

Factors Affecting Intention to Travel of People with Disabilities in Bangkok Metropolitan Region: A Preliminary Study

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were to analyze travel motivation factors and to identify the factors that influence intention to travel of Thai people with disabilities to the Bangkok metropolitan region. A total number of 420 responses of people with disabilities including people with mobility and physical impairments and people with hearing and communication disability, were analyzed by factor analysis followed by a multiple regression analysis. Results indicated that among the six travel motivation factors, only three factors, Information and activities, Seeking self-actualization, and Relationship Development, have a significant influence on their intention to travel. Practical implications and suggestion are further discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Travel Motivation, People with Disabilities, Intention to travel, Bangkok

Introduction

People with disabilities are among the most marginalized groups in the world. In general, they have poorer health outcomes, lower education achievements, less economic participation and higher rates of poverty than people without disabilities. Surprisingly more than one billion people live with a disability around the world, in one form or another; this constitutes approximately 15 % of the world population (World Health Organization, 2017). The disability experience resulting from the interaction of health conditions, personal factors, and environmental factors varies greatly. Disabilities come in many types and forms including physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society (World Health Organization and World Bank, 2011). Even though people with disabilities have impairments, they also have profound travel needs and motivations. When provided with various alternatives, they have stronger intentions and perceptions, with more outdoor and leisure activities (Darcy, 1998). Tourists with a disability are considered as the high market potential and high expenditure due to the travel behavior with more than two companions including family or caretakers (Bowtell 2015). Consequently, accessible tourism has become a new tourism niche market with high potential market value. Research in tourism and disability has gained increasing attention, particularly in the areas of tourists with disabilities, motivations, constraints faced, information needs, market dynamics, a decision-making process and cross-country comparison (Dominguez Vila et al, 2015).

As for Thailand, according to the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (2015), 1.74 million Thai people live with disabilities (2.64 percent of total Thailand population). The statistic shows that mobility and physical impairments are the most common to be found in Thailand (48.37 percent) following with hearing and communication disability (18.28 percent). Most of the research studies were focused on their quality of life, rehabilitation service, health care and welfare system. While some studies have tended to focus on the tourism aspect including the travelling story of physically and visually impaired people (Siriwong & Sengdaeng, 2011; Swangkong & Siriwo, 2017), tourist behavior

(Trongjitpituk, 2013), universal designs and facilities development (Rapipong & Kovindha, 2015), but little has been done on travel motivation and intention to travel of people with disability in Thailand. Gaining insight into what motivates them to travel would not only generate crucial information for government and tourism business to develop facilities and services that fit their needs but also for disabled people to addressing of what they really want. This research aims to fill the gap and enrich the tourism literature by identifying the travel motivation and factors affecting intention to travel of people with disabilities in which focusing on the two main disability groups to be found; mobility and physical impairments and hearing and communication disability. Bangkok Metropolitan region which consists of Bangkok and the five adjacent provinces was considered as the area of the study due to the recognition as key economic areas. Therefore, the main purpose of this paper were 1) to analyze travel motivation factors of people with disabilities and 2) to identify the factors that influence intention to travel of Thai people with disabilities in Bangkok metropolitan region.

Literature Reviews

Tourist motivation has been on the central stage of tourism research since the beginning of tourism studies because it provided the better understanding about the meaning of travel for the tourists. Therefore, motivation is the ultimate internal psychological motives that explain individuals' actions. Travel motivation is one of the primary variables that can explain travelers' activities (Jang, et al, 2009). There have been many approaches to researching travel motivation including psychology, learning theory, trait, humanistic and cognitive approaches (Filep & Greenacre, 2007). Built partly on Maslow's (1970) needs hierarchy theory of motivation, the travel career ladder theory, developed by Pearce and colleagues (Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983; Moscardo & Pearce, 1986), describes travel motivation through five hierarchical levels of needs/motives (namely, relaxation, safety/security, relationship, self-esteem and development, and fulfillment) (Chen et al, 2014).

Nevertheless, travelers are not considered to have only one level of travel motivation, but it was suggested that one set of needs in the ladder levels may be dominant. In the TCL framework, the term career ladder had some further specific implications. There is the common misinterpretation that one level of motives must be fulfilled before moving up the ladder (Pearce & Lee, 2005). Later on, in 2005, Travel career pattern: TCP were adopted based upon travel career ladder. TCP de-emphasises the ladder hierarchy and places travel motivation in a more dynamic, multi-level structure. The TCP model is referred as a key element to a much greater extent and provides a more theoretically robust model of tourist motivation than other approaches while also allowing for improvement (Pearce, 2005). The 14 resulted motivation factors, in the order of importance, were labeled as (1) novelty, (2) escape/relax, (3) relationship (strengthen), (4) autonomy, (5) nature, (6) self development (host-site involvement), (7) stimulation, (8) self-development (personal development), (9) relationship (security), (10) self-actualization, (11) isolation, (12) nostalgia, (13) romance, and (14) recognition. The results indicated that novelty, escape/relax, and relationship motivations are the most important factors (core motive). Nature, self-development, and self-actualization are recognized as mid layer motive with moderately important. The least important travel motivations are recognition, romance, Isolation, and nostalgia the least important ones (see Figure 1).

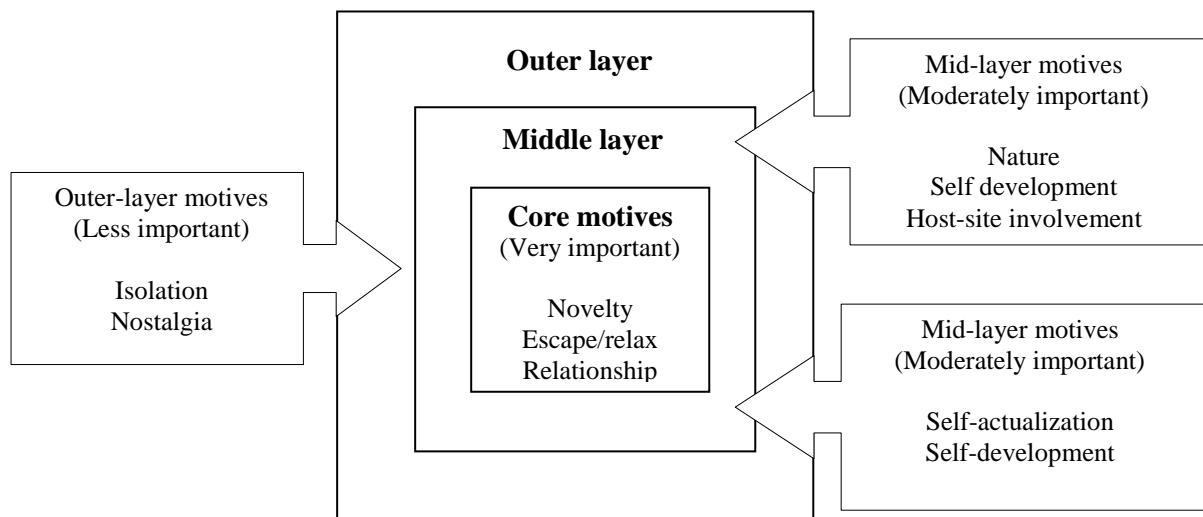


Figure 1 Travel Career Pattern Model (Pearce & Lee, 2005)

Along with TCP, push and pull motivation was also recognized as the approach to demonstrate tourist's travel motivation in which push factors related to socio-psychological motivation and the pull factors are related to the destination attributes. In this study, the researcher applied two based motivation theory which were push and pull factor and TCP Model because these models were widely accepted and used (Cody & Victor, 2010; Shi, Cole & Chancellor, 2012; Yousefi & Marzuki, 2015).

Behavioral intention is defined as a behavior that existed before an action depending on different attributable to evaluative beliefs, social factors that deliver a set of normative beliefs, and situational factors (Moutinho, 1987). In the tourism context, travel intention is the possibility of one's intent to travel or commitment to travel. Travel intention is an outcome of a mental process that leads to an action and transforms motivation into behavior, thus intention serves as an important mediator that connects motivation to future travel behavior (Jang et al, 2009). Only a few empirical studies about travel intention for specific markets including disabilities and senior were found in the literature. Tsai (2010) proposed that travel attitude and travel constraints have a significant influencing behavior intention of the physically disabled. On the other hand, the study of Lee et al (2012) revealed that three sub-dimensions of travel constraints exerted no significant influence on travel intention on people with disabilities. A more recent study by Syanont (2017) found that Novelty/Knowledge Seeking, Ego-Enhancement Socialization, Cultural & Historical Attractions, Leisure Activities & Affordable, and Relaxation Activities were significantly impacted to the intention to revisit of European senior tourists to Thailand.

Figure 2 depicts the proposed model which each motivation factor was selected based on the literature review. The proposed model breaks down motivation factors into 18 motivations, then principal component factor analyses were analyzed to categorize travel motivation factors. Subsequently, the model examines the relationship between motivation factors and intention to travel of Thai people with disabilities.

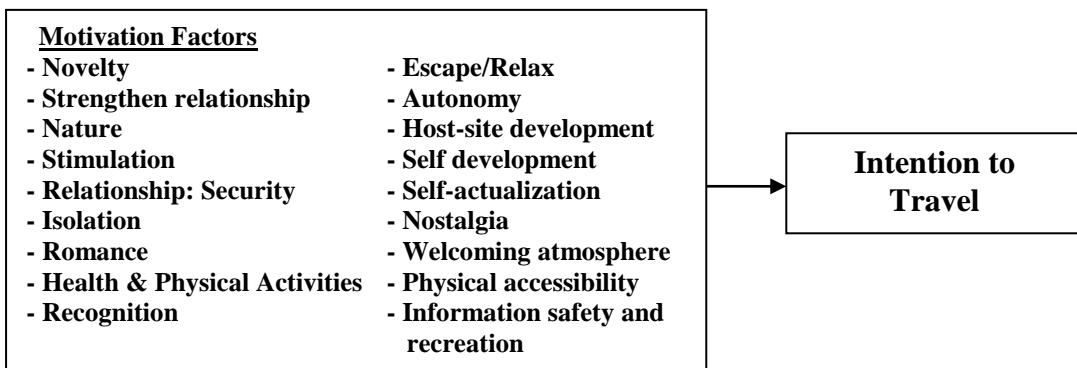


Figure 2 Proposed model

Research Methodology

According to the registered disability record by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (2015), there were 78,448 disabled people within Bangkok Metropolitan region separating into 57,867 people with mobility and physical impairments and 20,581 people with hearing and communication disability. A total of 15 locations related to disabilities activities such as organization, foundation, school, and hospital were selected to participate in this study during June-August 2016. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed through 3 means; direct contact, postal and direct E-mail. Among 495 return questionnaires, a total of 420 usable questionnaires were obtained.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first part asked about the demographic and travel behavior of respondents using closed-ended question with multiple choice, only 2 questions were asked participants to fill in the number related to the average length of travel and numbers of companions. The second section asked about travel motivation which was developed based on comprehensive review of travel motivation literature (Pearce & Lee, 2005; Konu & Laukkanen, 2009; Shi, Cole & Chancellor, 2012; Figueiredo, Eusebio & Kastenholz, 2012). The 74 items of travel motivation were rated on a 5 point Likert scale. The last section was about travel intention which was developed based on Lee, Agarwal & Kim (2012). The 5 set of questions were also rated on a 5 point Likert scale.

The data analysis consisted of three steps. First, descriptive statistics were used to compute the percentage score on the respondent profile. Second, Principal component factor analyses with varimax rotation were analyzed to categorize travel motivation factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 in which comprised of items with factor loading greater than 0.5. Cronbach's alpha was applied to test the reliability of underlying travel motivation factors, as well as descriptive statistics of travel motivation factors, were demonstrated. Lastly, multiple regression analysis, using the 0.01 level of significance, was employed to examine motivational factors will positively impact to the intention to travel.

Research Findings

Respondent Profile The socio-demographic profile of the samples indicated that majority of the respondents were mobility and physical impairments (58.6%), single (70.7%), age less than 21 years old (32.1%) and lived with parent (45.7%). Most of the disabled respondents replied to self-perceived health status as "good" (28.6%) and "excellent" (24.8%). As for their travel behavior, the majority of respondents were domestic travelers (86.7%), using a private car to travel (52.4%) and preferred ocean as a travel destination (47.9%). About half of respondent seek travel information through the internet (50.0%). Majority of the respondents travel not more than 3 days (77.9%) and travel with not more than three companions (46.9%).

Factor Analysis of Travel Motivation Factors and Multiple Regression

Stage 1: Requirements for factor analysis: Examination of a patterned relationship amongst variables by referring to the correlation matrix was conducted. According to Yong & Pearce (2013), a large number of the low correlation coefficient ($r < +/- .30$) should be removed as they indicate a lack of patterned relationships. Furthermore, correlations that are above $r = +/- .90$ indicate that your data may have a problem of multicollinearity. As the results, 39 items of travel motivation were removed. Therefore, a total of 35 items of travel motivation were conducted. Moreover, the adequacy of sample size and the patterned relationships was verified using Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (significant level of $p < .05$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) (cutoff above .50). The results of both tests identified suitable sample for factor Analysis as the KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity of travel motivation items were .944 and .000*.

Stage 2: Factor analysis: Principal components analysis is a data reduction technique which used to extract maximum variance from the dataset with each component. Varimax rotation was performed to minimize the number of variables that have high loadings on each factor and works to make small loadings even smaller (Yong & Pearce, 2013). The principal component analysis with 35 items of travel motivation produced six underlying factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 and factor loadings greater than 0.50 which were labeled as Novelty and Relaxation (mean=4.20), Relationship development (3.97), Seeking self-actualization (4.02), Closing to nature and self development (4.06), Information and Activities (3.79) and Body and Mind Stimulation (3.88). The percentage of variance explained by this solution was 62.22%. Internal consistency between the items in the factors was measured using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Most of the factors resulted in a Cronbach's coefficient alpha score greater than .80 which indicated strong consistency among the item of each factor (Table1). Moreover, the results indicated that novelty and relaxation motivation was the most important factor in forming travel motivation, and information and activities motivation the least important one.

Table 1 Travel motivation factors of people with disabilities

Motivation factors (Reliability alpha)	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained	Mean
Factor 1: Novelty and Relaxation (.87)		14.05	40.14%	4.20
Experiencing something different	.651			
Feeling the special atmosphere	.722			
Visiting places related to personal interests	.575			
Resting and relaxing	.697			
Getting away from the everyday	.549			
psychological stress				
Giving mind a rest	.654			
Being close to nature	.552			
Factor 2: Relationship Development (.85)		2.13	6.09%	3.97
Doing things with companion(s)	.537			
Doing something with family/friend(s)	.647			
Being with others who enjoy the same thing	.697			
Strengthening relationships with companion(s)	.703			
Strengthening relationships with family and friend(s)	.658			

Table 1 (Con.)

Motivation factors (Reliability alpha)	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained	Mean
Contacting with family/friend(s) who live elsewhere	.658			
Factor 3: Seeking Self Actualization (.86)		1.67	4.78%	4.02
Gaining a new perspective on life	.633			
Feeling inner harmony/peace	.733			
Understanding more about own self	.722			
Being creative	.729			
Experiencing the peace and calm	.650			
Factor 4: Closing to nature and self development (.86)		1.50	4.29%	4.06
Getting a better appreciation of nature	.548			
Being harmonious with nature	.564			
Learning new things	.668			
Experiencing different cultures	.679			
Developing knowledge of the area	.672			
Factor 5: Information and Activities (.83)		1.29	3.69%	3.79
Providing appropriate tourism information	.655			
The ease of use and access information in tourism	.810			
Providing signage for disable people	.779			
Adaptive recreational activities for disabled people	.772			
Factor 6: Body and Mind Stimulation (.80)		1.13	3.24%	3.88
Getting away from everyday physical stress/pressure	.593			
Feeling excitement	.536			
Having unpredictable experience	.635			
Being spontaneous	.674			

Stage 3: The second objective of this study was to identify the factors that influence intention to travel of people with disabilities in the Bangkok metropolitan region. Multiple regression analysis was performed based on earlier findings of the factor analysis. The six motivation factors were the independent variables while the intention to travel was the dependent variable. All independent variables were entered into the equation at the same time by using the enter method. The results of regression analysis and its coefficients indicated the relationship between motivation factors and intention to travel. There were three motivation factors were found to significantly influence intention to travel of people with disabilities including Relationship Development (X2) (Beta =.159), Seeking self-actualization (X3) (Beta =.228) and Information and Activities (X5) (Beta =.349) with statistic significance of 0.01. Information and activities turn out to be the most important factor, followed by Seeking self-actualization and Relationship Development. The value of the determination coefficient (R^2) was .376. This means that 37.6% of the variation of the dependent variable (Intention to Travel) is explained by the variation of the independent variables (Motivation Factors).

Table 2 Regression analysis of Intention to travel

Motivation Factors	Intention to Travel			t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	S.E.	Beta		
Constant	1.118	.195		5.742	.000
Novelty and Relaxation (X1)	.078	.064	.074	1.234	.218
Relationship Development (X2)	.155	.055	.159	2.821	.005**
Seeking Self Actualization (X3)	.222	.053	.228	4.214	.000**
Closing to nature and self development (X4)	-.006	.059	-.006	-.105	.917
Information and Activities (X5)	.306	.040	.349	7.588	.000**
Body and Mind Stimulation (X6)	-.035	.052	-.039	-.665	.506

R = .613 R² = .376 Adjusted R² = .372 SE = .602 F = 41.938 Sig = .000**

**P < 0.01

Discussion and Recommendations

This study addresses the gap in the tourism literature about travel motivation and factors affecting intention to travel of people with disabilities in Bangkok Metropolitan region. This research, for the first time, focused on people with disabilities in Thailand in order to analyze travel motivation factor that based upon their ideas. The findings of this first objective revealed the six underlying motivation factors of people with disabilities. “Novelty and relaxation seeking” was the most important travel motivation factor abided by with the TCP model that identified these factors as core motive. People with disabilities want to experience the inherent need to find something different which releases them from everyday psychological stress. They want to rest and relax. “Closing to nature and self development” and “Seeking self actualization” were the following two important travel motivation factors which complied with mid-layer motives of TCP model. This implied that people with disabilities also want to learn new things, being close to nature and want to experience different cultures. They want to understand more about their own self and be able to gain a new perspective on life. Whereas “Relationship development”, “Seeking body and mind stimulation”, and “Information and activities” were reflected as less important motivating factors. The results entail that they do not type of people that looking for excitement and unpredicted experience

When focusing on motivation factor that influences intention to travel, the result of the multiple regression analysis showed that among the six travel motivation factors, only three factors, Information and activities, Seeking self-actualization, and Relationship Development, have a significant influence. These are consistent with Ray & Ryder (2003) and World Health Organization (2011) that recommended tourism industry to promote accessible websites and services that can be easier for all type of disabilities to use which could influence tourism destination competitiveness in the future. Moreover, the results revealed that one of the main motivating factors to travel was relationship development among their family members, caretakers or companions. Such findings show similarities with the finding of Ray & Ryder (2003) and Shaw & Coles (2004) that mentioned the strengthening of the family relationship was one of the meanings of holidays of disabled people. That leads to two practical implications and one suggestion for further research as follows:

1. For the tourism service providers who do attempt to attract the disabled as customers: Even though Information and activities were rated as the less important motivation factor, however when it was considered with the intention to travel, the finding suggested as the most influence motivate factor for people with disabilities to travel. This finding underlined the

importance of tourism information provided online offline onsite and offsite and the importance of adaptive tourism activities for disabled people. Creation of accurate and accessibility of tourism information for people with disabilities need to be considered as one of the preparation plans for tourism service providers. Particularly the internet as a mainstream information source provides unique opportunities to disseminate and promote this information as well as to create an improved communication structure. Moreover, the results showed that people with disabilities usually travel with up to three companions. They expected the quality time and activities that could strengthen their relationship during their trip. Therefore, adaptive tourism activities and service should be developed in order to compromise with their constraints and barriers, strengthen the relationship with companions as well as inspire their creativity along with the new perspective of life.

2. For government agencies, Destination Management Organization (DMOs) and Tourism authority: As the demand for tourism in the group of people with disability is growing, along with the growing rate of aging population in Thailand. The accessible environment, transport, facilities, and services need to be improved throughout tourism chain. The collaboration of a wide range of stakeholders needs to be formed. As the result, policy and regulation might need to re-emphasize to ensure the right of people with disabilities and to remove societal barriers. National disability strategic and plan of action should be established to foster the development of infrastructure, transportation facilities and tourism service to be suitable for people with disabilities. The strategic plan should be deployed into enterprise-wide business improvement practices. Monitoring and evaluating system for strategic plan and action plan should be performed for tracking progress and demonstrate the results of the program.

3. Suggestion for further research: this research had focused on motivation and travel intention of mobility and physical impairments and hearing and communication disability. Further research could explore another type of disabilities such as sight and mental disabilities. Besides, the statistic comparative data of different types of disabilities would provide more understanding in their travel behavior, motivation and intention to travel. Finally, qualitative research could be conducted for a better understanding of the behaviors experience and the value of traveling.

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