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Would you come back to visit Malaysia? Understanding tourists perceived risks towards revisit desire

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Abstract

Due to major contributions of the tourism industry towards the economy a country, it is important to ensure that Malaysia is able to continuously attract visitors to the country. This paper aims to look into the tourists perceived risk namely their perception on financial risk, physical risk, socio-psychological risk and time risk in Malaysia and their desire and intention to revisit Malaysia in the future. The results of this study have shown that the tourists who have visited Malaysia have intention to revisit the country despite their a slightly high perception of risks in Malaysia. Financial risk that has shown statistical significance influence towards the revisit desire. Such results may be useful for those in the industry to prepare in attracting tourists to visit Malaysia once the travel bans are lifted and international borders are re-open.

Keywords:

Tourist revisit desire, Perceived risk, Tourism, Malaysia

Introduction

Globally, tourism has been contributing to the gross domestic product (GDP) for many years being the third-largest export following fuels and chemicals. For some nations, tourism contributes over 20% of their GDP. Supporting one in ten jobs globally, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown significant impact towards the industry (UNWTO, 2020) .

Malaysia has continually promoting tourism with continuous Visit Malaysia Year Campaign or more commonly known amongst Malaysian as "Tahun Melawat Malaysia". The campaign first launched in 1990 with the theme "To know Malaysia is to love Malaysia" welcomed 7.4 million tourists arrivals. Two decades later, Malaysia have been greeting about 20 million tourists annually (Malaysia, 2020b). With the "Visit Truly Asia Malaysia 2020" campaign targeted 30 million visitors with RM100 billion tourist receipts (Hirschmann, 2020). This would be a significant increase from 2019's numbers of about RM86.1 billion receipts and 26.1 million arrivals (Malaysia, 2019).

Unfortunately, when the coronavirus hit the world in late 2019 and worsen throughout 2020, the tourism industry hit hard. In the first half of 2020, only about 4 million tourists arrivals were reported a significant decrease of about 68% from the first half of 2019. The negative growth is mainly attributed to the closure of all international borders in line with the declaration of the pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (Malaysia, 2020a).

In hopes to revive the industry in the future, several aids from the government were introduced including the Prihatin stimulus package and the Economy Recovery Plan which provided up to RM1 billion towards aiding the tourism industry and tourism related SMEs (TheEdge, 2020).

For now, most endeavours are targeted towards reviving the local tourism industry as travel bans are still in place. However, key players of the industry are optimistic that the international tourism would restart once the borders are re-open provided more efforts are concentrated in helping the industry (Som & Harun, 2020).

Consequently objective of this paper to study the behaviour of those who have visited Malaysia in understanding their perception on risks in Malaysia and their desire to visit Malaysia again in the future alongside the relationship between the two.

Literature Review

Many studies have looked into the travel behaviour of tourists in order to understand what motivates them to travel and thus assisting in marketing strategies of industry players to pull tourists to visit their respective countries (Bartosiewicz & Pieleciak, 2019; DeVos, 2019; McKercher & Yankholmes, 2018; Zulfakar & Abdul Rahim, 2019). On top of understanding general tourist behaviours, studies in the past have also looked into the perception of travellers towards the countries they have visited with hope of presence of any form of loyalty which might lead to revisit desire (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2018).

The concept of revisit desire has been recognised as important by several researchers. Tourists who revisit are imperative for revenue generation (Abdullah & Lui, 2018; Tun & Athapol, 2016) as returning visitors shows more loyalty and tend to have a longer stay compared to first-timer visitors (Mohd Wahid et al., 2016). Understanding reasons why tourist revisit a country is vital as part of pull marketing technique and it has been found that if a destination can be trusted by a tourist, the intention to return is significantly higher (Pujiastutia et al., 2020). Analysing tourist revisit desires would have substantial contribution towards the industry for business owners and marketers together with the government authorities to attract not only first-time visitors but also any returning tourists (Tun & Athapol, 2016).

In understanding the tourist revisit desire, many dimensions of motivations can be looked at and knowing how tourist experiences and satisfaction influences revisit intention (Dayour & Adongo, 2015; Julaimi et al., 2016; Seetanah et al., 2018). Based from perception of medical tourists, other than the image of the destination, tourists tend to also consider the condition of the place based on their perception towards safety, accessibility as well as price and expenses (Cham et al., 2020).

One of the areas that have triggered many research on motivation for revisit intentions are the perceived risk of tourists which is part of the factors that have relationships with revisit desire (Viet et al., 2020). Such studies may have started decades ago through the identification of seven types of risks which are equipment risk, financial risk, physical risk, social risk, satisfaction risk and time risk (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992). Many other studies

have explored such risks and the effects to revisit intention (Artuğer, 2015; Viet et al., 2020; Çetinsöz & Ege, 2013).

One element of the perceived risks is financial risk. Financial risk can be defined as the possibility of cash spent not giving the same value in return (Verma, 2020). Tourists expenses may include various areas of spending such as accommodation, restaurants and transportations (Park et al., 2019). Financial matters and travelling expenditures are always seen as significant factors influencing behaviours of travellers, especially among younger travellers (Zulfakar & Abdul Rahim, 2019).

Physical risk refers to the possibility of facing physical hazards, injury, or sickness on a trip (WHO, 2010). Tourist are concern of their safety and security when visiting another location (Yang et al., 2015). Furthermore, physical risks also relates to exposure of tourists towards any criminal activities, issues due to political instability such as riots or war or terrorism attacks as well as any other issues that could lead affect their health or physical well-being while travelling (Hasan et al., 2017)

Socio-psychological relates to how one can be influenced by a group of people especially in their social circle (Šimková, 2014). It also is associated to an individual's personality or self-image (Long, 2016) as well as on how others might think of them (Deng & Ritchie, 2018). An individual consciously or unconsciously reasons that a holiday contains risk when it produces inner stress causing psychological tension (Deng & Ritchie, 2018). Such risk includes stress of the different circumstances, such as local food and beverage disappointment, unavailability of well-suited accommodation frustration, and vacation trip sudden cancellation that leads to uncomfortable situations during travelling (Mitchell & Vassos, 2008; Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992; Stone & Mason, 1995).

Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992) defined time risk as any possibility that a trip will consume more time than expected in relation to activities and services not being performed or received on time. It is also seen as any too much time spent or time waste on a vacation trip (Qi & Gibson, 2009; Waite, 2009).

The theoretical framework for this study as per Figure 1 is adapted from Artuğer, 2015 as this study aims to understand the influences of perceived risk towards tourists revisit intention to Malaysia.

The variables chosen for this study, namely financial risk, physical risk, socio-psychological risk and time risk may reduce the intention of tourists to return back to Malaysia hence decreasing their revisit desire.

The financial risk was found to have a negative relationship toward revisit desire in a study (Casidy & Walter, 2016). High-end and high costs trips may lead to tourist feeling that they are on an unworthy holiday (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992) while unexpected events may also lead to increase in costs and rise in financial risk (Hsu & Lin, 2005).

H1: There is significant negative relationship between financial risk and revisit desire.

The physical risk that the tourists perceived during their vacation can significantly influence their subjective perception of the impression of the place (Hsu & Lin, 2005). The higher the physical risks, the less desire to revisit the place as visitors are concerned about their safety and to avoid cases of accidents, kidnapping, robberies or terrorism (Sirakaya-Turk et al., 1997). Tourists would more prefer to have a safe trip if they experienced physical risk before because they are more concerned about their safety and security (Lepp & Gibson, 2008).

H2: There is significant negative relationship between physical risk and revisit desire.

Previous studies have shown that individuals prefer destinations whose psychological characteristics matched with their psychological characteristics (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007; Ekinici et al., 2013; Zeugner-Roth & Žabkar, 2015). Socio-psychological risk exists when tourists believe that the tourist destination is unmatched with their self-perception and how the people around them react towards the place selected for holiday leading to a lower revisit desire with the existence of higher perceived risk (Yin & Jahari, 2014).

H3: There is significant negative relationship between socio-psychological risk and revisit desire.

Tourists who have a perception that travelling will be a waste of time will lead to having negatively minded towards the place which has a direct impact on their desire to revisit the place (Artuğer, 2015). Time risk has been seen as a critical motivation towards the satisfaction one feels about their holiday which may influence their revisit intention (Deng & Ritchie, 2018).

H4: There is significant negative relationship between time risk and revisit desire.

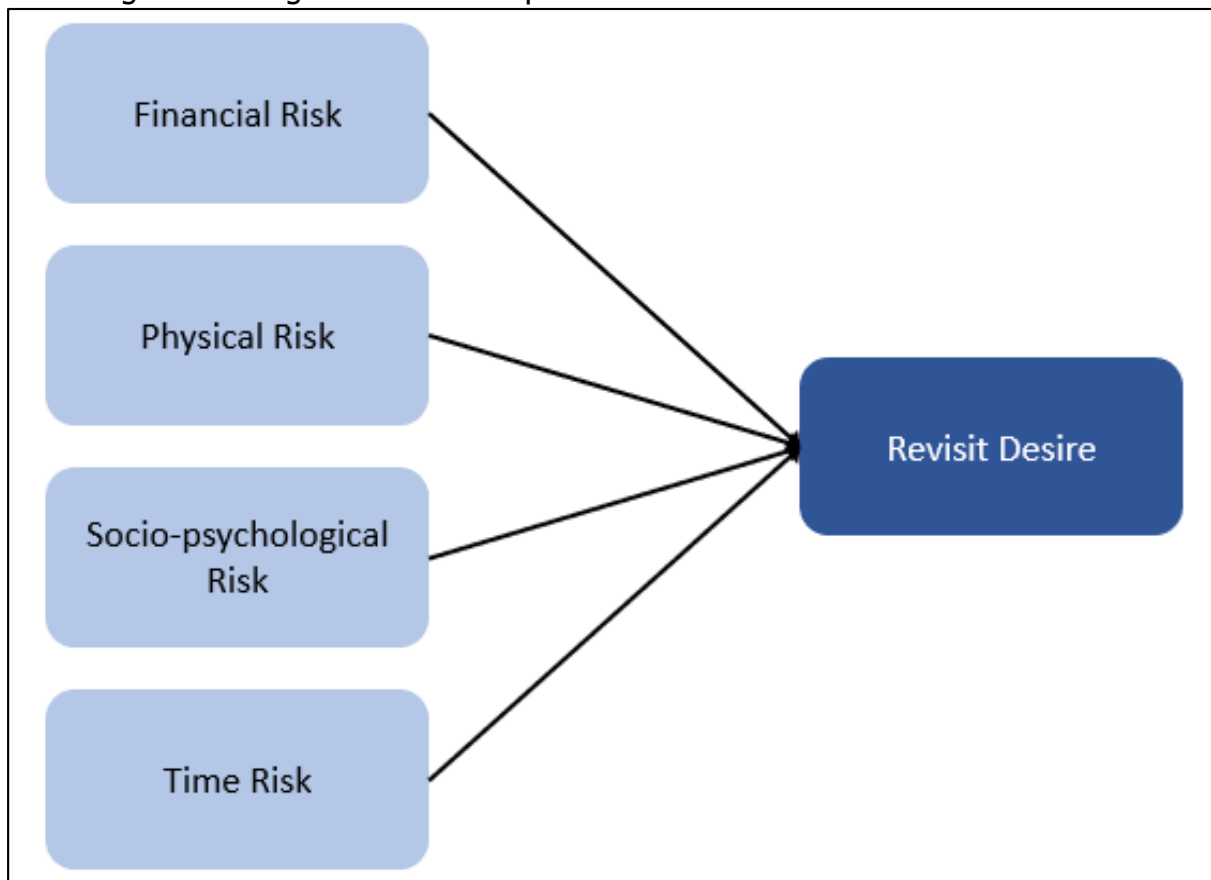


Figure 1. Framework summary of the relationship between the perceived risks and revisit desire.

Research Methods

This study was conducted through acquiring primary data collected from self-administered questionnaires. Responses were obtained from foreign tourists who have visited Mal. As the paper aims to understanding the impact of their perceived risk towards revisit desire, hence, respondents are among those who have visited Malaysia at least once. Despite a population of 26.1 million visitors in 2019, a small sample size is used as parametric

analysis and random sampling techniques are applied in this study, justifying a valid sample size of between 30 to 500 is a necessary sample size (Delice, 2010).

The questionnaire contains six sections beginning with Section A for demographic profile of respondents to obtain data on gender, age, education level, employment and annual income. Respondents were also asked questions on the visit to Malaysia, namely, the time of their visit as well as the purpose for the visit. Subsequently, Section B contains questions for financial risk in relation to the expenses incurred during their trip to Malaysia (Artuğer, 2015; Han, 2005; Ryu, 2010); Section C for physical risk on the safety concerns of the tourists (Mat Som et al., 2015); Section D on socio-psychological risk involving questions in regards to their personality and expectations (Artuğer, 2015; Carroll et al., 2014; Han, 2005); Section E for time risk to obtain information on their perception on the time spent while visiting Malaysia (Artuğer, 2015; Carroll et al., 2014) and ends with Section F on revisit desire to understand the intention to revisit Malaysia in the future (Lim et al., 2015). Five-point Likert scale was used to show the respondents indication of their agreement or disagreement towards each statement.

Results and Discussion

A total of 207 responses were collected. From the responses, 120 were male (58%) and 87 were female (42%) with a majority of the respondents originating from Asia. There are however representative from all other continents namely Austria and Oceania; Europe; North and Central America as well as South America despite the small number of respondents. The age distribution of the respondents was mainly between the age of 21 to 50 years old with 29.9% of the age 21 to 30 years old, 31.9% are from 31 to 40 years old and 24.6% are 41 to 50 years of age.

From the respondents, 85% of them currently working with majority earning annual income below USD25,000 or about RM100,000. About 58% of respondents have visited Malaysia once and amongst them, about 38% visited Malaysia in between 2016 to 2017. There are 25 respondents (12%) who have visited Malaysia more than three times.

Most of the respondents for this study visited Malaysia for vacation and leisure (35.8%) or to visit friends and families (36.3%) while 27% of them came to Malaysia for work purposes and business trips. 2 of the respondents (1%) visited Malaysia for their studies and through school exchanged programme.

The demographic distribution of the respondents is as per Table 1 below. The mean distribution of the four independent variables namely: financial risk (FR); physical risk (PR); socio-psychological risk (SR) and time risk (TR) together with the dependent variable, revisit desire (RD) is shown in Table 2. The Cronbach alpha of each variable showed a good value indicating that the items selected to analyse the variables are reliable.

Based on the means of each variables, it can be concluded that for PR, SR and TR is how a slightly higher than the neutral point of 3 indicating respondents on average have the perception that there are some amount of physical risk, socio-psychological risk and time risk while visiting Malaysia. The mean of FR showed a low amount indicating that perception of low risk in financial relating matters for their trip to Malaysia. Despite the perception of high risk for the three variables, the revisit desire showed a high mean displaying high intention of the tourists to return to Malaysia.

Table 1. Tourists' demographic profile

Variables	Descriptions	Percentage
Gender	Male	58
	Female	42
Age	Below 20 years old	2.9
	21 – 30 years old	29
	31 – 40 years old	31.9
	41 – 50 years old	24.6
	51 – 60 years old	9.7
	61 years old and above	1.9
Continent	Asia	96.6
	Australia	1.4
	Europe	1
	North and Central America	0.5
	South America	0.5
Times visited Malaysia	Once	58
	Twice	30
	More than three times	12
Year of visit to Malaysia	Before 2010	12.8
	2011 – 2015	17.8
	2016 – 2017	28.1
	2018 – 2019	30
	2020	11.3
Purpose for visit	Vacation and leisure	35.8
	Visiting friends and/or family	36.3
	Business or work trips	27
	Study trips	1

Source : Developed for this research

Table 2. Mean distribution of variables

Variables	No of items	Mean	Cronbach alpha
FR	5	1.973	.838
PR	6	3.964	.859
SR	6	3.753	.911
TR	5	3.899	.887
RD	4	4.169	.792

Source : Developed for this research

In accordance with Table 3, the p-values based on both the Levene's Test and t-test comparing are 0.751 and 0.310 respectively are greater than the 0.05 suggesting that there are no significant differences of the revisit desire between the male and female respondents.

Table 3. t-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		f	Sig.	f	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Revisit Desire	Equal variances assumed	.101	.751	1.108	205	.310

Source : Developed for this research

Table 4. Person Correlation of FR, PR, SR and TR towards RD

Variables	r	Sig.
FR	-.562**	.000
PR	.207**	.003
SR	.442**	.000
TR	.366**	.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source : Developed for this research

The correlation of all four variables with the revisit desire is statistically significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed) as reported in Table 4 indicating the existence of correlation among the population. Financial risk has a negative relationship with revisit desire signalling that the higher the risk, the less likely tourists would return. while the other three variables showed a positive correlations with the dependent variable indicating that they are having revisit desire in spite of the perceived physical, socio-psychological and time risk they might face.

Table 5. Model Summary of Multiple Linear Regression

Model	R	R squared	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.589 ^a	.347	.334	.5037823

a. Predictors: (Constant), FR, PR, SR, TR

Source : Developed for this research

Table 6. ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27.190	4	6.798	26.783	.000 ^b
	Residual	51.267	202	.254		
	Total	78.457	206			

a. Dependent variable: RD

b. Predictors: (Constant), FR, PR, SR, TR

Source : Developed for this research

Table 6. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	2.615	.231		11.317	.000
	FR	.351	.057	.446	6.169	.000
	PR	-.149	.072	-.190	-2.058	.041
	SR	.157	.076	.260	2.079	.039
	TR	.036	.083	.055	.433	.665

a. Dependent variable: RD

Source : Developed for this research

From Table 5, it is shown that the adjusted R² of 0.334 indicating that the four independent variables explained 33.4% variation of the model. The variables are able to explain and predict revisit desire of tourists based on the p-value of 0.000 from the ANOVA test as per Table 6.

Additionally, in reference to Table 7, only the perception of financial risk has a significant relationship with the revisit desire supporting H1 while the physical risk (H2), socio-psychological risk (H3) and time risk (H4) are all rejected as there is no significant relationship with revisit desire.

In line with above mentioned, despite the high amount of perceived physical, socio-psychological risk and time risk, tourists still have the intention to visit Malaysia again in the future.

In accordance to the result above, financial risk has shown a significant relationship with revisit desire indicating that the lower the risk, the higher the revisit intention. This is correlated with several studies discussing the importance of financial matters and some found that expenditure on food and beverages being a priority for tourists (Zulfakar & Abdul Rahim, 2019). From the result, respondents agree with H1 and have a low financial risk perception on Malaysia hence the high revisit desire. This is similar to results from (Artuğer, 2015) reporting that financial risk is the most significant antecedents, consistent to the result with financial risk being the only significant variable.

The other three variables on the other hand, despite not being significant, showed a positive relationship with revisit desire. This indicates that in spite of the high amount of perceived risk, tourists still have a revisit intention towards Malaysia. This could be due to risk seekers travellers who have the opinion that taking risk during holiday seemed to be an act of being fun and are associated with sensation-seeking (Green & Singleton, 2006; Pizam et al., 2004).

It has been found before that if a traveller have higher travel motivations, the intention to visit or revisit is still high despite the existence of any perceived risk (Khan et al., 2019). Nonetheless, it is still vital for key players of tourism industry to still ensure that tourists perceived physical risk as well as time risks are reduced to avoid creating any fear and negative perception towards the country (Yin & Jahari, 2014).

Socio-psychological risk being insignificant is in relation with the study done by Artuğer (2015) that reports a low impact of such risk towards revisit intention as well as Qi et al (2009) showing a negative impact of the risk towards any tourist intention. Socio-psychological risk may have a strong connection towards image or perception of a country in terms of social environment and culture influences (Hasan et al., 2017). Malaysia has branded herself as "Malaysia Truly Asia" as part of the Visit Malaysia campaign which are indicating that we are a destination that best represents the Asian culture (Malaysia, 2020b). The culture that Malaysia has to offer can be an important attraction to get tourists to visit Malaysia despite having any fear towards adapting to the environment in Malaysia.

Conclusions

On top of understanding risks, players of the industry can look through other areas of interest to get to know travellers motivations and behaviour. Previous studies on destination image may be an interesting area for future researchers to continue on to see if the image of a country affects perceived risk which leads to their travel intentions (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2018; Cham et al., 2020). Nowadays, travel motivation are also influenced by

social media as an important platform for marketing activities (Zulfakar & Abdul Rahim, 2019).

With financial being a substantial factor, it should be a priority to those in the industry to ensure that financial risk is reduced to a minimum or avoided all together so ensure that tourists are willing to visit Malaysia. Travel agents may provide bundle packages to promote more attractions to tourists especially those under a tight budget. This is to ensure that financial risk is reduced in order to increase revisit desires of tourists to Malaysia all in hopes to be able to revive the tourism industry as part as ensuring the economy of the country are able to improve post COVID-19 pandemic.

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