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Nur Shamilla Selamat

*Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, nshamilla2@live.utm.my*

Alex Tze Hiang Sim

*Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, alex@utm.my*

Jee Mei Hee

*Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, jmhee@utm.my*

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# **Transforming Tourism Destinations' Marketing Strategies by Understanding Tourists' Satisfaction**

**Nur Shamilla Selamat**

Department of Information Systems  
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia  
nshamilla2@live.utm.my

**Alex Tze Hiang Sim**

Department of Information Systems  
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia  
alex@utm.my

**Jee Mei Hee**

Educational Foundation & Social Science  
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia  
jmhee@utm.my

## **Abstract**

*Tourism propels the growth of a country's economy and gives rise to other service industries such as accommodation, food and beverages, retail trade, and transportation industries. With trends in travel and tourism pointing to tourists seeking novelty experience according to TripAdvisor, the objective of this paper is to identify factors influencing the intentions of tourists to a destination, taking into account the characteristics of tourists, by means of a systematic literature review (SLR). Collectively, 17 factors were identified from a total of 77 studies. Satisfaction, destination attraction, and loyalty are the three most investigated factors, while perceived behaviour control, psychological well-being, and religious are the three least investigated factors that affect the behavioural intentions of tourists to a destination. This SLR is instrumental in later part of the research in discovering whether there exist differences between a model developed based on factors identified via content analysis with a model discovered upon mining of data. The coalesced perspective of content analysis and data mining is essential in serving as a guide to practitioners or destination marketing organisation (DMO) in the formulation of marketing strategies to promote tourism destinations in accordance with their intended audience.*

**Keywords:** systematic literature review, tourism, intention

## **Introduction**

Tourism is becoming one of the fastest growing sectors in the world. For five consecutive years, its growth has outstripped that of the global economy (Scowsill 2016, p. 3). Tourism contributes to job creation and poverty diminution, promotes environmental sustainability, peace and understanding amongst communities, across nations. In 2015, the travel and tourism sector created 107,833,000 jobs in service industries such as hotels, travel agents, transportation, as well as restaurant and leisure industries (World Travel and Tourism Council 2016). Additionally, tourists spent US\$947 billion in the United States (U.S. Travel Association 2016), while the tourism sector accounts for approximately US\$40 billion in Europe and US\$100 billion in Asia (Joyce 2016). Tourism also drives the forces for regional development whereby it tethers the growth of attractions at a destination. It gives rise to new destinations.

The objective of this paper is to identify the factors that affect the intentions of tourists to a destination in an increasingly saturated marketplace, by adopting a qualitative approach of conducting a systematic literature review (SLR), apart from to discuss the significance of the most

widely discussed factors which is satisfaction. According to TripAdvisor (2015), 69 percent of tourists from all walks of life seek for novelty experience in their travel, from cruising to solo and adventure travelling. Tourists are also willing to spend more on their travel. In choosing their travel destinations, culture, monetary benefits, and amenities such as WiFi and air conditioning provided at a destination play a significant role in their decision-making process.

In catering to the demands of consumers, discovering the intentions of tourists to a destination is essential as it supplies the basis to practitioners in managing their tourism destinations. Different types of tourism destination attracts tourists of dissimilar characteristics. And in investigating tourists' intentions towards a destination, their characteristics and the destination's type of tourism is worth taking into consideration. A mismatch would be disastrous as it would defeat its initial purpose of serving as a guideline to practitioners in the formulation of marketing strategies that are in accordance with the different segments of tourists.

## **Literature Review**

The intentions of tourists to a destination is affected by a myriad of factors from satisfaction, perceived value (Kim et al. 2013; Lee et al. 2012; Pandža Bajs and Bajs 2015; Phillips et al. 2013; Prayag 2012) and loyalty (Beckman et al. 2013; Garcia et al. 2015; Niemczyk 2014) to time (Juan and Chen 2012), perceived behaviour control (Hsu and Huang 2012; Shen 2014), and religious and spiritual reasons (Hardan Suleiman and Mohamed 2012). This section particularly discusses the influence of satisfaction on tourists' intentions to a destination from literature. It also presents the justification, along with the research questions that motivated this review.

### ***The Influence of Satisfaction on Tourists' Intentions to a Destination***

According to Dolnicar, Coltman, and Sharma (2015), satisfaction refers to the "cognitive and affective evaluations of prior consumption experience". A plethora of research concludes that highly satisfied tourists are more likely to return to a particular destination (Chen et al. 2011; Chi 2012; Craggs and Schofield 2011; Dolnicar et al. 2015; Doong et al. 2012; Jin et al. 2015; Juan and Chen 2012; Lee et al. 2012; Moutinho et al. 2012; Niemczyk 2014), either in the short or long term (Assaker and Hallak 2013). Furthermore, referring to Plog's psychographic segmentation, allocentrics – tourists who continuously seek new destinations, mid-centrics and psychocentrics – conservative and cautious tourists who prefer familiar destinations (Plog 2001, 2002), show high revisit intention when they are highly satisfied (Park and Jang 2014).

Osti, Disegna, and Brida (2012) using factor analysis discover the three satisfaction factors, which are services, costs, and accessibility. Other than that, tourists' satisfaction is influenced by emotion (Palau-Saumell et al. 2012; Simpson et al. 2014), service quality (Chen et al. 2011), perceived value (Lee et al. 2012; Moutinho et al. 2012; Prayag 2012), and experience (Jin et al. 2015), whereby experiences which are deemed pleasurable and enjoyable increase tourists' level of satisfaction (Kim et al. 2013). According to Quadri-Felitti and Fiore (2013), positive educational and aesthetic experiences are the leading drivers of wine tasting ritual, vital to the wine tourists' satisfaction. Satisfaction is also affected by destination attractions (Eusébio and Vieira 2013; Weaver and Lawton 2011), such as food and amenities (Jung et al. 2015), as well as the cleanliness and attractiveness of the destination (Craggs and Schofield 2011). However, Huang, Scott, Ding, and Cheng (2012) revealed that experience affect satisfaction more profoundly than destination attractions. They also introduced mood as the antecedent of satisfaction. Additionally, satisfaction plays a mediating role between the image of a destination (Kim et al. 2013; Liu et al. 2015; Prayag 2012), perceived value (Jin et al. 2015; Pandža Bajs and Bajs 2015; Phillips et al. 2013) and behavioural intentions. On the other hand, perceived risk, such as the perceived worsening of crime and violence at a destination (Simpson et al. 2014), or the hazardous effect of environment on tourists' health (Li et al. 2016) inversely affect satisfaction. In other words, as the level of risk at a destination peaks, tourists' level of satisfaction will plummet.

Nevertheless, the relationship between satisfaction and behavioural intentions is complex. Tourists' behavioural intentions are influenced by satisfaction at a varying degree, depending on their characteristics. Satisfaction affects the behavioural intentions of tourists who does not have any prior visitation experience or first-timers, more than repeat tourists (Chi 2012). Kim et al. (2013) revealed that unsatisfied parents with satisfied children intend to revisit Orlando due to the family's priority of choosing a vacation destination for the children. Furthermore, Kozak and Duman (2012) indicated that in a family vacation, tourists' satisfaction is strongly influenced by their spouses. Also, their revisit intention is influenced by their and their spouses' satisfaction, whereas their recommendation

intention is determined by the satisfaction of themselves and their children, as well as their revisit intention. Eusébio and Vieira (2013) added that cultural differences and travel distances intervene with the impact of satisfaction on tourists' revisit intention, whereby international tourists perceived destination attractions to have a more significant effect on satisfaction than domestic tourists.

Not only that, tourists' characteristics denote their intentions to a destination whether to revisit, recommend, or both. In a study by Eusébio and Vieira (2013), satisfaction does not significantly affect the intention to revisit but have a positive effect on the intention to recommend due to novelty value. For tourists with high novelty-seeking tendencies, or high novelty seekers, satisfaction is not the driver of revisit intention, unlike medium and low novelty seekers (Assaker and Hallak 2013). Likewise, tourists with high risk-perception level or risk takers, satisfaction lead to their intention to recommend, although not to revisit. Dolnicar, Coltman, and Sharma (2015) suggested that satisfaction does not always positively affects behavioural intentions, whereby satisfaction is only one of the many factors influencing behavioural intentions as 60 percent of tourists who visited Austria more than once have a high intention to return to the destination, irrespective of their satisfaction level. Thus, in this case, loyalty drives the behavioural intentions of tourists.

### ***Objectives of the Review***

Based on a study by Tussyadiah et al. (2011), it is essential to compose narratives for marketing purposes embed with characters portraying intended audience, or target market. Narratives that are relatable to consumers are influential in increasing their knowledge of a destination resulting in their positive intention to visit the destination. They added that employing customisation in advertising able to stimulate empathy among tourists of diverse characteristics, through the introduction of different genres of narratives, or different characters in a narrative.

The significance of tourists' satisfaction towards their intention to revisit or recommend a destination is prominent, albeit their characteristics and the destination's type of tourism play a role in determining the degree of significance of the factor. Tourists' satisfaction with their experience at a destination has a significant positive influence on their revisit and recommending intentions, and it affects first-time tourists more than repeat tourists (Chi 2012). Implying that, first impression matters in ensuring that tourists are satisfied with their experience at a destination. Additionally, the influence of satisfaction on intentions to a destination for tourists travelling with family, or in a group is dependent on the collective satisfaction of the group (Kim et al. 2013; Kozak and Duman 2012). In food tourism, on the other hand, tourists' satisfaction is significantly influenced by food and amenity. Amenity refers to the availability of clean and comfortable places for visitors to sit and rest, and for exhibits, workshops and activities such as food tasting sessions to be conducted (Jung et al. 2015).

Understanding tourists' satisfaction and the factors affecting the degree of satisfaction, such as their characteristics and the destination's type of tourism aspires to offer insights on the means tourism destinations' marketing strategies able to be customisable. Also, the findings of Dolnicar et al. (2015) suggested that there are other factors motivating tourists to revisit or recommend a destination such as loyalty, apart from the factor satisfaction. All of these motivated the review, in answering the following notable research questions:

1. What are the different factors that influence tourists' intentions to a destination?
2. What are the different characteristics of tourists that contribute to the degree of significance of their intentions to a destination?
3. What are the different types of tourism destination that have a differential effect on tourists' intentions to a destination?

### **Methodology**

In fulfilling the objective of this paper, which is to identify the factors that affect the intentions of tourists to a destination, the method of synthesis is an SLR, a form of secondary study, which identifies, evaluates and interprets studies that are relevant to a research question, or phenomenon of interest (Kitchenham 2004). The electronic database searched is Scopus as it housed a comprehensive collection of peer-reviewed literature ranging from scientific journals to books, as well as conference proceedings. A computer-assisted analysis approach is undertaken using Nvivo 11 as a qualitative analysis and data management software. For sampling purposes, only journals are selected for the synthesis of study.

In constructing the search term for this study, the Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, and Context (PICOC) structure as described in Table 1 is utilised, in which the search term *tourists*, and *intentions* are derived. As all empirical and non-empirical studies that investigated the intentions of tourists are included, regardless of whether there exists a comparison between first-time and repeat visitors, no specific comparison is included in the PICOC structure. Boolean AND is used in linking the terms from the population, intervention and outcomes of the PICOC structure: *tourists* AND *intentions*. Synonyms and alternative words for tourists, as well as intentions, are taken into account. The search term *tourists* is replaced with *touris\** in order to represent not only tourist but tourists and tourism as well. The search term *intentions*, on the other hand, is replaced with *intent\**, representing intents, intention, and intentions. The final search term used in searching for literature is as follows: (*touris\** AND *intent\**).

<b>Population</b>	Tourists
<b>Intervention</b>	Intentions
<b>Comparison</b>	None
<b>Outcomes</b>	Intentions of Tourists
<b>Context</b>	Review(s) of any studies of intentions of tourists. No restrictions on the type of study apply.

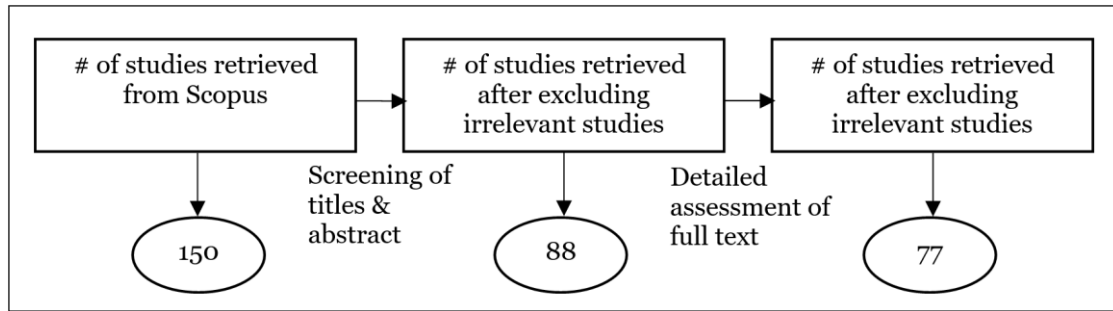
**Table 1. Summary of PICOC**

Studies are selected based on the inclusion criteria, such as 1) papers that are written in English, 2) papers published from January 2010 onwards, 3) studies with full text available online, and 4) studies that investigate the visiting intentions of tourists to a destination. In assessing the quality of the studies, a checklist was designed, reusing questions proposed in a study by Salleh, Mendes, and Grundy (2011). The checklist is comprised of seven general questions as described in Table 2 to measure the quality of both quantitative and qualitative studies according to the following ratio scale: Yes = 1 point, No = 0 point, and Partially = 0.5 point. The resulting total quality score for each study ranged between 0 (very poor) and 7 (very good).

<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1. Was the article referred? (Salleh et al. 2011)	Yes/No/Partially
2. Were the aim(s) of the study clearly stated? (Salleh et al. 2011)	Yes/No/Partially
3. Were the study participants or observational units adequately described? For example, age, gender, marital status, monthly income level. (Salleh et al. 2011)	Yes/No/Partially
4. Were the data collections carried out very well? For example, discussion of procedures used for collection, and how the study setting may have influenced the data collected? (Salleh et al. 2011)	Yes/No/Partially
5. Were the role of mediating variables adequately controlled for in the analysis? (Salleh et al. 2011)	Yes/No/Partially
6. Was the approach to and formulation of the analysis well conveyed? For example, description of the form of the original data, the rationale for the choice of method/tool/package. (Salleh et al. 2011)	Yes/No/Partially
7. Were the findings credible? For example, the study was methodologically explained, conclusions are resonant with other knowledge and experience. (Salleh et al. 2011)	Yes/No/Partially

**Table 2. Study Quality Checklist**

Initially, 1153 studies were identified in Scopus using the “(*touris\** AND *intent\**)” search term. Of these, only 150 studies with full text available online were retrieved from Scopus. 77 studies (88 percent of 88 studies) were accepted for the synthesis of evidence after a detailed assessment of titles, abstracts, and full text, as well as exclusion of duplicates. Figure 1 describes the steps in identifying and selecting relevant studies.



**Figure 1. Relevant Literature Identification**

Studies were then grouped into two broad categories, which are empirical and non-empirical studies as classified by W. Chen and Hirschheim (2004). Empirical studies are studies relying on concrete evidence such as data or observations, acquired through quantitative, qualitative or mixed approach for the testing of theories, while non-empirical studies focusing on concepts development. Empirical studies were further classified into sub-categories, which are survey, case study, laboratory experiment, field experiment, and action research, as defined by W. Chen and Hirschheim (2004). A majority of the studies are consists of empirical studies utilising surveys as their research approach. Only one study (one percent of 77 studies) uses the case study research design, while two studies (three percent of 77 studies) are non-empirical studies applying descriptive or interpretive research approach as discussed by Galliers (1991). Discussion on findings of the SLR and its implications will be in the next section.

## Findings and Discussion

The detailed analysis of the 77 studies shows the most acknowledged factor is indeed satisfaction. Table 3 lists the factors that affect the intentions of tourists to a destination, fulfilling the objective of this paper. Initially, 45 factors were identified by a total of 77 studies. After a number of deliberation with other researchers, it was concise to 17 factors. Satisfaction is the most commonly investigated factor, followed by destination attraction, and loyalty, whereas factors such as psychological well-being, religious, and time are the least investigated factors.

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Total Studies</b>
Satisfaction	40
Destination Attraction	39
Loyalty	30
Image	30
Perceived Value	30
Experience	21
Tourist Emotion	16
Culture	14
Perceived Risk	9
Knowledge	8
Attitude	7
Motivation	7
Subjective Norm	4
Time	2
Perceived Behaviour Control	2
Psychological Well-Being	2
Religious	2

**Table 3. Factors Affecting Tourists' Intentions to a Destination**

Evidently, mapping the intentions of tourists to a destination is a multifaceted process. Based on literature review and according to the theoretical lens of disconfirmation theory, it is vital for

practitioners to treat the expectations of consumers in a delicate manner. Boosting consumers' expectations although has its benefits, the strategy is vulnerable to leading to tourists' dissatisfaction if their expectation are not met. Ekinçi and Sirakaya (2004)'s disconfirmation theory argues that "satisfaction is related to the size and direction of the disconfirmation experience that occurs as a result of comparing service performance against expectations". Toning down consumers' expectations, on the other hand, leaves room for practitioners to impress tourists during their visit to a destination and increases their satisfaction.

Tourists' visiting intentions towards a destination is also depending on their characteristics as well. The image of a destination plays a significant role in influencing tourists in the anticipation phase, especially amongst tourists who have no prior visitation experience of the destination. They evaluate the destination in their decision-making process based on their judgements of sources such as the word-of-mouth of their relatives and friends, the electronic word-of-mouth in the form of tourists' reviews on travel review sites such as TripAdvisor, and narratives or stories that are written by practitioners in promoting their tourism destinations. In opposition, the image of the destination, satisfaction, as well as loyalty, commitment and attachment to the destination are influential in determining the revisit intention of tourists with prior visitation experience of the destination or repeat tourists.

In addition, focusing on the behavioural intentions of tourists specifically their revisit and recommending intentions as defined in a number of literature (Chen et al. 2011; Craggs and Schofield 2011; Eusébio and Vieira 2013; Giraldi and Cesareo 2014; Kozak and Duman 2012; Lee et al. 2012; Moutinho et al. 2012; Osti et al. 2012; Prayag and Jankee 2013), regardless of whether they are first-time visitors or repeat visitors, they are affected by a myriad of factors from the aspects of both destination and tourist, such as depicted in Table 4. From the destination aspect, factors such as attractions at the destination, and image of the destination significantly affects tourists' behavioural intentions. Attractions at a destination includes amenity, food, entertainment, hospitality, physiography, climate, infrastructure and celebrities endorsing the destination. The importance of the types of attractions at a destination is dependent on the nature and type of tourism of the destination. In food tourism, amenity and food are two attractions having the most significant impact, while physiography or natural attractions is most significant in island tourism, ecotourism, as well as sports tourism. For sports tourism, amenity such as the availability of recreational facilities is also highly influential. Meanwhile, in media-induced tourism, tourists' attachment towards a celebrity act as a catalyst for their behavioural intentions towards the destination.

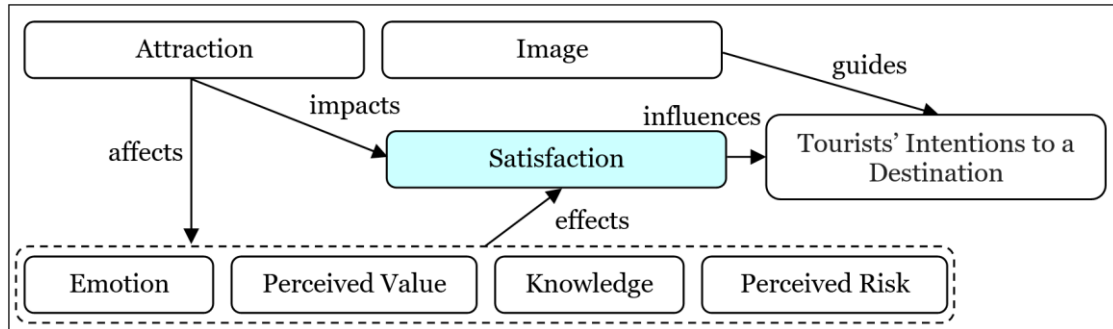
The image of a destination guides tourists to either revisit or recommend a destination. For first-time tourists especially, destination image is a significant component in their decision-making process of choosing a vacation destination that they deemed attractive. The formation of the destination image is through narratives, which are inclusive of written articles on a destination's attractions in brochures, posters, tourism websites, as well as tourists' reviews in blogs and forums. The intentions of tourists to a destination intensifies upon reading narratives that they are able to identify strongly with, or upon discovery of images of the destination from multiple different sources that is in congruence with one another. The image of a destination is also affected by the perception of prospective tourists toward immigrants and products originating from the destination. In a study by Moufakkir (2013), the image of Morocco is dependent on the perception of Moroccans living in Netherland by natives.

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Tourist</b>
Attraction Image	Satisfaction Emotion Knowledge Perceived Value Perceived Risk

**Table 4. Components of Metamodel**

From the aspect of tourist, factors such as tourists' satisfaction, emotion and knowledge, as well as perceptions of value and risk towards a destination has a significant influence on their behavioural intentions towards the destination. Tourists' decision-making process when selecting a vacation destination is based on the evaluations of whether they are satisfied with their prior visitation experience at the destination, whether they are emotionally connected or attached to the destination, and their knowledge of the destination itself. An increased knowledge of the destination such as on the way of life, culture and language of the community at the destination increases tourists' satisfaction

when travelling to the destination. They are able to relate more closely to and be more synchronised with the destination that they are visiting. Apart from that, their judgements are also affected by their perception of value at the destination. Destinations that are good value for money and able to provide them with authentic and beneficial experience increases their behavioural intentions towards the destination. However, destinations that they deemed as risky due to events of terrorism, crime and violence, social and political turmoil, natural disasters, or hazardous to their health due to disease outbreak, or harmful weather such as smog in Beijing (Li et al. 2016) would diminish their behavioural intentions towards the destination. Nevertheless, for tourists that are high novelty seekers and risk takers, destinations that provide a risk-laden experience increases their recommending intention towards the destination, albeit their revisit intention to the destination in the short term would be close to nil as they are very unlikely to settle on visiting the same place repeatedly. Instead, they would continuously seek new destinations to explore and experience. All these lead to the construction of a metamodel for tourists' intentions as depicted in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. A Metamodel for Tourists' Intentions**

From the metamodel, it can be concluded that factors from both the destination and tourist aspects have a significant influence on tourists' behavioural intentions to a destination. Not only that, factors from the aspect of destination also affect those of that of tourist. The attractions at a destination such as food instil tourists with a sense of attachment and emotional connection to the destination, especially upon dining on local food that are a reflection of the cultural background of the destination's community. Destinations with favourable amenity and hospitality also increases tourists' satisfaction when visiting the destination.

## **Conclusion**

Discovering the intentions of tourists to a destination is essential in equipping practitioners with the knowledge on the demands of consumers and what is expected of a tourism destination, depending on the nature and type of tourism of the destination, and the characteristic of tourists that are targeted to visit the destination. The metamodel explains the importance of satisfaction in influencing the behavioural intentions of tourists towards a destination. The intensity of emotions felt by tourists when visiting a destination regardless of whether it is positive or negative would leave an imprint of the destination in their mind and heart, which plays a part in determining their satisfaction towards their experience at the destination. Likewise, tourists' value and risk perceptions of a destination poses an effect on their satisfaction level. Their knowledge of the destination also further amplifies their level of satisfaction as they are inclined to be more appreciative of the attractions at the destination. A destination's attractions affects tourists' satisfaction directly and indirectly through factors from the aspect of tourist. Meanwhile, image guides tourists in their decision-making process of choosing their vacation destination, especially for first-time travellers. As for repeat visitors, their judgements are affected by their prior visitation experience through evaluations from the cognitive and affective aspect of the destination.

Referring to the discovery of Tussyadiah et al. (2011), in formulating customisable tourism destinations' marketing strategies, the metamodel is adequate to serve as a guideline for practitioners. Instead of applying a one-model-fits-all marketing strategy, introduce customisation in advertising tourism destinations. Take into account tourists' satisfaction and the factors affecting the degree of satisfaction in customising tourism destinations' marketing strategies. Introduce diversity in characters that are identified as the target market of the tourism destinations when writing narratives for marketing purposes. Also, include attractions of the destination that are identified to significantly influence tourists of particular characteristics to visit and recommend the destination in narratives. By doing so, intended audience of varying preferences and backgrounds would be able to identify with



and becoming attracted to the attractions included in the narratives resulting a positive visit intention to the destination. Apart from that, the metamodel is able to assist practitioners in their decision-making process in managing their tourism destinations. Factors such as the attractions at a destination that are deemed attractive and significant in influencing the target tourists of particular characteristics that were identified are able to guide practitioners when selecting attractions that need to be introduced, upgraded, or removed from the destination.

In time to come, this study intends to discover the factors affecting tourists' intentions to a destination from the perspective of data mining. As gaps found indicate that tourists' behavioural intentions to a destination were typically either the result of surveys or text mining of reviews, this study intends to embark on the task of converging results from the perspective of both content analysis and data mining, in addressing these gaps. Additionally, to investigate whether model developed based on content analysis differ or similar with, or complement model discovered upon mining of data. Thus, providing a comprehensive combined view from the perspective of both content analysis and data mining, assisting practitioners in formulating marketing strategies that are attractive to tourists of varying characteristics.

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