

DETERMINANTS OF TRAVEL MOTIVATION: A PLS-SEM APPROACH TOWARDS MALDIVIANS TRAVELING OVERSEAS

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Over the past decades, tourism behavior has been studied extensively in terms of travel patterns, typologies and motivations that affect travel related decisions. In this study, push factors for motivation to travel outbound has been determined in the context of Maldivians residents living in the capital city, Male. Increasing number of Maldivians travelling to different destinations for many purposes, the main purpose of this research is to examine push factors that motivate Maldivians to travel overseas. However for travel motivation, these push factors must have positive impact in order for Maldivians to travel. A motivation model has been applied in this study with a quantitative design approach using non-probability convenience sampling method to collect 268 valid questionnaires. The findings shows that 'escape' as a factor has a strong significant prediction towards travel motivation whereas as a matter of 'prestige' for Maldivians does not affect their outbound travel motivation. As the findings are beneficial to marketing and managerial decision makers in Asia and elsewhere by indicating important push factors that they can apply for attracting visitors with such motives.

Keywords: Travel motivation; Push Factors; partial least squares (PLS); Maldives

INTRODUCTION

Travel motives determine the reasons why a tourist would select to visit a certain place or engage in a certain activity. People might travel to relax, escape, build relationships, explore culture and even experience something new. McGuire's psychological motives define a classification system of internal and external motives that are likely used in consumption situations (Kinley, Forney & Kim, 2012). Internal travel motivations include the need for autonomy and tension reduction, while external motivations include the need for stimulation, utilitarian benefit, expression and affiliation (McGuire, 1976). The Maldives, a low lying nation of 1,190 islands is located south of India and Sri Lanka (Kundur, 2012). The concept of sun, sea and sand are the key reasons why tourists flock to the high-end resorts of this nation where the climate is hot and humid with the sun shining year round through wet and dry seasons. Today, the islands that have been developed into resorts have increased to 110 as of the end of 2013 (Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Republic of Maldives, 2014).

Type of Establishment	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Nos	Beds	Nos	Beds	Nos	Beds	Nos	Beds	Nos	Beds
Resorts / Marinas	97	20,942	98	21,350	101	22,128	105	22,901	110	23,677
Hotels	15	1,368	17	1,449	19	1,603	19	1,627	19	1,626
Guest Houses	22	462	25	476	38	659	75	1,101	135	1,930
Safari Vessels	145	2,206	156	2,434	157	2,514	154	2,503	163	2,716
Total	279	24,978	296	25,709	315	26,904	353	28,132	427	29,949

Source: Ministry of Tourism

Figure 1 Accommodation Establishments and Bed Capacity, 2009-2013