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Understanding Consumer Decision-Making in Tourism Sector: Conjoint Analysis

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Abstract

Tourism has been key global economic activities and youth is said to be the mind share attainer in which they are the opinion starter for many movements and trends. This study try to acknowledge the decision making of the youth, how they choose their tourism destination site using conjoint analysis to evaluate their preference attribute. The result showed that the most youth choose tourism destination with attributes such as international trip, friendly local people and has local specificity, and the expense in this trip is focused to enjoy sightseeing

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1. Introduction

Tourism industry nowadays has become the next blooming industry, which has essential value on creating job opportunities, earning foreign exchange (Yang, Lin, Tsung-Liang, & Chang, 2010). Although some global financial crisis (GFC) (Badr, Zakareya, & Saleh, 2009) and national security issues may challenges for the world tourism growth, tourism and related activities form one of the largest economic sectors (UNWTO, 2003).

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Youth in Indonesia covers 35% of the whole Indonesia population. The youth subculture is said to be the mind share attainer in which they are the opinion starter for many movements and trends –unlike older generations who require a greater amount of effort– going ‘green’ for the youth subculture is something that is already integrated in their everyday life.

Youth subculture is considered as “Low-Budget, High-Impact” because of they potential in influencing not only teenagers and young adults, but older generations as well. This mind share that the youth subculture is attaining within they own community also capture the mind share from many other communities. Its is not common for young adults to follow the trends of older generations, but it is quite common to see older generation’s efforts to keep themselves look and feel young (Markplus, Inc, 2010).

Youth people began to see tourism as an interesting activity. With so many alternatives of destination, youth people should decide the tourism destination. Seeing youth people as customer towards tourism destination, how they choose tourism spot which are interested? What makes them *choose* one *destination* over another?

The theories of consumer decision-making process assume that the consumer’s purchase decision process consist of steps through which the buyer passes in purchasing a product or service. However, not every consumer passes through all these stages when making a decision to purchase and in fact, some of the stages can be skipped (*heuristics* decision). Some heuristics decision called elimination by aspect (EBA) –decision strategies which a choice is reached through an iterated series of elimination where in each iteration, the decision maker selects an aspect (attribute) and eliminates all alternatives lacking that attribute.

Therefore in this paper, we investigate customers’ decision –especially youth people, on their decision towards tourism destination using conjoint analysis. Based on that observation, this research aims to understand more about the preferences of the youth to choose a tourism destination site. For marketers, understanding youth subculture may be an effective way to attain the market’s mind. The result of this study suggested to provide some inputs to develop tourism in Indonesia.

Two points that will be highlighted from this paper, i.e what decision attributes that considered as the most important for youth people based on their profile to choose the tourism destination, and what is the most preferable combination of decision attributes of the tourism destination for the youth subculture.

2. Decision Making of Tourism Customer

The most fundamental decisions made by tourism customer –i.e. where to travel, whether to travel, what to do, when to travel, how long to stay and how much to spend. While destination marketers have a strong interest in how tourism customers make all of these decision, the most significant of these concerns where to travel; that is, the choice of destination. A tourist may decide initially that they wish to visit a particular destination and then, having made that decision, they may then set about deciding what type of experience they wish to create for themselves during their visit.

An important role in choosing a destination is played by the mental image a tourist has about a particular area, which takes into account the interests, the beliefs, and the attitudes of that person, but is influenced by the common mental and public image of the destination (Obenour, W, Langfelder, J, & Groves, D, 2005).

According to Dan (1981), to choose a destination, tourists are pushed by their needs and wants, then are influenced by destinations’ attributes to make a decision of where they will go on vacation. Therefore, destination attributes are very important for a destination to be successful in attracting more tourists (Zhou, 2005)

Woodside and Lysonski (1989) developed a general model of the destination choice process which recognised the central role of perceptions and preferences. Their model, illustrated in figure 1, suggests that the destination chosen for a vacation is the outcome of a series of explicit and implicit decisions which progress from an initial state of destination awareness conditions from which particular destination preferences arise and a travel intention is formed.

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