The Role of Destination Attributes in Islamic Tourism

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Abstract. The objectives of this study are to test the relationship between tourism motivations and tourist satisfaction, and to test how ‘Religion’ moderates the relationship. The variable ‘Religion’ is represented by the availability of Islamic norms and practices which are relevant to tourism at the destination. The results of the Partial least square (PLS) indicated that the tourism motivations are significantly and positively related to tourist satisfaction. The results also showed that Religion significantly moderates the relationship between pull motivation and tourist satisfaction. However, the moderating effect of Religion on the relationship between push motivation and tourist satisfaction was not supported.

1 Introduction

Tourism industries are always searching for new segment of customers. For example, over the last decade the tourism industry has witnessed many firms in the industry catering to the needs of special groups such as elderly tourists, disabled tourists and gay tourists [1]. However, one relatively unexplored segment is the ‘Religiously conscious’ tourists. It is no wonder therefore that some researchers in this field insist that catering to the religious needs of any faith in this expanding industry is essential [2]. Although the relationship between tourism and religion has been addressed in the literature on tourism, there remains a shortage of theoretical publications in the area of destination attributes in the context of Islam. When it comes to the relationship between tourism and Islam, the lack of literature is more obvious, especially regarding Islamic norms and practices related to tourism at the destination and their impact on the needs of Muslim tourists. Thus, the objective of study is to test the relationship between tourism motivations and tourist satisfaction, and to test how ‘Religion’ moderates the relationship.

2 Literature Review

Religion is associated with tourism, in terms of consumer behaviour and the supplier, as well as the relationship between them [3]. However, there is limited research available on this relationship [4]. Destination marketing could generate greater satisfaction when appropriate tourists are targeted [5]. In response to that, the supply of religious attributes for Muslim tourists may lead to increased satisfaction.

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Article available at http://www.shs-conferences.org or http://dx.doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20141201077
It is known that Muslim customers constitute a broad market which is around 1.82 billion around the world [6]. In addition, the Muslim market has its special requirements and its culture, which cannot be ignored. Thus, satisfying the religious needs of Muslim tourists may encourage them to travel to a specific destination. Religion is bound to be very important considerations when a Muslim decides to travel abroad [7]. The Muslim tourists may decide not to travel to a particular destination in the absence of some Islamic attributes [8, 9, 10]. This study attempts to address this problem by empirically testing the relationship between tourism motivation and overall tourist satisfaction with the availability of religion (Islam) as a moderating variable. The religion (INP) is represented by the availability of Islamic norms and practices related to tourism at the destination.

By using the travel motivation theory as a base, many researchers have tried to give more attention to the pull and push relationship by frequently modifying items associated with the constructs. However, very limited research is focused on empirically testing the relationship between tourism motivations and overall tourist satisfaction. To fill this gap, in addition to studying the tourism motivation for Muslim tourists, this research will also investigate the relationship between tourism motivations and the overall tourist satisfaction. The influence of travel motivations on overall tourist satisfaction has been studied in previous research [11,12]. Each variable, push motivations (PUSM) and pull motivations (PULM), have hypothesized effects on the overall tourist satisfaction (OTS). In addition, as a moderating variable, religion is proposed between tourism motivations and overall tourist satisfaction.

3 Methodology

A total of 1,300 questionnaires were distributed in international hotels and tourism sites in four Malaysian cities: Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Terengganu, Penang, and Johor Bahru. The questionnaires were handed out in these cities following a convenience sampling approach. There was a scanning question on the cover page of the questionnaire to determine whether or not the tourist was Muslim or not. If the tourist was a Muslim, he/she was invited to proceed in filling in the questionnaire. The partial least square (PLS) technique is selected to assess the structural model in the current study. In order to examine the relationship between the constructs in the proposed model as well as to test the hypotheses, two stages of analysis were performed to evaluate the structural model: (a) Structural model without the moderating variable, and (b) Structural model with the moderating variable. The effect size is also calculated, this being a measure of the strength of the theoretical relationship, including the moderating effect [13].

4 Data Analysis and Discussion

To develop INP as a construct, 18 items were generated based on the combination of conducting qualitative research and reviewing tourism and Islamic teachings literature. Out of 1,300 questionnaires, 551 were completed and returned from international hotels and tourism sites in four Malaysian cities: Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Terengganu, Penang, and Johor Bahru. After data cleaning, the final sample size was 508. The EFA results determined significantly the correlated factors, including six push travel motivations, five pull travel motivations, and four factors representing religion (See Table 3,4,5). After EFA, the measures were subjected to confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS 19 software. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the modified models of the push motivations, pull motivations, and religion are summarized in Table 1.
Table 1. Fit Measures for the CFA Models

| Fit Indexes                        | PUSM    | PULM    | INP     | Acceptable level |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|------------------|
| Chi-square                        | 203.582 | 95.886  | 304.933 |                  |
| Degree of freedom (df)            | 94      | 48      | 129     |                  |
| \( p \)                           | 0.000   | 0.000   | 0.000   | >0.05            |
| Normed Chi-square (CMIN/DF)       | 2.166   | 1.998   | 2.364   | < 3.00           |
| Goodness-of-fit Index (GFI)       | 0.953   | 0.970   | 0.938   | ≥ 0.90           |
| Adjusted Goodness-of-fit Index (AGFI) | 0.932   | 0.951   | 0.918   | ≥ 0.90           |
| Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)          | 0.981   | 0.992   | 0.968   | ≥ 0.90           |
| Comparative Fit Index (CFI)       | 0.985   | 0.994   | 0.973   | ≥ 0.90           |
| Root Mean Square of Error of Estimation (RMESA) | 0.048   | 0.044   | 0.052   | ≤0.08            |

A two-stage approach is followed for evaluating the interaction effects of moderating variables modelled in PLS (Chin et al., 2003; Henseler & Chin, 2010). This issue was investigated by comparing the baseline model in stage 1 with the model in stage 2 (See Fig. 2). Results in stage 1 (See Table 2) indicate that the direct paths, PUSM to OTS, PULM to OTS, and INP to OTS, are statistically significant as the t-values (3.85, 7.56, and 11.14) are greater than 1.64. The explained variance (R-squared) is 0.54 for OTS. The goodness-of-fit (GoF) is 0.56. Whereas the results in stage 2, compared with stage 1, show that the R-squared was increased to 0.66 providing evidence of a better explained variance. The effect size is 0.26 indicating that the Religion have more than a moderate effect (0.26 > 0.15) on OTS. Using procedures suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007, p.148), the increased R-squared is attributable to the moderating effects and the effect size is statistically significant at 0.05 (\(F_3, 504 =129.6 > \text{Critical} = 2.6\)). The GoF increased from 0.56 to 0.62, indicating a better fit of the Model in stage 2.

Table 2. Tests of PLS Path with Bootstrap for Stage 1 and Stage 2

| Path coefficient | Stage 1 | Path coefficient | Stage 2 |
|------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| \( p \)          |         |                  |         |
| 0.11              | 3.85*   | 0.14             | 4.42*   |
| 0.33              | 7.56*   | 0.27             | 6.04*   |
| 0.51              | 11.14*  | 0.49             | 10.34*  |
| R-squared         | 0.54    | 0.66             |         |
| GoF               | 0.56    | 0.62             |         |
| Effect size       | -       | 0.26             |         |

*Sig. if above 1.64 for 1-tailed test.
| INP factors | Loading | Variance explained | Cronbach’s alpha | Mean (Std. dv.) |
|-------------|---------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| **Factor 1: Worship facilities** | | | | |
| Availability of Mosque (Masjid) | .752 | | | |
| Availability of prayer facilities at tourism sites, airport, shopping malls, hotels, conference halls, parks, etc. | .726 | | | |
| Presence of loud public pronouncement of Azan to indicate prayer time. | .761 | | | |
| Placement of Qibla direction (Qibla stickers/direction point towards Makkah city) in your hotel room | .642 | | | |
| Provision of a copy of the Holy Qur’an in each hotel room | .727 | | | |
| Availability of water supply in toilets at tourism sites, airport, shopping malls, hotels, parks, etc. | .648 | | | |
| **Factor 2: Halalness** | 7.57 | .893 | 3.76 (.53) |
| Availability of Halal food at tourism sites, airport, shopping malls, hotels, parks, etc. | .708 | | | |
| Availability of segregated Halal kitchen in hotels and restaurants | .714 | | | |
| Availability of segregated areas for women at beaches | .753 | | | |
| Availability of hotels with segregated swimming pools and gymnasium for men and women | .697 | | | |
| Banning of sex channels in hotel entertainment system | .747 | | | |
| **Factor 3: General Islamic morality** | | 6.46 | .889 | 3.78 (.563) |
| Observation of Islamic dress code by hotel and restaurant staff | .624 | | | |
| Prevalence of Islamic dress code (e.g. Hijab) at public places | .670 | | | |
| Banning by the authority of prostitution | .779 | | | |
| Banning by the authority of indecent display of affection between sexes at public places (such as kissing etc.) | .649 | | | |
| Censorship by the authority of adult scenes in movies shown on TV | .745 | | | |
| **Factor 4: Alcoholic drinks and gambling free** | 5.70 | .918 | 3.79 (.606) |
| Banning of alcoholic drinks by the authority at public places (such as tourism sites, hotels, parks, etc.) | .857 | | | |
| Banning of gambling activities by the authority at public places (such as tourism sites, hotels, parks, etc.) | .862 | | | |
| **Total variance explained** | | 72.18 | | |

KMO = .943   Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity   p-Value = .000
| Push factors                      | Loading | Variance explained | Cronbach alpha | Mean (Std. dv.) |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| **Factor 1: Achievement**        |         | 35.58              | .950           | 3.21 (.717)     |
| Meeting new people               | .808    |                    |                |                 |
| Going places friends have not    | .862    |                    |                |                 |
| been                             |         |                    |                |                 |
| Talking about the trip           | .858    |                    |                |                 |
| Indulging in luxury              | .829    |                    |                |                 |
| **Factor 2: Exciting and adventure** | 7.42    | .839               |                | 3.05 (.589)     |
| Finding thrills and excitement   | .727    |                    |                |                 |
| Being entertained and having fun | .755    |                    |                |                 |
| Being daring and adventurous     | .779    |                    |                |                 |
| Being free to act how I feel     | .608    |                    |                |                 |
| **Factor 3: Family togetherness**| 5.60    | .942               |                | 3.24 (.682)     |
| Visiting places my family came from| .812    |                    |                |                 |
| Visiting friends and relatives   | .774    |                    |                |                 |
| Being together as a family       | .801    |                    |                |                 |
| Seeing as much as possible       | .714    |                    |                |                 |
| **Factor 4: Knowledge/education**| 5.43    | .850               |                | 3.01 (.712)     |
| Learning new things or increasing knowledge | .721 |                    |                |                 |
| Experiencing new/different       | .682    |                    |                |                 |
| Seeing and experiencing a foreign destination | .708 |                    |                |                 |
| Visiting historical places       | .759    |                    |                |                 |
| **Factor 5: Escape**             | 4.828   | .871               |                | 3.06 (.677)     |
| Getting away from the demands at home | .836 |                    |                |                 |
| Getting a change from a busy job | .828    |                    |                |                 |
| Feeling at home away from home   | .664    |                    |                |                 |
| Experiencing a simpler lifestyle | .771    |                    |                |                 |
| **Factor 6: Sports**             | 3.728   | .555               |                | 2.66 (.710)     |
| Participating in sports          | .787    |                    |                |                 |
| Desire to watch sports events    | .603    |                    |                |                 |
| Participate in physical activity | .758    |                    |                |                 |
| **Total variance explained**     |         | 62.61              |                |                 |
Table 5: Pull Factors

| Pull factors                        | Loading | Variance explained | Cronbach’s alpha | Mean (Std. dv.) |
|-------------------------------------|---------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| **Factor 1: Natural scenery**       |         |                    |                  |                 |
| Outstanding scenery                 | .601    | 35.71              | .884             | 3.00(.806)      |
| Mountainous areas                   | .868    |                    |                  |                 |
| Natural ecological sites            | .867    |                    |                  |                 |
| Wilderness and undisturbed nature   | .839    |                    |                  |                 |
| **Factor 2: Wide space & activities**|         | 8.45               | .875             | 2.95(.682)      |
| Wide spaces to get away from crowds | .842    |                    |                  |                 |
| Variety of activities to see        | .604    |                    |                  |                 |
| Water sports                        | .812    |                    |                  |                 |
| Personal safety                     | .835    |                    |                  |                 |
| **Factor 3: Cleanness & shopping**  |         | 7.74               | .939             | 3.06(.699)      |
| Standards of hygiene and cleanliness| .754    |                    |                  |                 |
| Shopping facilities                 | .810    |                    |                  |                 |
| Reliance/privacy                    | .749    |                    |                  |                 |
| High quality restaurants            | .796    |                    |                  |                 |
| **Factor 4: Modern atmosphere**     |         | 5.48               | .784             | 2.92(.718)      |
| Modern cities                       | .770    |                    |                  |                 |
| Exotic atmosphere                   | .671    |                    |                  |                 |
| First class hotels                  | .784    |                    |                  |                 |
| Reliable weather                    | .749    |                    |                  |                 |
| **Factor 5: Different culture**     |         | 5.06               | .722             | 2.98(.611)      |
| Interesting and friendly local people| .661    |                    |                  |                 |
| Different culture from my own       | .678    |                    |                  |                 |
| Historic old cities                 | .734    |                    |                  |                 |
| Interesting town/village            | .750    |                    |                  |                 |
| **Total variance explained**        |         |                    |                  | 62.46           |

In stage 2, the moderating effect of INP on the relationship between PULM and OTS is statistically significant as the t-value of the interaction path is 5.05 and higher than 1.64. However, the results show no support for the moderating effects of INP on the relationship between PUSM and OTS as the t-value of this path is 1.25 and less than 1.64. These results suggest that the Model in stage 2 is better than the Model in stage 1 and provides evidence that the Religion moderate the relationship between pull motivation and the overall tourist satisfaction. Figure 1 shows that the results supported hypotheses H1, H2, and H4, as evidenced by the path coefficient and significant t-value. While hypothesis H3 was not supported meaning that there is no significant moderating relationship between PUSM and OTS by INP.
5 Conclusion

The results show that four factors were extracted from the eighteen Islamic norms and practices items and labelled; worship facilities, Halalness, general Islamic morality, alcoholic drinks and gambling free. Lack of public consumption of alcohol and public gambling activities were found to be the most important Islamic norms and practices with a mean score of 3.79, followed by general Islamic morality (3.78), worship facilities (3.765), and Halalness (3.763). The results of the PLS indicated that religion significantly moderates the relationship between the pull motivation and the overall tourist satisfaction based on the significant interaction and variance explained (β = 0.15, t-value (5.05) >1.64). This result confirms that the availability of Islamic norms and practices related to tourism at the destination contributes to the overall tourist satisfaction and strengthens the relationship between conventional destination attributes and tourist satisfaction for Muslim tourists. By having Islamic norms and practices, destination marketers can achieve tourist satisfaction among Muslim tourists. Furthermore, if destination marketers determine the preferable Islamic norms and practices to Muslim tourists, this could help them to design and tailor Halal products and services. The findings of this study should help marketers to better understand “Islamic tourism” and to develop marketing strategies to attract Muslim tourists. Furthermore, destination marketers might be able to design creative programmes that harness the unique characteristics of tourism products to satisfy and delight Muslim tourists. For example, design resorts fully meet Islamic religious needs such as segregated beaches, segregated swimming pool, and alcoholic drinking free.
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