

Tourist Behaviour of University Students in ASEAN Countries

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INTRODUCTION

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established in October 2003. This community consists of ten countries comprised of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The ASEAN community aims to increase the bargaining power and enhance the competitiveness of ASEAN countries in international forums. Being a member of the community also allows ASEAN countries to be stronger and gain a better ability to deal with various problems. Twelve years later, the ASEAN community declared itself to be “one nation” and the community was divided into three pillars. The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), one of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community, was officially established in December 2015. The purposes of the AEC are to facilitate the movement of goods, services, investments, capital, and skilled labourers within ASEAN. Skilled-workers, accordingly, are to be able to move freely within the ASEAN region. The national skill framework was established. Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) were developed and implemented for specific sectors identified in the ASEAN Framework. The MRAs encourage ASEAN members to mutually agree on the qualifications of skilled workers including educational background and work experiences. Such aforementioned factors are significant criteria for obtaining professional licenses. Recently, ASEAN has initiated MRAs for skilled workers of four major occupations comprising the construction, medical, tourism, and accounting professions.

ASEAN is experiencing significant demographic change with approximately 68 million new entrants to the labour force by 2025. High-skilled workers, including bachelor degree holders, are noticeably younger than ASEAN's workforce as a whole. The median age will be in the mid-20s (World economic forum, 2016). This indicates that new graduates will enter the employment workplace.

Additionally, young travellers are one of the lucrative markets for the tourism industry. UNWTO has estimated that 20% of the international tourists travelling the world in 2010 were young people which included university students. It is expected to gain almost 300 million international youth trips per year by 2020 (World Tourism Organization, 2012). In order to facilitate this tourist market, many destinations have formulated strategies to attract young travellers. However, little research has shown their travel motivation in relation to seeking job opportunities, especially after the AEC where labourers can more easily move and work within the ASEAN region. Therefore, by applying the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the purpose of the current study was to seek further insights into university student travel motivation and travel behaviour within ASEAN destinations. The research problem has been stated as: What predictors contribute to young tourist behavioural intentions? In this study, university student tourist is used interchangeably with the term young traveller. In the context of this investigation, young tourists refer to ASEAN university students who are expected to be potentially skilled-workers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study draws primarily from the main streams of literature regarding young and university student tourist behaviour and the theoretical framework of this study which is TPB. In relation to travel motivation, motivation is defined as psychological/biological needs and wants that drive individuals' actions (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). In tourism literature, the push-pull model has been widely used (e.g., Gulid, Mechinda, & Serirat, 2009; Prayag & Hosany, 2014; Rundle-Thiele, Tkaczynski, & Beaumont, 2010). The push factors refer to socio-psychological motives emerging from travellers themselves while the pull factors are motives aroused by destinations. Tourism scholars have suggested common travel motivations using the overarching question of why tourists travel to certain destinations (e.g., Jonsson & Devonish, 2008; Kakyom, Jeonghee, & Giri, 2006; Sangpikul, 2008; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Common tourist motivations include relaxation (Jonsson & Devonish, 2008; Kakyom et al., 2006; Prayag & Hosany, 2014; Sangpikul, 2008; Yoon & Uysal, 2005) and novelty seeking (Gulid et al., 2009; Jang & Wu, 2006; Rundle-Thiele et al., 2010; Sangpikul, 2008). Notwithstanding that scholars suggest that travel motives differ depending upon tourist contexts. Researchers have shown that escaping from a daily routine was an important travel motive for young tourists (Ryan & Zhang, 2007; Story, 2011). Those in the

young cohort were also motivated to travel by having new experiences (Lee & Chen, 2005; Prayag & Hosany, 2014; Story, 2011) and an extremely limited study found that seeking jobs and further study were also motives (Ryan & Zhang, 2007). However, little is known about ASEAN university student tourists' motivation regarding seeking jobs while travelling within the ASEAN region, especially after the establishment of the AEC.

Although the young traveller segment, which includes university students, is one of the key tourist segments, limited studies exist on the travel behaviour of this market. As shown in Table 1, a number of scholars have investigated factors influencing young travellers including university tourists' behaviours. The contexts of travel behaviours focused on in previous research

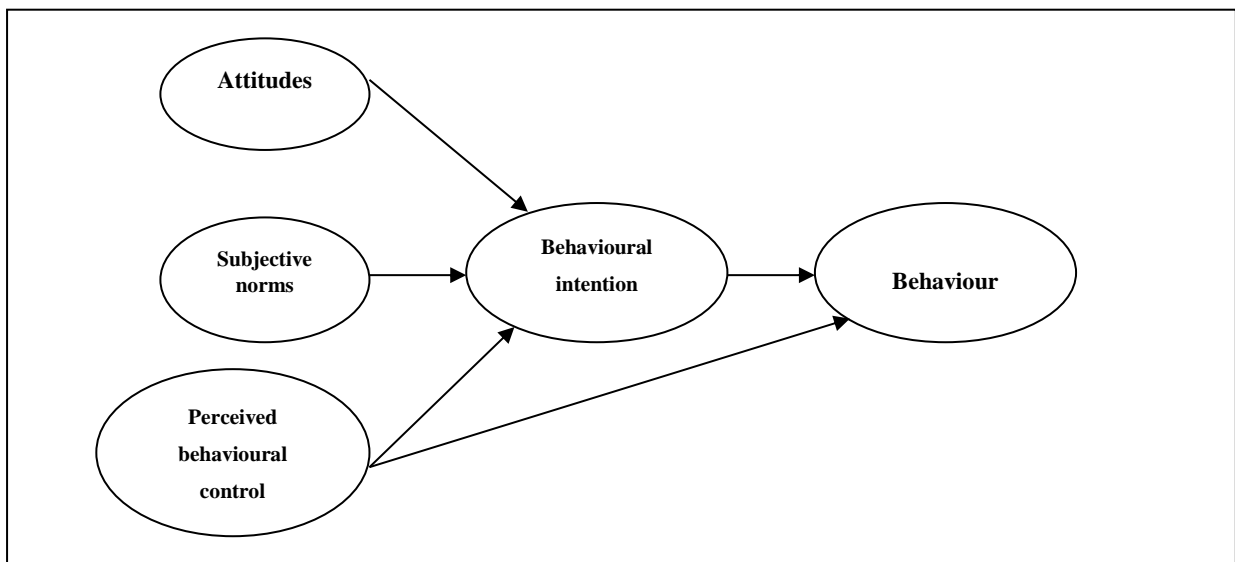
Table 1: selected research on young tourist behaviour

Author(s)	Samples	Context of the travel behaviour	Factors affecting travel behaviour
Hsu and Sung (1997)	278 international students from the Midwestern university	Travel patterns and travel activities	Age, gender, degree, and marital status
Kim and Jogaratnam (2003)	514 Asian and domestic students in the USA	Travel activities	Nationality, age, gender, source of income, length of stay, and marital status
Michael, Armstrong, and King (2004)	219 international students	choice of travel destinations	Country of origin, gender, and university attended
Kim (2008)	411 American students	Destination loyalty	Travel perceptions and trip satisfaction
Shi, Nakatani, Sajiki, Sawauchi, and Yamamoto (2010)	276 Chinese and other international students in Japanese universities	Destination choice, travel pattern, and travel activities	Nationality
Glover (2011)	948 local and international university students in Australia	Destination choice and travel patterns	Student status, faculty, level of study, and first language
Phau, Quintal, and Shanka (2014)	408 young travellers in Australia	Destination choice intention	Social value, word-of-mouth, and destination image
Prayag and Hosany (2014)	286 young tourists of the UAE	Travel motivation and perception	Shopping, relaxation, cuisine, and spending time with friends
Varasteh, Marzuki, and Rasoolimanesh (2015)	409 international students in Malaysian universities	Travel patterns and travel activities	Age, marital status, nationality, and source of income

include travel activities, travel patterns, destination choice, and travel intentions. Existing research suggests that socio-demographic factors—for example, age, marital status, and income—have an impact on such behaviour. It is expected that other predictors, for instance, cultural and psychographic variables, significantly contribute to travel behaviour. The scarcity of research calls for more investigations to address the gaps in the literature.

The second main stream of the review is in relation to the utilization of the TPB in tourism literature. In brief, the TPB, as depicted in Figure 1, was proposed by Ajzen (1991) to explain volitional and non-volitional elements contributing to how likely individuals were to perform an action. The volitional elements are attitude toward behaviour (AT) and subjective norms (SN), and the non-volitional factor is perceived behavioural control (PBC), which together influence behavioural intentions. Researchers adapted the TPB to suit the tourism context. Some scholars have adopted the original model of the TPB (e.g., Misung, Heesup, & Tim, 2012). Nevertheless, several others have extended the theory by including additional factors depending upon their research context, for example, past travel experiences, perceived risks, and travel motivations (e.g., Hsu & Huang, 2010; Lam & Hsu, 2006; Phillips & Jang, 2012; Quintal, Lee, & Soutar, 2010; Sparks & Pan, 2009). Varying outcomes were produced depending upon the research focus. Some studies fully support the applicability of the TPB indicating that AT, SN, and PBC have positive effects on travel intentions (Hsu & Huang, 2010; Misung et al., 2012; Phillips & Jang, 2012). However, others, including Lam and Hsu (2006), found only SN and PBC had a direct impact on behavioural intentions. It should be noted that these aforementioned studies examined tourists in Asian contexts. In Western contexts, Sparks (2007) contended that SN only partially affected behavioural intentions.

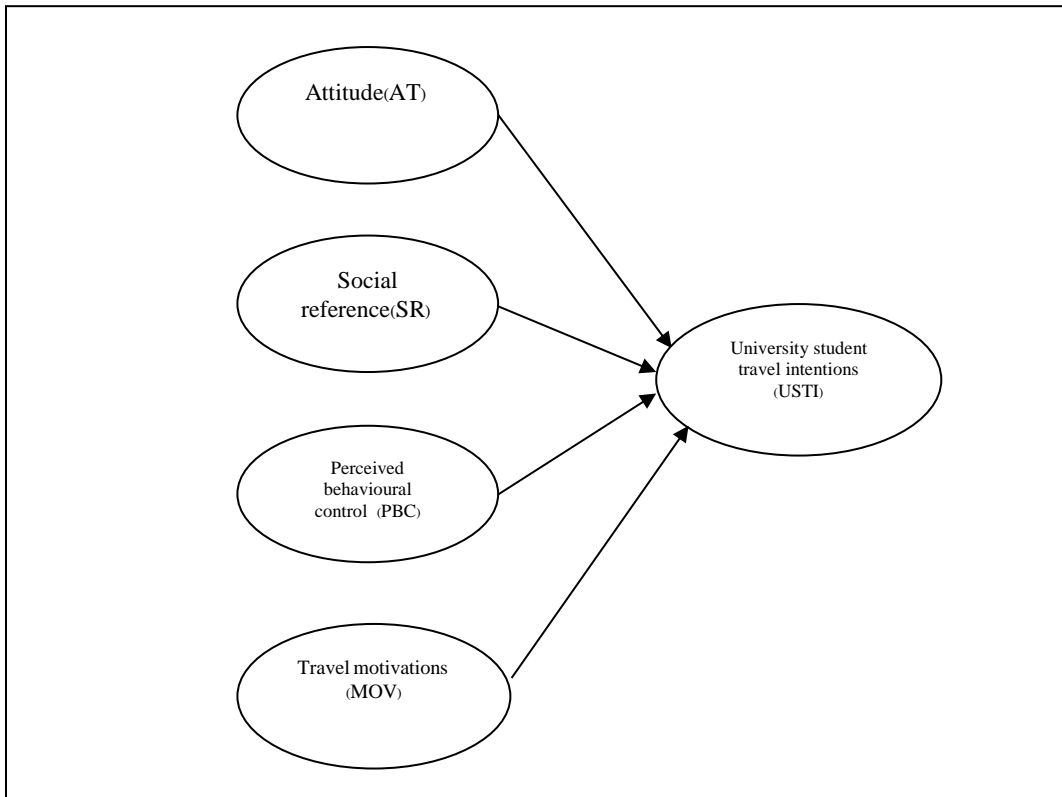
Figure 1: The Theory of Planned Behaviour



Source: Madden, Ellen, and Ajzen (1992)

As mentioned previously, several researchers adapted the TPB to suit the tourism context. Firstly, some researchers extended the theory by including other independent factors into the original model to examine tourist intentions. These factors include past experiences, travel motivation, and perceived risks, and uncertainty. For example, a few scholars stated that past behaviour had a positive effect on intentions (Lam & Hsu, 2006; Phillips & Jang, 2012; Sparks & Pan, 2009). Hsu and Huang (2010) found that travel motivation had a positive effect on travel intentions and that behavioural intentions directly affected actual behaviour when visiting the destination. A group of researchers adapted the dependent variable, such as actual visit behaviour (e.g., Hsu & Huang, 2010), within their TPB models. Very few studies have examined the relationship between travel motivation and travel intentions (Hsu & Huang, 2010; Phillips & Jang, 2012). However, only particular motivational components—for example, shopping motivation (Hsu & Huang, 2010) and enjoyment (Phillips & Jang, 2012)—significantly influenced tourist intentions. This scarcity is a call for further research to verify the relationship between travel motivations and behavioural intentions. The motivational factors used in previous studies (Hsu & Huang, 2010; Phillips & Jang, 2012) imply push factors (e.g., relaxation, knowledge seeking, enjoyment, escape, and socialising) with limited pull motivation (shopping). In the case of ASEAN university student tourists, there might be other aspects of travel motivation, for instance, employment seeking, especially due to easier labour movement after the AEC.

Figure 2: The conceptual framework of this research



Based on the TPB and young tourist motivations, four hypotheses were proposed.

H1. Attitude (AT) is positively related to university student travel intentions (USTI).

H2. Social references (SR) are positively related to university student travel intentions (USTI).

H3. Perceived behavioural control (PBC) is positively related to university student travel intentions (USTI).

The current research proposed to examine the effect of travel motivations on travel intentions. Therefore, the factor of travel motivations was included in the TPB model. Travel motivations in this study drew from the existing literature where travel motivations of young travellers referred to cultural experience, and novelty seeking (Kakyom et al., 2006; Prayag & Hosany, 2014). Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, the official establishment of the AEC at the end of 2015 allows freer movement of labourers within ASEAN countries. As such, in this study, employment seeking (Ryan & Zhang, 2007) was included to investigate its effect on travel intention within the ASEAN region. Employment seeking in the current research refers to young travellers casually exploring possibilities of full-time employment at a visited destination. Accordingly, the fourth hypothesis proposed is:

H4. Travel motivation (MOV) is positively related to university student travel intentions (USTI).

METHOD

This research adapted the TPB and examined relationships between psychological factors and university student travel intentions. The target respondents for this study were bachelor degree students who were expected to travel within ASEAN for leisure purposes. Thai and Malaysian university students were selected due to some differences between them—especially, the official language used in both countries. Thai is the official language in Thailand whereas English and Malay are the official ones in Malaysia. This might be one key reason why Malaysians would be able to move more freely across ASEAN after the AEC while Thais might be more reluctant to work abroad. Convenience non-probability sampling was employed in this investigation. This sampling method is widely used among scholars in various research areas, including tourism. This sampling approach was appropriate for this research due to the large number of university students in both countries. According to Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010), while the minimum ratio is five to one, the desired level of sample size is between 15 to 20 observations for each independent variable of the model of regression analysis. However, the existing literature deems a sample between 100 and 300 cases is satisfactory (DeVellis, 2012; Hinkin, 1998; Netemeyer et al., 2003). The target number of respondents was 500 with 250 Malaysians and 250 Thais.

A quantitative survey research approach was employed. 7-point Likert scale measurements of constructs in the TPB (AT, SR, PBC) with one additional construct (i.e., MOV) were used. In this study, MOV refers to relaxation, cultural experience, and employment seeking. The items related to MOV were adapted from the existing literature (e.g., C. H. C. Hsu & Huang, 2010; Misung et al., 2012; Phillips & Jang, 2012, Prayag & Hosany, 2014). The questionnaire consisted of four parts. The first section allowed respondents to rank each of the ten ASEAN countries they would like to travel to in the near future. The second part was the main section of questions relating to the key constructs shown in the conceptual framework. Questions regarding the dependent variables were also included in this part. The third part of the questionnaire was in relation to socio-demographic factors. Questions were asked to gain knowledge about potential young tourists visiting ASEAN countries and to ascertain demographic characteristics such as gender, age, country of origin, area of study, employment status, and travel companions. Finally, the last section of the questionnaire was an open-ended question for respondents to provide further information in regard to key reasons for not undertaking an ASEAN holiday vacation. The questionnaire was prepared in two languages, a Thai version for Thai students and an English version for Malaysian university students. The preliminary questionnaire was translated into English using a blind translation-back-translation method. A draft of the questionnaire was pre-tested with the researchers' colleagues to ensure that the items were simple and understandable.

A pilot study was then conducted to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire. The number of questionnaires distributed in the pilot study was 150 cases, which Pallant (2013) suggests is sufficient. The pilot test questionnaire was distributed to 165 Phuket Rajabhat University students in early December 2016. The researchers decided to use the incentive method as a sign of appreciation to respondents who gave up their study time to participate in the research. At the end, 150 usable pilot questionnaires were retained. The retrieved data was entered into statistical software. The written feedback from respondents about the questionnaire construction was analysed. The data analysis process followed steps providing in the following sections. In the pilot study, all 35 items were subjected to Principle Component Analysis (PCA) one construct at a time. Poorly performing items were removed one at a time. The results from the PCA comprising 32 remaining items across eight components satisfied the conditions at this stage. In the pilot test, the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for the questionnaire constructs ranged from 0.76 to 0.90, which exceeded the recommended satisfactory level of 0.70 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

Both an online survey and a self-administered face-to-face questionnaire were utilized in the actual data collecting stage of the study. This was to ensure that the targeted number of questionnaires were obtained in the limited time available. The online tool, namely SurveyMonkey, was employed. The researchers posted a link to the online survey on Facebook

and also distributed the link to potential respondents through academic networks across Thai and Malaysian universities from December 2016 to February 2017. Finally, 612 responses were obtained and 583 cases were usable for statistical analysis. The dataset, both from the pilot and the actual stage, was analysed involving three steps :1) data cleaning, missing value, and normality assessment; 2) principal component analysis (PCA), and internal consistency analysis; and 3) scale item and instrument adjustments. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) assisted with scale measurement (Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 2012). A series of multiple regression analyses were then conducted. The PCA analysis of the actual stage dataset suggested two components of the MOV variables, which were Cultural Experience and Employment Seeking, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: EFA Results of the Study

Factor and Items	Loading	Variance Explained (%)	Reliability (α)
Attitudes		62.55	0.80
The visit would be fascinating.	0.81		
The visit would be satisfying.	0.81		
The visit would be worthwhile	0.79		
The visit would be pleasant.	0.76		
Social references		59.68	0.70
Most people who are important to me will visit the destination in the near future.	0.83		
Most people who are important to me think I should visit the destination in the near future.	0.78		
The people in my life whose opinions I value would approve the visit in the near future.	0.71		
Perceived behavioural control		54.41	0.75
Whether or not to visit the destination in the near future is completely up to me.	0.78		
If I wanted to, I could visit the destination in the near future.	0.75		
I have complete control over visiting the destination in the near future.	0.68		
Cultural experience		58.48	0.86
I would experience a new culture while visiting the destination.	0.83		
I would interact with local people at the destination.	0.80		
I would learn about the culture of the destination.	0.77		

I would love to visit the cultural and historical attractions of the destination.	0.72		
Employment seeking		62.87	0.70
I would know more about the destination as a place to work in the future.	0.87		
I would seek job opportunities while visiting the destination.	0.77		
I would learn more about employment while visiting the destination.	0.74		
University student travel behavioural intentions		76.22	0.90
I probably will visit the destination in the next 6 months.	0.90		
I want to visit the destination in the next 6 months.	0.87		
I intend to visit the destination in the next 6 months	0.86		
I plan to visit the destination in the next 6 months.	0.86		

RESULTS

Almost all of the respondents (92%) were aged between 18 and 23 years old and undertaking their bachelor degree. Most of them (80%) were in their 1st and 2nd year of study. Of the 583 usable cases, 30% were completed by males and 70% by females. More than 50% of the subjects were in business and management areas of study whereas 30% of the sample were studying education. The rest of the respondents were with the science and technology faculty. Most of them (74%) were unemployed, while some were either part-time employed or in paid or unpaid internships. Regarding the dream ASEAN destinations, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia were reported to be the top three most favorite destinations they would like to visit in the near future. In addition, among ten ASEAN destinations, Myanmar, Cambodia, and the Philippines were chosen to be the last top three destinations of interest. A summary of the respondent profile is presented in Table 3. This profile includes gender, age, year of study, country of origin, employment status, and educational background.

Table 3: The Profile of the Respondents

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	173	29.70
	Female	410	70.30
	Total	583	100.00
Age	18 -20	341	58.49
	21 -23	197	33.79
	24 and above	45	7.72
	Total	583	100.00
Year of study	1	201	34.50
	2	227	38.90
	3	72	12.30
	4	83	14.20
	Total	583	100.00
Country of origin	Myanmar	2	0.30
	Singapore	2	0.30
	Malaysia	263	45.10
	Thailand	316	54.20
	Total	583	100.0
Employment status	Full-time employed	0	0.00
	Part-time employed	138	23.70
	Unemployed	389	66.70
	Paid internships	42	7.20
	Unpaid internships	14	2.40
	Total	583	100.0
Education background	Business and Management	328	56.26
	Science and Technology	64	11.00
	Nursing and Medicine	1	0.20
	Education	180	30.87
	Agriculture	1	0.20
	Law	1	0.20
	Other	8	1.40
	Total	583	100.0

As shown in Table 4, the results of the mean score analysis support the conclusion that respondents had positive perceptions of each of the travel behaviour factors. Overall, all factors were rated more than 4 on a 7-point Likert scale. The respondents indicated that cultural

experience was their highest predictor of travel motivation. In addition, they perceived moderately high levels of attitude, social reference, perceived behavioural control, and employment seeking. They rated the lowest scores for travel intention to ASEAN destinations in the next six months. This low score was supported by their responses to the open-ended question. The major reasons that would prevent them from travelling to a destination within ASEAN were time and financial problems.

Table 4: Mean Score Results for Each Aspect of Travel Behaviour

Travel behaviour	Mean	Std.Deviation
Attitude to travel within ASEAN destinations	5.89	0.77
Social reference	5.04	0.99
Perceived behavioural control	5.03	0.89
Employment seeking	5.40	1.21
Cultural experience	6.00	0.67
University student travel intention	4.02	1.54

Results of regression analyses indicated that the model was significant and three predictors (i.e., social references, perceived behavioural control, and travel motivation) had a significant impact on university student travel behavioural intentions, explaining 40 percent of the variance (see Table 5). Among the significant predictors, perceived behavioural control made the strongest contribution to the model, followed by social references. In relation to travel motivation factors (cultural experience, relaxation, and employment seeking), the findings showed that only employment seeking was a significant predictor of university student travel intentions. The effect of attitude was not significant ($p < 0.05$) in the model. The findings showed that university students were likely to have strong intentions to travel within the ASEAN region when students believed they could control their travel barriers and they were supported by social references, for instance, friends and family. Moreover, the results in this research indicated that university students would travel to ASEAN destinations due to employment seeking travel motivations.

Table 5: Regression Analysis of Predictors of University Travel Behavioural Intentions Based on Nationality

Predictors	Overall β^*	Thai β^*	Malaysian β^*
Attitude	0.20	0.22	0.09
Social references	0.30	0.40	0.17
Perceived behavioural control	0.30	0.38	0.12
Employment seeking	0.18	0.05	0.31
Cultural experience	0.02	0.06	-0.03
<i>F</i>	42.15	38.95	11.56
Model significance	0.00	0.00	0.00
Adjusted R ²	0.26	0.38	0.17

Note. β^* = *Standardized regression coefficient; Significant factors are in boldface.

A summary of whether or not each hypothesis is supported is provided in Table 6. All five factors were included to answer the research question and were hypothesized to have either a significantly positive or negative influence on the outcomes. Three significant positive factors were found, which were attitude, social references, and perceived behavioural control. Therefore, H1, H2, and H3 were supported. In addition, only one factor of travel motivations (i.e., employment seeking) significantly contributed to travel intentions. Hence, H4 was partially supported.

Furthermore, iterative multiple regression analyses were used to examine specific predictors of Thai and Malaysian USTI. It is evident that different predictors contributing to USTI for young travellers from different nationalities are different. The results indicated that attitude, social references, and perceived behavioural control had significant impact on travel intentions of Thai university students. This outcome differs from those affecting behavioural intentions of the Malaysian cohort. Malaysian university student travel intentions were affected by social references and employment seeking.

Table 6: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Results
H1. Attitude is positively related to university student travel behavioural intentions.	Supported
H2. Social references are positively related to university student travel behavioural intentions.	Supported
H3. Perceived behavioural control is positively related to university student travel behavioural intentions.	Supported
H4. Travel motivation (i.e., employment seeking and cultural experience) is positively related to university student travel behavioural intentions.	Partially Supported

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine ASEAN university student travel behaviour after the official establishment of the AEC. Factors influencing travel intention were investigated. With the utilization of the TPB, this study followed the precedent of previous research by including the additional predictor of travel motivation. In this research, travel motivation focused on relaxation, cultural experience, and employment seeking in the ASEAN region. This research provides a greater understanding of both the application of the TPB and of young travel behaviour to the tourism literature.

The current investigation followed existing research adapting the TPB. The relevant predictor of the university student tourist context was included, which was travel motivation. Accordingly, one motivational component proposed in this research, namely employment seeking, was a significant predictor of the travel intentions for university students. The extension of this additional factor further supports the advantages and flexibility of the TPB.

Furthermore, the study provided insights into what determines university students' travel behaviour. Similar to some extant literature (e.g., Hsu & Huang, 2010; Misung et al., 2012; Phillips & Jang, 2012), the current research fully supports the applicability of the TPB. All predictors of the TPB significantly contributed to travel intentions. In addition, this research is consistent with the findings from Hsu & Huang (2010) who found a positive effect of travel motivation on travel intentions.

The current findings contribute to a better comprehension of university student travel behaviours. Different significant predictors between Thais and Malaysian university students were evident. This study argued that only social references and perceived behavioural control significantly contributed to Thai student travel intentions. This finding agreed with Lam and Hsu (2006) who studied potential outbound tourists and found that social references and perceived behavioural control had a direct impact on behavioural intentions. However, in the case of Malaysia, only social references and employment seeking were found to be significant predictors of the outcome. The result regarding employment seeking conforms to Ryan and Zhang (2007) who examined Chinese university students travelling in New Zealand. They also found employment seeking and further study were travel behavioural predictors. While employment seeking was an insignificant predictor for Thais, it was the strongest significant predictor for Malaysian travel intentions. The possible reason may be related to English being the official language for use in the ASEAN region. As we know, English is one of the official languages in Malaysia. As such, the majority of Malaysians speak good English. In contrast, English proficiency is one of the key disadvantages for Thais.

As well as the theoretical contributions, this research further provides practical implications for various organizations. First of all, tourism related organizations can apply the findings to promote and attract university student tourists to visit their destinations. We know that one of the significant factors for this tourist market when considering a vacation within the ASEAN region is employment seeking. Therefore, policy makers should consider providing opportunities for young tourists, especially the university student segment, to engage more with local businesses and events in order to encourage the tourists to learn more about employment in such destinations. Moreover, due to an interest in international employment, universities in the ASEAN region could offer more curriculums to prospective students involving study and work in their countries. For instance, educational policy makers could investigate the work industries where university students would like to be employed. Then they can advertise their curriculums to those students. Such international students would boost a country's economy.

In addition, this examination pointed out the strongest predictors of university student travel intentions involved social references and perceived behavioural control. The tourism industry should place importance on these significant factors. Policy makers should promote greater and safer destinations to this potential tourist market including their reference groups. Also, we found that besides political and natural crises, the important barriers to young tourists involved insufficient travel budgets and time. The government and policy makers should encourage and support targeting budget accommodation businesses to young visitors, such as, Bed & Breakfasts, home-stays, and youth hostels. At the same time, such businesses should focus more on safety and security. In order to reduce financial burdens, it would be a good idea for government to promote reasonable local food street to this potential tourist market. As such, local street food businesses must meet quality standards regarding hygiene and taste.

Airlines could also benefit from the current research. Because of time constraints, university students are more likely to take trips during school breaks, which are scheduled in advance. Airline firms can introduce special promotions and campaigns to attract this market long in advance. This promotional plan can improve the performance of airline businesses, especially for budget airlines.

Moreover, educational institutions and the ministry of labour can apply the current research to improve labour skills—including the ability to speak English. English is the key language used among the ASEAN community. As such, those skilled workers with fluent English will gain a higher competitive advantage in a market where labourers can move somewhat freely within the region. In the case of Thailand, although the findings implied Thai skilled workers were less likely to seek jobs outside the country, the government should be aware of international labourers with outstanding qualifications who are seeking jobs in Thailand. As long as the English capability of Thais is not as high as their next-door neighbours, Thais will lose opportunities to be employed in high-performance businesses.

Nevertheless, these research findings suggest that governments should be aware of 'brain drain' involving young labourers from their countries. Some destinations in ASEAN, including Singapore and Malaysia, were rated as top destinations for university students in this region and it is likely that young travellers will prefer to seek employment in these countries. It is more likely that there will lack of labourers within countries that lack appeal. Therefore, the governments in such countries should formulate strategies to retain quality labourers working in their own lands.

Limitations to this empirical study include issues with sample selection and timing of data collection. A convenience sample was obtained for this study. While respondents were recruited from different areas of Thailand and Malaysia, including an online survey distribution, the sample may not be representative of potential university student travellers. In addition, only Thai and Malaysian university students were selected for this study. Consequently, further research should include a wider profile of informants in order to understand more behaviours relevant to travel intentions within ASEAN. Future studies could also extend the model to different cohorts, such as business travellers. In regards to other behavioural norms, a further study may compare behavioural differences between relaxing holiday takers and adventure vacationers.

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