“WORD-OF-PICTURE” IN ATTRACTING TOURISTS TO DISTANT DESTINATIONS

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Abstract

Pictures have become one of the most evolving tool in marketing destinations. Using pictures in destination marketing is important as “word-of-picture” (WOP) speaks very loudly in influencing tourists to travel. However, pictures of distant destinations are still lacking and not widely shown, which leads to only few tourist arrivals to distant destinations. This study aims to investigate which dimension of pictures speaks loudest in pulling tourists to travel and also to explore the significant relationship between “word-of-picture” (WOP) and tourist’s actual behaviour in travelling to distant destinations. The methodology used for this study is quantitative by distributing questionnaires to domestic tourists visiting the distant destinations, with questions regarding “word-of-picture” (WOP) and tourist’s actual behaviour. With 211 responses, findings indicate that the dimension of “geography”, particularly nature and landscape speaks the loudest in making tourist to travel as well as the dimension of “culture” particularly food speaks second loudest in pulling tourists to travel. Furthermore, the result shows there is a significant relationship between “word-of-picture” (WOP) and tourist’s actual behaviour especially for dimension of geography, culture and events. The results too showed that pictures say it all and they accomplish the task of tackling the tourist’s inner feelings and turning it into actual travelling as “word-of-picture” (WOP) does stimulate and influence tourists to travel to distant destinations. Therefore, pictures should be used more to motivate travel to these places as distant destinations have the potential to be developed and garner more tourist arrivals. Besides that, pictures are the closest tool that tourists see to visualise desired destinations. Through this, “word-of-picture” (WOP) is a highly capable and would become a powerful tool as the pictures speak for themselves.

Keywords: Word-Of-Picture (WOP), Actual Behaviour, Distant Destination, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), Domestic Tourists

1.0 Introduction

People travel for various purposes; they travel for business, leisure, entertainment or education (Poslad et al., 2001). This has made organizations and officials tackle their marketing techniques to suit these different purposes to travel. Earlier on, pictures of destinations were shown through printed advertising (e.g. magazines, newspapers, card cases, calendars, fans, books and etc.)
Destinations are also now being promoted through commercial images and advertisements organized by Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) (Kim & Stepchenkova, 2015) and they in turn, publish materials such as guidebooks, postcards and magazines (Stylianou-Lambert, 2012) and recently, through online publications too (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012) to provide ease in information searching.

Online picture postings are widely shared due to the undeniable prominence of beautiful and exclusive images of the visited destination (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012). Furthermore, with the popularity and broad use of the internet, product information on destinations is easier to find through social media, websites (Holliman & Rowley, 2014), images and mobile apps (Pan, 2014). Today, numerous Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) are actively promoting destinations by using photography and virtual experiences or environment of destinations in their respective countries as the strongest evolving tool for tourism destination marketing (Lo et al., 2010).

DMOs effort is assisted by the availability of digital, online and virtual photography which is now becoming one of most powerful marketing tools and with experiential marketing in tourism and hospitality, it will eventually compound the interest of potential visitors of the virtual tour to visit various tourist destinations and areas (Williams, 2006). The ability of photographs in capturing the attention warrants it to be an important marketing tool for potential tourists, especially in the era of digital technology (Aminudin, 2014). Pictures are becoming “word-of-picture” (WOP) in confirming views of tourist who have been to the destination and captured some pictures and may act as a teaser to potential tourists.

Thus, the role of WOP should not be neglected in marketing since it might be freely flaunted all over social media. Potential tourists may be and enthusiastically stimulated by destinations WOP to personally visit rather than just looking at the pictures. However, pictures of distant destinations are not widely shown and not being marketed extensively, something we should not overlook. With pictures potentially influencing and attracting tourists to travel, it is rational for this study to focus on WOP in attracting tourists to distant destinations. Besides, it is quite interesting too to know which dimension of pictures influences tourists most to travel. However, this aspect is yet to be investigated and this research proposes to bridge the gap.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 “Word-of-picture”

“Word-of-picture” or WOP is a newly developed term in tourism. It could be defined as “using pictures to send out information and to speak or influence on behalf of objects or landscape captured”. In tourism, photography or pictures are always being linked with travelling, like modern twins (Larsen, 2006). He added that photography is a travelling phenomenon in tourism. Sun et al. (2014), Donaire et al. (2014), Stepchenkova & Zhan (2012) and Pan et al. (2013) used the term dimension of pictures which is associated with sociology, geography, culture and events. However, this study used a different term, namely “word-of-picture” (WOP) in replacing the previous term which is “dimensions of pictures”.

Stylianou-Lambert (2012) and Crouch and Lubbren (2003) wrote that photographs produced by tourists have been studied by researchers and theoreticians from very diverse fields such as cultural studies, anthropology, tourism, geography, sociology and history of art and photography. Not to forget
pictures of “people” are included too (Sun, Ryan & Pan, 2014). This is why pictures of sociology often include local people and travellers (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012). Mostly, pictures of sociology are pictures of local people at a destination (Pan et al., 2013; Sun et al., 2014; Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012). So it is no wonder that pictures of local people is one of the important dimensions of “word-of-picture” (WOP) as it was widely used in past researches (Cohen, Nir & Almagor, 1992; Larsen, 2005; Chalfen, 1987; Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012; Sun et al., 2014) although the term “word-of-picture” was not used then. Markwell (1996) wrote about the desire of a group of tourists from Australia to look at each other’s photographs after they got back from a tour and indeed a social evening exclusively to view everyone’s photographs was held several weeks after returning home. This could become a good practice for marketing as they would get together with potential tourists and do word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing and may in turn influence them to travel to the destination too. As these photographs when viewed, tells a story that will hold viewers entranced and could motivate them to visit these destinations in person. However, only very few photographs of locals from distant destinations have been studied. Not much is known on how the dimension of sociology, with regards to these types of photographs, affect tourism.

People often travel abroad for the attractions offered by the human and physical resources of the destination. Human resources are attractions made by people (e.g. Petronas Twin Towers) while physical resources are attractions made by nature (e.g. beaches and rainforests). Activity of tourism is an action or behaviour of people in preparation for or during their consumed trip (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2015). When people travel to far-away destinations, photography becomes a ritual practice. Tourists often take pictures of objects, places, cultures and people (Larsen, 2006). Nature and landscape and built attractions (Sun et al., 2014) are two widely popular dimensions of geography and used by DMOs in marketing or promoting destinations. Several past researches (Pan, Lee & Tsai, 2014; Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012; Sun et al., 2014) can attest to it. However, there is very limited literature on geography pictures of distant destinations. Are these geography pictures able to pull and attract tourists to travel to distant destinations? Or do these geography pictures of distant destinations contribute significantly in pulling tourists to travel?

Culture is the characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by things like language, religion, resident’s identities (Medina, 2003) cuisine (Lin & Mao, 2015) music and dance (Dunbar-Hall, 2001). History and art too fall under the category of culture (Pan et al., 2013). So does local food or local cuisine (Sun et al., 2014). Numerous pictures are taken and experiences shared with their acquaintances. From their narrations, marketing by word-of-mouth (WOM) was practised and when the tourists showed pictures of local food to their friends, “word-of-picture” (WOP) comes to play in influencing potential tourists to travel to the destinations just to taste the local food too. Pictures depicting culture is usually used in marketing and has become one of the important dimensions of “word-of-picture” (WOP) (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012; Sun et al., 2014; Pan et al., 2013) even though the term WOP was not used then. However, from their findings, pictures depicting culture, even though it is an important dimension of WOP, was not the main reason why people would want to travel. Their study did not include motivation for actual travel. They also found that “geography” or “nature and landscape” pictures are the most important dimension of WOP but their study didn’t look at whether it may influence people to travel. This study, however, proposed to investigate whether “culture” pictures and other dimensions of WOP of distant destinations would or could become the main reason in making people to travel.

Attending events have been incorporated in many itineraries of tour operators (Getz, 1997). Many types of events would influence people and tourists to travel to certain places. Getz (2008)
grouped events as cultural celebrations – carnivals, festivals, memorials, religious events; political and state events – summits, royal occasion, VIP visits, political events; business and trade – conventions, trade shows, fairs; educational and scientific – conferences, seminars, clinics; sport competition – amateur/professional, spectator/participant; recreational – sport or game for fun and private events – weddings, parties and social. As these events could be photographed, distributed and viewed widely, they could influence or attract local people and tourists alike to travel to the destination. Getz (1997), Harcup (2000) and Hughes (1999) is of the opinion that events may take the place of a marketing strategy. Events could also become unique selling plans of destinations (Hallman & Breuer, 2010). Bidding for hosting sports events and other international events are becoming an important destination’s marketing strategy for tourism (Turco et al., 2003). Also, past studies showed that there were successful marketing effects between events and destinations (Brown, Chalip, Jago & Mules, 2004). Furthermore, sports events also could enhance and strengthen the destination brand (Brown et al., 2004). This explains why marketing events at the destinations could and may contribute to the growth of tourism in that place. When tourists visit the events, capture some photos and eventually upload these pictures online, the ripple effect of their photographs must not be undermined. When these photographs are shared, the destination, its people, culture and geography are elevated and acknowledged. Marketing through pictures should be expanded and this study proposes to add findings in the existing body of literature and is expected to give valuable input to local DMOs in marketing the destinations and influencing people to come and visit.

2.2 Actual Behaviour

Markwell (1996) wrote that photographic images in travel brochures and other marketing tools are what tourists depend on to help them decide where to go. Unwittingly they will return with pictures of their trip looking exactly as the photographs that enticed them to travel in the first place. Donaire et al. (2014) wrote that the ideas and images a person has of a destination (the tourist image) has a bearing on how tourists think and react and what they do (tourist behaviour) and the process of making a decision. Many studies have documented this (Chon, 1990; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Prebensen, 2006; Stabler, 1988). The satisfaction they get from being at their destination depends on the image they have of the place. Once they are fully entranced with the image of the place and by gaining more knowledge of that place, who knows, they could well be on their way there. Besides that, Mansfeld (1992) confirmed that once the decision for taking a trip has been reached, the process of information gathering, alternatives elimination, and actual choice will take place. Before long, it will lead to the actual travel. Pictures too play a part in dissipating knowledge, drawing interest to the viewers to travel, or in other words, to execute actual behaviour. Thus, this study is undertaken to investigate “word-of-picture” in executing tourists’ actual behaviour in travelling to destinations. From the reviews, very little study has been done that focuses on pictures and tourist’s actual behaviour. This study proposes to bridge the gap.

2.3 “Word-of-picture” and Tourist’s Actual Behaviour

This section discusses the relationship between “word-of-picture” and tourist’s actual behaviour. Stepchenkova and Zhan (2012) stated that pictures of sociology often include local people and travellers. This shows that tourists who travel to desired destinations are usually photographed with local people. Besides that, when tourists see a beautiful landscape, they almost always will capture the images as a proof that they have visited the destinations (Crang, 1997) and this could become a marketing technique when they return home. Travelling to a destination in search of local food is motivated by pictures of these destinations showing their delicious array of food. Sun et al.
(2014) stated that tourists described tasting of local food as a “peak touristic experience”. This shows that tourists do travel to the destinations to try the local food. Pictures of events motivate people to travel too. Wood (2005) and Ottevanger (2007) revealed several reasons why people travelled to events and this shows that tourists are attracted by pictures to travel to events. However, WOP and tourist’s actual behaviour on distant destinations are still lacking and this study hopes to expand the knowledge.

3.0 Methodology

This paper seeks to investigate which dimension of WOP is the most influential in attracting tourists to travel to distant destinations and also the significant relationship between WOP and tourist’s actual behaviour. This study uses the quantitative method by distributing standard questionnaires consisting of questions on dimensions of WOP when travelling, items on “word-of-picture”, actual behaviour and demographics of the respondents as the most basic section for a standard questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to domestic tourists travelling or currently on vacation at distant destinations with two filtering questions asked. The first filter question was whether they were tourists or residents of the area. The second question was whether they had looked for and searched pictures of the destinations online before making the actual travel.

The data were collected at three distant destinations or districts in Johor, a state in the southern part of peninsular Malaysia. Ledang, Mersing and Segamat were chose for this study as these three districts met the criteria as a distant destination and the criteria are (Prebensen, 2006); (1) long distance to travel; (2) lack of resources in terms of tourism (e.g. facilities); and (3) have few attractions. Therefore, Ledang, Mersing and Segamat were selected as the places of data collection for this study. The survey ran from 13th March 2015 to 23rd March 2015 as this was during the school holidays and public holiday, when tourists tend to travel to their desired places. The data collection was conducted during the day as this was when most of the tourists were seen. A total of 346 respondents or domestic tourists took part in the survey.

4.0 Findings

This section consists of three sub-sections which are general description of data, the most influential dimension of “word-of-picture” (WOP) and the significant relationship between WOP and tourist’s actual behaviour. With 211 valid responses, the results will be shown below.

4.1 General description of the data

In terms of gender, 72 male (34.1%) and 139 female (65.9%) domestic tourists came to these designated destinations during the period of study. The female tourists are the dominant respondents for this study. It was also found that most domestic tourists who came to these distant destinations were people aged from 21 – 30 years (34.1%) as young people are more adventurous and interested in this kind of destination. 76 respondents (36.0%) earning RM 2,001 – RM 4,000 per month were the largest group who travelled to these distant destinations as these places are likely affordable for people with this level of income.

Respondents were asked whether they travelled to these destinations for leisure, business or visiting friends and relatives. From the results, 146 respondents (69.2%) stated that they were there for leisure and this shows that a majority of the respondents went to these places for vacation with
their families and friends. Respondents were also asked on how many times they would search and look at pictures of distant destinations when they intended to travel. The results shows that the majority of respondents (32.2%) took more than 4 times to search and look at pictures of the destinations when intending to travel. With the advantage of technology, searching for pictures and other information online is relatively easy to do. From the survey too, it was found that a majority of the respondents chose search engines (Google, Yahoo, Bing and etc.) as the most convenient in searching for pictures of distant destinations. From this findings, it is strongly suggested that DMOs ensure their website or link is highly accessible.

Table 1
General description of data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 30 years</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 40 years</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 – 50 years</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 – 60 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61+ years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than RM 2,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM 2,001 – RM 4,000</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM 4,001 – RM 6,000</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RM 6,001+</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel Purposes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasure</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit friends &amp; relatives</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage of online pictures when intending to travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 2 times</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 3 times</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – 4 times</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 4 times</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of online media search of pictures of destinations when intending to travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social network</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search engines</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Tourism Websites</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Review Websites</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Travel Communities</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Most influential dimension of “word-of-picture” (WOP)
From the findings, pictures of “nature & landscape” received the highest frequency of respondents. 120 respondents (56.9%) chose pictures of “nature & landscape” of distant destinations as the most influential in making them travel to the destinations. Pictures of “food” and “built attractions” both received 36 votes (17.1%) and 32 votes (15.2%) and ranked as the second and third highest dimension of WOP respectively which attracted tourists to travel. Other dimensions of WOP such as “local people” received (5.7%) of votes, “way of life” and “traditional clothing” (3.8%), and “festivals & rituals” (1.4%). From the results, it is apparent that some tourists were influenced by other dimensions of WOP besides that of “nature and landscape” in making it their primary reason to travel. Nevertheless, pictures of nature and landscape and those of food remained the most popular reason to travel.

**Fig. 1. Most influential dimension of “word-of-picture” (WOP)**

4.3 Relationship between WOP and tourist’s actual behaviour

In this section, respondents were asked to rank each item of WOP in a 5-point Likert scale, 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Items under this section consists of 20 questions pertaining to each dimension of WOP namely sociology, geography, culture and events. Under the section for “actual behaviour” 10 questions or items were asked with answers in a 5-point interval scale, 1 = definitely no to 5 = definitely yes. In finding the results of the relationship, a multiple linear regression test was used in order to produce the outcome. As shown in table 2, there is a significant relationship between WOP and tourist’s actual behaviour (p < 0.01). For the dimension of “geography”, “culture” and “events” it shows a significant relationship with tourist’s actual behaviour (p < 0.01). However, for the dimension of “sociology”, the result shows that this dimension of WOP does not have a significant relationship between WOP and tourist’s actual behaviour (p > 0.01). Pictures of local people is not the primary reason to travel as people residing in Ledang, Mersing and Segamat (the selected distant destinations for data collection) are of the same major ethnicity (Malays, Indians and Chinese) as of
other parts of Malaysia. However, if these destinations are populated by indigenous people, pictures of “local people” would be the main reason for tourists to travel as these people have a very different historical and cultural background.

Table 2
Relationship between WOP and tourist’s actual behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standard Coefficients</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>p value (sig.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>1.165</td>
<td>0.245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>5.285</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td>5.483</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>0.392</td>
<td>6.805</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

5-point scale where 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree (WOP)
5-point scale where 1 = definitely no to 5 = definitely yes (Actual Behaviour)

5.0 Discussion & Conclusion

This study sought to investigate which dimension of WOP would be the most influential to tourists and also to investigate the significant relationship between WOP and tourist’s actual behaviour when travelling to distant destinations. The results of the study has shown that mostly tourists do search for and look at pictures of distant destinations when they intended to travel and that they have been influenced by it which made them do the actual travel. Even though domestic tourists (e.g. tourists residing in Malaysia) know these destinations better than international tourists, they still depend on pictures before making their trip to the desired destinations. Thus, the power of pictures should not be overlooked and underestimated as pictures are the closest thing or tool in visualising the destinations. Which dimension of pictures contribute greatly to travel are noteworthy too as DMOs may use this favourable dimension for marketing purposes.

As mentioned before, pictures of “nature and landscape” influences the most (56.9%) in making tourists travel to distant destinations. Previous researches (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012; Pan et al., 2013; Sun et al., 2014) too mentioned and showed that geography, particularly nature and landscape pictures of destinations was the more overwhelming dimension as they usually display breath taking scenery. These types of pictures appeal to their inner senses and motivate them to do actual travel. Furthermore, nature and landscape pictures often invoke a feeling of calm and peace and makes you feel good whilst the beauty of nature leaves you mesmerised. With the tranquil and breath taking pictures beckoning, our inner feelings are ignited and thus spark the desire to travel. In addition, Pan et al. (2013) recommends that nature resources images are the best promotional images even if it is used solely to attract tourists with a relaxing mentality and ambience. Pursuant to this, the majority of tourists who travelled to distant destinations did so with beautiful pictures of nature and landscape as their pulling factor.

Pictures of cuisine or local food, categorized under the dimension of culture is highly influential too (17.1%) as it is noticeable in this research findings. Previous researches (Pan et al., 2013; Ashwell, 2014) also showed that culture influences tourists to travel. As previously mentioned, culture includes
The characteristics of a particular group of people, language, religion, resident’s identities (Medina, 2003) cuisine and local food (Lin & Mao, 2015; Sun et al., 2014) music and dance (Dunbar-Hall, 2001) and also history and art (Pan et al., 2013). Pictures of local foods has a high influence too in attracting tourists to travel to destinations. Food becomes the primary pulling factor for visiting a destination, more so if the food is only found there and nowhere else.

Furthermore, tourists acknowledged WOP of geography, culture and events relationship as positive ($\beta = 0.246, 0.320$ and $0.392$, respectively $p < 0.01$) and it is significant to the dependent variable (tourist’s actual behaviour) whereby the p value for all these variables were $p = 0.000$. Pictures of geography, culture and events do gave them a significant impact in making them travel to distant destinations. However, the relationship of sociology, though positive ($\beta = 0.058$, $p > 0.01$), is not significant enough ($p = 0.245$) to the dependent variable (tourist’s actual behaviour) as the value was greater than $p > 0.01$. Past research by Pan et al. (2013) found that the image of “local people” does not strongly affect tourists to visit a destination. Thus this study substantiates past findings.

The results show that domestic tourists who travelled to distant destinations have a strong and positive acceptance on “word-of-picture” which made them do the actual travelling to these destinations. Overall, this study is in line with other studies (Sun et al., 2014; Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012; Pan et al., 2013) as they found quite similar results too. Furthermore, pictures showing attractive distant destinations tickle the tourist’s inner feelings and stimulate them to travel. Even though this study does not look at the picture’s affective qualities, past research by Pan et al. (2013), “arousing” and “pleasant” feelings are the two most affective qualities of a destination. Moreover, this shows that pictures do affect positively towards tourist’s inner feelings and stimulate them to do the actual travel.

This study has several implications to DMOs and private tourism supportive bodies (e.g. hotels and transportation agents). Official DMOs could use the findings from this research to pull more tourists to local distant destinations by using pictures as pictures are one of the most powerful tool to promote a destination. Furthermore, DMOs can hand out and distribute promotional brochures or templates to hotels in big cities and well-known tourist places as this may give awareness and acknowledgement to tourists that these distant destinations are interesting places to visit too. Aside from that, local transport agents or car rental agents should be able to provide services to tourists who are interested in making a visit to these destinations to personally feel the excitement and fun while travelling to these destinations.

It is passionately hoped that local official DMOs increase usage of pictures to promote destinations as pictures are the closest thing that tourists can use to visualise an image of these amazing places. Thus, in order for local destinations to gain more revenue from the tourism industry and for a more profitable destination marketing strategy, pictures should be used more often, especially for promoting distant destinations. Once these destinations are introduced widely to the country and the world, tourist arrival will increase, national tourism statistics will be on the rise and subsequently the livelihood, revenue and quality of living of the locals will be greatly improved.

References

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Biographical Notes

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