



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***PREFERRED EVENT ATTRIBUTES, MOTIVES AND SATISFACTION
AMONG SPORT TOURISTS ATTENDING SEPAK TAKRAW EVENTS
IN MALAYSIA***

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IN MALAYSIA**

By

AZADEH ZAREI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Science**

December 2014

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Dedicated

To

Those who have enhanced my life in untold ways



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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Science

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AMONG SPORT TOURISTS ATTENDING *SEPAK TAKRAW* EVENTS IN
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December 2014

Chairman: Professor Aminuddin Yusof

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Using Tourist Attraction System Model of Leiper (1990), this research has investigated demographic characteristics, event informational sources, sport event attributes, attendance motives, and satisfaction on sepak takraw sport event. A total of three hundred and sixteen (n=316) sport tourists comprised of domestic sport tourists (n=224) and foreign sport tourists (n=92) attending 2013 ISTAF Super Series were chosen as subjects. The demographic profiles' results show differences in the following characteristics: marital status, nationality, ethnicity, last venue of attendance, income, and trip expenditure. With regard to markers, a great number of domestic sport tourists indicated using mass communication items and the word of mouth communication as the event information sources. However, social networking and mass communication were the most important sources of information for foreign sport tourists. The findings from MANOVA analysis show that there was a significant difference on the eight combined sport event attributes and the only dimension of sport facility among domestic and foreign sport tourists. Domestic and foreign sport tourists significantly differed in the eight combined attendance motives and the economic, aesthetic, family, and escape dimensions. The results from independent samples t-tests indicate that no significant difference was found in overall satisfaction between domestic and foreign sport tourists. These findings provided support for the sepak takraw sport event as a potential area of sustainable tourism development within small-scale sport-tourism context.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sians

**ATRIBUT ACARA PILIHAN, MOTIF DAN KEPUASAN PELANCONG SUKAN
DALAM MENGHADIRI ACARA *SEPAK TAKRAW* DI MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Dengan menggunakan Model Sistem Tarikan Pelancong, Leiper (1990) kajian ini telah mengkaji ciri demografi, sumber maklumat acara, ciri acara sukan, motif kehadiran dan kepuasan ke atas acara sukan sepak takraw. Sampel melibatkan pelancong sukan (n=316) yang terdiri daripada pelancong sukan tempatan (n=224) dan pelancong sukan asing (n=92) yang menyaksikan 2013 Siri Super ISTAF. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa terdapat perbezaan di antara pelancong sukan dari segi taraf warganegara, bangsa, jantina, pendapatan, dan kos perjalanan. Merujuk kepada elemen penanda, terdapat bilangan besar pelancong sukan tempatan melaporkan menggunakan komunikasi massa dan melalui percakapan mulut sebagai sumber maklumat acara. Namun begitu, rangkaian sosial dan media massa merupakan sumber maklumat yang paling penting bagi pelancong sukan asing. Dapatan daripada analisis MANOVA telah menunjukkan bahawa terdapat perbezaan signifikan ke atas lapan sifat acara sukan yang digabungkan dan dimensi kemudahan sukan di antara pelancong tempatan dan asing. Pelancong tempatan dan asing mempunyai perbezaan signifikan dari segi lapan motif kehadiran yang digabungkan serta dalam dimensi ekonomi, estetik, kekeluargaan, dan perlepasan diri. Dapatan daripada ujian-t bebas menunjukkan bahawa tidak terdapat perbezaan signifikan dalam kepuasan keseluruhan di antara pelancong sukan tempatan dan asing. Dapatan ini telah menyokong acara sukan sepak takraw sebagai bidang yang berpotensi dalam pembangunan pelancongan mampan dalam domain sosial dalam konteks pelancongan sukan skala kecil.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The concept of sports-event-tourism has been included in recent academic research as a prominent modern tourism product. Tourism is defined as a voluntary and nonrecurrent leisure activity that involves seeking novelty, temporary travelling and stay (Cohen, 1974). Over this approach, tourists' behaviors always pursue leisure for satisfaction and experience outside their homelands (Leiper, 1990, 1981; Gibson, 2005, 2004, 1995). Sport-tourism is "travel that takes individuals temporarily outside of their home communities to participate in physical activities, to watch physical activities, or to venerate attractions associated with physical activities" (Gibson, 2005, p. 198). There appears to be an agreement through much literature of tourism about those factors related behavioral motives and the destination attractions contributing to illustrate how tourists are dragged into making travel decisions (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Iso-Ahola, 1983, 1984).

Tourism Attraction System Model by Leiper (1990) provides a useful insight into finding out sport event tourism's unique aspects. The model encompasses three components which include: a tourist, a nucleus and a marker. With regard to the tourist component, it is essential to understand the underlying factors of sport tourists roles in order to identify the type of their behavior as being active participants, spectators or venerator (Gibson, 2005). The behaviors and roles of sport tourists can be understood through the concepts that are used in the sport-tourism context by their demographic characteristic patterns including sex (Bilyeu & Wann, 2002; Gibson, 2013; Lawson, 1991; Meng & Uysal, 2008), age (Ryan, 1998), education (Hall, 1991), previous experience (Pearce. P. L. 1988, 1996; Rayan, 1998) , income (Lawson, 1991), nationality (Pearce. D.G. 1978) and race (Armstrong, 2002; Bilyeu & Wann, 2002; Wann, Bilyeu, Brennan, Osborn, & Gambouras, 1999; Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999).

Reviewing within sport-tourism context reveals that there are broadly applicable scales for examination of the motives among sport spectators and fans (Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail, Anderson, & Fink, 2000; Wann, 1995). For instance, sport Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS) of Wann (1995) depicted sport fans' and spectators' motives into eight different dimensions. Escape refers to temporarily forget troubles. Eustress considers the positive form of stress (Motlagh, 2013; Wasserberg, 2009; Yusof, M. Shah, & K.Geok, 2010). Aesthetics refers to the beauty of the event. Group affiliation refers to a desire to be with others (Motlagh, 2013; Wasserberg, 2009). Entertainment explains the value of having fun (Motlagh, 2013; Wasserberg, 2009; Yusof et al., 2010). Self-esteem refers to the creation of a positive personal concept and the feeling of achievement (Motlagh,

2013; Wasserberg, 2009). Family considers time spent with family members. Economic refers to having the opportunity to gamble.

The second component of Tourism Attraction Model is linked to a nucleus component which emphasis the features of a sporting event or a place. The hierarchy concept of Leiper (1990) explains that sporting event attributes as prime attractiveness of the attraction system's nucleus influence sport tourists decision pertaining for attendance among other nucleus alternatives. Distinctive sport event attributes related to sport tourists' attendance decisions were proposed by Ferreira and Armstrong (2004). It involves attractiveness of game (Bernthal & Graham, 2003; Byon, Zhang, & Connaughton, 2010; Greenstein & Marcum, 1981; Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Yusof et al., 2010; Zhang, Pease, Hui, & Michaud, 1995; Zhang, Smith, Pease, & Jambor, 1997); pre-game and in-game entertainment (Bernthal & Graham, 2003), sport facility (Greenwell, Fink, & Pastore, 2002; King, 1999); physical contact; popularity of sport (Hansen & Gauthier, 1989); promotions and free offering (Bernthal & Graham, 2003; Byon et al., 2010); accessibility and convenience (Byon et al., 2010; Zhang, Piatt, Ostroff, & Wright, 2005), and cost (Bernthal & Graham, 2003; Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Zhang et al., 2005).

A Marker or an informational source is the third component in this model. It plays the role to guide sport tourists toward sport event phenomenon or any potential nucleus attributes. This is named detached markers which function as a generating, contiguous and transit markers. Sport tourists receive information from various forms of mass communication such as newspaper, magazines, newsletters, TV, and radio. Other media electronic communication such as the internet and social network, facebook and email, words from mouth to mouth communication such as friends, family and travel agency (Yusof, M. Shah, & K.Geok, 2012) as well as advertising boards and posters (Higham & Hinch, 2003; Hinch & Higham, 1999) are known as markers. Finally, within sport-tourism and marketing context, customer satisfaction and sport event attributes experienced are differentiated by the comparison of the standard used in the disconfirmation of expectations (Oliver, 1980, 1993). Overall satisfaction is sport tourists' cognitive level or emotional state after exposure a sport phenomenon through sport event attributes experienced.

Sport and tourism development opportunities associated with mega-sports events have been expanded with the professionalization of the events industry in Malaysia. In this point, the 1998 Commonwealth Games, the biennial sport event of Malaysian Formula One Grand Prix, the biennial sport event of Malaysian Motorcycle Grand Prix and the 2001 SEA Games had large attendance records in Malaysia. The 1998 Commonwealth Games were held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia where drew on 70 nations competitors including 3,638 participants and 100,000 sport spectators. The 2001 Southeast Asian Games (the SEA Games) brought 773 athletes, 50,000 spectators and 7000 volunteers from 10 Southeast Asian countries.

Sport events in the small-scale are advantageous as they are believed to have less negative impact on the host than mega sporting contests such as the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup (Gibson, Kaplanidou, & Kang, 2012; Gibson, Willming, & Holdnak, 2003; Higham, 1999; Hinch & Higham, 1999, 2001; Yusof et al., 2010). Globally, large-scale sporting events have garnered negative feedback and detrimental effects on local hosting venues (Ohmann, Jones, & Wilkes, 2006). Large financial debts and increased instances of corruption have been recorded in addition to increased budgetary spending in the host areas during the bidding cycle (Baade & Matheson, 2004). Negative publicity for large-scale events including political activism, terrorist attacks and removal of locals from the venue area has been reported (Boo & Busser, 2005; Toohey & Taylor, 2008).

As such, Higham (1999) pointed out, small-scale sport event such as regular season tournaments as in basketball, soccer, rugby leagues, ice hockey, international sporting fixtures, domestic competitions and people with disability (PWD) sports leverage more benefits for the hosting communities. The positive outcomes of small-scale sporting event reduce investment of necessary funds as the availability of current sport infrastructures, and secondly, are more manageable in terms of crowding and congestion compared to mega-sport events. Following, Horne (2000) argued that “a sustained series of smaller events, often based on amateur sport, can provide wider exposure sufficient to create a ‘host’ city image and thus increase tourist revenue.

Traditional sports event is also a form of small-scale sporting events. They are often considered as ethnic or regional identity symbols both locally and nationally, that distinguish them from many modern sports (Renson, 1992a). Both traditional and culture are related and relied on the creations in cultural community (UNESCO, 1990). Culture has been expressed by individuals or group and recognized as a reflection of expectation in a community and represents the social and cultural identification which have been transmitted by different oral means and imitation.

Considering sport as heritage is not related to the idea of sport as the expression of culture and identity, nor to the belief that sport can have archaeological, architectural or historical relevance (Hinch & Ramshaw, 2014). Rather, the basis of this consideration is that heritage can be the product of any fabric and that heritage is not finite as a resource (Howard, 2003). The commodification of sport heritage through tourism provides visitors with access to a culture that they do not usually encounter at other attraction types (Hinch & Ramshaw, 2014). This commodification is part of the universal “consumption of culture” trend. Additionally, some types of sport-tourism are considered as authentic and distinctive experiences and a remarkable growing in tourist attraction in demand for sport-tourism improvements (Hinch & Higham, 2005). Accordingly, traditional sport can be conceptualized as a commodifying tool within tourism which instigates sport tourists for experiencing sport event attributes as well as national heritage, identity, and community spirit insight into place.

With regard to the authenticity concept and sport heritage in terms of immovable tangibles, Malaysia is recognized as the home of Sepakatakraw as it has been an intrinsic association between its events and a specific place in Malaysia in case they move to international destinations since 1960. Instances throughout sepak takraw history in Malaysia are the 1965 SEAP Games, 1970 Asian Sepak Takraw Championship, the 1980 sepak takraw Event of the Open Championship Team and the 2011 ISTAF Super Series, and 2011 sepak takraw King's Cup. Nevertheless, there is inadequate empirical research in relation with traditional sport-tourism such as sepak takraw event as potential international tourist attraction and in helping to maintain cultural traditions of South-Asian region. Therefore, current study examined Leiper's model (1990) from the viewpoint of domestic and foreign sport tourists through sepak takraw event of 2013 ISTAF Super Series in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia.

Kota Kinabalu is located on the tropical island of Borneo and is the modern capital city of the Malaysian state Sabah, one of the two states of East Malaysia, and the second part of large Malaysia Sport Tourism Project after Kuala Lumpur. The event site was Likas sport complex which has been dedicated as the big house of Kota Kinabalu's sporting venues, located 10 minutes away from Kota Kinabalu. Likas Complex Stadium has conducted several executive national and international sporting competitions for sport tourists' experiences such as the 1994 Karate World Championships, 2002 Sukma Games, 2008 BWF Super Series Masters Finals (badminton), Borneo Safari 4x4 Challenge, and F2 Powerboat UIM World Cup Series which have recorded at attracting significant visitors and participants in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. The 2013 ISTAF Super Series, organized by the International Sepak takraw Asian Federation (ISTAF) and was held in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia where the event drew thousands of international and local viewers. The tournament included 12 men's and 5 women's national teams from different countries such as Indonesia, Brunei, Vietnam, Iran, India, the USA, Malaysia, Thailand, Germany, Switzerland, Singapore, the Philippines.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Malaysia is regarded as the main internationally recognized sepaktrakaw showcase, where sepaktkraw has been successfully introduced as an important sport and tourism event (ISTAF, 2014; Megat & Virdati, 2012). The motives, sport event attributes and sport event informational sources used to organise revenue streams, community spirit and awareness are sorely lacking which creates a difficulty in tourism industry authorities and Malaysian sport-tourism improvements. In sport marketing context, selecting a particular segment of the market based on international and national region, it can customize its product and marketing strategies to meet their specific needs. In spite of sepak takraw prominence in Malaysia, there is little data linking to important issues such as: Who are sport tourists? What event sources of information are used by domestic and foreign sport tourists? What factors motivate domestic and foreign sport tourists? Are domestic and foreign sport tourists satisfied with the sport event experienced? Do attendance motives, event attributes and satisfaction differ between distinct groups of domestic and foreign sport tourists?

A number of academic studies have used Leaper's (1990) theory on small-scale events such as the sporting events of motor-cross event and mountain-bike (Yusof et al., 2012), soccer (Yusof et al., 2010) and rugby (Higham & Hinch, 2003) whereas traditional sporting events such as sepak takraw in the form of small-scale have been largely ignored. Addressing some questions in understanding sport market in the scope of sepak takraw events provides useful basis for making marketing segment decisions. The current research, therefore applied Leaper's (1990) Tourism Attraction System Model to traditional sport event of sepak takraw as small-scale sport-tourism in order to investigating differences of demographic profiles, event informational sources used, attendance motives, sepak takraw attributes as attractions of nucleus and overall satisfaction among sport domestic and foreign tourists.

1.3 Objectives

The major objectives of this research are as following:

- 1) To investigate the demographic profiles of domestic and foreign sport tourists who attended sepak takraw event in Malaysia (human element).
- 2) To investigate domestic and foreign sport tourists' informational sources about sepak takraw events in Malaysia (marker element).
- 3) To investigate the differences in the attributes of the sepak takraw event that attracted domestic and foreign sport tourists in Malaysia (nucleus marker).
- 4) To investigate the differences in the motives of domestic and foreign sport tourists who attended sepak takraw event in Malaysia (human element).
- 5) To investigate the differences in overall satisfaction between domestic and foreign sport tourists who attended sepak takraw event.

1.4 Research Questions

The following are the research questions for this research:

- 1) What are demographic characteristics of domestic and foreign sport tourists who attended sepak takraw event in Malaysia (human element)?
- 2) What are domestic and foreign sport tourists' informational sources about sepak takraw event in Malaysia (marker element)?
- 3) What are the differences in the attributes of sepak takraw event which attracted domestic and foreign sport tourists in Malaysia (nucleus element)?
- 4) What are the differences in the motives of domestic and foreign sport tourists who attended sepak takraw event in Malaysia (human element)?
- 5) What are differences in overall satisfaction between domestic and foreign sport tourists who attended sepak takraw event?

1.5 Limitations

During the process of data collection, the different skills of research assistants, such as explaining question items to the respondents, may lead to inconsistencies in data collection. Therefore, a team of four trained graduate student were placed on-site to ensure the representation and explain of questionnaires to domestic and foreign sport tourists. Another constraint regards to language barriers, which influenced respondents not to understand the question items, and subsequently not answer the questions. Thus, questionnaires were designated in both English and Malay language, as well as pilot study was conducted.

1.6 Delimitation

A convenience sampling method was applied. As such, the data can only generalize to sport tourists who attended the sepak takraw event in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia.

1.7 Significance of Study

Traditional sports as small scale sport events may be a form of sustainable tourism development which can have three impacts such as social, economic and environmental for host communities.

Traditional sport event of Sepak takraw can play an important role in helping to maintain cultural traditions and values of South-Asian region's culture, while with increase popularity there is increasing risk of losing their authenticity in terms of process and product. The potential of Sepak takraw vent in terms of positive social impacts would include building Malaysian community pride, enhancing the sense of identity of a community and region, encouraging revival or maintenance of traditional sports and enhancing local and foreign appreciation and support for heritage sport.

The research findings are important for sports marketing organizations and Malaysian Government to optimise the economic development generated by working within the current sport infrastructure and minimising the funding and investment during bidding as well as the expenditure needed to secure the event through hosting. If the opportunities are recognized, the local communities would be more likely to share the positive economic benefits associated with the events by increasing visitors to a site or community and an external injection of capital. In addition, Malaysian communities would become increasingly involved in sport-tourism, in different forms such as employment of residents in tourism businesses and ownership of tourism businesses by residents. Finally, Sepak takraw event as a form of sustainable small scale tourism event would have positive environmental considerations related to recycling, resource use, producing less crowd and infrastructural congestion, and carbon footprint and improve traffic management, thereby promoting overall sustainability in Malaysia.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

1.8.1 Tourist Attraction Systems (Leiper, 1990)

Three components encompass the Tourist Attraction Systems of Leiper (1990): a tourist or human component, a nucleus component, and a marker component. Accordingly, “a tourist attraction comes into existence when the three elements are connected”.

1.8.2 Sport Tourists

Sport tourists refer to travellers staying away from their own homelands for at least 24 hours in an event destination whose primary purpose is viewing a sport event (Robinson & Gammon, 2004).

1.8.3 Domestic Sport Tourists

In this research, domestic sport tourists were travelers or permanent residents from Malaysia or permanent residents, excluding Kota Kinabalu, resided in Kota Kinabalu for at least 24 hours, whose primary purpose was viewing 2013 ISTAF Super Series.

1.8.4 Foreign Sport Tourists

In the current research, sport foreign tourists were travellers or permanent residents from foreign countries, resided in Kota Kinabalu for at least 24 hours, whose primary purpose was viewing 2013 ISTAF Super Series.

1.8.5 Sport Tourists' Motives

Sport tourists' motives are defined as either an adjective “that which causes or impels to action” or as a noun “the psychological feature (an emotion, desire or need) that acts as an incitement to action” (*American heritage dictionary of the English language*, 2000) . In the current research, sport tourists' motives were measured by the Sport Fan Motivation Scale (Wann, 1995) which relies upon eight varied dimensions including eustress, self esteem, escape, aesthetics, entertainment, group, economics, affiliation, family.

1.8.6 Sport Event Attributes

Nucleus involves the features of the sport event influencing sport tourist's decision to travel and experience them in host destination (Leiper, 1990). In this research, sepak takraw event attributes were measured by an event attributes scale encompassed by eight dimensions such as (1) popularity of sport, (2) attractiveness of game, (3) promotion and free offering, (4) pre-game and in-game entertainment, (5) physical contact, (6) accessibility and convenience, (7) sport facility and (8) cost (Ferreira & Armstrong, 2004).

1.8.7 Generating Marker

A generating marker is defined as the pre-trip event's information gathered by sport tourists (Leiper, 1990). In this research, the generating markers considered informational sources including mass communication, electronic communication, word of mouth communication and advertisements such as boards and posters about the sepak takraw event in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia received by sport tourists at home or office.

1.8.8 Transit Marker

A Transit marker is defined as event's information gathered by sport tourists in transit to the event (Leiper, 1990). This research considered informative sources involving mass communication, electronic communication, word of mouth communication, advertisement such as boards and posters about the sepak takraw event received by sport tourists in transit to Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia such as at the airport, hotel, bus or train Station.

1.8.9 Contiguous Marker

A contiguous marker is defined as sport event's information gathered by sport tourists while attending the event (Leiper, 1990). This research used a contiguous marker as information sources such as mass communication, electronic communication, word of mouth communication and advertisement such as boards and posters about the sepak takraw event received by sport tourists at the Likas Complex Stadium in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia.

1.8.10 Traditional Sport

Traditional sport is characterized by a particular role in representing the cultural identity; a sportive identity opposed to modern sport; specific regional origins and particularities; historical tradition; cultural complexity and ethical quality; the relevance of the designation “Sport for All” whether in the country of origin or during international exchanges (UNESCO, 2005)

1.8.11 Sepak takraw

Sepak takraw, one of Malaysia’s traditional sports, identifies the South-eastern Asian country’s culture and is, currently, being played in more than twenty countries. Sepak takraw is commonly regarded as one of the toughest sports in the world. It is described as a spectacular blend of volleyball, football, martial arts and gymnastics which requires physical fitness in a variety of forms: lightning reflexes, precious control fearlessness and gravity defying leaps (ISTAF, 2014).

1.8.12 Satisfaction

Satisfaction is a function of cognition, affect, and direct experience at a sport event (Oliver, 1980). This study applied cognitive satisfaction in one dimension consisting four items: satisfying with decision, doing right thing, feeling and being so glad to attend (Shonk, 2006).

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