these areas gives an advantage of collecting data from foreign tourist who are already in Malaysia, thus the data collected would be useful and reliable.

FINDING AND ANALYSIS

Table 1: Relationship between Pricing and Duration of Stay and the Intention to Re-Visit Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	48.877[a]	12	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	55.615	12	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.498	1	0.221
N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 10 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.02.

Table 2: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	66.007[a]	16	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	71.994	16	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.140	1	0.286
N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 13 cells (52.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.05.

The Chi Square Test confirms that there is a significant relationship between distribution channel and duration of stay. This confirms that travellers still depend on traditional intermediaries especially tour operators/travel agents to purchase their holiday packages. The study result also confirms that there is a significant relationship between the distribution channels and intention to re-visit. Therefore, the hypothesis on distribution channel and duration of stay and intention to re-visit has accepted.

Table 3: Relationship between Personal Promotion Tools and Duration of Stay and Intention to Re-Visit

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	p	Significance	Dependent Variable	p	Significance
Travel Agent	Duration of stay	21.324	0.001*	Intention to re-visit	24.882	0.001*
Operator		7.667	0.053		5.250	0.263
Friends		11.719	0.008*		20.830	0.001*
Relatives		20.007	0.001*		8.223	0.084
School/College teachers		3.778	0.286		27.570	0.001*
Peer groups		18.562	0.001*		20.996	0.001*
Hearsays/ recommendation		6.497	0.090		10.640	0.031*
Personal experience		1.126	0.771		11.685	0.020*

represents the p value of less than 0.05.

The Chi-Square Test confirms that there is a significant relationship between personal promotional tools and duration of stay when tourists obtain information about Malaysia from travel agents, friends, relatives and peer groups. It also confirms that there is a significant relationship between personal promotional tools and intention to re-visit when tourist obtain information about Malaysia from travel agents, friends, school/college teachers, peer groups and hearsays/recommendation, and personal experience. Therefore, it could be concluded that these sources could have an influence on the duration spent by the respondents in Malaysia. It is also interesting to report here that the finding contradicts the finding of Mill & Morrison (1992); Sirakaya & Woodside (2005) that in spite of its contribution on destination choice, the recommendation of friends and relatives, has no impact on the length of stay. Therefore, the hypothesis on personal promotional tool and duration of stay and intention to re-visit has accepted.

Table 4: Relationship between Impersonal Promotion tool and Duration of Stay and Intention to Re-visit

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	p	Significance	Dependent Variable	p	Significance
Advertisement	Duration of stay	10.423	0.015*	Intention to re-visit	35.064	0.001*
Brochures/leaflets		8.007	0.046*		7.870	0.096
Video/display		32.811	0.001*		29,671	0.001*
Travel programme		12.368	0.006*		18.839	0.001*
Documentaries		0.067	0.995		9.014	0.061
Guidebooks		5.703	0.127		31.760	0.001*
Films		43.721	0.001*		9.253	0.055
Novels		2.856	0.414		2.807	0.591
Newspaper travel pages		4.868	0.182		27.169	0.001*
National, state, city tourist office		1.494	0.684		8.584	0.072
Travel fairs / expo / travel market		7.302	0.063		10.853	0.028*
International events / road shows		7.244	0.065		41.071	0.001*
Familiarization or journalist or press tour		46.246	0.001*		11.526	0.021*

represents the p value of less than 0.05.

The Chi-Square Test confirms that there is a significant relationship between impersonal promotional tools and duration of stay when tourist obtain information about Malaysia from advertisement, brochures/leaflets, video/display, travel programme, films and familiarization or journalist or press tour. The Chi-Square Test also confirms that there is a significant relationship between impersonal promotional tools and intention to re-visit when tourist obtain information about Malaysia from advertisement, video/display, travel programme, guidebooks, newspaper travel pages, travel fairs/expo/travel market, international events/road shows and familiarization or journalist or press tour. Malaysia's landmarks such as Kuala Lumpur Twin Tower (KLCC) play a significant role in attracting tourists to Malaysia. KLCC has become the prominent landmark featured in many movies especially those Bollywood movies that attract Indian travellers to visit Malaysia. Therefore,

the hypothesis on impersonal promotional tool and duration of stay and intention to re-visit has accepted.

Table 5: Relationship between Product tool and Duration of Stay and Intention to Re-visit

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	p	Significance	Dependent Variable	p	Significance
Tourist attractions	Duration of stay	44.389	0.001*	Intention to re-visit	116.713	0.001*
Accommodation		6.254	0.903		83.245	0.001*
People		27.951	0.006*		125.559	0.001*
Public Transportation		26.192	0.010*		112.466	0.001*

represents the p value of less than 0.05.

The Chi Square Test result confirms that there is a significant relationship between tourism product variables and duration of stay. The tourist attractions, people and the public transportation has significant relationship on duration of stay. The Chi Square Test result also confirms that there is a significant relationship between all tourism product variables and intention to re-visit. Therefore, the hypothesis on product and duration of stay and intention to re-visit has accepted.

RECOMMENDATION

It can be concluded from this study that marketing mix elements have significant relationship with traveller duration of stay in Malaysia and intention to re-visit the country. In order to propose relevant recommendation, it is important to understand that in order to promote a tourism destination or product, all the four components of marketing mix has to be considered in order to propose comprehensive solutions as the marketing mix depends on each other in order to promote a complete tourism destination.

Economic conditions and structural features that characterize a country, such as currency exchange, market behaviour and pricing, are further attributes of the product that can influence traveller experiences and thoughts about a destination. Therefore, all these should be taken into account as factors influencing pricing of tourism places, which could shape travellers destination choice.

Tourism stakeholders especially transportation operators such as airline companies to revise their pricing policies in order to attract travellers, especially for long haul tourists as it is important to attract them with attractive airfares.

Tourism stakeholders in Malaysia could maintain the prices of tourism elements at a very competitive price in order to promote Malaysia as a value for money destination.

Malaysia could be priced differently according to the variety of products offered and different target markets. On the other hand, the pricing of tourism products can be higher if the tourism stakeholders were to sell niche tourism products to markets with higher spending power such as the Middle East market. The potential niche tourism products as such as the health tourism, sport tourism and etc.

Tourism marketers could continue to utilize the travel intermediaries to distribute tourism product to the target markets. Travel agents are still important travel distribution channel although internet is emerging as a more cost efficient tool. It also indicates that travel agents and tour operators can target first time visitor to Malaysia as this group tend to depend on travel intermediary more than frequent travellers. In addition, business travellers also depend more on the travel agents to do their travel arrangements.

Quality services appear to be a key factor that tourism stakeholders in Malaysia should consider in order to attract repeat visitation and to potential visitors.

Therefore, destination marketers and tour operators/travel agents could work together to promote Malaysia and encourage tourist especially first timers to purchase their holiday packages through travel agents. This could also be applied when targeting new target market.

Tourism suppliers such as airline, car rental companies, and accommodation suppliers could utilize internet to offer attractive deals to Malaysia. Tourism stakeholders could make effort to offer a safe online transaction to attract more online bookings.

More familiarization trip could be organized to encourage these stakeholders to experience the different tourism products offered in Malaysia in order to encourage and facilitate better selling of tourism products for Malaysia. The same could be applied in hosting journalist travel programs.

Films are becoming more important especially to attract mass groups. This is evident in Indian market as a huge number of Bollywood movie makers come to Malaysia to shoot movies, which influences more Indians to visit Malaysia. Therefore, government sector could provide more incentives to these movie makers in order to project better image of the country and attract larger number of tourist.

Continuous advertisement, video/display, travel programme on Malaysia is also noted to be important to attract repeat visitors.

Quality experience provided for tourists encourages destination loyalty thus allowing them to recommend Malaysia to their friends, family and peers groups.

Tourism stakeholders such as hotels and airline companies are encouraged to provide hospitality trainings to the staffs in order to maintain high quality of manpower in the industry. Staffs could be encouraged to further their studies in order to deliver highly skilful and knowledgeable industry professionals. Also, it is important for tourism stakeholders to employ staffs with right human skills as tourism involves high level hospitality services and people represents Malaysia.

It is important here to note that promoting tourism places efficiently takes into account all the marketing mix elements. In addition, the above mentioned recommendations can only be implemented after taking into account all the socio-cultural, political and economical elements which is not discussed in this study.

CONCLUSION

The study allows an understanding on the relationship between marketing mix tools and tourist travel pattern to Malaysia. The analysis of variables highlights that there is a significant relationship between the four marketing mix variables and two tourist travel pattern variables. It is evident in this study that there is significant relationship between place, product, price and promotion and tourist length of stay and duration of stay in Malaysia. The study is relevant to the tourism stakeholder and destination marketers to understand the profile and travel pattern of tourist visiting Malaysia and which marketing mix tools has significant influence on their travel decision making. The study results would facilitate tourism stakeholders in Malaysia to identify the relevant marketing mix tools that suits their target market.

It is also evident from this study that, not many researches are conducted to study the relationship between marketing mix elements and travel pattern. Therefore, this study is vital in contributing an idea to tourism marketers on how to further utilize the marketing mix tools more efficiently in order to encourage longer stay and repeat visitation. As a result, this research complimented our field of study by identifying the significant relationship between marketing mix variables and tourist travel pattern variables. In macro level, this study could also facilitate the tourism stakeholders from the neighbouring countries such as Singapore, Thailand, and other new entrants to the industry such as Vietnam and Cambodia. There are many similarities between Malaysia and the neighbouring countries in terms of the tourism resources; therefore this study is relevant and applicable in more regional and to certain extent global level. This is due to the reason that the variables studied in this study, marketing mix and travel pattern are used globally to promote tourism destinations worldwide. Therefore, the result of this study is applicable in tourism context for many countries.

It must be mentioned here that there are certain limitations in this study. One of them would be the limited data collected for two of the marketing variable tools that is place and promotion, due to time limitation. Similarly, how the Internet was used to obtain information about Malaysia did not form part of this research (e.g., the use of Web sites, online travel blogs, online travel media, and online video sites) and would be a useful area of future travel research. Equally, how the two variables are related to each other is not studied. Furthermore, in future it would be interesting to study in detail the relationship between marketing mix variables and other variables of tourist travel pattern such expenditure. To add further, among the interest field of the researcher would be on other components of destination marketing such as destination branding and its influence on tourist decision making and travel patterns.

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