



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***GENERATION Y MALAYSIAN WOMEN PERSPECTIVES TOWARDS
SOLO TRAVELING***

TOH JEN YING

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By

TOH JEN YING

**Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

August 2017

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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By

TOH JEN YING

August 2017

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This thesis entitled “Generation Y Malaysian Women Perspectives towards Solo Travelling”. It is intended to focus on the perspectives of solo travelling from the Generation Y women in Malaysia. The emergence of women’s leisure in generation Y and the dynamic development on gender discourses mirrors the increase in tourism. Women solo traveller is not a new occurrence in the tourism yet in Southeast Asia, reviews about women solo travellers is relatively limited. This trend is a phenomenon to illustrate the differences of West and Asia perceptions and to identify social and cultural influences for them on decision to travel solo. It represents the motivations and the constraints of women’s solo travel to a country or destinations be it in a group, or being solo throughout the journey. The main objective is to understand the gen Y perspectives’ on solo travelling and how they make decisions to travel. Women’s leisure in Asia is drawing differentiation of cultural aspects which can influence in taking part in solo travel. Therefore, even solo travel is an emerging trend in Asia, yet the root culture in Asia is still retained and added more value in this type of travelling pattern. Basically, this study aims to identify the features of Malaysian women on participate in travel solo and the roles of Malaysian Women as a dominant gender discourses in individual’s cultures as a whole.

This study used qualitative approach which sets out to explore Malaysian women in gen Y between 19-33 years old. They are the representative in this study particularly in solo travel. Sixteen in-depth interviews were held. The main focus was to allow the women to speak on their roles and experiences and identify their perceptions regard solo travelling. It reflects how gender can be links with leisure and the social and cultural attributes. The results reveal that social and cultural did not influences on their leisure but solo travelling can be influenced by personal identity or social identity. Three themes were identified throughout the findings which are travel motivation, social and cultural attributions, and the characteristics and planning approaches of gen

Y. The findings of this study show that Asian women's leisure is prevalent and women are able to have their own lives despite traditional ideologies, yet the result presents the constraints of undertaking solo travel as part of the travel pattern is concerned. The main rationale is the safety of themselves as victims and also the security of destinations which make women's travel vulnerable. Therefore, majority of Malaysian women prefer to travel in groups instead.

In conclusion, this study has been conducted to assess the viewpoints of Malaysian women in Gen Y where there is potential on a growing market in Gen Y and leisure these days. Tourism is a versatile and vibrant concept so the impacts of women's leisure are vital factors for the policy makers, tourism marketers and any related business to comprehend the characteristics and the needs of women's travellers especially in solo travelling. It also provides a dimension where West and Asia features is highlighted.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**PERSPEKTIF GENERASI Y WANITA MALAYSIA KE ARAH
PENGEMBARAAN SOLO**

Oleh

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Ogos 2017

Pengerusi : Profesor Madya Khairil Wahidin Awang,, PhD
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Tesis ini bertajuk "Perspektif Generasi Y Wanita Malaysia Ke Arah Pengembaraan Solo". Ia bertujuan untuk memberi tumpuan kepada perjalanan solo dari perspektifwanita Generasi Y di Malaysia. Kemunculan percutian wanita dalam generasi Y dan pembangunan yang dinamik pada wacana gender mencerminkan peningkatan dalam pelancongan. Pelancong solo wanita bukan perkara yang baru dalam pelancongan tetapi di Asia Tenggara, tetapi pelancong solo wanita adalah agak terhad. Trend ini adalah satu fenomena dan ia menunjukkan perbezaan antara persepsi Barat dan Asia dan juga untuk mengenalpasti pengaruh sosial dan budaya untuk membuat keputusan dalam perjalanan solo. Ia jugadiwakili oleh faktor dan kekangan dalam wanita sama ada di luar negara atau destinasi pilihan samada menyertai kumpulan, atau pengembara solo. Objektif utama adalah untuk memahami perspektif wanita gen Y tentang perjalanan solo dan bagaimana mereka membuat keputusan dalam percutian. Wanita di Asia dapat mengambar pembezaan aspek budaya yang boleh mempengaruhi keseimbangan dalam mengambil bahagian di perjalanan solo. Oleh itu, walaupun perjalanan solo bukanlah satu trend yang baru di Asia, namun akar budaya di Asia masih kekal dan ditambah dengan lebih nilai dalam corak perjalanan solo. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti ciri-ciri wanita Malaysia dalam mengambil bahagian dalam perjalanan solo dan peranan wanita Malaysia sebagai wacana gender dominan dengan budaya individu secara keseluruhan.

Kajian ini menggunakan Pendekatan kualitatif untuk menerokai wanita dalam generasi Y Malaysia yang berumur antara 19-33 sebagai perwakilan untuk kajian wanita dalam perjalanan solo. Enam belas wawancara mendalam telah diadakan. Fokus utama adalah untuk membenarkan wanita untuk berkongsi peranan dan pengalaman mereka dan memahami persepsi mereka dalam perjalanan solo. Ia menggambarkan bagaimana jantina boleh menjadi relasi dengan sifat-sifat sosial dan kebudayaan. Keputusan ini menunjukkan bahawa sosial dan budaya mempengaruhi percutian wanita tetapi perjalanan solo boleh dipengaruhi oleh identiti peribadi atau identiti sosial. Tiga tema

telah dikenal pasti iaitu motivasi perjalanan, atribusi sosial dan budaya, dan ciri-ciri wanita gen y di Malaysia and persiapan mereka untuk melancong. Dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan lazimnya dalam percutian wanita Asia mampu untuk mempunyai kehidupan mereka sendiri. Sesungguhnya keadaan tradisional ideologi bukan kekangan, namun perjalanan solo sebagai sebahagian corak perjalanan menunjuk kebimbangan wanita. Rasional utama adalah keselamatan diri mereka sebagai mangsa dan juga keselamatan destinasi yang membuat wanita waswas. Oleh itu, majoriti wanita Malaysia memilih untuk perjalanan dalam kumpulan sebaliknya.

Kesimpulannya, kajian ini telah dijalankan untuk menilai pandangan wanita Malaysia dalam gen y di mana terdapat potensi untuk mengembangkan pasaran percutian dalam wanita gen y. Pelancongan adalah satu konsep yang serba boleh, oleh itu, impak percutian wanita adalah faktor penting bagi pembuat dasar, pemasaran pelancongan dan perniagaan yang berkaitan dengan ciri-ciri dan keperluan pelancong wanita terutama dalam perjalanan solo. Ia juga menyediakan platform di antara Barat dan Asia.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 14 August 2017 to conduct the final examination of Toh Jen Ying on his thesis entitled "Generation Y Malaysian Women Perspectives Towards Solo Travelling" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CUEPACS	Congress of Union of Employees in the Public and Civil Service
GI	Government Issues or General Issues
IPK	International World Travel Monitor
ITB	Internationale Tourisms-Borse Berlin
MH	Malaysia Airlines
MTUC	Malaysian Trade Union Congress
NCWO	National Council of Women's Organizations
PERTIWI	<i>Persatuan Tindakan Wanita Islam</i>
TCP	Travel Career Pattern
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WAO	Women's Aid Organization
WCC	Women's Crisis Centre
WTO	World Tourism Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The focus of this thesis is about the interrelationships between leisure, women identities and Generation Y. It is to explore and offer explanations of women's leisure in contemporary societies. This chapter introduces the features of Malaysian Generation Y women decision making towards solo travelling. In order to provide a comprehensive study within this context, the contextual background will be used in order to gain more insights. This chapter discusses tourism in general, to understand the roles of society towards tourism, highlighting the trends and major changes in tourism. It is important to explain the forms of women in solo travel context and the changing values with regard to tourism marketers, so as to give a holistic approach to understand the tourism phenomenon especially in solo travel. The strength of this study is the ability to identify women's experiences in travelling and their influences or be influenced on the socio-cultural structures as well as to investigate women as a dominant gender discourse shape in societies. Hence, chapter 1 provides the overview of the study, which consists of the background of the study, statement of problems, general and specific objectives, significance of the research, and definitions of the terms used.

1.2 Tourism in General

Tourism is the vehicle of economic development in many nations. Domestic and international tourism sectors are continuing to expand in markets stimulated by the consumers. According to the International World Travel Monitor (IPK) International (2015), the number of outbound trips has increased significantly and tourism consultancy and expects global travel to increase. Tourism has shown a continuous growth and it also remains as a significant income earner despite encountering challenges whether is war and terrorism, natural disasters and health epidemics (Aiwa, 2016). This growth has exceeded other social and economic sectors trends in the social era (Wilson, 2004). Likewise, international tourism receipts earned, based on destinations worldwide has increased from 1950 which which was at US\$25¹ million to US\$1.2 billion in 2015 (UNWTO, 2015). United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) predicts more growth with 1.8 billion tourist arrivals in 2030. The source market for international tourism continues to be the key driver of socio-economic progress for many regions such as Europe, America, Asia and the Pacific. The markets for China are growing at a high rate (WTO, 2014). In fact, international tourism remains a privilege for the wealthy, developed nations, while the majorities from third world countries have fewer opportunities to travel abroad (Wilson, 2004). The foundations of post-war modernity are direct to the phenomena of travel pleasure. With the growing demand in niche tourism, today the typologies of tourists have developed differently from becoming mass tourists. People tend to seek extraordinary experiences

¹ United States Dollar (USD \$ 1) = Ringgit Malaysia (RM3.86)

rather than the bubble environment². Past histories have proved that mass tourism have evolved since the beginning of 1950s (Kovari & Zimanyi, 2011). Pleasure travel, also known as the demographic shift from the production to consumption; consists of the increasing elements which contribute towards the global industry such as leisure time, income, mobility, and the convenience of transportation. Patterns vary from country to country depending on the factors of attributions. Malaysia is the targeted country in this research.

Within the phenomena of the global tourism movement, Malaysia itself plays its roles in tourism. International outbound leisure travel trips by Malaysia residents are estimated at 10.9 million in 2014, and forecasted to grow at 5.7% by 2020 (Choong & Wong, 2014). Apart from that, Malaysia is well known as a multi-racial country where Malaysians have benefited in enjoying major festivals of various races and have on average 14 days public holidays which do not include holidays enjoyed by different states. Most of the full-time employed Malaysians are entitled to two weeks annual leave or more. Hence, the combination of holiday periods and the promotion of marketing strategies³ on products and services such as cheaper air transportation, Yearly marketing events or fairs that organize in Malaysia such as Malaysia International Travel Mart (MITM) and Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) or airlines promotions during Festivals season, School holiday season or Year End sale. Hence, it encourages the growing potential of tourism market in Malaysia and show the increase of leisure among youngsters (Du Cros, 2014). These marketing strategies target not only the dominant gender, but these also apply to the women who consider travelling with or without companions.

1.3 Women and Travel

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, historians, scientists, and laypersons doubted that males and females could be equally connected through an ancient and intricate evolutionary past. Women and tourism were not accepted back then. However, the background of the women and the travel phenomena slowly emerged, especially in the west. Women travellers are not a new occurrence now. Historically, global travel is meant to be the prerogative of men. Women were the invisible consumers back in 1973 and were not recognized by the society (Bartos, 1989). A Victorian woman, Lady Mary Anne Barker has documented her adventurous life and experiences as a woman. Dawson (2001) compiled the story of Victorian women adventure and considered these characters as “lady mountaineers” who took up the challenges of climbing the Alps. A Malaysian woman, Marina Ahmad is the first lady in Malaysia who climbed Mount Everest (Utusan, 2012). Conservative concepts of men taking charge were applied (Bartos, 1989). Women are breaking the hybrid identities of being classified to be the wife, the mother, the girlfriend or the housewife and they are able grab the opportunity

²Bubble environment refer to familiar, comfortable microenvironment within a novel, foreign macro environment (Cohen, 1972).

³The Malaysia International Travel Mart (MITM) and Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) are yearly events which are held in Malaysia. These fairs or events have lots of great deals and attractions for those who are planning to go for holidays.

to be tourists, for their own pleasure. One of the earliest empirical investigations on women's travel examined travel patterns during different stages of the life cycle (Bartos, 1982). Bartos's findings show that single and childless women are involved more on travelling, and working women travel more frequently compared with non-working women. With the opportunities available from the society, and besides their responsibilities, women manage to have their own life and act on their own. Tourism researchers have emphasized on women being the primary decision makers about family holidays. Therefore, women decide destinations for holidays. Besides that, women have also become more prominent on other types of travel including business travel. The reflection in the workforce worldwide has higher proportions of business travellers decades ago. Research shows that half of the business travellers are female (Popcorn & Marigold, 2000; Westwood, 1997). Such reflections can be in any travel components like hotels, airlines, and other tourism ventures planning to enter the new market of corporate travellers. This has become part of the tourism products and services.

Society is responsible in establishing the social roles and expectations that shape the characteristics of gender discourses. It has magnified and suppressed the differences on a biological basis. The ways of gender behaviour have revealed the role model and expectations. The idea of a woman who travelled alone seemed to be abnormal, and thus have tarnished the social reputation, as travel socially unacceptable by Victorian standards (Robinson, 1990). The consumptions of tourism products and services of interest of women have been receiving a significant importance. Hence, there is a growing movement who travel independently. Despite the various ways of travel, females are increasingly choosing to travel abroad alone (Bond, 1997; Matthews-Sawyer et al, 2002). According to Bond (1997), in the research of 'North American Adventure Travellers', it has shown that 63% who took overseas trips are women and most of them choose to travel alone. According to booking.com survey (2015), 72% of American women are enthusiastic about solo travel and travel on their own for work or business purposes. Solo women travellers are searching for adventure, social opportunities, education, self esteem and confidence to go alone. Female adventure tourist rose in participant numbers in sailing and backpacking in 2008 (Hudson, 2003). 65% of women mentioned that they were confident once they came back from solo trips. Gaining insight into the women can remain as valuable goals for all sentient things, thus doomed as blessed to navigate the world population and the shifting of gender gap accordingly.

These women who travel alone emphasize more on western women. However in Asia such phenomenon is also observable in the Japanese and Chinese market segmentation. For instance, increasing numbers of Japanese women choose to travel abroad alone (Hashimoto, 2000). It shows that Asians are no longer being confined to the nature which had been established centuries ago and thus, have evolved from time to time where the gap of Asian and Western perspectives in women travel have narrowed. Western culture has always exerted strong influences in matters of sexual equality thus revealing how a place can retain its culture while developing a democratic structure. Wang and Lin (2003) show that Western culture had influences in sexual equality which raised the issues of Taiwanese women's rights and self-awareness, but at the same time the Chinese culture (Confucian) is still being retained. Studies have been conducted in Western countries in the context of solo travel; however, few or not much can be said

about Asia. Yet, changes in culture encourage women to travel. Thus, at this point, identifying the Western influences is vital and the perspectives of Western and Asia might vary. The responsibilities of women in every stage have different meanings in their lives. Hence, it can be concluded that women's life is connected with responsibilities for travel opportunities. They are not timid now; they are bold, confident, gusty adventurers with no dependency on their partners (Wilson, 2004). Women's education and employment opportunities have increased and improved in today's world and have led to the increase in female participation in travel. Studies on women's leisure have revealed that women are more constrained than men in seeking access in tourism activities. Constraints on women are not emphasized; however it is their priority and prerogative to make a stance against social structures.

Being perfectly well aware that the average person's idea of a woman capable of real mountaineering or any sport demanding physical fitness and good staying power, is a masculine looking female with short hair, a loud voice and big feet, it always gives me a particular pleasure to upset this preconceived picture. In the year of grace 1910 a love of fresh air and exercise is not purely a masculine prerogative... and should be quite easily associated with a love of beauty and personal daintiness (Dawson, 2001, p. 183).

The changes in ideologies have shifted and women are no longer having expectations in going with traditional ways by staying home and being responsible for their families and husbands. There are choices and options of choosing to have families or children. National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO) has been established since 1963 to provide more opportunities and sources such as professional skills, employment to the women in Malaysia (Tumin, 2006, p.43). There are some active non-profit organizations for instance the Women's Aid Organization (WAO), *Persatuan Tindakan Wanita Islam* (PERTIWI), the Selangor Chinese Woman Lai Chee, the Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC), the Congress of Union of Employees in the Public and Civil Service (CUEPACS), and the Women's Crisis Centre (WCC) which are controlled by women for the benefits of the gender. Hence, the opportunities and encouragement are given and protected for the equality of gender. National statistics have asserted that Malaysian women have increasingly been engaged in the modern sector employment, especially during the peak of the manufacturing sector in the 1980s. Back then, there were less than 1.8 million women participation in the labour force. According to Datuk Dr Noorul Ainur Mohd Nur, Secretary-General from The Ministry for Women, Family and Community Development, women in the labour force is expected to increase to 55%. It means that for every 100 women, 55 are in the labour force (The Sun, 2014). Besides that, the opportunities of education have also made an impact on women and travel. According to Malaysia Education Statistics, for the public higher learning institutions in 2014/2015 intake, 61% of the new students are females and 39% of the new students are males. This shows that women have the opportunity to involve themselves in education. As a result of these demographic shifts, the benefits, the increase of freedom associated with it, Malaysian women tend to have opportunities to travel more than before. The result of greater financial independence and the access to education enabled the emergence of different ways between gender issues and tourism.

The current area of observation is Asia market and the rising of middle class travellers in travelling. Also, the increased of low cost airlines and outbound tourism shown the women's participation in leisure. Malaysians women aged between 20-24 years old reached the peak in urban sector while most women exits the labour force from 30-34 years old. It shown the women in between 20-30 years old are active in workforce and hence financially wise is not huge impact in this issues. The rationale is more towards their motivations is identified by gender, age, marital status, income level and children (Cheng & Cheng, 2015). In contrast, Malaysian women should have other external variables in travel motivation due to generational values and solo travelling pattern. However, this does not mean that all women are undertaking the activities alone. There are various options to choose on travel patterns such as solo independently or solo in a group, domestic, international, adventure, budget, luxury, urban and backpacking. Despite the association of social trends, benefits and freedom with the changes of socio-demographics, there are still some barriers when women make the decision on solo travelling alone are being considered. The aim of the thesis is to acknowledge women's voices in a field where they are less heard, and these voices and experiences are linked to the gendered and societal context. This is not only about women and travel; it is also about the social status and ideologies which shape women in the society as a whole. Therefore, it is important to study the tourism market in the perspective of gender issues and identify the influences and motivations, their behaviours and experiences of individuals in this aspect.

To an extent, ample information and guidebooks are available for the independent women travellers. These sources will guide the women travellers on relevant and reliant ways of travelling in different countries. Most of the publishers have contributed some knowledge to women's independent travel in the sense that women tend to seek different advice and information than men when they travel (Glotfelty, 1996). For example "Gusty Women" is aimed at the solo woman traveller with a range of guidebooks and non-fiction anthologies (Bond, 2001). With the contribution of knowledge from the experiences of women travellers, it proves that women's independent travel market does exist and they have unique needs and specific requirements or advices for travelling alone. Indeed, the overall picture can provide offers for more women to participate as solo travellers and giving the strength in making decisions. Hence, solo travel is also one of the travelling patterns where women are able to participate.

1.4 Women Solo Traveller

The concepts of 'solo travel' and 'independent travel' are used throughout this section. "Independent traveller" is a phrase to describe diverse tourists who are different from the mass, organised tourists. They have different needs and motivations than mass tourists. It is also known as the "fully independent traveller" (Wilson, 2004). Chai (1996) describes independent travellers as tourists who do not travel via a fully inclusive package or in groups and the duration they stay compared with other tourists is longer. According to Hyde and Lawson (2003) in a study entitled "The Nature of Independent Travel", three characteristics are identified in independent travel such as the experiences of a traveller as an itinerary, travellers are willing to take risks on vacations and travellers possess a desire for the unplanned experiences. It can be referred to as backpackers, free

independent travellers (FIT), tourists, working holidays, visiting family and friends, and overseas holidays (Myers, 2010). Despite the traditional term “backpacker” that is commonly known as an independent traveller, Hannam and Diekmann (2010) introduced the term “flashpackers”. Flashpackers are defined as backpackers who travel with an expensive backpack or trolley-type and stay in various types of accommodations. These travellers normally apply to older travellers where they have greater disposable income than the traditional backpackers.

On the other hand, solo travel refers to the status of one’s arrival status (Foo, 1999). Solo travellers may arrive in the country alone, but this does not mean that they will travel alone for the entire duration. They will connect and communicate with other tourists or the local people. They are tourists using the holiday experience as single individuals. It means they book single rooms, eat out alone, explore the destinations and participate in activities alone. Despite the flexibility and freedom, the solo traveller may or may not be independent travellers. However, according to Wilson (2004), solo travellers are likely to be independent travellers as they prefer the flexibility and freedom with the more structured nature of packaged, organized holiday to the extent that solo travel and independent travel are connected, which is a misleading concept. There is some similarity in both concepts. Solo travellers prefer to make their own arrangements prior to their holiday. The implicit connotation of solo travel is found in the terms of the independent traveller. They only make pre-booking, has flexibility and some form of freedom for travelling (Lawson & Hyde, 2003). These brief encounters have often proved to be the highlight of individuals with regard to solo travel and independent travel. This classification schema provides a baseline of typologies development of travellers. The main characteristic of a solo traveller is arriving in the country alone. They have the preference to be responsible for the whole trip alone by organizing their own itineraries, accommodations or structure their trip with the tour and packages services to gain access to their destinations. In this scenario, the typology of a person is changing and adjusting accordingly from the organized mass tourist to the fully independent traveller.

Solo travel is a growing trend in the tourism industry and it has drawn extensive attention from researchers and marketers with various target segmentations. It has changed the social structures and lifestyles where people are no longer tracking the typical life cycle. The phenomena of the active, aging population, no child marriages, and late marriages have produced changes significantly in travel and leisure demands (Lasser et al, 2008). Analyzing on how the position in the tourism context may reveal factors that give impact to the decision-making women have been taken for study in the research. Women solo travellers leave home alone and choose to travel by themselves, even though it might not be applicable to the entire journey. They tend to have choices to be organized mass travellers or to be independent. There is confrontation and the constraints of individual segments in solo travel compared to those who travel with groups or packages. For example, age, social era and stages of life show certain influences where social expectation and societal disapproval regarding solo female travel were more prevalent for women in earlier eras due to the child-rearing and domestic norm. However, the popularity of solo travel has gained attention in systematic academic research in this field especially concerning women in Asia. According to a reader survey in Solotraveler blog (2014), between 80-90% of travel styles are solo independent. Solo travel places women outside of their environment and into unfamiliar spaces and cultures. Spaces and

places are shaped by the complex cultural, racial and power relations that influence on people and their actions. Booking.com sources show that 65% of women take vacations without partners because the female traveller mission is to escape from daily routines and explore rhymes and cultures. 59% of female solo travellers mentioned that they would like to travel solo again in the next 12 months. This reader survey is not only restricted to single ladies; it also included women with partners and children. There are few cases of Malaysian women solo travellers who have gained attention in Malaysia society such as Petrina Thong, a solo female traveller who spent a year hitchhike from Kuala Lumpur to Europe (Stuff, 2016) and also Anita Yusof, the first women solo Muslim to ride her bike around the globe (The Sun daily, 2016). Although it did not represent gender distinction and gen Y, still their experiences added additional values to the studies of Malaysian women's leisure and solo travelling. As an alternative, the study of Aiwa (2016) regarding Malaysian travellers (male and female) risk perceptions indicates the desire of youths prefer to travel in groups. Several rationale sare discovered in her findings which are pleasure to travel with close peoples and unfamiliarity of places to face barriers. The nature of this study is more close to the research topic and hence this can be the guidelines to investigate Malaysian women only in solo travelling pattern.

The attention on women and the solo traveller concept today that lavished on their decision on solo travel has far exceeded the original perspectives highlighted on them. With the opportunities that are given by the acknowledgement of the society, many people are willing to travel. As such, an imbalance will always be present resulting in an awareness. As a consequence, in the real scenario, the typologies may not fit neatly into the actual categories, preordained boxes (Weaver & Oppermann, 2000) with regard to the tourist roles and typologies. Each role and typology have some divergence in different periods due to the changes in surrounding environments. A generation were born in a certain period of time, experience the same significant life events and changes in society which will give some impact towards tourism.

1.5 Generation Y

Sociologist Karl Mannheim states that all generations will have their respective views of the world through the similar experiences that they shared during their lifetime (Moscardo & Benchendorff, 2010, p.17). There is effect on their formative years due to the significant life events and changes in society during their lifetime (Glover, 2010). Strauss and Howe (1992) show the critical definition of events of different generations in the last century. For the Government Issue or General Issue (GI) generation and Silent generation is the Depression and the Second World War, for the Baby Boomers is the economic growth of the fifties and sixties and the Vietnam War, Generation X is the economic instability of the seventies and Generation Y is the creation of technologies. The Baby Boomers was the primary focus in the travel industry analysis, but the attention has shifted towards Generation Y, also known as the millennials (Lee, 2013). Table 1.1 shows the generational dates and ages.

Table 1.1: Generation Birth Year and Age.

(Source: Benckendorf, P., Moscardo, G., & Pendergast, D, 2010.)

Birth Year	Generation	Age range in 2016
1901-1924	GI Generation	92–115
1925- 1942	Silent Generation	74-91
1943-1960	Baby Boomers	55-72
1961-1981	Generation X	34-54
1982-2002	Generation Y/Millennials	13-33

According to Lee (2013), Generation Y populations in United States (US) are expected to be at 78 million compared to Baby Boomers population which is 58 million by 2030. The 13-33 age group is beginning to take over Baby Boomer populations. Most people are aware of Generation Y as they are tech savvy and their travel patterns are different from their parents. In case of Generation Y, they deal with globalization and the development of technologies such as the mobile phones and internet influences regardless of their nationalities, social, economic, or cultural backgrounds. Little research has been conducted on tourism and Generation Y (Benckendorf et al, 2010). This trend will bring changes for people involved in the travel industry like tourism policymakers, entrepreneurs, travel companies, managers and hosts, as Generation Y may have new approaches to travel. The Generation Y is very different from other generations because of the technological advances developed during the era. They are the exciting generation as Baby Boomers have gone through social revolution and their growing up are without technology advancement. They are the first born generations in the society that faces global engagement and international interdependence which means they are able to connect with the global community through technology. The Generation Y in every country is different due to the influences and environmental exposures. Hence, in modern travelling, generation Y is able to travel frequently and are tech savvy due to the easy access of free information online (Amadeus, 2013). Generation Y is an important consumer group in tourism because of their size and purchasing power, and also the differences in values and behaviours compared with earlier generations (Glover, 2010). They are considered as the builders for future tourism (Mendiratta, 2012) and they consider travel as part of their lives (Du Cros, 2014).

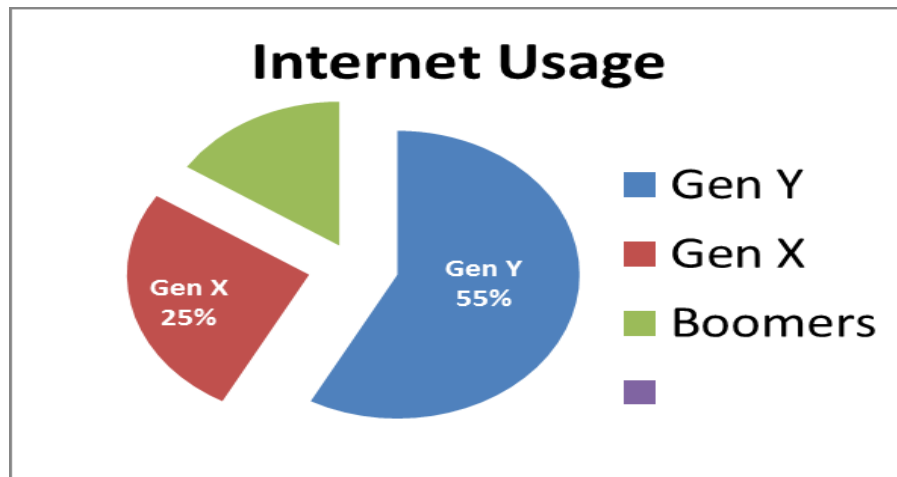


Figure 1.1: Generational internet usage Malaysia.
(Source: Household Internet Survey, 2011).

The survey (Figure 1.1) indicates the leading of gen Y using the internet in 2011. It has shown Malaysian gen Y stands out compare with other Malaysian generation cohorts in term of digital immersion and exposures. Therefore, different generations in Malaysia undergone different development of the world may caused the gen Y culture to be different than earlier generations cultures. This is where the characteristics of gen Y is derived.

The criterion of Generation Y is defined into three key trends which are the smart consumer, social interaction, and uniqueness search. Smart consumers refer to the shift from tourist to explorer. They are empowered to decide on their own travel itineraries from social networks such as travel review sites, blogs, photos, videos, and communities at no cost. With the access provided, it manages to give vast amounts of information and comparisons of the products or services. Channel experiences are seamless due to the convenience of online purchasing and broadening social experiences. These are full and enriching customer experiences as the touch and feel environment takes them to a different world. Social interaction is where they like to be connected, sharing experiences with peers and people who have fewer opportunities. Travellers want to be valued as individuals. They are able to showcase their experiences through their photos, interests, friends and hobbies. And all these relevant information provide platform for communication and decision making advices. The interaction itself is the key to relationship building. And lastly, finding the unfound, telling the untold and searching for uniqueness. Generation Y has strong opinions about what they want, but they are also open to ideas and suggestions. Their intention is to deliver something different and to not duplicate what they have already known. Every experience that they have gone through enhances and fulfils their needs and expectations.

According to Benckendorf et al (2010, p.3), traits of generations can lead to comprehend the common patterns such as attitudes on work, political behaviours, consumer patterns and family orientation. Generation Y has the opportunities in exposure and they will not travel in the same styles as their parents. Lens of generation Y for the tourism industry

can provide guidelines to connect the recent members of tourism workforce and current and future visitor markets (Benckendorf et al, 2010). It is essential to understand and provide relevant solutions for the emerging generation. Table 1.2 outlines specific characteristics and differences between generations.

Table 1.2: Current Characteristics of Population Generation.
(Source: Benckendorf, P., Moscardo, G., & Pendergast, D, 2010.)

Generation	Current Phase of Life	Social Roles	Stage of Cycle
Silent Generation	Elderhood	Leadership: transferring values, learning institutions	Artistic
Baby Boomer	Elderhood	Leadership: transferring values, learning institutions	Idealistic
Generation X	Midlife	Power : asserting values, managing institutions	Reactive
Generation Y	Young adult, Childhood	Vitality: testing values	Hero
Generation Z	Young adult, Childhood	Growth : being nurtured, acquiring values and belief systems	Artistic

Strauss & Howe (2008) shows seven core characteristics posses by Generation Y which are special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured and achieving. Lee (2013) addressed the top ten travel trends among Generation Y. The top ten trends of Generation Y have identified the importance of technology and how the influences are in Generation Y. They tend to seek for immediate gratification, demand of information, checking with the review sites, social creatures-online and offline, shorting booking window, young business travellers, expecting amenities, authentic experiences, volunteer tourism and pod hotels. These traits of the characteristics of Generation Y have created an excellent experience through technology and traveller confidence. This is why it is important to understand the core traits of Generation Y in order to provide better understanding to ensure strong influences in the work force and tourism markets (Benckendorf et al, 2010). In terms of leisure, a study was conducted by the World Youth Student and Educational Travel Confederation that disclosed the Generation Y travellers' pattern. These traits include travelling more often, explore more destinations, spending more on travel, travel booking through the Internet, inspired to get experiences, eager for information, and they are bold travellers (Richards, 2007). The availability of technology allows them to experience the benefits of tourism experiences. The specific traits in Generation Y are created to build the tourism experiences through technology and the ability on boosting traveller confidence towards travelling.

In Malaysia, gen Y showed the successful story of Malaysia in political stable, economic growth and social prosperity in the 1980s and 1990s during the administration of Mahathir bin Mohamad⁴ (Shiratuddin et al, 2016). These have proved the education and technology savvy in Malaysian gen Y characteristics and thus it will give significant impacts to the Malaysia society. Targeting a whole generation for marketing purposes is not likely to be successful because of the vast differences within a generation (Glover, 2010). The demographics changes in Malaysia indicate that gen Y is the largest cohort group of total Malaysia population. This age group is considered special where they gone through education involve in workforce and experience transition from childhood to adulthood (UN, 2014). The shift has explored major concerns highlights the gen Y culture which is not considered identical from earlier generations. Thus, this study is to create the interest in understanding the Malaysian who is in Generation Y. It is also to investigate the perspective of travel and if certain trends are able to discover motivations for the women in Generation Y. Besides that, Western and Asian cultures are explained in the following section to distinguish the values of Asia for the purposes of travel.

1.6 Statement of Problem

Western civilization has established dominance over non-western societies with the expectation that this dominance is permanent and unchanged (Tsai, 2010). Social life is dominated by men and men's interest and women are not included. Cultural expectations and patriarchal ideologies are further reflected in women's social behaviour and leisure participation. This study provides the insights of gender and culture offerings especially women in the leisure context. The status of genders has shifted where the stereotypical gender identities and women empowerment raised the issue of women status in today's context. Cultural values play an important role in East Asian economic growth and social conditions (Tsai, 2010). Western values towards Asia might not be suitable and cultural practices need to be modified in order to suit with the locals. Asian values in social relations from family to government are the basic social units and it is a metaphor in the culture. Hence, the cultural expectations and patriarchal ideologies that are reflected in women's social behaviour and leisure participation are taken.

Apart from that, westerners perceive a progressive linear relationship between work, leisure and fulfilment in life. They believe in rewarding themselves for their own benefit and see clearly the boundary of work and leisure (Schutte & Yoo, 1997). In western societies, women can access multiple locations and destinations, have the right for freedom and are provided with the opportunity to travel (Wilson, 2004). On the other hand, Asians do not recognize the west's linear progressive relationship between work, leisure and fulfilment in life. To them, life fulfilment is hard work (Manrai & Manrai, 1995). Therefore, westerners distinguish between work and a balance in life which Asia do not recognize. The nature of work in Asia is not clear between work and leisure.

⁴ Mahathir bin Mohamad is a Malaysian politician who was the fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia from 1983 to 2003. He made great impacts on Malaysian politics in the 22 year of tenure. He fought for equal opportunities for the Malay people, formulated policies that help in business and education to the citizens. His biggest achievement as prime minister was tied the currency of Malaysia Ringgit (RM) to the United States Dollar (USD\$) which make Malaysia recover faster during the Asian financial crisis of 1998 (Thefamouspeople, 2015).

Asians have a sense of guilt in leisure to satisfy their personal needs. As a consequence, any leisure pursuit requires justifications (Schhutte & Ciarlante, 2000). However, sources from TripAdvisor Women's Travel Survey 2015 show that 60% of the women in Southeast Asia travel alone because they get the freedom to do anything. Likewise, women in Asia today find more freedom and independence than before (Schutte & Yoo, 1997). They have better education, income, responsibilities and influences outside the home, late marriages and few or no children. Hence, the survey show that western progressive linear relationships have influences in Asia and there is demand in the solo travel context despite the cultural differences of the West and Asia. As such, leisure for women and travel vary and these are also based on Western and Asian concepts. Ultimately, the survey below is referring to all the generations in Southeast Asia context as whole instead of gen y. Popular debates among Malaysian women interest group in the inequality is reinforced in Malaysia (Subramaniam, 2011). The possible reason could be the colonial policy and practiced that emphasizes on women roles and also the direct influences of Western values in gender basis. There is lack of study on specific benefit in nationality in Asia and gender in Asia tourism field. Hence, this research is to investigate the status of gender influences of Malaysia values in leisure opportunities.

According to Khan (2011, p.105), leisure is divided on the lines of gender, creating into privileged and underprivileged classes where women are placed at a disadvantage in leisure opportunities. Hence, there is disconnection of viewpoints in males and females on how leisure time can be spent. Men see leisure as a right and women are not encouraged by men to do so. This has raised the awareness of women's rights and freedom in leisure (Reeves, 1994) but it is not ascertain that there is disadvantages gender in leisure (Khan, 2011). Some questions have revealed the perception of females travelling solo as inappropriate such as "are you going alone?", "is it safe to travel alone?". Women are aware of the issues and the implications of women and travel. Majority of victims of sexual assault is female (Wilson, 2004). In India, 92% of women have experienced on sexual violence in public places (UNWOMEN, 2016). Examination has been conducted accordingly of women in this society in terms of tourism (Henderson, 1994), where the lack of "neglected dimension" of study within this field still surfaces. Malaysia women largely under represented at decision making level according to United Nations Development Programmes Human Resources Development Report 2015. This has become questionable where the assumptions of the changes in gender roles and equality structure in society. Asia focused research was less common than non Asian research on marketing segmentation (Leung et al, 2015). Rather, the intention to examine the fundamental distinction of this market segmentation and to suggest a biological basis which is universal and important to oneself in this subject. Therefore, this study proceeds to examine women's concerns in leisure and solo travelling pattern be able to provide an interesting platform for this research.

Travel motivations vary from country to country and it has established in the west (e.g. Bansal & Eiselt, 2004; Dann, 1977; Iso-Ahola, 1982; Pearce, 1988; Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983). There are some studies of tourist motivations contributed in non-western developed societies such as Japan (Cai & Combrink, 2000; Cha, Mc Cleary, & Ulysal, 1995) and Taiwan (Jang, Yu & Pearson, 2003). It is possible to identify common motivations based on age (Myers, 2010). Muresan (2012) identified the age group of planning own trip is 18-29 years old which is in the range of gen Y and this is confirmed

by Du Cros (2014) that supported his models of travel behaviour of independent tourists in planning. The results can identify Malaysia women on their planning for travelling. Then, there is research about festivals and events motivation, but not much is focus on specifically benefit-related motivations to specific market segments or specific nationalities (Frochot & Morrison, 2000). Previous studies have attempted to identify tourists' behaviour and motivations (Li & Cai, 2012) and it has been examined mostly in western society. There is lack of understanding for more investigations into more specific segmentation especially the fundamental questions of behaviour in the social and cultural context of Asia is left unattended. The latest travel motivation among Malaysians gen Y is still unknown despite the increase in leisure (Cheng & Cheng, 2015). Thus, this study will focus on their perceptions towards solo travelling. This study aims to make contributions to the neglected areas of tourism motivation and tourism benefit research.

Malaysia leisure travel has increased 14% from 76% to 90% which is the second among countries in the world after Taiwan for the past two years (International World Travel Monitor (IPK) International, 2014). Malaysian consumers are increasingly into leisure as a result of increase in quality of life. The growing potential of the tourism market (UNWTO, 2014) and understanding increasing travel interests among youngsters (Du Cros, 2014) do not necessarily indicate a denial to the traditional culture. In fact, it may facilitate the values that would not be addressed to the same extent. Malaysia as the background in this study, is a multi-racial country with unique diversity where the intention to study the motivation is to apply the empirical knowledge concerning Malaysian women who are the decision makers in solo travel. The variety of cultures, diverse patterns of social learning, religious beliefs, historical backgrounds, technological developments, the perspectives of the panorama of human cultural diversities are different in manifestations where the underlying biological roles can be shown. Cross-cultural differences are reflected in perceptions, motivations, expressions, verbal and non-verbal behaviours, values, and meaning systems (Tsai, 2010). It is the practice of injecting the culture of one society into another. It has been argued that cultural difference is the key factor in revealing patriarchal power which intervenes in women's lives. Perceptions of young Malaysians would be different from westerner's perception (Mura & Khoo-lattimore, 2012). Depriving them from the market would mean a loss of potential expenditure by this group. Solotraveler blog (2014) survey shown that 80-90% of women travel styles are solo independent. This is taken from the blogs because there is no exact news reported in relation to gen Y solo travellers and Asian women studies. Looking into successful cases as reported in the news regarding Malaysian solo women travellers such as Anita Yusof, the first solo Muslim who rode her bike around the world. It was reported in The Sun Daily (2016). Another woman, Petrina Thong, was the solo woman who hitchhiked from Kuala Lumpur to Europe (Stuff, 2016). All these successful cases have shown that Malaysian women have less restriction with neither gender nor Asian cultural influences. However, the two cases identified are not gen Y. This study is targeting on Generation Y or also known as the millennials who are aged 19-33. Generational studies raise the controversies and debates of inconsistencies (Giancola, 2006; Kowske, 2010). The criticisms appeared to the limited of generational findings to minorities, immigrants, women studies, generations in workplace and the precise birth dates of different generations (Giancola, 2006). Younger women in the West have the prove their independence and autonomy through solo travel before entering into career, family and long - term relationship

(Wilson, 2004). Therefore, the focus will be on Asian, particularly Malaysian to identify the truth of Malaysian women in gen Y.

1.7 Objectives

The nature of society has created images for women on the responsibilities that they should carry, the culture that moulds them to have a sense of consciousness of their own roles in life. In fact, western cultures have shown that there is a certain limitation in travelling as the gender has its own responsibilities. At such, it gives ideas to examine the perspective of various cultures in Malaysia. The objectives are based on the nature of the typologies that have created such an imbalance in the provision of travel. The phenomena of women's participation in solo travel have grown and the recognition towards this concept is gaining more attention on women's leisure purposes especially in Asian countries. The academies are interested in understanding gen Y Malaysian women perceptions towards solo travelling. The nature of gender and the culture present an impact on the decision- making in terms of leisure and women motivation to participate in tourist activities.

The general objective is to understand how Generation Y Malaysian Women make decisions towards solo travelling. Specifically, the research attempts to achieve the following objectives:

1. To explore the motivational factors involved in Generation Y women travel.
2. To explore social and cultural attributes that shape Generation Y Malaysian Women solo travelling decision- making.

In response to the assumption that women and solo travel adapt to the changing needs and trends in tourism industry, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the factors that motivate Malaysian Generation Y to travel?
 - 1a. How do Malaysia women Generation Y decide when making solo travel?
 2. What are the social and cultural attributed that influences on their decision making?
 - 2a. How would social and cultural attributes influence Malaysia women perceptions towards solo travelling.

1.8 Significance of the Research

This study will be a significant endeavour in the context of women and solo travel. The study emphasis on the significant market of gen Y Malaysian women. The uniqueness of the country can provide diverse outcomes based on the characteristics of the country.

These contributions can create a platform towards the research on theory and practice in the market segment. Considering the market power, the wealth and the size of the potential Generation Y market for the tourism industry, it is vital to develop a capacity of consumption behaviours in the group, modelling the consequences, and predicting the impacts on the demands for tourism products and services. Tourism demand and supply influences directly to the changes and developments in tourist motivations. In order to survive in a market, characterized by competitors, faced with economic crisis, tourism products and services need to be identified based on the motivations to determine different markets. For theoretical purposes, tourist motivation theories have been well established and have evolved over time. Tourist motivations use psychology to study the human nature.

Fodness (1994: p.556) mentioned that tourism marketers could benefit from understanding tourist motivation “for the purposes of product development, service quality evaluation, image development, and promotional activities such as positioning”. The trends of motivations are changing over time to suit with the evolution of tourism offers. It can represent decision making factors in production and marketing of goods and services (Mahika, 2011). Hence, the changes that occur in tourist motivations can determine customer desires and predictions in creating product offers. The foregoing review of key approaches by Forchot and Morrison’s (2000) to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of consumer motivations research are used in the field of tourism. Need-Based motivation theories demonstrate that a wide variety of needs can motivate human behaviour. Many tourism motivation and segmentation studies are needs-based. One of the famous motivation studies is Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1943). There are no general measures of needs that have been developed, so it is easier to measure the physiological needs. However, to predict the effects of motivations require more than understanding of needs. That is why it is difficult to develop general measures of psychographic needs.

Value- Based motivation theories can predict the motivation effectively as it also focuses on the individual’s cognitive structure and therefore measures more than just the demographic and psychographic variables. Many tourist motivations and segmentation studies are needs-based. One of the famous motivation studies is Plog (1984) where the characteristics of individuals can help identify personal values on tourist motivation and consumer behaviour such as travel decisions, travel behaviour, vacation activity preferences and vacation motives.

This study also assists tourism organizations and practitioners to understand the influencing factors on decision making of women in solo travel segmentation. It also can help to identify how to develop strategies to tackle the subjects given. The involvement of communities and tourism enterprises have to draw up work on the implementation and is a fundamental requirement in order to grab the opportunities. The need to verify the essentials of the management criteria is sensible. As such, in managing destinations, long term competitiveness and sustainable development of destination is the basic mission of destination management (Mags & Basan, 2007). According to Lengyel (2007), the main tasks of a destination manager or any other related parties emphasize on identifying the research activities, integrate with the stakeholders, manage

destinations planning and development, monitor performances, implement schemes, awards, destination marketing, promotion, professional business training and support to be linked with all the participants in tourism industry. The system can facilitate identifying current and future opportunities of the consumer marketplaces. Hence, it is essential for the organization and practitioners to comprehend the scenarios and formulate implementation for this particular market segmentation. The demand can be channelled towards marketing based with the resources in tourism industry. In fact, while drawing the market with a high tendency to spend, promotional campaigns can emphasize on the policies of the potential segments. The potential segment investigation process is through a research paradigm.

1.9 Scope of the study

Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam are expected to enjoy steady growth for intra-regional and inter-regional tourism among South East Asia countries. The expansion of low cost carriers and technology developments encourage people to travel (UNWTO, 2014). Hence, the initiation to investigate the study is to find out Gen Y Malaysian women's views on solo travel. The process of addressing this research is positioned by a research paradigm. An interpretive paradigm, using qualitative data collection techniques will direct the study for findings. These obviously require an interpretive research paradigm since it could elaborate personal opinions and emotions. A qualitative research design is appropriate for the investigation of emotions (Mura & Khoo-lattimore, 2012). Besides that, a gender approach offers the thought when the research is viewed and undertaken. According to Berdychevsky et al (2013), gender relations between men and women build their touristic experiences, thereby it provide a good reason to understand the condition of women in 21th century on their choices and preference for leisure and contribute to the deconstruction of stereotypes. The study will also focus on the factors that influence decision- making in terms of tourist motivation in the solo travel context as per given in the literature review. Possible findings can be positive and negative to tourism marketers as the study aims to identify Gen Y Malaysian women decision making towards solo travelling and reveal much about this segmentation.

Malaysian diversity of race, culture and religion is the selection as the background of the study. The intended place for data collection is in Malaysia. Location depends on the convenience of the participants. Gen Y is within the age group of 19 to 33 years old, and brought up from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. It is an opportunity to explore from various categories of travellers based on the culture.

1.10 Definition of Terms

The following are the definitions of terms that are used throughout the thesis. These are common terms that will be repeated in the thesis.

Solo travellers refer to the status where a person travels alone, not with family, friends or partners and it does not mean that the traveller remains alone throughout the whole journey (Foo, 1999).

Independent travellers describe diverse tourists who are different from the mass, organised tourists. They have different needs and motivations than mass tourists, and are also known as the “fully independent traveller” (Wilson, 2004).

Generation Y is the first generation in the society approach to the creation of the technologies and are tech-savvy (Benckendorf et al, 2010).

Feminism refers to equality in all opportunities, treatment, respect and social rights between men and women (Curthoys, 1994).

Travel motivations are the actions involved in travel and it is one of the variables that explains travellers activities (Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983).

1.11 Summary

This chapter provides reviews of the background of tourism, the context of solo travel in the thesis, and Generation Y traits, criteria and trends for better understanding in Generation Y contribution towards tourism which will give a glimpse in this study. The outlines emphasize the gaps in literature in the related areas to address the opportunities and constraints in this study. The general description of tourism is to give ideas on the impacts of tourism in relation with the context of women’s perceptions on solo travel and be a guiding tool for the results and discussion. It can also provide useful insight and information for practitioners and organizers in the tourism industry. Study limitations are outlined to identify the possibility of the constraints of the research.

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