
Student Motivation in Outdoor Recreation Engagement: Examining the Validity and Reliability of the Measuring Instruments

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ABSTRACT

Motivation is a detailed, wide-researched concept in the tourism field, and it is often associated with the pull and push factors and their influence on student behaviour. Hence, using a quantitative method through a questionnaire survey, this study aims to measure motivation and its roles in influencing higher education students to engage in outdoor recreation activities. A total of 150 respondents had participated in this study and the data gathered from the questionnaires were analyzed using the IBM SPSS version 26 statistical software. Priorly, expert evaluations were conducted to measure the reliability, content validity, face validity, and normality of the data. The pilot study has verified the reliability of the measuring instrument, while the data evidenced rational normality. Overall, the findings supported the measuring instruments proposed in this study for further research.

Keywords: *Motivation, Outdoor Recreation, Student Engagement, Recreation Activities, Instrument*

INTRODUCTION

Academics have frequently researched leisure, recreational, and tourist activities that include home-related activities such as reading or watching favourite television

programs and outdoor activities such as going to the cinema, engaging in sports, attending shows, or visiting new places (Aşan, & Emeksiz, 2018; Tribe, 2011; Che Aziz et al., 2020). Recreation refers to an activity where people simply delight in their free time instead of engaging in highly committed activities such as working overtime, working a second job, optional shopping, home or car maintenance, child care, religious duties, homework, further studies, and politics. Briefly, leisure is experienced and enjoyed through any recreational activity although recreation is also considered a social institution organised for social reasons (Brooker & Joppe, 2013; Nik Hashim et al., 2020; Fatt et al., 2020).

Over the years, people are increasingly interested to explore and study the contexts of leisure and recreation. Generally, recreation is referred to as activities that people voluntarily engage in during their leisure time and not forced by others (Park et al., 2012; Pesonen et al., 2012; Hagen & Boyes, 2016). People often spend their free time or leisure time doing recreational activities that they deem positive, beneficial, and provide value to them (Sidi & Radzi, 2017; Che Aziz et al., 2020). For instance, given the growth in the number of adventure recreational activities, people are now able to engage in activities such as rock climbing, mountain climbing, kayaking at sea, white-water rafting, scuba diving, stand up boarding, and jungle trekking (Ewert, Gilbertson, Luo, & Voight, 2013; Gaffar, Yuniawati, & Ridwanudin, 2012; Nik Hashim et al., 2019), which positively influence them outdoors and provide valuable experiences to them.

Recently, there has also been a shift to more refined commercial activities where people require new types of recreation instead of the simple, non-commercialised outdoor activities, and this shift has fostered the outdoor retail industry and business growth at large (Margaryan & Fredman, 2017; Che Aziz et al., 2020; Hashim et al., 2020). This makes it crucial for studies to investigate motivation and its roles, especially concerning student motivation in outdoor recreation engagement. Hence, this study seeks to investigate the reliability and validity of the proposed measuring instruments and their contributions to this context through a pilot study to ensure no further issues during the actual study, which could lead to the failure or underachievement of the research project.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative method upon considering the findings in prior literature. A questionnaire survey was used in this study to measure motivation and its

roles in influencing the engagement of higher education students in outdoor recreation activities. Besides, this approach is beneficial since it focuses more on the collection of numerical data through an extensive survey. In general, the target research population comprises the higher education students in Kelantan, which includes a total of 150 students from year one to year four as the sample size of this pilot study. Notwithstanding, the normality of the data must first be tested to prevent statistical errors that may yield invalid outcome. According to Das & Imon (2016), normal data to mean data can signify a symmetrical distribution upon selecting a sample. Based on the current findings, positive values were recorded from the skewness and kurtosis tests with 0.406 for and 0.787, respectively, and this indicates the leptokurtic distribution of data (peaked and slightly skewed to the right) instead of a normal distribution (Std. Error). Furthermore, the data were also deemed normal since both of the values were within the ± 1.96 limit.

The data were collected using self-administered questionnaires, which comprises three main sections: Section A, Section B, and Section C. Section A entails the respondents' demographic background, while Section B includes the items in the independent variable and Section C includes the items in the dependent variable which adapted from the previous study (e.g Aziz et al, 2020; Che Aziz et al., 2020). To gain further information, a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree" was used to measure the items in the questionnaires. The collected data were analysed using IBM SPSS version 26 via reliability analysis, by which a reliability value below 0.6 is considered poor, while the values ranging from 0.6 to < 0.7 and 0.7 to < 0.8 are deemed moderate and good, respectively. Besides, the value ranging from 0.8 to < 0.9 is very good, while the value above 0.9 is considered excellent (Hair et al., 2015) (see Table 1).

Table 1: Reliability analysis rule of thumb

Coefficient Range Value	Association Strength
Below 0.6	Poor
0.6 to 0.7	Moderate
0.7 to 0.8	Good
0.8 to 0.9	Very Good
0.9 and above	Excellent

Hair *et al.* (2015)

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to address the objective outlined above, a conceptual framework was developed to examine the motivation factors influencing student engagement in outdoor recreation activities. Two independent variables were highlighted from the model: push factors (events and activities, culture, variety seeking, adventure, and natural resources) and pull factors (prestige fulfilment, enhancing relationships, relaxation, variety of sightseeing, and knowledge gain).

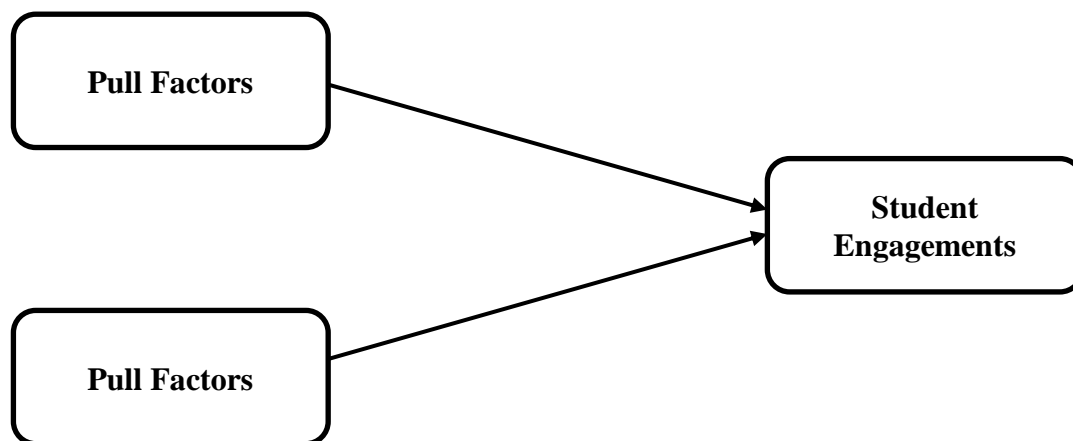


Figure 1: A Conceptual Framework

RESULTS

Demographic profile

The demographic constructs were used to determine the extent to which some criteria established for the selection of the respondents are achieved. Based on the respondents' demographic background in Table 2, this study comprises 20% female respondents and 80% male respondents. The majority of the respondents are 21-25 years old with 32%, while the respondents over 31-35 years old belong to the lowest age group with 15.33%. Based on the table, most of the respondents are Malay with 41.33%, whereas the minority of them are Indians with only 14.67%. In terms of income, the majority of the respondents are PTPTN/Loan borrowers with 78%, and most of the respondents take hospitality courses with 40%, while the lowest percentage was recorded from the

wellness students with 27.33%. As for their year of study, the respondents are mostly in their third year with 36.67%, while those in their fourth year recorded the lowest percentage with 14%.

Table 2: Demographic profile of respondent

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	120	80
Female	30	20
Age		
16 - 20	34	22.67
21 - 25	48	32
26 - 30	45	30
31 - 35	23	15.33
Race		
Malay	62	41.33
Indian	22	14.67
Chinese	36	24
Other	30	20
Income Sources		
Parent	21	14
PTPTN/ Loan	117	78
Scholarship	12	8
Courses		
Tourism	49	32.67
Hospitality	60	40

Wellness	41	27.33
Years		
First	24	16
Second	50	33.33
Third	55	36.67
Fourth	21	14
Total	150	100

Reliability and Validity

To measure the internal consistency of the research instruments, a reliability analysis was conducted and the results were interpreted using Cronbach’s Alpha, which refers to the average value of reliability coefficient obtained from the standardized items in the study with a normal reliability range between 0 and 1. According to Nunnaly (1978) and Pallant (2005), Cronbach’s Alpha value that exceeds 0.70 is accepted, since the closer the value gets to 1, the greater the scale and vice versa. Additionally, the actual data collection process includes the use of scale validity content through expert evaluations from university academicians and researchers to improve the validity of the questionnaire. The reliability analysis results are depicted in Table 3. As can be seen in the table, all of the variables in this study have high-reliability values that range from 0.767 to 0.988, thereby reflecting an excellent internal consistency. As such, the questionnaires are finalized and deemed valid, and the scale is considered reliable for further fieldwork data collection.

Table 3: Pull Factors Toward Engagement Recreation

Variable	Cronbach Alpha
Pull Factors	
Natural Resources	0.767
Adventure	0.812
Culture	0.843
Event & Activities	0.861
Variety Seeking	0.912

Push Factors	
Relaxation	0.988
Sightseeing Variety	0.899
Gaining Knowledge	0.745
Fulfilling Prestige	0.723
Enhancing Relation	0.876
Student Engagement	0.875

CONCLUSION

Leisure and recreation are driven by many factors as proposed in prior studies; however, these factors may not be solid answers since students have their own definitions of leisure. While all of the factors established in this study are evident in the Malaysian context, these factors, however, are not deemed definitive due to the different viewpoints from researchers, professors, and scholars alike. Hence, this pilot study aims to measure the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments relative to motivation and its roles in influencing the engagement of students in outdoor recreation activities. Expert opinions were also gathered to pre-test the face and content validity of the questionnaires. Besides, the reliability test conducted in this study has proven the reliability of the items since the Cronbach's alpha values were more than 0.7; therefore, none of the items were removed and it can be deduced that each instrument is valid. Further, the actual test anticipates the participation from more than 300 respondents to provide data that may help the researcher comprehend the study area. The current research outcome is also anticipated to contribute to the literature on the relevant fields whilst encouraging more potential future research.

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