

DO REVISIT MATTERS? A REVIEW ON TOURISM DESTINATION PERSPECTIVE AND TOURIST SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to explain the importance of travellers revisit to tourism destination especially by reviewing more than 60 leading tourism and hospitality journals and conferences. The literature review focusing on the three main areas of repeat travelers, revisit intention and tourist satisfaction. However, empirical studies on tourists' intention to revisit have emerged as a significant problem in the strategic marketing of destination over the past few decades. Destination management organizations have long recognized of the urgency to create holiday experience that keep tourists to revisit and recommend to others. Different satisfaction conceptualization studies have been made based on existing theoretical and empirical research in the fields of marketing and tourism to seek the primary determinant of revisit intention. In contrast, findings in many studies show it as a continuous issue. This conceptual paper attempts at evaluating recent empirical studies on satisfaction and revisit intention

KEYWORDS: *Revisit, Revisit intention, Tourist Satisfaction.*



Introduction

In the decade, the tourism industry is widely accepted as one of the major sources of economic growth. More and more destination countries are switching to activities of agriculture, mining and manufacturing and gearing them forward to become tourism attraction as a new economic generator benefiting from the multiplier effect provided by tourism industry (Cernat & Gourdon, 2012; Şafakli & Kutlay, 2016; Zaei & Zaei, 2013). This expansion has resulted in increasing competitive tourism destinations. On the other hand, **Existing literature have proven that many tourist destinations rely on repeat visitors because they represent a cost-effective and retaining valuable market segment** (Choo et al., 2016; Jang & Feng, 2007; Kozak, 2001; Li, Cai, Lehto, & Huang, 2010; Stylos, Vassiliadis, Bellou, & Andronikidis, 2016). Further, repeat visitors signify a stable source of tourism revenue, they also act as information channels linking the networks of friends, relatives and other potential travellers to a destination (Huang, 2006). Retaining the tourists will benefit tourism business in term of less promotional cost and marketing expenditure could be saved in attracting repeat visitors compared with the first time visitors (Guat, 2010; Mahadzirah et al., 2012). As such, the increasing number of revisit tourist will significantly increase revenue to the particular countries.

Meanwhile, empirical studies on tourist satisfaction has long been a focus among scholars in predicting tourist behavior. Literature in general agreed that satisfied tourists are loyal to the destinations visited and will return (Ahmad Puad, Badarneh, et al., 2011; Dmitrović et al., 2009; Lee, 2007; Wang et al., 2017) This greatly helps in sustaining the local tourism development as tourist destinations often rely on repeat tourist to save the ever-increasing marketing costs (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Ko and Chiu, 2008; Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010; Prayag, Hosany, & Odeh, 2013). In addition, information related to tourist satisfaction also represents the destination's ability to meet the tourists' needs (Battour et al., 2012; Choo et al., 2015; Ramseook et al., 2014). This assessment can help destination marketers to improve the quality of products and services that in turn guarantee tourists' satisfaction.

Method

The Importance of Revisit

Many tourism destinations tend to encourage repeat visitation as it is seen to benefit the countries from the economic perspective. For example, Oppermann (1999) highlighted the advantages of revisit to destination in the context of four marketing advantages: (a) less marketing costs to attract repeat tourists as compared to the first timers, (b) numbers of revisit is an indicator of tourist satisfaction, (c) the repeaters assumption as the most favourable of a particular destination, and (d) this group have the tendency to suggest the destination to others. For cost effectiveness, many tourism destinations tend to rely on repeaters as they spend less in retaining previous visitors compared to the first timers (Um et al., 2006).

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Less spending refers to the cost of promotional activities in attracting repeat visitors is less than new customers (Chang, 2013). As claimed by Ahmad Puad et al. (2011) that there would be 10% cut in cost and 2% increase in customer retention. Meanwhile, in business, Reichheld and Sasser (1990) emphasised that with the 5% customer retention, the companies will boost profits up to 100%. In other words, even a small decrease in percentage of customer retention cost, it is likely to increase profit earning. This situation will contribute to the cost effective (Jang & Feng, 2007) and significantly increase tourism destination revenue (Ahmad Puad et al., 2012). Furthermore, the repeaters will stay longer (Wong, King, & Wan, 2015) and are likely to give positive words by way of mouth by recommending to others (Phillips et al., 2013). The above view is supported by Jayaraman et al. (2010) who stated that repeat visitors are vital for increasing revenue of Malaysian tourism industry.

Given the importance of revisit in the tourism industry, scholars have acknowledged that this area needs to give great attention in tourism literature. For example, few studies concluded that revisit is an important factor of destination loyalty (Alegre & Cladera, 2013; Kim, 2010; Mohamad, Abdullah, Ali, & Yacob, 2013; Rahman, 2014). In addition, maintaining loyal customers is an essential contributor to the business success and continually benefits development of the countries (Gursoy et al., 2014).

Repeat Travellers

As the above discussion has revealed the importance of revisit to the tourism industry, this section will further discuss on repeat travellers. A number of studies have examined the differences between first-time and repeat travellers. For example, a study by Um et al. (2006) revealed the difference between first timers and repeaters in visiting a destination. First-timers' revisit intentions may have been influenced mainly by destination performance as a whole because of their initial stay. Meanwhile, the repeaters' actions of revisit are the result of the improvement made by the destination management. For instance, special events and acquisition of new attractions, and other marketing promotion strategies function as to recall their positive memory and disseminated information on new attractions. These efforts also contribute to the factors influencing their future behavioral specifically on the revisit intention (Um et al., 2006).

Meanwhile, Gitelson and Crompton (1984) found that repeat travellers are more likely to be seeking relaxation. This study also revealed that visitors return to a familiar destination at least for one of this five reasons: 1) reduced risk/are satisfied with a particular destination; 2) reduced risk/find the same kind of people; 3) have an emotional attachment to a particular destination; 4) further explore a destination, and 5) to show the destination to other people. Study by Fakeye and Crompton (1991) found that the repeat travellers to a particular destination will develop a more multifaceted and distinguished image of a destination as the destination image could have changed after the first visit or once they have spent time there. Repeat travellers are also likely to reconfirm previously formed images and familiarity with a

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destination. Familiarity may contribute to the reason for travellers not to look for information on other destinations for their next trip (Kozak, 2001; Li et al., 2010; Um et al., 2006).

Revisit Intention

The understanding of tourist travel behavior and the prediction of their revisit intention is one of the focus in tourism studies (Campo-Martinez et al., 2010; Jang & Feng, 2007; Kozak, 2001; Li et al., 2010; Stylos et al., 2016; Um et al., 2006; Yuksel, 2000). These studies indicate that explaining and predicting human behavior form the primary purpose of tourist behavior studies. However, the tourist's needs and wants are varied and continuously change in different aspects making the task difficult and complex (Chang, 2013). Meanwhile, the clear view of relationship between future behavioral and its factors will help tourism players to develop an appropriate image and marketing strategies to make the best use of their existing resources (Chang, 2013; Chen & Chen, 2010; Kozak, 2001; Um et al., 2006). In this sense, previous researchers have examined factors influencing tourist behavior towards a repeat visitation by examining major factors of revisit intention.

Currently, exploring tourist behavioral intention is one of the main focus in engaging various types of tourism (Assaker & Hallak, 2012; Chang, 2013; Hosany & Witham, 2009; Kim et al., 2015; Shen, 2014; White, 2014). Behavioral intention is defined as the possibility for the individual to act (Ajzen, 1991), to involve in a particular behavior (Feldman & Lynch, 1988), the projection of a brand, consumers will buy (Chang, 2013) and considered to be the best predictor of human behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Conner & Armitage, 1998; Hong et al., 2009). In other words, having a better predictive technique and explanation of tourists' intention could help in understanding their travel behavior (Ajzen, 2006). The revisit intention concept has been viewed as the main factor highly associated with actual revisit travel behavior or can be seen as an expectation of individual's future revisit travel behavior. Generally, studies on revisit intention involve empirically explored variables that influence tourists' intention to revisit and tourist satisfaction is found one of the most significant variables of tourist intention to revisit particular tourism destination.

Tourist Satisfaction

Since more than a decade, tourist satisfaction has been established as a key term in tourism research, as it results in positive behaviours and a better understanding of tourist behaviour, thus providing assistance to managers in the tourism industry (Lee, 2007; Dmitrović et al., 2009; Ahmad Puad et al., 2011; Wang, Yang, Han, & Shi, 2017). Specifically, tourist satisfaction could critically ensure the success of a marketed destination (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Ko and Chiu, 2008; Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010; Prayag et al., 2013) because it is linked directly to destination choice, product/service consumption, and repeat visits (Chou, 2013; Lee, 2007). In addition, information related to tourist satisfaction is crucial for interpreting whether a destination fulfils the tourists' needs, which may help destination marketers improve the

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quality of products and services that interest particular tourist segments (Battour et al., 2012; Choo et al., 2015; Ramseook et al., 2014).

From the tourism business perspective, the main aim of tourism players is to put their efforts in measuring and upgrading tourist satisfaction level to ensure increased visitation rates and returns on investment (Flambard-Ruau, 2005; Oppermann, 1999). Tourism managers are encouraged to further examine factors contributing to tourist satisfaction and future revisitation, as these factors are a requirement for maintaining competitiveness (Hosany & Witham, 2009; Kim et al., 2015). Undoubtedly, satisfaction and revisitation have constantly been associated with business success. Given the importance of tourist satisfaction theoretically in revisit studies and practically in determining the success of a tourism destination, it is crucial to attain all information about tourist satisfaction. Hence, the present study is expected to not only provide such information regarding the factors of IMT satisfaction but also presents the mediating role of tourist satisfaction on revisit intention, which will assist tourism players to become more competitive globally.

Satisfaction refers to the degree to which an individual believes that experience results in a positive emotional state (Rust & Oliver, 1994). Later, Kozak (2001) argued that tourist satisfaction or dissatisfaction could be considered as a form of performance measurement and as a useful source to assess a destination's competitive advantage. Others defined satisfaction as the customer's judgment of whether or not a certain product or service has fulfilled their needs (Neal et al., 1999; Oliver, 1997). Satisfaction is also an outcome of the subjective assessment of whether or not the selected alternative reaches or goes above expectations (Jang & Feng, 2007; Um et al., 2006). Satisfaction occurs when customers obtain more value than the value that they really spent in terms of price, time, and effort (Assaker & Hallak, 2012). Besides, scholars tend to relate satisfaction with cognitive and affective responses related to consumption experiences (Dolnicar et al., 2013; Velazquez et al., 2011). For example, people tend to compare the service given by hoteliers via star ratings and they will only be satisfied when the performance of a service provider achieves that stated standard (Velazquez et al., 2011).

In connection to peoples' behavioural intention, some works associate the consequences of satisfaction to positive behavioural intention; however, in certain circumstances, a tourist's intention to return to a particular destination is not always determined by satisfaction (Dolnicar et al., 2013). This situation happens when tourists intend to seek novelty and gain new experiences (Oppermann, 1999; Rittichainuwat et al., 2003). They could choose to visit another place and decide not to return to the same destination even if they had obtained a favourable experience previously (Assaker & Hallak, 2012; Phillips et al., 2013). In other words, satisfaction will not always lead to tourists returning to the same travel destination. Tourist satisfaction in previous empirical studies is further highlighted in the next section.

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Tourist Satisfaction in Revisit Intention Studies

In destination marketing literature, empirical studies have demonstrated that satisfaction has a positive influence as one of the main factors that explain revisit intention to a particular destination (Ahmad Puad et al., 2011; Alegre & Cladera, 2013; Campo-Martinez et al., 2010; Chen & Chen, 2010; Karim & Chua, 2009; Kim et al., 2015; Kim, 2010; Kozak, 2001; Lee, 2009; Ling et al., 2010; Mohammad, 2014; Yuksel, 2000). These studies tested and operationalised satisfaction differently according to the context and objective of study. Satisfaction has been operationalised as tourist satisfaction with destination (Kim, 2010), tourism activities (Mohammad, 2014), travel experience (Kim, 2010; Munir et al., 2013; Um et al., 2006), destination attributes (Lee, 2009; Yuksel, 2000), events (Osti et al., 2012), destination image (Ahmad et al., 2011), food (Karim & Chua, 2009; Ling et al., 2010), services (Chen & Chen, 2010), as well as satisfaction with the stay at a particular destination (Alegre & Cladera, 2013). This variety of satisfaction-derived intentions and the multi-conceptualisation of measuring satisfaction indicate differences in the selection of items to be measured.

However, the revisit intention literature has also demonstrated that tourist satisfaction does not always have a significant relationship with revisit intention (Assaker & Hallak, 2012; Lin, 2012; Phillips et al., 2013; Rittichainuwat et al., 2003; Um et al., 2006). For example, Rittichainuwat et al. (2003) studied international tourists in Thailand and found that travel satisfaction had no impact on the tourists' return intention. Similarly, Um et al. (2006) found that satisfaction was not significant in predicting tourists' intention to revisit Hong Kong for the years 2001, 2002, and 2003. Meanwhile, Lin (2012) conceptualised satisfaction as tourist psychological wellbeing and obtained negative results regarding their intention to revisit a hot springs area. Recently, Assaker and Hallak (2012) claimed that even satisfied tourists might not return to the same destination based on their survey conducted among tourists at sun and sea attractions in Australia.

On a similar note, Dolnicar et al. (2013) claimed that satisfaction does not always lead to tourists revisiting the same destination. Their judgment was based on a meta-analysis of published papers in tourism journals between 2002 and 2011. The availability of various destination attributes offered at particular tourism attractions may encourage travellers to visit the destination once only (Dolnicar et al., 2013; Oppermann, 1999; Rittichainuwat et al., 2003). Therefore, the relationship between satisfaction and behavioural intention is multifaceted, and indicates several possible reasons for why high levels of satisfaction do not always lead to an expected positive behavioural intention.

Result

The above argument highlights a gap in the significant role of tourist satisfaction on tourists' revisiting a tourism destination. Previous studies found inconsistent findings (positive or

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negative) on the relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. Further research according to different contexts of study could give a better explanation and provide more valuable information to retain or to encourage more tourist arrival to particular tourist destinations (Campo-Martinez et al., 2010; Kozak, 2001; Mohammad, 2014; Osti et al., 2012). Table 2.7 indicates the various concepts and findings of tourist satisfaction in previous research on tourist revisit intention.

Table 1 *Tourist Satisfaction in Revisit Intention Studies*

Author/year	Satisfaction conceptualisation	Relationship between satisfaction and revisit intention (Positive/Negative)
Kim et al. (2015)	Tourist satisfaction with the destination	Positive
Mohammad (2014)	Satisfaction with tourism activities	Positive
Munir et al. (2013)	Travel satisfaction	Positive
Phillips et al. (2013)	Satisfaction with destination attributes (product and services such as transportation, accommodation, food, services, and others)	Negative
Alegre & Cladera (2013)	Satisfaction with stay	Positive
Assaker & Hallak (2012)	Satisfaction with destination attributes (the climate, beaches, accommodation, and setting)	Negative
Lin (2012)	Psychological wellbeing	Negative
Osti et al. (2012)	Satisfaction with the event	Positive
Ahmad, Seyedeh, Azizan and Jamil (2011)	Satisfaction with destination image (Penang)	Positive
Ling, Muhd Shahrin, and Mohhidin (2010)	Satisfaction with Malaysian food	Positive
Campo-Martinez et al. (2010)	Overall satisfaction/global tourist satisfaction	Positive
Chen and Chen (2010)	Satisfaction with the services	Positive
Kim (2010)	Satisfaction with overall travel experience	Positive
Karim and Chua (2009)	Satisfaction with food attributes	Positive
Lee (2009)	Satisfaction with destination attributes (Taiwan wetland tourism)	Positive
Um et al. (2006)	Satisfaction in terms of quality of experience	Negative
Rittichainuwat et al. (2003)	Travel satisfaction	Negative
Kozak (2001)	Satisfaction with the holiday experience	Positive
Yuksel (2000)	Satisfaction with destination attributes (Turkey)	Positive

The above studies produced mixed results on the relationship between tourist satisfaction

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and revisit intentions. Since there are inconsistent findings (positive and negative relationship), it is crucial to further investigate the influence of tourist satisfaction in the context of revisit intention (Dolnicar et al., 2013; Velazquez et al., 2011). Hopefully, the findings of this present study will provide more explanations about the consequences of satisfaction on behavioural models of tourism destination revisitation.

Discussion

Other related variables which are also vital as main factors of tourists' revisit intention is satisfaction (Alegre & Cladera, 2013; Arasl & Baradarani, 2014; Chen & Chen, 2010; Hosany & Witham, 2009; Jang & Feng, 2007; Mohammad, 2014; Munir, Khatijah, & Azizul Yadi, 2013; Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 1999; Bosque & Martin, 2008; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Yuksel, 2000). For example, Mohammad (2014) found that tourist satisfaction is an important factor for tourist repeat visitation to Jordan. Likewise, Chen & Chen (2010) have examined the visitor's experience of heritage tourism in Tainan, Taiwan. This study found that satisfaction has a significant and direct positive effect on behavioral intention of revisit. Meanwhile, some of the researchers concurred that satisfaction has indirect effect on revisit intention or has important role as mediator in revisit intention studies (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Choo et al., 2015; Chou, 2013; Lee, 2009, 2007, 2006; Liu et al., 2017; Prayag, Hosany & Odeh, 2013; Su & Hsu, 2013).

Conclusion

The clear view of relationship between future behavioral and its factors will help tourism players to develop an appropriate image and marketing strategies to make the best use of their existing resources (Chang, 2013; Chen & Chen, 2010; Kozak, 2001; Um et al., 2006). In this sense, previous researchers have examined factors influencing tourist behavior towards a repeat visitation by examining major factors of revisit intention. The understanding of tourist behavioral intention is critical in predicting future behavior. In the same manner, revisit intention can serve as a beneficial instrument in predicting future revisit behavior (Campo-Martinez et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2015; Lin, 2013). Therefore, a critical analysis and empirical study on the factors of revisit intention may answer factors influencing repeat visitors and provide the ground to improve the Malaysian tourism market by encouraging repeat travellers.

Recently, the number of studies on tourists' revisit intention shows the growing attention from many researchers to predict and clarify tourists' intentions to revisit (Campo-Martinez et al., 2010; Chang, 2013; Chen & Chen, 2010; Chen & Gursoy, 2012; Darnell & Johnson, 2001; Hong et al., 2009; Huang, 2007; Huang, 2009; Jang & Feng, 2007; Kim, 2010; Kozak, 2001; Lee, 2009; Mohammad, 2014; Um et al., 2006; Yuksel, 2015). An overview of these studies demonstrates that the tourist revisit intention is considered a valuable concept in predicting future revisit behavior. Previous studies also revealed that the relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions have produced mixed results. There are positive and negative relationships. This paper gives insight into the impact of tourist satisfaction towards revisit intention. Thus,

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the finding tends to justify that better understanding of tourists' revisit intention should be one of the main concerns for tourism marketers in serving their target market successfully.

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