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Perceived Destination Competitiveness of Langkawi Island, Malaysia

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Abstract

Repeat visitors and holidays at a destination and are a stable market for a destination.   For a destination to be the competitiveness of the tourism destination is compatible shows, attract visitors, increase tourism spending and provide them with a memorable experience satisfaction. However, despite the rapid development in this industry, the Perceived destination competitiveness, tourist satisfaction, tourism images and travel revisit intentions of tourists to Langkawi have yet to be discovered for future strategic development of Langkawi. To bridge the gap, this opportunity based study investigates the relationship between perceived destination competitiveness tourist satisfaction, and travel revisits intention and its relationships are hypothesised to be mediated by the threefold tourist images that are operationalised by tourist satisfaction, commitment and loyalty. This study develops these ideas by generating responses to build an assessment of the relative importance and show the tourist revisit intentions to Langkawi.

Keywords: Perceived destination competitiveness; tourist satisfaction; tourism image; travel revisit intentions

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1. Introduction

Tourism destination around the world is competing each other's owing to increasing global mobility of the tourists. Every tourism destination is trying hard to be more competitive. Meng (2006) noted that in the current competitive tourism market, competitiveness has increasingly be seen as a critical influence on the performance of tourism destinations. He further argued destination competitiveness has become a key issue and creates increasingly challenging in tourism market. Ritchie & Crouch, (2003); Jones & Haven-Tang (2005) postulated that a successful tourism destination must embrace an integrated approach towards the many components of the tourism system. However, the tourism industry players like the government, tourism enterprises, local communities and tourist itself may have very different approaches to destination competitiveness.

Many studies have indicated that tourists and their needs stand as the ultimate driving force which influences competition and competitiveness in the tourism destination. Today, destinations eventually compete on the quality of tourism experience offered to visitors. In this note, competitiveness in tourism denote a destination is compatible, attract visitors, increase tourism expenditure and providing them with satisfying memorable experiences. It is also enhancing the well-being of destination resident's and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generation (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003).

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the year 2005 saw more than 800 million international tourist arrival, and the tourism receipts were of US$ 682 billion. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) for 2006 forecasts that travel and tourism will generate 234 million direct and indirect jobs worldwide, accounting for 8.7% of the global employment, and it will contribute up to 10.3% of the world gdp. According to the same estimate, the global travel and tourism activity is expected to increase by 4.7% between 2007 and 2016. And also there are links between the tourist and destination such as the transportations, information availability, and marketing components to make buying decision easier.

Another big market in the world is China. Therefore, China will still be the largest source market for international tourism, easily surpassing 110 million border crossings, further supported by the Chinese government exploiting the Soft Power policy opportunities coming with it. The push factors pollution and overcrowding will continue to encourage Chinese tourists to make the switch from domestic to outbound traveller, even though it is to be hoped that pollution levels will not go on to rise as dramatically as in 2013.

With all the drastic changes some effects on the nature of the travel industry (Holjevac, 2003). AS the demand for tourism has increased, and many new tourist destinations have emerged, the competition in the tourism sector has intensified (Crouch. G.I 2011; Getz & Brown, 2006). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) agreed that tourism can be an assistance to the country's economy growth. Tourism is a system combining of tourism goods and services.

2. Literature review

2.1. Perceived destination competitiveness

Destination competitiveness in the tourism industry is a fragmented industry comprised of various elements such as attraction, activities, services and infrastructures, which build up the total appeals of the natural and man-made characteristic of the place. Tourism competitiveness is an ability of destination to meet visitor needs on various aspects of the tourism experience (Ritchie, Crouch, 2003) which means that competitive position of a destination on the tourism market, depending on which and how well the target resources are managed.

The most detailed work on overall tourism competitiveness was undertaken by Crouch and Ritchie (1999, 2003). They contended that to be competitive, a destination development of tourism must be sustained not just economically, ecologically but socially, culturally and politically. They focus on long-term economic prosperity as the yardstick by which destinations can be assessed competitively. Thus, the most competitive destination is that which most actually creates sustainable well-being for its tourists and residents.

Adapted part of the integrated model of destination competitiveness which comprises of inherited resources, created resources, supporting factors and resources by Tanja Armenski, Doris O, Gomeselj, Branislay Djurdjev, Nevena Curcic, Alexandra Dragin (2012) as the Determinants of Perceived Destination Competitiveness as stated in

this paper. It is interesting to see that both research studies (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003; Dwyer et al., 2004) revealed similar competitiveness factors. The only difference is the descriptive terms which are used by these researchers and other studies such as those carried out by Kozak & Rimmington (1999); Wilde & Cox (2008). In addition to this, scholars also identified a destination's resources as universally important factors in determining its competitiveness (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Dwyer et al., 2004; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Wilde & Cox, 2008; Buhalis, 2000; Hassan, 2000; Mihalic, 2000 and Kozak et al., 1999).

2.2. Inherited resources

Inherited Resources include both natural and cultural elements. Inherited Resources features such as historic sites, heritage, and traditional art. Tourism cleanliness, unspoiled nature and national parks, attractiveness of the climate.

2.3. Created resources

Factors such as nightlife & entertainment, special events/festivals, food services facilities, health resort and spa, water based activities and great shopping experience, visitor accessibility to natural areas, accommodation, tourism guidance and information, airport efficiency/quality, theme parks and adventure activities.

2.4. Supporting factors

Some supporting factors including the hospitality of residents towards tourists, communication and trust between tourist and residents, telecommunication system for tourists, financial institution, destination link with primary origin market, quality of tourism sector, health/medical facilities to serve tourists, efficiency of custom/immigration, accessibility of destination and visa requirement   are considered as the most attractive feature of any destination that is competitive

2.5. Tourism images

There three primary determinants on tourism images such as a destination image, country image, and hotel image.

2.6. Destination image

Destination image is in line with the impressions or perception of an area which can either be attribute-based or the whole components of the picture of both (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003).

2.7. Country image

Country image is defined as the overall perception of tourist from a particular country, based on their perceptions of the country's production and marketing strengths and weaknesses (Roth & Romeo, 1992). This present study the term is somewhat used with particular reference to the effect of country image on products related to the tourism industry.

2.8. Hotel image

Hotel image in this study is a product's image formed from the physical environment, contact personnel, quality of service, corporate identity, and accessibility as mentioned in this paper and which will be further explained

2.9. Tourist satisfaction

Due to tourist responses three primary determinants are explicitly deals with the level of consumer engagement in the consumption process thus represents a better indicator which may influence the tourists' perception of tourism experience and destination competitiveness (Gnoth J.,1997). It is assumed that a traveler with high involvement level with the travel and tourist activities would have different perceptions of the tourism experience, and the destination compared to the traveler whose involvement is low. (Dwyer et al., 2004; Dwyer & Kim, 2003)

2.10. Travel revisit intentions

There are two main consequences of value perceptions, that is: 1) intentions to repurchase and 2) recommending behaviors and both the consequences have been of concern for cost studies. Invariably, favourable behavioural intentions come by way of saying positive things about the service and recommending the service to others (Boulding, Kalra, Staelin, & Zeithaml, 1993; Zeithaml et al., 1996), paying price premiums to the company and expressing cognitive loyalty to the organisation (Chi & Qu, 2007; Oliver, 1997).

The Definition of Behavioural Intention customarily, intention is conceived as a position of a consumer who deliberates about purchasing a product or brand during an anticipated time frame (Berkman & Gilson, 1986). An earlier study by Howard & Sheth (1969) assert that intention is a rendering of a consumer's attitude, confidence, and anticipation about a particular purchase plan that inhibits the effect of attitude and trust. Intention is understood as a cognitive state that reflects the consumer's plan to buy units of a particular product or brand in some specified time period.

3. Langkawi Island as tourist destination

Many scholars claim that competitive destination is one which brings about the greatest success not only in developing a particular destination but increase in tourists' arrival or receipt, market share and that is, the largest well-being for its residents on a sustainable basis (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003).

As Langkawi Island as the case study area of this survey, in line with this notion, Malaysia government through Ministry of Tourism is continually proactive in promoting the nation by using all the available tourism resources in making this country as competitive destination. Attractions like shopping with duty-free prices, conventional tourism like diving, flora, fauna, cultural, heritage and now step- up promotion for gastronomic, eco-business tourism, sports, MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Convention and Exhibition) tourism and many others while committed in preserving Mother Earth for future generations well-being are some of the initiatives undertaking. Refer Figure 1 and Figure 1.1 for the map of Langkawi

In 2010, tourism has been allocated around RM 899 million (US$ 267.4 million) and this funding has increased the revenue for local in capitalizing the economy. 36 million of tourists' arrival and 168 billion in revenue are set by the government from tourism in line with the 2020 Vision (MTPB, 2012)

The vision aimed by LADA's Blue Print 2012, of becoming nothing less than a Global Top 10 island and Eco-Adventure Destination 2015. An island paradise where visitors can enjoy pristine beaches secluded islands and nature sanctuaries filled with exotic wildlife, tropical plants and rock formation as old as the Earth. One with high baseline standards and a handful of truly world-class attraction and unique experience example the Live Malay Village as it was 100 year ago at Makam Mahsuri and trace history of the Earth on a geology discovery. Also with exemplary standards and practices for the protecting and regeneration of the environment and culture.

In making competitive destinations, some of the famous islands are also included. Langkawi besides Penang, Tioman since the inclusion of it as a prospective competitive tourist destination in 1975 is one of the popular destinations aggressively developed. It was first declared as a tax-free island to draw more visitors to shop and spend besides appreciating the exotic beauty of the island.

The rapid investments by the federal government and the private sector can still be seen in making Langkawi at least compatible with Phuket and Bali Island. Not only that, in positioning Langkawi as an international tourist destination the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) as the local government agency was formed.

This study aims to provide answers to research setting, therefore, to acquire the reliable answer is crucial to set up a comprehensive set of questionnaire. This study expect to assess knowledge, attitude and practice among culinary intern who had done culinary internship. This study expect to tackle new dimension of preventive foodborne illness, which derived from people who have study in culinary field. Therefore, culinary intern are aimed to become practitioners who would responsible to improve FHS to new level.

4. Methodology

They found that the most prominent antecedent of revisit and the strongest indicator of satisfaction are perceived attractiveness. Revisit intention together with the word of mouth publicity, price sensitivity, spending behavior, and spending risk are the primary variables that contribute to a market development (Petrick, 2004). On the other hand, - seeking and destination satisfaction revisit intention (Jang & Feng, 2007).

The tourists will be satisfied with their travel experiences, and they will be willing to revisit and suggesting to others. Moreover, satisfaction has a direct affect towards destination loyalty (Alegre & Cladera, 2009). The adopted and proposed conceptual framework model as per Figure 1.

This study wants to be able to draw conclusions and plan to generalize. The population is will be 40 tourists were randomly distributed from second week of January 2015. Furthermore, the ratio of respondents to parameter should increase with a rate of 15 respondents for each parameter if the data have some violation of multivariate normality (Iannario & Piccolo, 2010). SPSS will be used, and the preliminary finding will be gathered and analyzed in this paper. The existing literature suggested that the measurement scale of Perceived Destination Competitiveness, perceived destination competitiveness will be measured using a seven-point Likert scale.

To gain the objectives of the study, an extensive review of the existing literature has been done and a theoretical and structural model is developed as in Figure 1 accordingly to examine the relationship between the Perceived destination competitiveness. To determine the casual relationship effect between tourists' perceived destination competitiveness and tourist's satisfaction in determining tourists' revisit intention. To identify the influence of tourists' perceived destination competitiveness on tourists' satisfaction. To investigate the moderating effect of tourism image on the relationship between tourists' perceived destination competitiveness and tourists' satisfaction thus creating revisit intention. To identify potential usage of tourism image in tourism organizations as promotional tools to help promote Langkawi Island as tourist's perceived destination competitiveness, increase tourists' satisfaction and generate revisit intention.
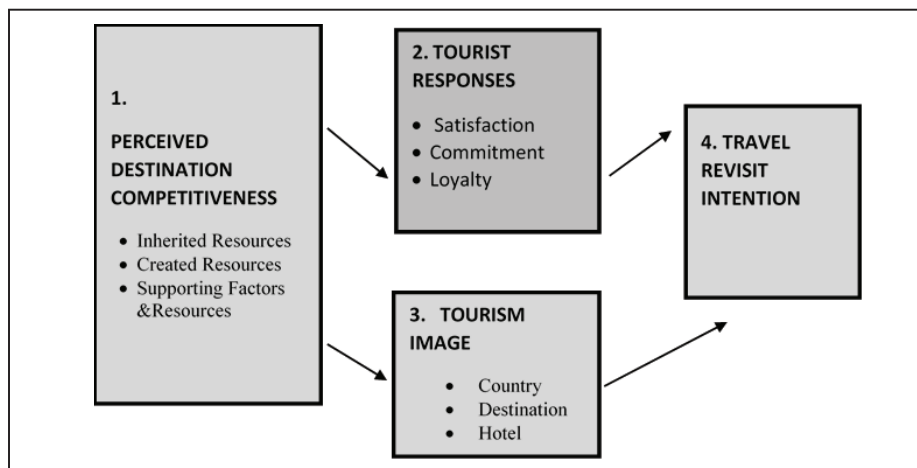

Fig. 1. Conceptual framework destination competitiveness model

(Sources: Adapted from Tanya Armenski, Doris O, Gomezelj, Branislav Djurdjev, Nevena Curcic, Aleksandra Dragin 2012)

4.1. Research questions

With these changes come effects on the nature of the travel industry (Holjevac, 2003). In particular, as demand for tourism has increased and new tourist destinations have emerged, the competition in the tourism sector has intensified (Crouch, G.I, 2011; Getz & Brown, 2006) The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) believes that tourism can help each country's economy growth. In a simple way, tourism is a system combining an origin and a destination. This feature has reflected by the nature of the production and consumption of tourism goods and services. Generally, the source or tourist refers to the demand and the side of tourism, whereas the destination represents the supply portion of the tourism.

Four research questions are addressed in this study which are related to the problem statement of this study.

* Does the Perceived destination competitiveness whose underlying dimensions which are inherited resources, Created resources, and Supporting factors have a positive relationship with the Tourism images which comprises of Destination images, Country images, and Hotel images?
* How do Tourism images affect   Tourist satisfaction, loyalty, and most importantly their   Behavioral intention to Langkawi Island?
* To what extent does the tourist Perceived destination competitiveness is able to create the Tourist revisit intentions?
* Lastly, how can LADA ensure that the Country image, Destination image, Hotel image are sustained to generate tourist responses which the tourist revisit intentions to revisit Langkawi Island in the future.

All hypotheses formulated are based on all literature that have been gathered. In short the hypotheses are as below:

* H1: There is   a significant relationship between all the underlying Perceived destination competitiveness determinants such as inherited resources, created resources and supporting factors and Tourism images' determinants country, destination, and hotel image.
* H2: There is a significant relationship between Perceived destination competitiveness and Tourist responses such as satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty.
* H3: There is a significant relationship between Tourist satisfaction and Tourism image
* H4: There is a significant relationship between Tourist satisfaction and Revisit intention
* H5: Tourism image moderates the relationship between Perceived destination competitiveness, Tourist satisfaction, and Revisit intention

5. Conclusion

It should be noted that the conceptualization of perceived customer value which was fine-tuned to align with the tourism context, provides deeper insight into the value-enhancing strategy for sustaining and expanding market growth and acts as a competitive advantage in this turbulent business environment. Practices that allow employees to serve customers more fully also enhance employee satisfaction in essence showing that employees do indeed care about the service quality they deliver to customers.

In this study, Perceived destination competitiveness that have three determinants has communicated to the research survey respondents as their responses during their leisure vacation, since it is easier for the general public to understand, and it is commonly believed that a vacation involves tourism activities related to a destination.

Therefore, for this study, the relationship between destination competitiveness and the tourism experience have a common variance has a positive influence on tourists' perceived destination competitiveness. The study utilizes factor analysis to discover the underlying dimensions of Perceived destination competitiveness determinants, and tourist satisfaction   to test the moderating effect of tourist image on the relationship between them. Therefore, their satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, motivation and productivity are the antecedents of customer loyalty and revisit intention. This confirms recent work on the "tourism images" economy that posits that clients look beyond the product itself, and even the help employees give when assessing a retailer (Hill, Self & Roche, 2002).

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