

## **DETERMINING DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES AND TOURISTS' MOTIVES FOR VISITING LANGKAWI ISLAND**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the study is to address the profile of tourists visiting Langkawi and determine the motives of tourists visiting Langkawi. Using a quantitative research approach, data were collected from 340 respondents visiting Langkawi using the Leisure Motivation Scale (LMS) [1]. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and t-test. The results showed that there were two kinds of tourists visiting Langkawi: sports tourists and non – sports tourists. The majority of sports tourists (72.9%) from the age of 22 up till 28 years of age was more interested in sports tourism and was found to be losing their interest in sports tourism at around the age of 28 to 33 years of age. Results also showed that there are no significant differences in terms of motives between sports tourists and non-sports tourists traveling to Langkawi. The information obtained from this study can be used by people in the sports tourism industry to implement it into their marketing segmentation by targeting the right type of tourist coming to Langkawi.

### **Keywords:**

*Tourist, Motives, Langkawi*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Malaysia nowadays is well known for organizing any kind of sports event, with its fully-equipped and sophisticated sports facilities which are now available to be used. Nowadays, Malaysia has become increasingly active on promoting itself as an event organiser by hosting various international world-class sports events and recreational activities [2].

There are many other interesting places in Malaysia that also provide facilities where sporting activities can be done, and at the same time be visited by tourists. One of those places is Langkawi. “Langkawi is suitable as an international sporting destination as it has numerous facilities” said Tun Mahathir [3]. Sports tourism can contribute to the development of a country. A small and developing country has the potential to be developed as a location for international sports organisation based on its natural resources. Furthermore, various aspects such as the infrastructure, services, and resource economics can be developed from an area. Among them, organising events such as Le Tour de Langkawi, Langkawi International Formula Jet Ski Super Series, Royal Langkawi International Regatta, Asian Sailing Championship, Langkawi International Mountain Bike Challenge, Paintball World Cup Championship, Ironman Malaysia Triathlon, Langkawi Water Festival, and Langkawi has one of the best sports facilities infrastructures in the world.

Besides having a list of sports events for the sport tourists to participate in or watch, Langkawi has a lot of other sports attractions that offers a lot of benefit for tourism in Malaysia. Beaches, mountains and jungles are some of the beautiful and unique natural resources that can be enjoyed through sports and recreational purposes. As a result, tourists are given the opportunity to enjoy sports and recreation activities in Langkawi. Water sport activities such as snorkelling, scuba diving, jet skiing, parasailing, and kayaking in Cenang, Kok, Tengah and Teluk Burau beaches are the many things that tourists can participate themselves in. On the other hand, tourists are welcomed to do activities like jungle trekking, rainforest canopy adventure, horse riding, go-carting or caving at the Langkawi Geopark. In addition, there are three golf club courses in Langkawi which are known as Langkawi Golf Club, Gunung Raya Golf Resort and Danau Bay Golf Club which each golf club offers different types of golfing style. Of all the attraction that Langkawi have had, the number of the tourists' admittance has been increasing year after year. The number of tourists visiting Langkawi has been increasing from 2006 to 2008 [4]. It shows a positive future and these advantages may contribute maximum profit income to the country.

According to the tourists' sports literature, there are differences in either participating actively or passively in the sport tourism event. Hence, it will be better to try to define the differences between active and passive sport tourists [5]. Sports tourism is defined as "All forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organised way for non-commercial or business/ commercial reasons, that necessitate travel away from home and work locality" [6]. Nevertheless, no attempt has been made based on demographic profiles to compare the differences between these two groups of tourists.

Furthermore, sport tourists' motivation need to be investigated. Motivation has been referred to as a need or desire that energizes behaviour and direct it towards a goal [7]. A number of disciplines have assisted in the explanation of the phenomena and characteristics related to motivation. Beard and Ragheb developed a model called the Leisure Motivation Scale (LMS) which tried to divide the motivators into four types based on the work of Maslow [1, 8]. The scale measuring the following dimensions of travel motivation: 1) intellectual (to extent to which an individual is motivated to travel to be involved in activities such as exploring, discovering or creating); 2) social (the extent to which an individual travels because of the need for friendship and interpersonal relationship); 3) competence mastery (the extent to which an individual engages in tourism activities that is challenging, achievement-oriented or competitive in nature); 4) stimulus avoidance (the extent to which an individual needs to escape and get away from over stimulating situations).

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

One type of study that is often conducted in the early stage of strategic development process of sport tourism industry is the examination of sport tourists' demographic profiles. In the implementation of effective market segmentation and targeting, the information on the specific characteristics of sport tourists is crucial to have even though that the sport tourism is rapidly growing in Langkawi. Researches on tourists' profiles and travel motivations are still lacking. To implement effective market segmentation and targeting is rather impossible to do for the sport tourism industry as the information needed is not yet completed. According to Hanafiah, understanding peoples' motives is important in promoting tourism, since it provides a better explanation of the motives behind tourists' behaviours, it also enables tourism planners to predict tourists' actions [9]. A disregard for market research has often showed in the poor development of sport tourism in Langkawi. By an extent of our understanding about sport

tourists' profiles, the authorities, marketers, and service providers of Langkawi, Langkawi tourism will gain valuable data to implement effective market segmentation and targeting as well as underestimating the potential and sustainability of the sports industry in Langkawi. To identify the segments of the sport tourism market is very crucial to the Langkawi tourism industry. It determines how the tourists make vacation decisions and by identifying the specific characteristics of tourists who visited a particular destination in Langkawi or may have engaged in certain activities while on vacation. Information in terms of their profiles and characteristics, motivation of visiting Langkawi as a sport tourist and activities involved while on vacation on the sport tourists, may be needed as well.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The general objective of this study is to obtain sport tourists comprehensive information related to the profiles visit to Langkawi. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

1. To examine demographic profiles of tourists' visiting Langkawi.
2. To identify tourists' motive visiting Langkawi.

## **METHODOLOGY**

A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the tourists who are visiting Langkawi. The subject was comprised of a convenience sample of 340 tourists visiting Langkawi. The demographic profile of the tourists is shown in Table 1. The survey instrument consists of two sections. The first section was asked about demographic profiles of the tourists. The second part of the instrument consists of shortened version of the Leisure Motivation Scale (LMS) developed by Beard and Ragheb measuring the following dimensions of travel motivations: intellectual (the extent to which an individual is motivated to travel to be involved in activities such as exploring, discovering or creating), social (the extent to which an individual travels because of the need for friendship and interpersonal relationships), competence-mastery (the extent to which an individual engages in tourism activities that is challenging, achievement-oriented or competitive in nature), and stimulus-avoidance (the extent to which an individual needs to escape and get away from over-stimulating situations) [1].

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the tourists visiting Langkawi. A total of 400 subjects were given a survey and 340 subjects have responded to the survey provided. The total number of tourists who participated in this study is 340 subjects which are divided by two categories: sport tourist (n=248, 72.9%) and non-sport tourists (n=92, 27.1%). Table 1 and 2 discussed about demographic profile of sport and non-sport tourists visiting Langkawi.

**Table 1: Demographic Profiles of Sport Tourists Visiting Langkawi**

<b>Demographic Profiles Sport Tourists (n=248)</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Nationality</b>	Domestic	185	74.6
	Foreign	63	25.4
<b>Ethnic</b>	Malay	179	72.2
	Caucasian	34	13.7
	Chinese	18	7.3
	Indian	9	3.6
	Asian	8	3.2
<b>Age</b> (M=31.43, SD=10.32)	22-28	97	39.1
	28-33	43	17.3
	33-40	31	12.5
	17-22	29	11.7
	40-45	19	7.7
	45-50	14	5.6
	55-60	6	2.4
	50-55	6	2.4
60 & above	3	1.2	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	130	52.4
	Female	118	47.6
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	127	51.2
	Married	108	43.5
	Widowed/ Divorce	13	5.2
<b>Level of Education</b>	High School	66	26.6
	Bachelor Degree	56	22.6
	Diploma	55	22.2
	Certificate	37	14.9
	Master/PhD	25	10.1
	Elementary School	9	3.6
<b>Occupation</b>	Company Employee	108	43.5
	Government Servant	54	21.8
	Student	39	15.7
	Self-Employed	29	11.7
	Retired	6	2.4
	Unemployed	9	3.6

	Others	3	1.2
<b>Monthly Income</b>	RM1000-2999	98	39.5
	RM3000-4999	40	16.1
	RM7000 and above	24	9.7
	RM5000 - 6999	18	7.3
	Less than RM999	9	3.6

From the total number of the sport tourists (n=248), majority of them were domestic sport tourists (74.6%) and foreign sport tourists (25.4%). Majority of the sport tourists visiting Langkawi were Malay (72.2%), males (52.4%), between the age of 22-28 years old (39.1%) consistent with Levinson theory of The Seasons of a Man's Life [10]. Levinson explains that males in their twenties are tending to be physically active equivalent with their youthful identity. As a result, they realised that they might be able to participate in some physical activities in Langkawi. About 51.2% of them are single and have less commitment towards family. Thus, they can actively participate in sport tourism activities. This result also suggest that sport tourists were high school educated (26.6%), occupied as company employee (43.5%) with the monthly income between RM1000-RM2999 (39.5%).

**Table 2: Demographic Profiles of Non-Sport Tourists Visiting Langkawi**

<b>Demographic Profiles Non-Sport Tourists (n=92)</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Nationality</b>	Domestic	65	70.7
	Foreign	72	29.3
<b>Ethnic</b>	Malay	63	68.5
	Caucasian	16	17.4
	Chinese	6	6.5
	Indian	4	4.3
	Asian	3	3.3
<b>Age</b> (M=30.04, SD=9.96)	22-28	38	41.3
	28-33	17	18.5
	33-40	9	9.8
	17-22	13	14.1
	40-45	6	6.5
	45-50	4	4.3
	55-60	2	2.2
	50-55	1	1.2
60 & above	2	2.2	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	43	47.8
	Female	48	52.2

<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	51	55.4
	Married	37	40.2
	Widowed/ Divorce	4	4.4
<b>Level of Education</b>	High School	15	16.3
	Bachelor Degree	37	40.2
	Diploma	18	19.6
	Certificate	8	8.7
	Master/PhD	13	14.1
	Elementary School	1	1.1
<b>Occupation</b>	Company Employee	36	39.1
	Government Servant	19	20.7
	Student	26	28.3
	Self-Employed	4	4.3
	Retired	4	4.3
	Unemployed	2	2.2
	Others	1	1.1
<b>Monthly Income</b>	RM1000-2999	21	22.8
	RM3000-4999	24	26.1
	RM7000 and above	10	10.9
	RM5000 - 6999	6	6.5
	Less than RM999	3	3.3

From the total number of non-sport tourists (n=92), majority of them were domestic non-sport tourists (70.7%) and foreign non-sport tourists (29.3%). Majority of the non-sport tourists visiting Langkawi were Malay (65.5%), males (47.8%), between the age of 22-28 years old (41.3%), marital status single (55.4%), bachelor degree educated (40.2%), occupied as company employee (39.1%) with the monthly income between RM3000-RM4999 (26.1%).

**Table 3: Motives of Sport Tourists and Non-sport Tourists Visiting Langkawi using t-test**

<b>Motives</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig. (2 tailed)</b>
<b>Intellectual</b>				-1.059	.291
Sport tourist	248	4.087	.731		
Non-sport tourist	92	4.165	.559		
<b>Social</b>				.892	.374
Sport tourist	248	3.825	.844		
Non-sport tourists	92	3.736	.804		
<b>Competence mastery</b>				1.192	.235
Sport tourist	248	3.868	.797		
Non-sport tourist	92	3.736	.794		
<b>Stimulus Avoidance</b>				-.493	.622
Sport tourist	248	4.141	.751		
Non-sport tourist	92	4.183	.673		

\*p < 0.05 significant difference

Table 3 shows that, there is no significant difference between sport and non-sport tourists with respect to the motives of visiting Langkawi. The results indicate that stimulus avoidance contributes the highest mean for both sport and non-sport tourists. This suggest that sport and non-sport tourists experienced high level of stimulation in their life as they are both sport and non-sport tourists are mostly occupied by company employee in private sector with stressful, challenge and orientate profit making working environment. This is why the sport and non-sport tourists seek for a vacation in order to satisfy their needs to escape the stress and pressure in their daily lives. In addition, the differences between both categories are that, the sport tourist participates more in sports and recreational activities whereas the non-sport tourists were more towards leisure activities, for example visiting historical place. Even though both sport and non-sport tourists are involved in different types of activities, in the end, both of them still share the same motive which is intellectual motive. They seek for new knowledge; new skills and new experience are more likely to be discovered for those who participate in competition in a different environment. The result also suggests that sport and non-sport tourists are motivated to have social and competence mastery motive at the least.

## CONCLUSION

This study has important implications for tourism marketers in Langkawi. This paper has discussed an overview on profile of sport tourist and non-sport tourist and their motives on visiting Langkawi. A better understanding about motive and profile for both segments is crucial in order to develop and implement effective market segmentation and targeting. Besides that, strategic market segmentation may attract and convince the tourists to stay longer in Langkawi which then will increase the maximum profit of tourism in Langkawi. Conclusion drawn from this study should be considered in light of limitation imposed by small sample size. In order to be able to draw more conclusive conclusions, the study should be in a large sample size. This will then provide a more detail profile of tourist and motivation for this market and enable a more generalise application finding.

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