

**MEDIATING EFFECT OF PERSONAL AND SITUATIONAL
CHARACTERISTICS OF ARAB TOURISTS IN MALAYSIA AND
THEIR INFLUENCE ON INFORMATION SOURCES AND
INFORMATION CHANNELS OF TOURIST INFORMATION CHOICE
STRATEGIES**

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Abstrak

Statistik menunjukkan bahawa kemasukan pelancong ke Malaysia terus meningkat sebanyak 14.3%; sumber maklumat dan saluran maklumat telah memainkan peranan penting dalam hal ini. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian yang sedia ada masih belum membezakan bagaimana sumber maklumat dan saluran maklumat mempengaruhi strategi pilihan maklumat pelancong Arab. Oleh itu, kajian ini mengkaji kesan pengantara ciri-ciri peribadi dan situasi terhadap sumber maklumat dan saluran maklumat untuk memberikan pemahaman yang lebih jelas tentang bagaimana sumber maklumat dan saluran maklumat mempengaruhi strategi pilihan maklumat pelancong Arab. Data dikumpulkan daripada 358 pelancong Arab di Malaysia melalui prosedur soal selidik yang ditadbir sendiri, dan data dianalisis menggunakan analisis regresi berganda. Secara keseluruhan, kajian itu mendapati bahawa sumber maklumat dan saluran maklumat mempunyai pengaruh yang besar ke atas strategi pilihan maklumat pelancong Arab. Bagi kesan pengantara, kajian itu juga mendapati bahawa ciri-ciri peribadi mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap sumber maklumat berkaitan strategi pilihan maklumat pelancong Arab. Hasil menunjukkan bahawa ciri-ciri situasi mempengaruhi secara signifikan sumber maklumat berkaitan strategi pilihan maklumat pelancong Arab. Oleh itu, kajian ini menyimpulkan bahawa sumber maklumat dan saluran maklumat mempengaruhi strategi pilihan maklumat pelancong Arab, manakala ciri-ciri peribadi dan situasi mempengaruhi sumber maklumat dan saluran maklumat berhubung strategi pilihan maklumat. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada ilmu dalam bidang ini dan juga menyediakan beberapa penemuan baru yang boleh menyumbang kepada pembangunan pengetahuan yang berkesan yang seterusnya boleh meningkatkan industri pelancongan di Malaysia dan juga menarik lebih ramai pelancong Arab ke Malaysia. Kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa kedua-dua pelancong Arab dan agensi-agensi pelancongan Malaysia perlu sentiasa mengambil kira ciri-ciri peribadi dan situasi dalam perancangan dasar pengembaraan pelancongan. Akhir sekali, kajian ini menonjolkan batasan kajian dan cadangan untuk kajian masa depan.

Katakunci: Sumber maklumat, Saluran maklumat, Strategi pilihan maklumat, Ciri-ciri peribadi, Ciri-ciri situasi.

Abstract

Statistics show that the influx of tourists in Malaysia has continued to increase by 14.3%; information sources and information channels have played crucial roles in this regard. However, existing studies are yet to distinguish how information sources and information channels influence information choice strategies of Arab tourists. Therefore, this study examines the mediating effects of personal and situational characteristics on information sources and information channels to provide clearer understanding on how information sources and information channels influence the information choice strategies of Arab tourists. Data was collected from 358 Arab tourists in Malaysia through the self-administered questionnaire procedure, and the data was analysed using the multiple regression analysis. Overall, the study found that information sources and information channels had significant influence on the information choice strategies of the Arab tourists. As for the mediating effects, the study also found that personal characteristics significantly mediate the influence of information sources on the information choice strategies of the Arab tourists. The result showed that situational characteristics significantly mediate the influence of information sources on the information choice strategies of the Arab tourists. Therefore, the study concluded that information sources and information channels influence the information choice strategies of the Arab tourists, while personal and situational characteristics significantly mediate influence of the information sources and information channels on the information choice strategies. The study contributes to the body of literature in this area and also provides several insights that may contribute to the development of knowledge that would effectively enhance the tourism industry in Malaysia and also attract more Arab tourists to Malaysia. The study recommends that both the Arab tourists and the Malaysian tourist agencies should always consider personal and situational characteristics in planning for tourism adventure policies on tourism. Finally, the study highlights the limitation of the study and the suggestions for future study.

Keyword: Information sources, Information channels, Information choice strategies, Personal characteristics, Situational characteristics.

Publications from This Research

The following conferences papers and publication have been produced from the research reported in this thesis:

Bilal A. A Al-khateeb and Zulkhairi B Md Dahalin, “Information Source, Information Channels and Information Choice: The Mediating Effect of Personal Characteristics”, in the Proceedings of the International Conference on Computing & Informatics, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, August 2013.

Bilal A.A Al-khateeb and Zulkhairi B Md Dahalin, “Re-Investigating the Relationship between Information Source, Information Channels and Information Choice Strategies Using the SmartPLS”. International Business Information Management Association (22nd IBIMA), (ISBN: 978-0-9860419-1-4, 13-14 November 2013, Rome, Italy.

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List of Abbreviations

IDTV	Integrated Digital Television
TV	Television
DVD	Digital Versatile Disc
CDROM	Compact Disc Read Only Memory
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
BTL	Bell Telephone Laboratories
S-M-C-R	Source-Message-Channels-Receiver
S-O-R	Stimulus-Organism-Response
IT	Information Technology
WWW	World Wide Web
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
IV	Independent Variable
DV	Dependent Variable
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
KMO	Kasier-Meyer-Olkin
VIF	Variable Inflationary Factor
AAPOR	American Association for Opinion Research
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the background of the information sources, information channels, information choice strategies, and mediating personal characteristics and situational characteristics. This chapter starts with the background, statement of the problem, the research questions, the research objectives, and the significance of the study, the scope of the study, and finally the structure of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The person, who, in the 1940's, developed the information theory, was Claude Shannon. Since then, people speak frequently about the differences between information sources and communication channels. In particular, communication students as well as the general public, talk about this distinction on a daily basis (Rogers, 1997). According to this model developed by Shannon, 'an information sources is the personal or organization from which the information originates'. As an example, in the tourism industry, sources of information includes travel agents, service providers or suppliers, journalists, travelers, location, friends, tour operators, and family. As for the information channels it refers to the way the information is transmitted to the receiver. Tourist information channels normally refer to face-to-face interaction, telephone, TV, print, Integrated Digital Television (IDTV), mail, mobile Internet and the Internet.

Several tourism scholars have recognized the importance to understanding more about the factors influencing travelers' information choice strategies (Chen &

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