

Travel Motivation of Indonesian Seniors as a Potential Market in Choosing Destination Overseas

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Abstract:

Purpose:

The purpose of this paper is twofold. First, to identify push factors driving Indonesian seniors to travel overseas. Second, to examine pull motivating factors when the Indonesian senior groups visited destination abroad.

Design/methodology/approach:

Using the construct of push and pull travel motivation, this exploratory study initiated a novel inquiry into the Indonesian seniors when visiting destination abroad. Questionnaire-based survey was completed to 246 Indonesian seniors aged over 55 years who had travelled abroad. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) statistical technique was utilised to assist the authors to reduce the total of 33 both push and pull travel motivation variables into new underlying factors.

Findings

The results revealed that, self-exploration; relaxation; and relationship enhancement were three internal factors which push seniors to travel abroad. On the other side, factors of facilities and hygiene; destination familiarity; value for money and destination proximity; local attractions; and supporting travel facilities were found to be the attributes of the destination which pull the seniors to select an overseas country they would like to visit. While the push motivational factors found were similar to senior market as general, interestingly, this study discovered two pull factors of destination familiarity, along with value for money and destination proximity as the dominant pull motives in selecting the destination.

Originality/value:

Although literature on senior travel motivation is abundant, however, to the author's knowledge, empirical studies that focus on examining Indonesian senior outbound travel behaviour are still rare. These findings therefore are valuable in shedding a light for tourism stakeholders to cater to this potential segment more customisedly.

Keywords:

Travel motivation, push factors, pull factors, senior travellers, Indonesians

Paper type:

Research paper

1. Introduction

The World Health Organisation estimates that in accord with the global ageing pattern, the number of Indonesian senior citizen in 2020 will reach 28.8 million people or about 11.34% of the total population BPS (2015). Given its substantial market size, the ageing Indonesian population can be seen as one of the most attractive markets to the tourism industry. Responding to this, the tourism industry stakeholders should be more attentive to different needs and preferences of this senior market. An increase in the average life expectancy, the advancement of medical technology, and better government retirement system have contributed to the increased life quality of Indonesian seniors (Pusat Data dan Informasi Kementerian Kesehatan, 2013). According to Mastercard's *Future of Outbound Travel in Asia Pacific 2016-2021* study, outbound tourism market from the developing countries in the Asia Pacific region is predicted to grow about 7.6% in average within the next five years (Susanti, 2017).

The importance of the senior travel market has been well-acknowledged by both tourism scholars and industry practitioners. Abundant studies on senior travel motivation have been devoted in understanding and better serving the needs and preferences of senior tourists (Jang and Wu, 2006, Kim et al., 2010, Prayag, 2012, Tung and Ritchie, 2011). However, literature has shown that these studies mostly focused on examining the behaviour of senior groups from Western or developed countries such as United States, Australian, or Japanese and South Korean (Chen and Gassner, 2012). To the author's knowledge, little attention has been devoted to understanding travel behaviour of Indonesian seniors. Considering the shortcoming, this study aimed to identify push factors driving Indonesian seniors to travel overseas. Besides, it also aimed to explore pull motivating factors of the group when visiting destination abroad. The findings of this research therefore are anticipated to offer a significant contribution to portray the underlying factors of Indonesian senior travellers' behavioural pattern embracing their travel motivation and their preferences on the destination choice.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Senior Travellers

The literature has shown that there is still no universally accepted consensus as to categorising the senior group. Some define senior market are those aged 55 years old and above (Patterson, 2006), whereas others such as World Tourism Organization (WHO) and Act of the Republic

of Indonesia number 13, 1998 consider those who are 60 years old and plus as seniors. This study refers to the former definition, that is, defining seniors are those aged 55 years old and above.

It is crucial for every business to satisfy the customers with products and services that meet their needs and preferences. To do so, companies need to understand the behaviour of their target market thoroughly, as different segment has different needs and preferences, including the senior segment as well. There are false perceptions attached about older people. They are often stereotyped as somewhat frail, often unwell, and are generally uninterested in trying new travel activities (Wijaya, 2012). In fact, not all those perceptions are true. In many cases, today's seniors much differ from their previous cohorts. Their behaviour in consuming products and services including tourism products and services has changed as well (Chen and Gassner, 2012). Huang and Tsai (2003) argued that many seniors nowadays have changed their traditional ways of thinking from giving their savings to children into willingness to spend on their own interests. Seniors have more free time since they are retired. As such, they are more flexible with their time and this flexibility brings continuity in terms of market demand flow that is not limited with tourism seasonality pattern (school holiday, on leave work). Seniors tend to have a long length of stay when visiting a destination (Avcikurt, 2009).

2.2. Push and Pull Travel Motivation

According to Moutinho (2011), motivation is defined as an inner state of need or a condition that directs an individual to do particular types of action to achieve a feeling of fulfillment. With regard to tourism, travel motivation relates to why a tourist travels to a certain place or destination. Motivation is a basis for understanding why tourists behave in certain ways as it reflects the intrinsic needs of each individual. In the reality, tourist's motivation can be very wide range and complex. They might seek to satisfy not only one single need but also a number of distinct needs simultaneously (Gonzalez and Bello, 2002). Therefore, it is important to know what major motivators which drive tourists for traveling.

Amongst different motivation theories in the literature, Dann's (1977) push and pull motivation concept has been widely adopted in many studies examining traveller motivation. Push factors relate to the internal needs and preferences of travellers such as ego-enhancement, self-esteem, knowledge seeking, relaxation, and socialization (Jang and Wu, 2006). On the contrary, the pull factors are characteristics pertaining to the visited destination and this may include the level of cleanliness, safety; facilities, event, and cost; and natural and

historical sight (Kim et al., 2003). Baloglu and Uysal (1996) have argued that push and pull factors are fundamentally related to each other since pull factors could be seen as the stimuli of push factors which strengthen the reason why travellers choose to visit or not to visit a destination. In other words, the push factors give travellers a reason to visit to a certain destination whilst the pull factors describe their selection of destination on certain attributes that are embedded in a destination (Johann et al., 2016).

Understanding senior's travel motivation is essential to travel and tourism businesses that cater to this growing market. Johann et al. (2016) stated that senior travellers' motivations are seeing something new; getting away from routine; visiting and experiencing sights and culture; concluding a phase of life; rest and relaxation; comfort and pampering; experiencing landscapes and nature; challenging and stimulating oneself. Moreover, the statement is in line with the idea of Jang et al. (2009) who found in their study that senior travellers' motivations were: novelty seeking; self-esteem; ego-enhancement; socialization; rest and relaxation. Lee et al. (2008) in their study discovered that compared to the younger travellers, the seniors paid less attention to physical-intensified and skill-oriented activities. However, the senior respondents did not mind to undertake less rigorous physical activity such as viewing or sightseeing at natural sites and parks. Additionally, senior respondents weighed more family recreation as their trip motivation. Their time was spent in emotional exchanges especially when dealing with their family members. Moreover, Jang et al. (2009) pointed out the presence of emotional reason behind travel decision of the seniors. For instance, for senior couple groups, one of the main motives for travelling is aiming to celebrate a happy life event such as silver or golden wedding anniversary.

3. Research Method

To achieve the aim of the study, a combination of face-to-face and online surveys were completed to 246 participants aged above 55 years old. All participants were Indonesian citizen and live in various cities across Indonesia and had ever travelled overseas at least within one year of the data collection was undertaken. The participants who live in Surabaya were approached personally meanwhile those who do not were required to fill the survey online.

Travel motivation items in the questionnaire were developed based on previous studies examining push-pull motivation construct. In the questionnaire, push factor motivation questions were measured in part 1 of travel motivation. Meanwhile, pull factor motivation

items were assessed in part 2 of destination attributes. Altogether, both push-pull motivational factors developed from the literature were refined to adjust with Indonesian seniors overseas travel context.

There were three sections of the questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire measured travel motivation of the participants. In total, 16 items related to senior traveller motivation were included indicating their level of agreement or disagreement on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The second part aimed to explore the attributes of selecting destination choice. It contained 17 items related to travel destination choices such as availability of shopping facilities, medical facilities, local climate, travel distance and activity choices. In this part, participants were asked to rate the importance of each destination attribute concerning the extent of importance, ranging from 1 (unimportant at all) to 5 (very important). The last part of the questionnaire identified the information related to demographic profiles of the senior travellers such as gender, age, education level, marital status, employment status, and income source.

The method chosen to address the research objective was Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) which aimed to reduce the number of variables in two constructs of push motivations and pull motivations. The underlying factors emerged from EFA were represented as correlations among sets of many interrelated variables (Hair et al., 2006).

4. Results and Discussion

A total of 246 questionnaires were usable for data analysis. As can be seen in Table 1, in terms of socio-demographic profiles, there was an equal participation between male and female respondents. In terms of the age, the respondents were classified into four senior groups who are aged 55-60; 61-65; 66-70; and above the 70 years old. Out of these four groups, the majority of the total sample was the youngest senior aged group, that was 55-60 years old (63.4%). Most respondents were married, whose highest education attainment was secondary school (45.9%); and worked as entrepreneurs whose average monthly income achieved above IDR 10 million (38.6%).

Insert Table 1 here

With regard to travel characteristics, countries of Singapore and Malaysia, were top two overseas destination that most respondents had visited. Significant amount of respondents also

chose Australia and China as the destination they ever explored. Most respondents stated that they travelled overseas for holiday purposes (61%), and travelled together with their family (74.8%). The majority of the respondents expressed their travel expenses were paid by family members.

Insert Table 2 here

For the purpose of this study, exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted separately between the push travel and the pull travel motivations. Using varimax rotation, the eigenvalue over 1.0 was used for factor inclusion, and a factor loading of 0.40 was adopted as the standard to include items in a factor. Moreover, Bartlett's test of sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) were calculated to determine whether sufficient correlations existed among the examined variables.

With regard to push motivational factors, the EFA showed that the value of Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was .877, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was highly significant (Chi square = 1,930.587, $df = 136$, $p = .000$), indicating a good result for the 16 variables permitted to be analysed further. As shown in Table 3, three push motivation factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were derived to represent the original 16 variables, explaining 59.304% of the total variances. In the table, the variables are ordered and grouped by the size of loading to facilitate interpretation.

Insert Table 3 here

The results showed that the participants were driven to travel by three push motivation factors. The first factor was named *Self-exploration* since it displayed a predominance of items which were linked with participants' desire to equip themselves with new knowledge and experiences while travelling. This was achieved through their willingness to explore such activities as meeting new people, knowing way of life of the local people, and learning new culture in host destination. *Relaxation* was the label given for the second push factor which corresponded to the participants' desire to enjoy leisure time with their family, to enjoy life, to escape from routines by travelling to new places they never visited before, and to improve health stamina. The third push factor was named as *Relationship enhancement*, which confirmed that the desire to improve the quality of their relationship by visiting friends and relatives who live overseas, to enjoy travelling with friends rather than being lonely, to recall

their memories towards nostalgic moments in their lives, and to encounter with spiritual experiences that is expected to enhance the quality of their relationships with others.

Following the EFA results of the push motivational factors, the calculation for the pull factors demonstrated the value of Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was .798, and Barlett's test of sphericity was highly significant (Chi square = 1,868.587, $df = 136$, $p = .000$), indicating a good result for the 17 variables to be valid for further analysis. Five pull motivation factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were derived to represent the original 17 variables, explaining 67.41% of the total variances. Illustrated in Table 4, the findings revealed that the respondents were driven by five pull motivational factors.

Insert Table 4 here

Factor 1 is called **Facilities and Hygiene** – it encompassed destination attributes related to transport, hygiene quality, accommodation, and safety security aspects. Factor 2 was labelled **Destination Familiarity** – which consisted of the availability of food that is familiar to the senior participants, language that can relatively be easy to understand so that it helped the participants to communicate while they were travelling in the destination, and the climate that was not far different from the one in Indonesia. Interestingly, while some participants pointed the familiarity issues influencing their destination selection, some other participants highlighted the availability of local cuisines as the pull factor that drove participants to select the destination. **Value for Money and Destination Proximity** was the name given for the third pull factor which represented aspects pertaining to travel expenses. This could include travel cost from Indonesia to the selected destination and vice versa, the currency value, and distance proximity between home and visited destination. Factor 4 was labelled as **Local Attractions** – contained the variety of cultural attractions and natural attractions that the participants could visit while in the destination, and the availability of the information center of the visited destination. The fifth pull factor revealed was **Supporting Travel Facilities in Host Destination** that were shaped by the availability of shopping facilities, health facilities, and various special events held in the destination.

This research attempted to discern travel motivation of the Indonesian seniors and their preferences to the decisions of overseas destinations. The findings revealed that overall, senior participants were internally motivated by three push factors of: 1) self-exploration; 2) relaxation; and 3) relationship enhancement. On the other side, the participants were driven

by five pull factors considered as the external factor, mostly referring to the destination characteristics. This pull factors were: 1) facilities and hygiene; 2) destination familiarity; 3) value for money and destination proximity; 4) local attractions; and 5) supporting travel facilities in host destination.

Self-exploration appeared to be the most important push factor motivating the participants to travel overseas. In this study, self-exploration factor comprised the attributes relating to the desire to challenge the participants' with travel activities that can enhance their knowledge by encountering with new culture and new people including the locals. This finding is similar to Jang and Wu (2006) who found that novelty seeking was one main motive that drove seniors to visit new places. *Relaxation* was appeared to be the second most important push factors motivating participants to travel overseas. The emergence of this factor is unsurprising since most previous studies also highlighted the same factor, in which seniors were driven by the desire to get rid of the boredom of the daily routine life and have a relax leisure time for a while (Jang et al., 2009, Jang and Wu, 2006, Johann et al., 2016). *Relationship enhancement* was emerged as the third contributing to participants' push factors to travel overseas. It is not uncommon to see that after taking a holiday and visiting new places or attending certain types of events, the relationship quality can become better.

In terms of the pull motivating factors, this study has revealed five factors related to the destination that influenced participant selection. First, *facilities and hygiene* factor was merged from transportation, accommodation quality, hygiene and safety attributes. This finding confirms previous research completed by Kim et al. (2003) who also revealed this factor. The second factor was *destination familiarity*. In the survey, participants mentioned Singapore and Malaysia as top two destinations visited. This is unsurprising given that these neighbourhood countries have the same cultural root with Indonesia, thus, the language, the food, the climate of these countries are expected to be similar to Indonesia. Moreover, *value for money and destination proximity* was found to be the third pull factor for the participants to select a destination abroad. As shown in the survey, the most frequent countries to visit were Singapore, Malaysia, and China. These three countries are relatively closed to Indonesia, hence, the short distance for taking trips from home to the destination and conversely would directly affect travel expenses paid by the participants. In fact, Indonesia's currency value is considered very low compared to the values of other countries, thus, travelling to Europe and North America regions will be considered as exorbitant trip. Interestingly, the emergence of

factors 2 and 3 (destination familiarity, and value for money and proximity, respectively) are rarely uncovered in the previous studies. As mentioned earlier in the literature review, most research on senior travellers focused on examining seniors from Western or developed countries. Senior people from these regions might not have encountered with problems related to language and travel expenses since they are relatively more open to the differences and new challenges. According to Reisinger and Turner (2002), as member of high uncertainty avoidance cultures, most Asian travellers are worried about the exposure to language difficulties or other cultural differences when travelling overseas. As a consequence, the two pull factors of destination familiarity, and value for money and destination proximity should be taken into account by tourism and travel providers when catering to the Asian (including Indonesian) seniors.

The fourth pull factor emerged in this study was *local attractions*. This included both natural and cultural attractions, as well as the availability of information centres to provide services to the participants in case they needed any assistance. Last pull factor appeared from the analysis was *supporting facilities in the destination*. This encompassed attributes of destinations of shopping facilities, health facilities, and special events. This result confirms the past studies that also found the role of destination attractions and supporting facilities as the significant pulling factors for the seniors to choose a destination (Avcikurt, 2009, Prayag, 2012).

Conclusion and Limitations

To conclude, the results of this study has contributed to a better understanding of how the senior travellers in particular Indonesian seniors is influenced by the push and pull factors when visiting a destination overseas. Such an understanding is crucial for relevant stakeholders such as tour operators both in Indonesian seniors' home country and tourism service providers overseas in designing travel itinerary and activity as well as tourism product and services that suit with this segment.

This study is an exploratory in nature, therefore, it has limitation in terms of the sampling size and the variables examined. Further research could be undertaken to incorporate more respondents to improve the generalisability of the findings. Other variables such as travel satisfaction and revisit intentions could be added in providing better insights as to Indonesian senior market travel behaviour.

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Table 1. Demographic Profiles

Demographic profile	n	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	120	48.8
Female	126	51.2
<i>Age group</i>		
55-60 years old	156	63.4
61-65	44	17.9
66-70	18	7.3
Above 70	28	11.4
<i>Marital status</i>		
Married	202	82.1
Not married	6	2.4
Widow	37	15.0
<i>Highest education attained</i>		
Primary or secondary	113	45.9
Diploma or bachelor	101	41.1
Postgraduates	30	12.2
<i>Occupation</i>		
Retired	25	10.2
Employee	11	4.5
Entrepreneur	135	54.9
Professionals	19	7.7
Housewife	53	21.5
<i>Average monthly income</i>		
Less than IDR 3 million	24	9.8
IDR 3-6,999,999 million	59	24.0
IDR 7-9,999,999 million	64	26.0
Above IDR 10 million	95	38.6

Table 2. Travel Characteristics

Travel characteristics	n	%
<i>Visited Destination</i>		
Malaysia	22	8.9
Singapore	80	32.5
Australia	14	5.7
Others (including China)	130	52.8
<i>Purpose of travel</i>		
Holiday or leisure	150	61
Business purpose	27	11
VFR	24	9.8
Medical treatment	31	12.6
Religious purpose	8	3.3
<i>Travel arrangement</i>		
Company paid	9	3.7
Paid by family member	129	52.4
Travel agent or tour operator	54	22
Personal fund	53	21.5
<i>Travel accompany</i>		
Friends	26	10.6
Family	184	74.8
Travel alone	16	6.5
Tour group	10	4.1

Table 3. Push Factors Influencing Seniors to Travel

Factor name	Factor loadings	Eigen values	Variance (%)	Reliability
Factor 1. Self exploration		6.298	37.047	.853
Locals way of life	.848			
Expand knowledge	.764			
Locals do	.725			
Learning culture	.654			
Meet new people	.586			
Factor 2. Relaxation		2.098	12.342	.858
Family time	.809			
Enjoy life	.753			
Places not in Indonesia	.691			
Escape from routine	.684			
Visit new places	.642			
Healthy stamina				
Factor 3. Relationship Enhancement		1.686	9.915	.774
Do hobbies	.763			
Visiting friends and relatives (VFR)	.727			
Nostalgic	.663			
Attending events	.604			
Lonely	.580			
Spiritual experience	.579			

KMO = .877; Barlett's Test of Sphericity: Approx. Chi-Square = 1,930.587; $df=136$, Sig = .000; Total variance explained = 59.304%; Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation; Rotation converged in 7 iteration

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