

Prioritization of Pull Factors of Malaysia as a Destination for Iranian Tourists

Ramin Asadi

Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences

Institute of Geography

E-mail: Ra_asadi@yahoo.com

Tel: +989123997845

Mahmoud Daryaei

E-mail: Mah_daryaei@yahoo.com

Tel: +989141150816

Abstract

Researches show that a large number of Iranian tourists choose Malaysia as a destination. In this study the pull factors of Iranian tourists were recognized referring to secondary information existing in literature review and Delphi model and via the same model 5 criteria were recognized in order to analyze these factors and then these criteria were weighted by pair-wise comparison method.

This study is of applied type and its statistical population consists of tour leaders of 100 companies engaged in providing tour packages of Malaysia all around Iran. The reason to select these people as statistical population is their familiarity with desires and interests of tourists and pull factors in Malaysia. In order to determine sample size Morgan Table was used and the result was 80 sample size chosen via random method among randomly selected tour leaders.

On the basis of acquired results education is the main factor to attract Iranian tourists. This fact shows the development of education tourism in Malaysia. Also factors like modern attractions, open social space and standard accommodation besides variety tourism attractions have high importance rank. The distance between the country of origin and destination country (low accessibility) besides tropical climate have negative effect in attracting Iranian tourist to Malaysia.

Keywords: Pull Factors, Iranian Tourist, Malaysia Tourism, TOPSIS, Prioritization

1. Introduction

The new millennium and the coming decades are a crucial time for the relationship between travel and tourism and sustainable development. The need to preserve the world's inherent assets for future generations is becoming an imperative goal not only for travel and tourism, but also for all other industries that use the earth's natural resources [1].

Tourism has emerged as one of the major industries in the world economy. Tourism revenues have grown to the third largest industry after oil and automobiles. This sector constitutes nearly 10% of the world gross income, 8% of world exports and up to 35% of world trade in services. The number of tourists' journeys increased from 25 million in 1950 to 700 million in 2003, and is predicted to reach

1.6 billion in 2020 (WTTC, 2006). Many countries attempt to develop tourism sector and increase the number of incoming visitors because of several reasons: international tourists bring foreign currency to the host country; tourism sector is much more merciful toward environment than many industries producing goods; and growth in tourism industry accelerates other related industries (retail, entertainment and Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia transportation). As with other countries in the world, tourism industry can be claimed as an important sector for the Malaysian economy. It has been identified as the second largest foreign exchange earning sector and helped to strengthen the economy. The number of visitors from Western continent, North America and particularly the Gulf region has raised phenomenally in the recent year led the Tourism Malaysia's to woo more visitors from these continent and region [2].

Until the 1970s, tourism was not regarded as an important economic activity in Malaysia. Malaysia remained a relatively unknown destination, while other countries in the region such as Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia built on their established reputations as mass tourism destinations. During the 1980s, tourism became an increasingly important industry worldwide. Investment in new facilities and capital equipment reached around \$US 350 million per year, representing 7.3 per cent of total worldwide capital investments. Almost 6.5 per cent of the world's workforce were employed by the industry. Among the main reasons for this growth were increased personal income and leisure time, improvement in international transportation systems and greater public awareness of other parts of the world due to improved communications.

These developments were felt by Malaysia as well as other countries. Recognizing that tourism can play a role in economic and social development, as well as in fostering national integration and unity, the Malaysian government undertook a series of positive initiatives to stimulate the development of the tourism sector [3].

Nowadays Tourism has resulted to economic growth of Malaysia. Year by year, number of international tourist arrivals to Malaysia showing an upward trend and this supported with the country's political stability, besides several program and package introduce by the Malaysian government to encourage international tourist visit Malaysia. Malaysia recorded 23.65 million tourist arrivals last year in 2009, higher than the 22.05 million arrivals in 2008 and the scaled-down target of 19 million set for last year due to the global economic downturn. The top 10 tourist-generating markets for Malaysia last year were Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Brunei, China, India, Australia, Philippines, United Kingdom and Japan. The Malaysian tourism industry will continue to grow rapidly in coming years on the back of increasing promotional activities by the government and growing reputation of the country as a shopping hub [4].

Ever since the September 11 event, Malaysia has become an oasis for tourists from the Middle East as it is able to provide a safe haven for Muslim tourists as an alternative to their traditional escapade to London (and Western Europe) during their hot and humid summer months. The West Asian market is a lucrative and much sought-after market as they are reportedly high spenders [5].

The country has endless stretches of white sandy beaches, including some 700 kilometers of almost deserted coastline on the east coast of peninsular Malaysia and literally hundreds of tropical islands away from the popular, traditional circuits. It is an ecotourist's paradise boasting 19 national parks, jungles, hill resorts and Southeast Asia's highest mountain, Mount Kinabalu in the East Malaysia/Borneo state of Sabah. In addition it is a harmonious blend of centuries-old cultures, arts and traditions, and of multi-racial and multi-ethnic communities [6].

The National Ecotourism Plan was developed to provide a more integrated approach to achieve specific national objectives, such as those contained in the Five Year Plans and other documents, within the field of ecotourism. It should contribute towards producing a more distinctive Malaysian tourism image and identity and contribute towards direct involvement of local populations, enhanced training, interagency and inter-sectoral cooperations, most importantly, fostering environmental protection and preservation.

World Heritage Listing is a form of branding that will inevitably attract more tourists to the area upon listing, especially if the sites are already tourism attractions in their own right. The economic potential of the World Heritage Site branding makes it attractive for budget airlines to operate routes to such destinations from regional hubs such as Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru and Bangkok [7]. According to the World Heritage list at UNESCO World Heritage Centre, there are 4 heritage sites in Malaysia, namely: Gunung Mulu National Park and Kinabalu Park as Natural sites, Melaka (Historic City of the Straits of Malacca) and George Town (Historic City of the Straits of Malacca) as Cultural sites [9].

Although ecotourism is still a niche market, its growth rate in the Asia-Pacific region is phenomenal, averaging between 10 – 25 % annually [8]. Malaysia has the potential to become a top of the list destination for ecotourism. It is one of the world's 12 mega diversity areas blessed with a variety of mangroves, swamps, mountains, coral reefs, limestone and caves [10].

Like its Asean neighbors, Malaysia too regards tourism as a very important sector that brings the much-needed foreign exchange, new jobs and businesses. Heritage tourism, classified as a subclass of cultural tourism by the World Tourism Organization, has been identified and spelt out in the new Tourism Policy by the Tourism Ministry as one of the new niche products to be developed extensively for the next ten years. Paralleled with the growing interest in heritage tourism and the global influx of the alternative tourists, tourist arrivals in the Malaysian heritage cities, especially Penang and Malacca, have improved over the years. Despite this, the real potential of culture and heritage as tourism resources is not fully realized. They are not well attended and only started to be appreciated. In Malaysia, heritage and culture has also been identified as new niche products to be developed extensively in tourism development. Cultural vibrancy is clearly manifested in the ongoing and successful “Malaysia: Truly Asia” promotional drive by the country's promotion arm, Tourism Malaysia. In this promotion, Malaysia boasts to host a wide variety of Asian ethnic groups that making it into a little Asia. Malaysia also has distinctive multicultural architectural heritage with strong Islamic, Chinese and Western influences; all of which have been portrayed in the heritage buildings. The major heritage elements; historic building, historical sites and unique local cultures are commonly found in many historic cities throughout Malaysia. An inventory has revealed that 30,000 heritage buildings are located in 162 cities throughout Malaysia [11].

For January–September 2008 period, the mass of tourist arrivals to Malaysia was from the Southeast Asia region (74%), in which tourists from Singapore formed the largest group, followed by Indonesia and Thailand. Between 2007 to September 2008, the biggest increase was recorded by the arrivals of the Iranian tourists, which grew by 62.3%. [12].

In tourism research motivation has been a common area of study. pull motives are those that affect the option regarding the place to visit and are related to the attributes of the destination [13]. According to Gnoth (1997), the need for holidays depends on wishes such as self actualization, self-esteem and social status. Based on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, the tourist builds his/her own perceptions [14]. As Gnoth (1997) refers, perceptions about a destination can be reduced to a behavioral or cognitive perspective [15].

Appropriate actions have been proposed, to place Malaysia as one of the major exporters in education tourism industry, parallel with its vision to become an international centre of excellence for education beyond year 2020. Currently, there are 20 public universities, 33 private universities and university colleges, 4 foreign university branch campuses, 27 polytechnics, 59 community colleges and about 500 private colleges. The increasing numbers may also contribute to the assimilation of cultures and civilization among the foreign and local students. Indirectly, there will be closer relationships between Malaysia and other countries. Today, Malaysia already has a varied international student population of more than 70,000 from countries such as China, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Iran, Maldives, Nigeria, Sudan, Yemen, India, Botswana, Thailand, Saudi Arabia and many more. Its market share for international students was ranked 11th in the world as a destination among international students [16]. So one of the main pull factors of Malaysia is education factor.

2. Materials and Methods

The present study is of descriptive research type. It is considered as applied type in terms of objective. The present study is of survey research type in terms of collection of information and data has been made through studying books and documents. For obtaining necessary information at this study, required data have been collected through library-based studies, questionnaire and obtaining data from resources and documents (for provision of study theoretical fundamentals).

2.1. Research Model

In the first phase by referring to the literature review and Delphi method, pull factors of Malaysia as a destination for Iranian tourists are determined. Then by the same method five criteria are determined for analyzing these factors and by pair-wise comparison these factors are weighted.

In the next step, TOPSIS method is used for ranking the importance of 22 pull factors of Malaysia.

2.2. Statistical Population, Sample Size and Sampling Method

All tour leaders are statistical population of the preset study. In this study the statistical population consists of 100 tour leaders of companies engaged in the field of providing tour packages of Malaysia in all around Iran. The reason to select these people is their familiarity with motives and desires of tourists travel to Malaysia. sample size is calculated by application of Morgan table and in this study amounts to 80 persons.

2.3. Validity & Reliability, Measuring Tools

Provided initial questionnaire was given to university professors and experts in charge, with the aim of presenting their views on validity of questionnaire and whether questions posed at the questionnaire are appropriate or not. Necessary changes were made at questions on the basis of viewpoints of lecturers and officials in charge.

Cronbach's Alpha [17]. Test was used for testing reliability of questionnaire of study. For this reason, 82 study questionnaires were distributed among statistical population (individuals set for this study). Then each answer was studied individually and response rate of each question was calculated. In the same direction, Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test was made through the application of SPSS software package. Generally, test reliability rate was obtained 792% at large.

2.4. Method of Analysis

2.4.1. Delphi

Delphi method starts with identification of the problem and selected experts (Delphi panel) based on their experiment related to the defined problem. A questionnaire is designed and distributed to the Delphi panel. Then data is collected and analyzed to reach consensus in responses. If the respondents have reached consensus a report is developed based on responses, if not, a new questionnaire is developed based on the results of the previous round and again distributed to the panel. This process is repeated until consensus is reached and based on which a final report is developed [18].

2.4.2. Weighting the Criteria

The basic procedure to carry out the pair-wise comparison consists of prioritization of criteria by pair-wise comparison (weighing). Rating the relative priority of the criteria is done by assigning a weight between 1 (equal importance) and 9 (extreme importance) to the more important criterion, whereas the value reciprocal to that is assigned to the other criterion in the pair. The weightings are then assigned a number and averaged in order to obtain an average weight for each criterion [19].

2.4.3. TOPSIS

For ranking and selecting the most appropriate suppliers TOPSIS method is more appropriate due to the following reasons:

In this technique, due to permission of desirability exchange between the attributes, it is possible to improve a supplier performance through its comparative advantage in some areas, despite its poor performance in other cases. In TOPSIS decision making technique, interaction effect of attributes is considered. This technique also considers Conflict and compatibility between attributes [20, 21, 22] TOPSIS decision making technique is less sensitive compared to weighting technique. Considering the statistical populations covered in this study, compensating models and its constructive subgroup, TOPSIS technique, is used for evaluating and ranking the suppliers [23].

2.5. Reorganization and Weighting of Evaluative Criteria

Referring to literature review and research background, 5 criteria are recognized for analysis of pull factors of Malaysia as a destination for Iranian tourists and then by administration of questionnaire, aspects and ideas of tourism and geography experts are acquired. Then weight of each criterion is calculated on the basis of pair-wise comparison.

Matrix of pair-wise comparison of decision makers is calculated by using geometric mean as follows:

In this method after completing pair-wise comparison matrix, first geometric mean of each line of matrix is calculated; in the second phase the present column is normalized by dividing each attribute to the sum of present attributes.

The new column matrix is the matrix of weight of the indexes of the considered problem. Below the mathematical form of this method is provided:

$$\begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & \dots & a_{1n} \\ \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ a_{n1} & \dots & a_{nn} \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow{1} \begin{bmatrix} \sqrt[n]{a_{11} \dots a_{1n}} \\ \cdot \\ \cdot \\ \sqrt[n]{a_{n1} \dots a_{nn}} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \pi_1 \\ \cdot \\ \cdot \\ \pi_2 \end{bmatrix} \xrightarrow{2} \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\pi_1}{\sum_{i=1}^n \pi_i} \\ \cdot \\ \cdot \\ \frac{\pi_1}{\sum_{i=1}^n \pi_i} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} W_1 \\ \cdot \\ \cdot \\ W_n \end{bmatrix}$$

In this research 5 basic criteria are recognized to analyze the pull factors of Malaysia as a destination for Iranian tourists, which are shown in the matrix of pair-wise comparison (Table 1).

Table 1: Matrix of Pair-wise comparison of basic criteria

Criteria	Number of tourists	Amount of expenditure	Length of stay	Second visit	Encouraging others
Number of tourists	1	0.5	1.6	3.5	4.7
Amount of expenditure		1	2.4	2.7	2.2
Length of stay			1	3.1	1.8
Second visit				1	
Encouraging others					1

After forming the model in expert choice and importing the matrix of pair-wise comparison, the weight of criteria and sub-criteria was calculated as shown below. Table 2 shows the prioritization of the pull factors of Malaysia as a destination for Iranian tourists which are determined on the basis of AHP method (expert choice software). As shown in table 2 amount of expenditure is the most important criteria with relative weight equal to 0.343. So, it is the most affective factor among all important factors in strategic decision-making of Iranian tourists, and number of tourists with relative

weight equal to 0.292 is in the next priority. Consistency rate of pair-wise comparison is equal to 0.06 which is acceptable, because it's lower than 0.10.

Table 2: Weighting the basic criteria

Row	Basic criteria	Weight	Priority
1	Number of tourists	0.292	2
2	Amount of expenditure	0.343	1
3	Length of stay	0.179	3
4	Second visit	0.076	5
5	Encouraging others	0.11	4

In table 3 matrix of decision and in table 4 matrix prepared in the basis of five criteria stated above and 22 pull factors about Malaysia as a destination for Iranian tourists, which are prioritized by TOPSIS (2005) software and Excel are shown.

Table 3: Decision matrix

Row	Pull factors	Number of tourists	Amount of expenditure	Length of stay	Second visit	Encouraging others
1	Low expenses in destinations	25	23.6	22.80	26.3	36.30
2	Accessibility to get visa	32.4	34.8	27.8	30.00	26.80
3	Hospitable people in destination	35	16.8	21.00	27.8	31.60
4	Quality of services	46.7	23.6	33.70	22.65	43.60
5	Modern attractions	74	25.26	45.00	53	56.30
6	Suitable accommodating	55.2	32	42.84	47.2	42.60
7	Variety of attractions	52.6	33.8	40.00	43.5	41.20
8	Social security	18.5	44	27.00	28.5	21.00
9	Cultural attractions	25	34.7	33.00	37.4	32.10
10	Festivals and events	30.24	36.8	36.80	28.4	36.30
11	Public health and hygiene	50	36	38.50	40	37.20
12	Religious, cultural and language similarities	24	48	28.00	25	31.00
13	Climate	15.7	55.6	22.60	16.8	15.90
14	Performing activities which are not available in the country of origin	65	27	45.20	52	48.70
15	Cheap shopping	22.7	45.9	30.00	33.6	27.50
16	Visiting the places which are shown in the films	33.7	40.8	28.26	32	27.40
17	Economic and political close relationships	24	56	27.00	28.5	21.00
18	Suitable transportation system	27	53	30.40	32	24.70
19	A destination with high prestige	34.7	35.70	32.60	30.00	34.00
20	Accessibility	22.50	63.00	18.40	22.40	16.20
21	Natural attractions	31.7	38.4	34	43	36
22	Education tourism	72	23	54.7	62.4	53.8

Table 4: Table of normalized decision matrix

Row	Pull factors	Number of tourists	Amount of expenditure	Length of stay	Second visit	Encouraging others
1	Low expenses in destinations	0.0306	0.0285	0.0317	0.0345	0.0490
2	Accessibility to get visa	0.0396	0.0420	0.0386	0.0393	0.0362
3	Hospitable people in destination	0.0428	0.0203	0.0292	0.0365	0.0426
4	Quality of services	0.0571	0.0285	0.0468	0.0297	0.0588
5	Modern attractions	0.0905	0.0305	0.0625	0.0695	0.0760
6	Suitable accommodating	0.0675	0.0387	0.0595	0.0619	0.0575
7	Variety of attractions	0.0643	0.0408	0.0556	0.0571	0.0556

Table 4: Table of normalized decision matrix (continued)

8	Social security	0.0226	0.0532	0.0375	0.0374	0.0283
9	Cultural attractions	0.0306	0.0419	0.0459	0.0491	0.0433
10	Festivals and events	0.0370	0.0445	0.0511	0.0372	0.0490
11	Public health and hygiene	0.0612	0.0435	0.0535	0.0525	0.0502
12	Religious, cultural and language similarities	0.0294	0.0580	0.0389	0.0328	0.0418
13	Climate	0.0192	0.0672	0.0314	0.0220	0.0215
14	Performing activities which are not available in the country of origin	0.0795	0.0326	0.0628	0.0682	0.0657
15	Cheap shopping	0.0278	0.0555	0.0417	0.0441	0.0371
16	Visiting the places which are shown in the films	0.0412	0.0493	0.0393	0.0420	0.0370
17	Economic and political close relationships	0.0294	0.0677	0.0375	0.0374	0.0283
18	Suitable transportation system	0.0330	0.0640	0.0422	0.0420	0.0333
19	A destination with high prestige	0.0424	0.0431	0.0453	0.0393	0.0459
20	Accessibility	0.0275	0.0761	0.0256	0.0294	0.0219
21	Natural attractions	0.0388	0.0464	0.0472	0.0564	0.0486
22	Education tourism	0.0881	0.0278	0.0760	0.0818	0.0726

Table 5: Weighted normalized decision matrix

Row	Pull factors	Number of tourists	Amount of expenditure	Length of stay	Second visit	Encouraging others
1	Low expenses in destinations	0.0089	0.0098	0.0057	0.0026	0.0054
2	Accessibility to get visa	0.0116	0.0144	0.0069	0.0030	0.0040
3	Hospitable people in destination	0.0125	0.0070	0.0052	0.0028	0.0047
4	Quality of services	0.0167	0.0098	0.0084	0.0023	0.0065
5	Modern attractions	0.0264	0.0105	0.0112	0.0053	0.0084
6	Suitable accommodating	0.0197	0.0133	0.0107	0.0047	0.0063
7	Variety of attractions	0.0188	0.0140	0.0100	0.0043	0.0061
8	Social security	0.0066	0.0182	0.0067	0.0028	0.0031
9	Cultural attractions	0.0089	0.0144	0.0082	0.0037	0.0048
10	Festivals and events	0.0108	0.0152	0.0092	0.0028	0.0054
11	Public health and hygiene	0.0179	0.0149	0.0096	0.0040	0.0055
12	Religious, cultural and language similarities	0.0086	0.0199	0.0070	0.0025	0.0046
13	Climate	0.0056	0.0230	0.0056	0.0017	0.0024
14	Performing activities which are not available in the country of origin	0.0232	0.0112	0.0112	0.0052	0.0072
15	Cheap shopping	0.0081	0.0190	0.0075	0.0033	0.0041
16	Visiting the places which are shown in the films	0.0120	0.0169	0.0070	0.0032	0.0041
17	Economic and political close relationships	0.0086	0.0232	0.0067	0.0028	0.0031
18	Suitable transportation system	0.0096	0.0220	0.0076	0.0032	0.0037
19	A destination with high prestige	0.0124	0.0148	0.0081	0.0030	0.0050
20	Accessibility	0.0080	0.0261	0.0046	0.0022	0.0024
21	Natural attractions	0.0113	0.0159	0.0085	0.0043	0.0053
22	Education tourism	0.0257	0.0095	0.0136	0.0062	0.0080

Table 6: Prioritization of the pull factors by TOPSIS method

Row	Pull factors	d-	d+	d-+d+	CL	Priority
1	Low expenses in destinations	0.017	0.01997	0.0370	0.4597	9
2	Accessibility to get visa	0.01349	0.01873	0.0322	0.4187	11
3	Hospitable people in destination	0.02052	0.01702	0.0375	0.5466	8
4	Quality of services	0.02051	0.01223	0.0327	0.6265	6
5	Modern attractions	0.02776	0.00436	0.0321	0.8643	2

Table 6: Prioritization of the pull factors by TOPSIS method - continued

6	Suitable accommodating	0.02064	0.00999	0.0306	0.6737	4
7	Variety of attractions	0.01924	0.0114	0.0306	0.6279	5
8	Social security	0.00834	0.02462	0.0330	0.2529	17
9	Cultural attractions	0.01311	0.02024	0.0333	0.3931	14
10	Festivals and events	0.01328	0.01879	0.0321	0.4141	12
11	Public health and hygiene	0.01776	0.01289	0.0306	0.5796	7
12	Religious, cultural and language similarities	0.00767	0.02362	0.0313	0.2451	18
13	Climate	0.00324	0.0285	0.0317	0.1020	21
14	Performing activities which are not available in the country of origin	0.02476	0.00601	0.0308	0.8047	3
15	Cheap shopping	0.0084	0.02335	0.0318	0.2645	16
16	Visiting the places which are shown in the films	0.01171	0.01941	0.0311	0.3763	15
17	Economic and political close relationships	0.00487	0.02587	0.0307	0.1584	20
18	Suitable transportation system	0.00681	0.02397	0.0308	0.2212	19
19	A destination with high prestige	0.01398	0.01761	0.0316	0.4426	10
20	Accessibility	0.00249	0.02894	0.0314	0.0793	22
21	Natural attractions	0.01294	0.01865	0.0316	0.4096	13
22	Education tourism	0.02851	0.00269	0.0312	0.9137	1

2.6. Interpretation of the Table

Referring to 5 criteria weighted by pair-wise comparison matrix and TOPSIS model the ranking table of pull factors of Malaysia as a destination for Iranian tourists represents that education factor weighted 0.9137 is the most important factor for Iranian tourists.

Modern attractions (0.8643), reforming activities which are not available in the country of origin (0.8047), suitable accommodation (0.6737), variety of attractions (0.6279) respectively are of high importance for tourists travel to Malaysia. Likewise, this table shows that accessibility (0.0793) and climate(0.1020) are less important factors.

Conclusion

Scientific developments and establishment of international universities in Malaysia resulted to attract tourists interested in education. Confirmation of some Malaysian universities by Science Ministry Of Iran, existence of courses which Iranian tourists are interested in, and easy acceptance of students by universities attract many tourists.

Likewise, the existence of modern attractions and standard infrastructures, social open space that make this country comfortable for Iranians are the other important factors for Iranian tourists to select Malaysia as a destination.

Cheap accommodations built according to international standards, variety of attractions, and providing high quality services are the other attractive factors for the Iranian. Suitable public health and hygiene besides tourist attractions and presentation of cheap tour packages are the other important factors to attract Iranian tourists to Malaysia.

Living of different religious followers in the same space, hospitable people of destination country besides the accessibility to visa have had effect on Iranian tourists decide to select Malaysia as a destination. In the last years scientific and commercial seminars and conferences and also different festivals in Malaysia have attracted many international tourists. Adjacency of Malaysia to equator and suitable geographical position have created Peculiar and original natural attractions and unique wildlife that are of average importance for Iranian tourists.

Cultural attractions and local communities are the other affective factors to attract tourists, too. The results of this survey show that distance between the country of origin and destination (low accessibility) besides tropical air and high humidity have negative effect in attracting Iranian tourists to Malaysia specially in summer.

Reference

- [1] World Travel & Tourism Council, International Hotel & Restaurant Association, International Federation of Tour Operators, International Council of Cruise Lines and United Nations Environment Programme, (2002). *Industry as a partner for sustainable development*. United Kingdom.
- [2] Mohd Hanafiah, M.H. & Mohd Harun, M.F. (2010). Tourism Demand in Malaysia: A cross-sectional pool time-series analysis. *International Journal of Trade, Economics and Finance*. Vol. 1, No. 1, June, 2010.
- [3] Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism of Malaysia. National Ecotourism Plan, Malaysia, 1996.
- [4] LOGANATHAN, NANTHAKUMAR and YAHAYA IBRAHIM (2010). Forecasting International Tourism Demand in Malaysia Using Box Jenkins Sarima Application. *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, Vol. 3, Number 2, 2010.
- [5] Hamzah, A. (2004). POLICY AND PLANNING OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN MALAYSIA. The 6th. ADRF General Meeting, 2004 Bangkok, Thailand.
- [6] WORLD TRAVEL & TOURISM COUNCIL: MALAYSIA THE IMPACT OF TRAVEL & TOURISM ON JOBS AND THE ECONOMY (2002).
- [7] Hall, C.M. and Piggin, R. (2003) World Heritage Sites: Managing The Brand, in Fyall, A., Garrod, B. and Leask, A. (2003) *Managing Visitor Attractions: New Directions*, Elsevier: Oxford., pp. 204 – 219.
- [8] UNESCO World Heritage Centre website, <http://whc.unesco.org>, 23 July 2010.
- [9] Hall, C.M. and Lew, A. (1998) (eds.) *Sustainable Tourism: A Geographical Perspective*, Harlow: Addison-Wesley Longman.
- [10] Marker, M.A., Blanco, A., Lokanathan, S., Verma, A. (2008). Ecotourism In Malaysia. Project for pp5279: clusters and national competitiveness, Lee Kuan Yew school of public policy.
- [11] Idid, S.Z.A. (1996). Conservation of the Heritage Cityscape (in Malay), Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia Heritage Trust.
- [12] Malaysia, Ministry of Higher Education, 2008. Jadual 1.4: Enrolmen Pelajar Antarabangsa Di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Awam Dan Swasta Mengikut Negara Asal, Tahun, 2003-2007.
- [13] Lundberg (1990). *The tourist business* (6th ed.). Van Nostrand Reinhold: New York.
- [14] Gartner, W. C. (1993). Image formation process. In M. Uysal & D. R. Fesenmaier (Eds.), *Communication and Channel Systems in Tourism Marketing* (pp. 191-215). New York: Haworth Press.
- [15] Gnoth, J. (1997). Tourism motivation and expectation formation. *Annals Tourism Research*, 24 (2), 283-304.
- [16] Hisham, M.B. and M.D. Norzaidi, 2009. Strategic Alignment of Strategies Information System Planning (SISP) Success: An Exploratory Study in Public University in Malaysia, *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 2: 76-87.
- [17] Bland J.M., Altman D.G. (1997). Statistics notes: Cronbach's alpha. *BMJ*, 314:572.
- [18] Pill, J. (1971). The Delphi method: Substance, context, a critique and an annotated bibliography. *Socio-Economic Planning Science*, 5: 57-71.
- [19] Saaty, T.L. (1990). How to make a decision: The Analytic Hierarchy Process. *European Journal of Operational Research* (48).
- [20] Triantaphyllou E. (2000). *Multi-Criteria Decision Making Methods: A Comparative Study* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, Netherlands): 5-201.

- [21] Ho W, Xu X & Dey P. K. (2010). Multi-criteria decision making approaches for supplier evaluation and selection: A literature review. *Eu J of O R*, 202: 16-24.
- [22] Shih H S, Shyur H J & Lee E. S. (2007). An extension of TOPSIS for group decision making, *Math and Com Mod*, 45: 801-813.
- [23] Manikrao Athawale, V., Chakraborty, S. (2010). A TOPSIS Method-based Approach to Machine Tool Selection. Proceedings of the 2010 International Conference of Industrial Engineering and operations Management Dhaka, Bangladesh, January 9-10, 2010, India.