

THE INTEREST OF INDONESIAN TOURIST TOWARDS OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF INTEREST TO TRAVEL AND TOURIST ATTRACTION

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Abstract. Indonesia is experiencing a growing number of passionate travelers who are eager to explore destinations beyond their own country's borders. This paper explores the reasons that attract Indonesian tourists to explore different Asian destinations, shedding light on the importance of access, cultural immersion, cost considerations, and currency exchange rates in shaping their travel experiences. This research paper aims to uncover the reasons why Indonesian tourists are drawn to visit various Asian countries. The study is based on data collected using a quantitative approach and descriptive statistical analysis from 183 individuals who had traveled to several Asian countries in the past year. The analysis of data that has been processed portrays factors what motivate Indonesian tourists and what factors they consider when planning their trips, including ease of access to facilities and obtaining information about the countries they visited, interest in understanding the culture of the destination country and actively participating in it. Additionally, the cost of living in the destination country is a critical aspect of their travel considerations. These findings provide valuable insights for both travelers and the tourism industry, offering a basis for well-informed decisions and improved travel experiences in the future.

Keywords: Travel, Tourist Attraction, Cultural Heritage, Socioeconomics

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Indonesian Tourists Characteristic in the past five years

In recent years, there has been a notable increase in the number of Indonesians traveling abroad, as more and more of their countrymen discover new places. And it is reported by the Indonesian Bureau of Statistics, an astonishing number of 3.54 million Indonesians traveled Internationally [BPS]. This number has a significant increase, doubling its number compared to last year, this number also represents a mark of impact that happened after the post-pandemic recovery travel restrictions had been lifted.

According to Data Indonesia, with more than 380 respondents and recorded that most of the destination is Singapore. Following that Malaysia, Japan, and Arab Saudi. This trend has been rising each year since the last five years. And for the past five years, international tourists that are coming to Indonesia are mostly from Singapore, Malaysia, China, Australia, and South Korea. Most of the international tourists that are coming to Indonesia are from Asian countries background, and attracted by the beauty and the diversity of culture that Indonesia have.

1.2. Indonesian Tourists Travel Motivations

Participating and watching different cultures form our background is a part of humans' natural tendencies to be curious, especially with the intense globalization and internationalization that has made it easier to reach other countries. Aside from that, humans are fueled with curiosity and with that drive, we are yearning to immerse

ourselves with diverse cultures and global knowledge. This drive, this fuel for exploration, is what propels us across continents and oceans, seeking not just sun-kissed beaches and towering skylines, but the very essence of what it means to be human in a million different shades. Every whispered greeting in a language we're still deciphering, every unfamiliar spice dancing on our tongue, every shared smile across a cultural divide – these are the brushstrokes that paint a fuller picture of our global tapestry, weaving us inextricably into the fabric of humanity. In a world where understanding breeds tolerance and connection, travel isn't just a luxury, but it has become a necessity for humans.

According to Csikszentmihalyi (2016), there are a few travel motivation models. People traveling due to external pressures like obligation, duty, or even leisure expectations (like shopping with a partner) sit lower on the "intrinsic motivation" scale. Conversely, those who choose to travel for personal enjoyment, discovery, or cultural immersion land higher on this scale. Interestingly, these motivations can intertwine: a forced trip might spark genuine love for a place, while a relaxation vacation could unexpectedly lead to business opportunities. So, while one motive typically dominates a travel experience, both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons can often play a role, sometimes even simultaneously.

Attraction towards cultural heritage has also been connected by many researchers in the past. A few examples of researches that have discussed and showed how cultural differences had become a motivation for tourists to visit other countries. Studies show cultural differences in bird-watching tourism motivations. Tourist's racial background is also can create emphasis on their cultural roots according to Yan (2019), tourists from asian backgrounds tend to have bigger participation in religious or ethic festival. These festivals and cultural celebrations have deep roots on cultural heritage, tourists who belong to the same cultural group tend to join cultural-related festivals, correspondingly, tourists who do not belong to the same ethic or cultural group joined these cultural celebrations with the purpose to learn different cultures.

This motivation and traveling style can differ for different race groups as well. For example, Asians, like the Chinese tend to be driven by relationship building and cultural learning, possibly due to Confucian respect for history and elders. Westerners, in contrast, like Anglo-Americans, prefer solo travel and outdoor challenges. This difference extends to activity preferences, with finding Chinese students less interested in active recreation compared to Australians, potentially due to cultural differences in valuing such activities. Understanding these cultural influences is crucial for bird-watching tourism.

This study seeks to examine the main causes of this trend, concentrating on Indonesians' preference for visiting other Asian nations, utilizing data from 2022. The study explores the reasons, inclinations, and cultural pursuits that lead to Indonesians' growing interest in traveling abroad. The information from 2022 shows a steady rise in the number of Indonesians traveling overseas each year, with nearby Asian nations including Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, Macau, and Thailand becoming popular travel destinations [British Council]. This ascending trend represents a shifting mindset among Indonesians, with travel becoming an integral part of their lifestyle.

1.3. South-east Asia as a Tourists Destination

A thorough survey indicates that a considerable proportion of Indonesians are quite interested in the cultures of other countries. Of the respondents, 42% said they were "very interested" in visiting abroad, while an astounding 72% said they were at least "somewhat interested." (British Council) This percentage is notably lower than in many other ASEAN nations, indicating that there may be particular reasons driving Indonesian travelers' choices. One prominent factor that draws Indonesians to other Asian nations is their rich cultural variety. The complex tapestry of cultures, customs, and experiences that these locations provide enthrall Indonesian tourists. The study explores the unique cultural features that entice Indonesians to various locations, illuminating the significance of cultural discovery in fostering personal development. One measure of a nation's competitiveness in the tourist sector is how much its culture has contributed to its

industry's growth. In order to draw visitors and promote itself as superior to other locations, a destination typically uses its most noticeable photos (Kumar, 2024).

The attraction of neighboring Asian nations occupies a particular place in the hearts of Indonesians, who are traveling abroad more and more frequently. This thorough examination of Indonesian travelers' travel habits highlights how important cultural curiosity is in determining their choices. In the dynamic world of international tourism, understanding these trends is crucial for businesses, politicians, and players in the tourism industry looking to meet the changing expectations of Indonesian tourists.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The effect of Tourist Accessibility on Intention to Travel

According to recent case study with Tana Toraja as subject to identify intention to visit, one of the variables considered is accessibility (Wahim et al., 2023). Accessibility can be defined as an element of external transportation, which help tourists to reached the designated spot. Accessibility affects interest to travel because it determines the ease and convenience with which tourists can reach a destination. Accessibility can be measured and determined with various variables from the number of transportation, quality of the transportation, and the distance of the location. And most importantly is the service centers related to time and costs. Good accessibility, involving efficient transportation networks and quality infrastructure, reduces travel time and cost, making a destination more attractive to potential visitors. Improved accessibility enhances tourist satisfaction, as they can easily explore various attractions. This positive experience increases the likelihood of tourists revisiting the destination, fostering tourist loyalty. Accessibility also addresses diverse needs, such as those of families, seniors, and people with disabilities, ensuring a broader appeal and inclusivity in tourism.

2.2. The effect of Cultural Heritage on Intention to Travel

The Authenticity of cultural heritage influenced and sparked traveling intention (Nilsson, 2015). Cultural heritage often influences individuals' interest in travel by sparking curiosity about different traditions, histories, and lifestyles. Exposure to diverse cultural backgrounds can create a desire to explore and experience new places, fostering a deeper appreciation for the richness of global heritage. It plays a multifaceted role in shaping tourist experiences and destination identities, though challenges related to authenticity and potential misuse exist. Study done by Nilsson compared the authenticity of cultural heritage from Hungary and Western Pomerania, which proves that even locals from both designated countries are seeking and preserving their cultural heritage.

2.3. The effect of Socioeconomic capability on Intention to Travel

The importance of socio-demographic characteristics as key determinants of tourist preferences and travel destination choices. Studies have identified factors like age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, and income as influencing lifestyle differences and travel motivations (Wijaya et al., 2018). For example, family status can significantly impact pull motivators. A study of Croatian families with children compared to married couples without children found that affordable prices, value-for-money offers, child-friendly services, and suitable accommodation became crucial decision factors for families. This suggests that other influencing factors like destination cleanliness, accessibility, safety, and infrastructure may also vary depending on tourist demographics.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research employed a quantitative approach, utilizing descriptive statistics, to investigate the travel patterns and preferences of Indonesian residents who had traveled to several Asian countries within the past year. The study population comprised individuals living in Indonesia, and the research sample, consisting of 183 respondents

from diverse backgrounds, was gathered using the snowball sampling method. Data collection involved the distribution of online questionnaires through Google Form. The research objects were assessed using the nominal scale, categorizing data without assigning quantitative values, focusing on attributes such as age, gender, and simple yes/no responses. Statistical analysis was facilitated by SPSS Statistics 26, and a significance level of 95% was established to ascertain statistical significance in the study's findings, ensuring that results were not a result of chance.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results

Table 1

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Men	88	48,1	48,1	48,1
	Women	95	51,9	51,9	100,0
	Total	183	100,0	100,0	

Based on the table above, the number of respondents who are accustomed to traveling is roughly equal between men and women. However, upon closer examination based on age groups, the table below that the age group spanning 18 to 25 years enjoy traveling the most.

Table 2

Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	> 35	39	21,3	21,3	21,3
	18 - 25	93	50,8	50,8	72,1
	26 - 35	51	27,9	27,9	100,0
	Total	183	100,0	100,0	

This finding aligns with prior research, which has consistently demonstrated that the travel behavior of individuals aged 18 to 25 is notably influenced by a strong desire for new experiences and relaxation. Furthermore, this age group exhibits a unique propensity to leverage online resources for trip planning and booking. This inclination towards digital channels is attributed to the pervasive impact of virtual tourism on travel intention among young adults. Notably, a study published in the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) database corroborates this trend, revealing that the number of users aged 18-25 who had experienced virtual travel exceeded those in other age groups, indicative of their heightened interest in travel (NCBI, 2022).

Table 3

Countries	Frequencies
Singapore	103
Malaysia	84
Thailand	58
Japan	76
South Korea	47
China	15

Philippines	4
Vietnam	16
Hongkong	36
Taiwan	6

Based on the frequency table above, the respondents have the ability to choose more than one destination country in Asia within the past year. Interestingly, a significant number of them opted for Singapore as one of their favorite destinations, with a frequency rate of 103. This indicates that Singapore is indeed a highly preferred destination among the respondents during that time period.

According to research findings, a significant portion of Indonesian travelers to Singapore in 2019, specifically 53%, cited their purpose for visiting as holidays, highlighting a robust inclination towards leisure travel among Indonesian tourists (Statista, 2019). Furthermore, an additional 17% of Indonesian travelers during that period visited Singapore to connect with friends and relatives, underlining the strong familial and social ties that contribute to travel between the two nations (Statista, 2019).

Singapore's appeal to Indonesians extends beyond leisure tourism. The city-state's modern healthcare facilities, world-class public transport system, and thriving job market have attracted many Indonesians. Some individuals have even chosen to pursue Singaporean citizenship due to the promise of better job opportunities and comprehensive packages, including full tuition, pre-departure training, living allowances, and educational support (SCMP, 2022).

In addition to these factors, the visa exemption for Indonesian passport holders for short stays in Singapore further enhances its appeal as a convenient destination for both leisure and business travel (MFA Singapore, n.d.). The urban landscape, safety, and cleanliness of Singapore further contribute to its attractiveness for Indonesians compared to other holiday options (MFA Singapore, n.d.).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
easily find adequate facilities in the destination country.	183	1	3	2,95	0,291
easily find information about activities in the destination country	183	1	3	2,90	0,365
experience language limitations in seeking information	183	1	3	1,57	0,822
satisfied with the availability of information about activities	183	1	3	2,87	0,438
find interesting activities in the destination country	183	2	3	2,94	0,238
Valid N (listwise)	183				

The table reveals that the highest rating, averaging at 2.95, pertains to the ease of locating various facilities in the destination country, showcasing a relatively low standard deviation of 0.291. Conversely, the lowest rating, indicating challenges faced by individuals encountering language barriers when seeking information, is scored at 1.57, accompanied by the highest standard deviation of 0.822.

Table 5

easily find adequate facilities in the destination country.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	3	1,6	1,6	1,6
	Maybe	4	2,2	2,2	3,8
	Yes	176	96,2	96,2	100,0
	Total	183	100,0	100,0	

In Table 5, it is evident that 96.2% of respondents found it easy to access facilities such as information, transportation, and accommodation in the destination country, while only 1.6% encountered difficulty in this regard.

Table 6

experience language limitations in seeking information					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	118	64,5	64,5	64,5
	Maybe	26	14,2	14,2	78,7
	Yes	39	21,3	21,3	100,0
	Total	183	100,0	100,0	

Table 6 highlights that 64.5% of respondents did not experience language limitations when seeking information about their destination country. However, 21.3% reported difficulties in accessing such information due to language barriers.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
interested in countries with a strong cultural presence	183	1	3	2,66	0,571
participating in cultural festivals can enhance understanding and appreciation of its cultural heritage	183	1	3	2,82	0,426

language limitations hinder from participating in or learning about the culture	183	1	3	1,74	0,796
interested in visiting historical tourist sites to learn about the culture	183	1	3	2,58	0,736
interested in participating in local culture when you are in the destination country	183	1	3	2,67	0,595
Valid N (listwise)	183				

The table demonstrates that the highest rating, with a score of 2.82, is associated with the belief that participating in cultural festivals enhances understanding and appreciation of the destination country's cultural heritage, with a relatively low standard deviation of 0.426. Conversely, the lowest rating, reflecting the perception that language limitations hinder participation and cultural learning, is scored at 1.74, accompanied by the highest standard deviation of 0.796.

Table 8

participating in cultural festivals to enhance understanding & appreciation of its cultural heritage					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	3	1,6	1,6	1,6
	Maybe	27	14,8	14,8	16,4
	Yes	153	83,6	83,6	100,0
	Total	183	100,0	100,0	

In Table 8, 83.6% of respondents agree that participating in cultural festivals enhances their understanding and appreciation of the destination country's cultural heritage, while 1.6% hold a differing view.

Table 9

language limitations hinder from participating in or learning about the culture					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	88	48,1	48,1	48,1
	Maybe	55	30,1	30,1	78,1
	Yes	40	21,9	21,9	100,0
	Total	183	100,0	100,0	

Table 9 reveals that 48.1% of respondents disagree that language limitations hinder their participation in and learning about other cultures, particularly the culture of the

destination country. However, 21.9% express that language limitations do pose obstacles to their engagement in and understanding of the destination country's culture.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
willing to bear the expenses for specific tourist locations	183	1	3	2,73	0,556
experience of visiting a foreign country is worth the cost	183	1	3	2,83	0,422
high currency exchange rate act as a barrier to traveling	183	1	3	2,05	0,860
financial situations influence choices of which country to visit	183	1	3	2,74	0,559
understanding the cost of living that you will incur in the destination country	183	1	3	2,93	0,315
Valid N (listwise)	183				

The table displays the highest rating, with a score of 2.93, attributed to individuals' understanding of the cost of living they will incur in the destination country, accompanied by a low standard deviation of 0.315. Conversely, the lowest rating, pertaining to concerns about high currency exchange rates acting as a barrier to travel to the destination country, is scored at 2.50, with the highest standard deviation of 0.860.

Table 11

high currency exchange rate act as a barrier to traveling					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	63	34,4	34,4	34,4
	Maybe	48	26,2	26,2	60,7
	Yes	72	39,3	39,3	100,0
	Total	183	100,0	100,0	

In Table 11, 39.3% of respondents agree that high currency exchange rates act as a barrier to travel, while 34.4% disagree with this perspective.

Table 12

understanding the cost of living that you will incur in the destination country					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	3	1,6	1,6	1,6
	Maybe	7	3,8	3,8	5,5
	Yes	173	94,5	94,5	100,0
	Total	183	100,0	100,0	

Table 12 indicates that 94.5% of respondents agree that they understand the cost of living they will incur in the destination country, while 1.6% express a lack of understanding regarding these living expenses.

4.2. Discussion

Firstly, the cultural and linguistic similarities between Singapore and Indonesia make this travel easier. Malay, which is similar to Indonesian, is used in Singapore as one of its official languages, allowing young Indonesians to communicate without significant language barriers.

Additionally, the ease of access and geographical proximity between the two countries is another attraction. Singapore is located very close to Indonesia, making the journey quick and affordable for young people who want to experience international adventures without spending a lot of time or money.

Singapore also offers a variety of tourist attractions and entertainment options, such as Marina Bay Sands, Universal Studios, and famous zoos. Festivals and cultural events that often blend elements of Malay/Indonesian culture make Singapore an enticing destination.

Beyond the above aspects, Singapore's strong economy and metropolitan lifestyle capture the interest of many young Indonesians who want to experience a different and dynamic way of life. This creates opportunities for them to learn about international culture and business and expand their career horizons.

Social connections and networking also play a crucial role since Singapore often serves as a gathering place for people from various nationalities, including many Indonesians. This provides opportunities for young Indonesians to meet and network with individuals from diverse backgrounds, which can be beneficial both personally and professionally.

In conclusion, the combination of cultural proximity, ease of access, educational and career opportunities, tourism appeal, lifestyle, and the chance to connect with a variety of people makes Singapore a popular destination for young Indonesians who want to explore the world and broaden their horizons.

CONCLUSION

For young Indonesians aged 18-25, Singapore serves as a gateway to the broader world of travel. Its undeniable proximity, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and cosmopolitan charm offer a comfortable and convenient introduction to international experiences. The city-state's emphasis on cleanliness, safety, and efficient management resonates with this generation's desire for a secure and enriching travel environment. However, Singapore acts as merely the first chapter in their evolving travel narratives, one increasingly characterized by a thirst for broader cultural immersion and diverse experiences.

This nascent wanderlust finds expression in ventures beyond the familiar confines of Singapore. Neighboring Malaysia beckons with its vibrant cultural tapestry, where

ancient temples and bustling markets offer a glimpse into a different way of life. While geographically close, Malaysia provides a welcome contrast in its diverse ethnicities and customs, allowing young Indonesians to explore a cultural landscape both familiar and intriguing. Beyond Southeast Asia, Japan emerges as a destination of stark contrast, captivating with its unique blend of gleaming modernity and serene traditional beauty. The opportunity to immerse oneself in the delicate elegance of cherry blossoms one moment and the vibrant neon pulse of Tokyo the next offers a thrilling cultural juxtaposition for these adventurous travelers. Thailand, with its kaleidoscope of experiences, adds another dimension to their travel tapestry. From the pulsating energy of its street life to the breathtaking landscapes and storied temples, Thailand provides a sensory feast that broadens their understanding of the world's diverse offerings.

As this study dealt with the interesting question of what motivates Indonesian tourist to go abroad, there are certain limitations. As the exploration of this phenomenon unfolds, researchers may delve into a more nuanced understanding of individual motivations, exploring deeper layers of cultural, socioeconomic, and personal factors that drive Indonesians to explore foreign destinations. Furthermore, future investigations could adopt a longitudinal approach, such as the tracking shifts in travel patterns and motivations over time to capture evolving trends. It is essential to recognize that motivations can be dynamic and subject to change due to external factors such as global events or shifts in societal values as time passed on.

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