MALAYSIA, CRISSES AND TOURIST TRAVEL MOTIVATION

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Undoubtedly, tourism industry continually acts as a vital industry in increasing the income, foreign exchange earnings, economic growth, investment and business activities in many countries. It is also generating a high proportion of employment opportunity or minimizes rate of unemployment. As with other countries, Malaysia is perceived tourism as one of the major sources of income for the economic growth. It is now considered as the greatest expansion industry compared to other industries or sector of the economy. Despite this, tourism is also often described as a fragile and vulnerable industry. It is evident when this money spinning industry without an exception is facing and experiencing crises either through immediate, emerging and sustained crises depending on its period of gestation. These three types of crises are identified to have closely associated with tourism industry and influence tourists travelling motivation. This paper besides reviewing and understanding the dimensions of the crises also addressing the issues related tourists travelling motivation after the crises for the purpose an empirical investigation. Understanding the tourists travelling motivation after the crises will stimulate idea for the government and tourism related agencies in creating effective strategies in combating those issues when it is occurring.

Key words: Crises, tourist, motivation, tourism

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**Introduction**

Academic scholars unanimously agree that travel motivation is related to a set of needs that cause a tourist to take part in any tourism activities (Jenkins, 1999; Pizam, Neumann, & Reichel, 1979; Crompton, 1979) or in other word, travelers’ decision making in choosing a destination (Crompton, 1979). Yoon and Uysal (2005) contended that external, situational or cognitive aspects as full factors closely associated with tourist travel motivation. In this context, pull factors are those that are motivate tourist to travel by the destination’s attractiveness such as beaches, recreation facilities, cultural attractions, entertainment, natural scenery, shopping and parks (McGee et. al.1996). Yuan and McDonald, (1990) recognized seven pull factors that motivate tourist to travel namely, facilities, culture and history, ease of travel, budget, cosmopolitan environment, hunting and wilderness. Pull factors is also associated with potential activities or key attributes offers at, a destination like travel arrangements together with environmental quality and safety as major proportions of destination attributes (Kassean & Gassita, 2013).

In addition, scholars strongly asserted pull factors elements undoubtedly create and building the image of a destination and it is considered as one of the significant factors in ensuring the long term sustainability of any tourist destination and repeat visitation (Pizam, Neumann, & Reichel, 1979; Crompton, 1979; Jenkins, 1999). In this context, the destination image is made up of three distinctive hierarchical interrelated components such as cognitive, affective and conative (Gartner, 1993). Cognitive component is theorized as the sum of beliefs and attitudes of the destination attributes. In this sense, the image of a destination is assessed by the attributes relate to its resources and attractions (Stabler, 1995) in which influence tourists travel and experience it (Gallarza, Garcia & Saura, 2002; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Go & Govers, 2005). Meanwhile affective component is linked to the feelings and values of the individual places on destination based on travel benefits or motives (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Beerli and Martin, (2004) argued that emotional dimensions or components are strongly influencing the motivations of tourists to travel. Lastly, conative element is stated as the action and decision of an individual of whether or not to travel to a particular destination (Gartner, 1996).

Kim and Morrison, (2005) on the other hand stated that destination images are very vulnerable and may subject to change as it’s depend on the incidents and crises that occur in the particular destination. This is supported by Campiranon, (2006) which stated that incidences and crises affect the level of tourists’ confidence toward a particular destination as tourism market are sensitive and vulnerable to any crises. Crises may include deteriorating destination’s physical conditions, on-going crime rate, and high unemployment rate (Beirman, 2002). Major crises like terrorist attacks tend to have greater impact on images of the destination like terrorist attacks, epidemics, assaults on tourists and natural disasters (Beirman, 2002; Avraham, 2004). The obvious example is the global famous terrorist attack on the New York City and Washington D.C. on September 11, 2001. Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S Travel Association stated that this incident has caused the United States missed out about 78 million inbound travelers and $606 billion in tourism revenue (Maditinos, & Vassiliadis, 2008). Similarly, to the impact of the Bali bombings on 12 October 2002 which cause deterioration on the Indonesian economy and tourist arrival.
After the bombing, the number of foreign tourists visiting the island declined around 57 per cent at the same reduced the hotel average occupancy rate. In a short time, approximately 2.7 million tourism workers were unemployed (Inside Indonesia, 2008). Not only terrorist attacks lead to economic and tourist arrival down but Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in 2003 and the H5N1 Avian Influenza (Avian Flu) epidemic in 2004 also have dented the image of tourism in Asia as a safe tourist destination (Maditinos, & Vassiliadis, 2008). Hence, it could be said that crises not only is plummeted the tourist arrival but affected the image of particular destination or country as well as tourist motivation to travel.

Literature Review

Crises Attributes

The term “crisis” is originally from the Greek word “krisis”, which means judgment, choice or decision. Pearson and Mitroff (1993) suggest that crises are events which pose threats to the capability or the sustainability of the country, organizations, environment and community. This is supported by Seymour and Moore, (2000) that crises can threaten life, reputation and the survival of a country, organisation, environment and community. Faulkner (2001) argues that crises can be described as ‘sudden challenges which might test the organizations and nation ability to cope’. Elsubbaugh et al. (2004) on the other hand deduced that crises are an unavoidable in all industries. Thus, without a doubt, crises not only can affect the economic but major contributor industries such as agriculture, manufacturer and as well as tourism.

Seymour and Moore (2000) initially classified two types’ crises namely “cobra” which strikes suddenly and the “python” which occurs gradually. Karagiannis et al. (2006) stated that another aspect to categorize the crises that affect tourism industry is looking from human involvement aspect toward the crises (direct, indirect, no human involvement). Sausmarez (2007) on the hand contend that crises are traditionally classified as either natural (earthquakes and hurricane) or man-made (plane crashes, industrial accidents, and terrorist events). Of the mentioned type of crises, classification of crises namely immediate crises, emerging crises and sustained crises given by Parson (1996) is the most suitable used for this study as they are depending on the gestation of the period.

Immediate crisis

Based on the literature search, Parsons (1996) was the only researcher looking at the immediate crises. He is referring to this type crisis as an event that happens where little or no warning received whereby the organisations, government or any authority parties are unable to research the problem or prepare a plan before the crisis hits. Terrorism, minor natural disaster, aircraft crashes and missing airplane (unprecedented crises) are some of the examples.

It is worth mentioning, as part immediate crises the unprecedented crisis is referring to the events or incidences that never happened before (Cambridge Dictionary, 2015). In this sense, the shocked attack by two heavily armed gunmen entered the Paris offices of satirical news magazine of Charlie Hebdo and killed 12 people including 2 police officers are the clearest example of terrorism. The downed of German wings flight 9525 on 24 March 2015 (Cables News Network, 2015) and the missing Airline flight MH370 on March 2014 (The Malaysian Insider, 2014) are other examples of immediate crises. In sum, those given examples are suit with the definition given Parsons (1996) that which all incidents have an
instance period of gestation where the government or any authority parties unable to prepare a plan to stop or minimize its impacts.

**Emerging Crisis**

Emerging crisis denote an incident or event that not instantly occurring or is slowly developing thus able to be stopped or control by the government or any responsible parties (Parson, 1996). Epidemic-disease such as dengue, malaria, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and influenza H1N1 are the example of emerging crisis where when it occur the organisation may still deal, stop or minimize the impact. Although SARS is a viral occurred between November 2002 and July 2003 in multiple countries which caused an eventual 8,096 cases and some deaths yet it was able to deal and controlled by many governments (World Health Organization, 2015). Similar to influenza H1N1, this epidemic which hit the African and Southeast Asian countries and cause some deaths but able to control and prevent from widely spreading (World Health Organization, 2010). Again, those incidents suit with characteristic given by Parson (1996) that emerging crisis although occur deliberately but enable the government together with the collaboration from all parties especially medical to minimize its impacts.

**Sustained Crises**

It is type of sustained crises which happens longer and causes a bigger impact in long term not to the major industries such as agriculture, manufacture, health including tourism industry. This is the hallmark of sustained crisis, which Parson (1996) refers to the incident or event that may last for weeks, months or even years. The obvious example is the on-going conflicts at the Middle East (Syrian civil war, Islamist at Egypt) which have significantly disrupted the image and economy of the associated countries and the governments are unable find a solution to control the crisis (Sonmez, 1998). Similar examples can be seen in Thailand as it faced 19 military coups since the country became a constitutional monarchy in 1932 but still unable to prepare a plan or solve a solution (Bangkok Post, 2014). Parson (1996) concluded that the sustained crisis attributes it can be fully stopped and may have a greater impact towards the image and economy of the country.

**Destination image**

There are many definition of destination image claimed by scholars. Gallarza, Saura and Garcia, (2002) noted that destination image as an impressions that a person holds about a place. Baloglu and McCleary, (1999) argued that definition of destination image mostly focussed on the multidimensional perspective (attribute-based or holistic). Gartner (1996) argues that destination image is made up of three distinctive hierarchical interrelated components such as cognitive, affective and conative. Cognitive component is conceptualized as the sum of beliefs and attitudes of the destination attributes. In this sense, the image of a destination is assessed by the attributes relate to its resources and attractions (Stabler, 1995) in which influence tourists travel and experience it (Gallarza, Garcia & Sarah, 2002; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Go & Govers, 2005). Meanwhile affective component is related to the feelings and values of the individual places on destination based on travel benefits or motives (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Beerli and Martin (2004) argued that emotional dimensions or components are strongly influencing the motivations of tourists to travel. Lastly, conative component is referred to the action and decision of an individual of whether or not to travel to a particular destination (Gartner, 1996). Since destination image is the psychological picture of the destination which influence on tourist
decision-making process, it is considered as one of the vital factors in ensuring the long term sustainability success of the destination (Beerli & Martin, 2004). According to Jarumaneerat & Promsivapallop (2012) negative images can be obstacles to the destination as tourists may be cautious to visit or return to the destination.

**Tourist Travel Motivation**

Travel motivation refers to a set of needs that cause a person to participate in a tourist activity (Pizam, Neumann, & Reichel, 1979). According to Crompton (1979), most tourist motivation relates to travelers’ decision making in choosing a destination that involves the concept of push and pull factors. In this sense, tourists are pushed and pulled by some sources of inherent forces. These forces explain how individuals are pushed by internal variables, and how they are pulled by a travel destination (Uysal & Hagan, 1993). The push factors are socio-psychological motives such as the desire for escape, novelty seeking, adventure seeking, dream fulfilment, rest and relaxation, health and fitness, prestige, and socialization (Huang, Tsai, & Hsien, 2003). The pull factors are motives aroused by the destination rather than emerging exclusively from within the travelers themselves (Crompton, 1979). Pull factors include tangible and intangible signs of a specific destination that pull people to travel, such as natural and historic attractions, food, people, recreation facilities, and marketed image of the destination (Uysal & Hagan, 1993).

**Pull Factor Attributes**

Pull factors are referring to those external, situational or cognitive aspects that cause an individual motivation to choose one destination over another once the decision to travel has been made (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). It has been categorized as features, attractions or attributes of the destination itself, such as beaches, sunshine, cheap airfares and sports facilities (McGee et. al., 1996). Yuan and Mc Donald (1990) identified seven pull factors that motivate tourist to travel, namely, culture and history, budget, ease of travel, facilities, cosmopolitan environment, hunting and wilderness. The pull factors are also associated with potential activities or key attributes offers at a destination while Yoon and Uysal (2005) state that travel infrastructures together with environmental quality and safety as major dimensions of destination attributes. However, some scholars argued that destination extraordinaire attraction, worth economic value and fascinating atmosphere influence tourists to visit a destination (Phetvaroon, 2007; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; McGee et. al., 1996; Yuan & Mc Donald, 1990; Balogulu & McCleary, 1999).

**Malaysia, Crises and International Tourist Travel Motivation**

As with other countries, Malaysia is no exception is facing the immediate, emerging, and sustained crises which directly affected the country economy as well as the tourism industry. The missing of the Malaysian Airlines flight MH370, intrusion at the east coast of Sabah, kidnapping and shot down of MH17 are the present examples. These incidences have affected the overall tourist arrival and receipt to the country. The tragic disappearance of the Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 has declined the number of Chinese tourist arrivals to Malaysia (Bernama, 2014). As reported, thirty percent of Chinese tourists immediately cancelled their trips after the incident that cause Malaysia of losing around RM100 million (Bernama, 2014). The intrusion of the east coast of Sabah by the Sulu militant has also dropped in tourist arrival to the country (The Malaysian Insider, 2013). The shot down of Boeing 777, flight MH17 from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur that killed all 298 passengers
aboard worsens the situation and badly hit the Malaysia tourism industry. In sum, the series of those incidences directly affect the image of Malaysia as one popular tourist destination.

Despite those phenomena and it is worth mentioning that after a few months of mourning and dreary period for the country including tourism industry, tourist arrivals to Malaysia is showing a positive recovering. Except for Chinese and Taiwanese, tourists of other international markets like Japanese, Korean Australasian, Middle Eastern continues to provide the bulk of Malaysia’s inbound visitors (The Star Online, 2014). The Asean members countries is also contributing tourist arrivals with Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, the Philippines and Singapore showing double-digit increases for the quarter (The Star Online, 2014). This phenomenon has brought critical questions. What motivate and the pulling factors that make the international tourists still visiting Malaysia in spite of the crises? In other words, what is the most significant destination attributes available in this country that pulls the tourist to visit? There must be the underlying reasons of this causation and this trends need to be revealed.

In line with the above notion, many researcher have undertaken the studies on tourists pull factors to a particular destination on the normal situation, absent or free from crises or disturbance such as cultural attractions (Zhang, Qu, & Tang, 2004; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Baloglu, 1997) natural attraction (Chen, 2001; Baloglu, 1997) historical sites (Truong & Foster, 2005; Gartner, 1989) various activity (Crompton et al., 1992; Guthrie & Gale, 1991) climate (Truong & Foster, 2005; Ahmed, 1991) safety (Enright & Newton, 2004; Zhang, Qu, & Tang, 2004; Chen, 2001; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999) local friendliness (Chen, 2001; Zhang, Qu, & Tang, 2004) low travel cost (Chen, 2001; Huang, Tsai & Hsien, 2003) and value (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Baloglu, 1997; Schroeder, 1996). Despite this, there are very limited studies looking at the positive relationship between the pull factors, destination images and tourists motivation to travel after crises. Thus, this issue and gap is warrant for an empirical investigation.

**Conclusion**

As the study is still under investigation significant academic contributions to the existing body of knowledge will be accomplished by looking way of the tourist perceived crises and their behavior. Since none of such study is undertaken in Malaysia contextual setting, the originality of this research will also create a new body of knowledge in Malaysia tourism research. Knowing and understanding the pull factors that attract tourist to travel to Malaysia after any crises will surely create awareness to the government, authorities and other related bodies. In this sense, although the crises will definitely hit and affect the economy of the country but the government in the short time could combating those issue and in this study context attracting tourists by using an effective strategies including enhancing the destinations extraordinary attraction, worth economic value and good atmosphere. In addition to this, during the crises, government and related bodies should not be panic, but hastening the recovering process by focusing at the existing tourist markets to at least the sustained the tourist arrival and constantly earning the foreign revenue for the country.

**References**


