THE ROLE OF PERSONAL VALUES IN INFORMATION SEARCH STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM – A STUDY OF HOMESTAYS IN MALAYSIA

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Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

October 2022

STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

DECLARATION

The work in this thesis has not been previously submitted for a degree or diploma at any higher education institutions within or outside Malaysia. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by other scholars except where due reference is made.

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Acknowledgements

This journey is possible because I have had many who journeyed with me. Words cannot fully express my gratitude but I will try. Firstly, my Father has inspired me from the start, and has opened every door necessary for the completion of every single task of this project. He sustained me through these many years of labouring on this project, through many challenges and disappointments; and spurred me on with every success and achievement along the way. He has given me supernatural strength and wisdom from above, truly, to be able to arrive at the completion of this journey. Thank you, Abba. All glory is Yours!

My family has been with me throughout this journey. My husband, Yu Hoe has been my strongest ally, my friend, my partner and my "big-picture" reference, working with me through many rounds of discussion, arguments and brain-storming. You covered all my weaknesses. You are my pillar of strength. I cherish the treasure of you. My children, Adelia and Nathan - have 'suffered' many days and weeks of disruptions and frustrations of having (or rather not having) me around. I love you. Thank you for your patience, support and understanding. My mum – thank you for fighting for all your children to be educated all those years ago, and for all your prayers for my success, especially in this journey. I dedicate this to you, Mum.

My amazing supervisors must come next: Dave and Kenny. You have been tremendously supportive, always encouraging and always there. In spite of the physical distance of over 6000 miles, Dave has always been prompt in his response, so patient and so thorough in his feedback. It felt like he was just in the office next to mine! I appreciate you for all you have done for me in this journey. Kenny, thank you for your patience, for all the little details you highlighted and for being a friend. You have been great examples to me, as researchers, as supervisors and as mentors.

There are so many others who have journeyed with me. I cannot name them all but I treasure them in my heart. A special thank you must go to my dear friend, Mandy. She has been my encouragement, my buddy – putting her arms around me when it seemed like I would never finish this journey! You believed in me more than I did in myself! Those in the corridor who gave me something at different points along my journey: Venga, Anita, Mohan, Maniam, Jason, Angelina,Yvonne, Wen Li, and so many others. Thank you.

Last but not least to the University of Nottingham Malaysia, for the scholarship and this opportunity to pursue my PhD. Thank you all.

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Proceedings

Gan, S. W., Inversini, A. and Rega, I. (2016) 'Community Based Tourism and ICT : Insights from Malaysia', in *ENTER 2016 Conference on Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism*, published in *e-Review of Tourism*, Vol 7. Available at: http://ertr.tamu.edu/enter-2016-volume-7-research-notes/.

Gan, S. W., Inversini, A. and Rega (2018) 'Tourism, Development and Digital Technologies: Insights from Malaysian Homestays', in Stangl, B. and Pesonen, J. (eds) *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2018*. Springer, Cham, pp. 52–63. doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-72923-7_5.

Book Chapter

Inversini, A., Rega, I. and Gan, S. W. (2020) 'E-Tourism as a Tool for Socio-economic Development', in Xiang, Z. et al. (eds) *Handbook of e-Tourism*. Springer, Cham. doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-05324-6_108-1

Journal

Inversini, A., Rega, I. and Gan, S. W. (2022) 'The transformative learning nature of Malaysian homestay experiences', *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*. Elsevier Ltd, 51(June), pp. 312–320. doi: 10.1016/j.jhtm.2022.03.008.

Abstract

The growth of international tourist arrivals in the developing and emerging economies has made it a main contributor of export in services and over 100 million jobs in small and medium sized enterprises. However, it also creates a threat to the social and cultural fabric of the communities involved in the industry and to the environment. Community-based tourism such as the Homestay Programme in Malaysia can be leveraged as a means of conservation of the social, cultural and environmental heritage of these communities. However, the uptake of community-based tourism in Malaysia is developing slower than anticipated.

Therefore, this research intends to investigate this problem with a view towards advancing the development of this unique tourism experience. It will study the role of personal values as an antecedent to information search strategies and destination selection, to provide insights into the profile of Homestay visitors and their information search strategies. The conceptual framework developed for this study is based on the contingency model synthesising theories of economics of information, information processing and psychographic/motivational approaches. Data collected for this mixed methods study comprised of 7 in-depth semi-structured interviews and 239 survey responses. Interview data were analysed using directed content analysis. Adopting Schwartz's Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ) as part of the survey instrument, survey data collected were analysed through univariate, multi-variate, regression and exploratory factor analyses.

Findings indicate that the personal value prioritised by Homestay visitors is indeed different from other tourists. The majority of Homestay visitors are young urban Malaysians with higher education, prioritising the personal value Self-Direction, in contrast to other visitors in Malaysia and Asia who prioritise Security. Currently, the only important source of information for Homestays is friends and family. Due to a lack of resources and technical competency, Homestays are not able to establish and maintain a robust online presence. Therefore, there is currently a mis-match between available information sources and the preferred information search strategies of Homestay tourists such as search portals, online agencies and influencers.

To address this challenge, policy intervention and management strategies are needed to develop a customised information infrastructure that meets the specific needs of Homestay tourism. Contributing to extant literature, results of this study support the assertion that models which incorporate the element of personal values add significant insights in studies on information search strategies and destination selection. This study also sheds light on the current information infrastructure for Homestays, providing insights into issues relevant for Homestay tourism and improvement strategies for consideration by relevant stakeholders.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

This thesis presents a theoretical model for studying the impact of personal values on information search strategies of tourists in the context of community-based tourism, a unique tourism product which is gaining momentum in the Malaysian tourism industry. This research will highlight the unique characteristics of tourists visiting community-based tourism (CBT) sites, with specific focus on their personal values, and its impact on the information search behaviour of these tourists in order to understand the information search strategies for CBT destinations, analysed from the perspective of channels and sources of information. This perspective is taken based on shortfalls observed in previous studies on information search strategies, particularly the lack of clarity in the distinction between sources of information and the channels through which these sources are accessed. Specifically, in terms of the nature of the Internet, some viewed it as a source of information rather than a channel by which information is sought and obtained. In fact, many authors do not distinguish between the two and have used the internet as a source rather than a channel (Luo, Feng and Cai, 2004; Lo et al., 2002, Bieger and Laesser, 2004; Schweda and Varan, 2004); Pan and Fesenmaier, 2006 and Hyde, 2007).

Extensive research has been done on information search strategies for tourism, considering a variety of different factors and variables affecting information search, including vacationer demographics, trip and destination characteristics, and situational conditions. However, personal values as a characteristic of the vacationer/tourist has been given little attention in the literature, despite extensive research in the field of psychology linking personal values to behavioural and psychological aspects in various different contexts. Hence this research seeks

to contribute to the literature on information search for tourism by incorporating the element of personal values as a characteristic of the vacationer in the context of community-based tourism.

Community-based tourism is selected as the context of this study due to its unique features within the field of tourism. According to the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 2019a) tourism has had a high growth rate of 5.1% per annum over the last 10 years; with Asia and the Pacific recording a growth rate of 6% in 2018. The growth of international tourist arrivals in emerging economies has made it a main contributor of export in services, accounting for up to 52% for less developed countries, and up to 29% in other parts of the world. 50% of the jobs in the tourism industry are in small and medium-sized enterprises (Cooper, 2012). However, it also creates a threat to the social and cultural fabric of communities involved in the industry. Hence, proper planning is essential in order to leverage tourism as a means of conservation of the social and cultural heritage of these communities. In order to promote conservation of local culture, community-based tourism is an important strategy as it focuses on tourists experiencing local culture and lifestyle. In recent years, the Malaysian Homestay Programme as a form of CBT has experienced a declining growth rate. Therefore, this research seeks to contribute insights into the profile of tourists to CBT sites and their information search strategies, towards informing its marketing and communication strategies in order to reach a wider market and enhance the development and growth of this niche tourism product in Malaysia.

This study analysed the influence of personal values on other demographic variables and on information search behaviour of tourists, to develop a framework for information search strategy incorporating the perspective of sources and channels of information for community-based tourism destinations. The outcomes of this research enable managers to understand the personal value profiles of CBT customers, the types of information search strategies employed

by this group of tourists and the most effective methods to communicate with, and to attract and retain them.

In this chapter a brief history of tourism as a research area will be provided, followed by a discussion of the statement of the problem, with an introduction of the concepts of personal values and information search strategy, which are the focus areas of this research. Next, the significance and benefits of this research will be explained. The research objectives will then be presented, together with the organisation of chapters in this thesis.

1.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF TOURISM AS A RESEARCH AREA

While modern tourism can be traced back to the introduction of commercial flights and club holiday destinations in the 1950s (Gyr, 2008), tourism as an area of academic and management research goes back almost five decades with the publication of Dean MacCannell's (1976) book, 'The Tourist' (Meethan, 2001). Tourism initially emerged out of a differentiation between home and work which appeared in the nineteenth century with the industrial revolution, urbanisation and the emergence of the capitalist system where work was regulated as paid labour. The legal requirement to provide paid leave to workers meant that the majority of workers now have the means and time to take a holiday at some point in the year. Meethan (2001) is of the view that the earliest development of seaside resorts in this period established a pattern for mass tourism, and created specific tourist spaces which are conceptually, temporally and spatially separate from the sphere of work, designated for the pursuit of leisure. Tour packages and organised trips became a form of mass production of the product for tourists to consume. Tourism is attractive because it offers a sense of freedom and self-determination which is not available in everyday life (Krippendorf, 1987). Motivations for tourism include fulfilling a sense of curiosity to explore new places, cultures and people (Mayo and Jarvis, 1981), hedonism and self development (Riley, 1988). 'Tourists' are defined as 'persons away from home to the extent that their behaviour is motivated by leisure related factors' (Leiper,

1990). This definition can include persons on trips for the purpose of work/business, but may devote their own discretionary time to a leisure related activity. Meethan (2001) argues that tourism is part of what is inherent in modern capitalism, defined as a 'global process of commodification and consumption involving flows of people, capital, images and cultures'. A conceptual definition of tourism developed by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) (2018) states that tourism is

> 'a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal, business or professional purposes'.

Although tourism has been an important economic activity in the developed world since the mid-nineteenth century, the development of analytical approaches to explain this social phenomenon has only been pursued recently. Tourism as an academic discipline has not been analysed rigorously with theoretical analysis, although it has been studied empirically with descriptive analysis. There is a need to synthesise empirical data into theoretical frameworks as it remains under-theorised, eclectic and disparate, according to Riley and Love (2000) and Meethan (2001). Blichfeldt and Kessler (2009) surveyed research over the last 15 years and concluded that the majority of the research done on tourism is destination specific and employed quantitative research methods. These provide practical contributions through an understanding of the extent and nature of the relationship between tourists and the services and experiences offered in those destinations but are less enlightening in uncovering the reasons for specific tourist behaviour (Blichfeldt and Kessler, 2009) or for development of theoretical frameworks.

Tourism as a product is heterogeneous, made up of a bundle of tangible and intangible inputs and outputs. UNWTO (2019b) states that a tourism product is

> ‘a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as natural, cultural and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services and activities around a specific centre of interest which represents the core of the destination marketing mix and creates an overall visitor experience including emotional aspects for the potential customers’ (p.18).

Hence, its production cannot be analysed in the same way as traditional manufacturing and consumption of products and services. There are tangible outputs such as accommodation and transport but also pre-purchase intangible experience of information search and post-consumption experience sharing and feedback (Davies, 2003). Tourism as an industry is also distinguishable from traditional manufacturing or service industries as tourism often comes together from several distinct but connected industries based around the tourist’s motivations. Products in tourism are often time-dated (such as hotel rooms for specific dates, or tickets for public transportation), and results from contracts with third parties, involving varying degrees of outsourcing. In view of the unique and eclectic nature of the industry and its significant contribution to national economies, the importance of research in the area of tourism is increasing, especially for developing nations, and appropriate attention should be devoted to researching this area.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In developing nations, the importance of tourism to national economies cannot be understated. Until the 1990s, tourism has been adopted by many developing nations as a modernisation and development strategy to attract foreign investment, increase national economic value and promote modernity and technology transfer (Hummel and van der Duim, 2012). The high growth rate of international tourist arrivals have contributed over half of the export of services in emerging economies and close to 30% in developing economies (UNWTO, 2019a). As such, tourism has become one of the main sources of foreign exchange earnings; hence,

developments in this industry will help spearhead economic development in the these nations. Tourism generates over 277 million jobs worldwide (equivalent to 9.8% of consolidated GDP of the world) (Beyer, Dickhut, Korner et al., 2017) and half of these are in small and medium-sized enterprises (Cooper, 2012).

Nevertheless, concurrent with the extensive development brought about by tourism, there has also been significant detrimental effects. Tourism causes decay and destruction of culture, and adverse social change; this can be seen in obvious examples of cities such as Pattaya, Thailand and Las Vegas, USA as the demands of tourists visiting these destinations has caused the culture of the communities to disappear and a 'tourist focused' artificial culture to be developed. Mass tourism (set products, fixed prices and economies of scale) popular in the early years of tourism development (Hyde and Lawson, 2003) has brought about this degeneration of cultural heritage and environmental issues in many of these traditional tourism destinations. The negative social and cultural impact of mass tourism is well documented (Murphy, 1985; Cater, 1993; Hall and Lew, 2009). A new tourism characterised by flexibility, innovation, diagonal integration, community participation and environmental soundness is emerging as a result of new customers, technology and products, driven by the changing lifestyles and demographics of tourists (Poon, 1993). Since the 1970s, community-based tourism has emerged as a response to the adverse environmental, socio-cultural and economic impacts of international mass tourism (Cater, 1993). Although in the early years, most of the CBT initiatives were based in small rural communities with ecology and nature as its main attractions, it has since been expanded to include culture, gastronomy, and traditional craft with diverse management models across different parts of the world (Zapata, Hall, Lindo et al., 2011).

1.3.1 Community-based tourism – a sustainable alternative

In more recent times, tourism has been identified as a tool for poverty alleviation by utilising cultural and environmental resources available in economically deprived areas to create jobs and businesses for local communities. Specifically, CBT has been shown to have a positive impact in enhancing economic, social and environmental welfare of communities (Sakata and Prideaux, 2013). Initiatives under the UNWTO's Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty Programme and International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development in 2017 reflect the emphasis of tourism as a tool for economic development.

Tourism is also closely associated with specific locations because destinations are identified and marketed in the global marketplace as expressions of culture, identity and locality. Due to the interaction between local and global elements of tourism, several issues require close examination. Firstly, the patterns of demand and consumption from the tourists, as well as their motivations and values should be investigated. Today's tourists are much more knowledgeable, culturally sensitive and environmentally aware (Buhalis and Connor, 2005). New technology has influenced both the supply and demand of tourism products. Because of a higher level of technological literacy, they are able to access, visit and keep in touch with members of other communities in remote places (Blichfeldt and Kessler, 2009). The impact of these demands on host communities in terms of their cultural values, organisation of work and gender relations therefore become important concerns. Positively, it provides sources of income and employment, and improvement in the economic wellbeing of the community. With appropriate emphasis on local culture and traditions, local communities can be empowered through their interaction with tourists (Messerli, 2011). With participation in tourism management and ownership of tourism resources, CBT can play a crucial role in the conservation of the natural environment and cultural heritage.

Although the understanding of what constitutes community based tourism (CBT) is diverse (Mayaka, Croy and Cox, 2019), three key elements of community-based tourism (CBT) are: being located within a community, owned by members of the community and managed by them. The fact that CBT contains the key concepts of renewable economic, social and cultural benefits makes it a form of sustainable tourism development (Hall, 2007), defined by UNWTO (2005) as 'tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities'.

In Asia, Taiwan is one of the success stories for the development of CBT, where it has been designated as a national policy (Lee, 2009). Similarly in South Korea, CBT is supported by the government via "Tourdure", a type of CBT programme (Eom, Han and Song, 2020). Studies on CBT have been reported for other countries in Asia, including Nepal (Acharya and Halpenny, 2013), Thailand (Dangi and Jamal, 2016), Laos (Harrison and Schipani, 2007), Cambodia (Schott and Nhem, 2018), Indonesia (Widjanarko, Utomo and Wibawa, 2020) and Malaysia (Din, 1996; Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). CBT has also been implemented in various countries in Africa such as Kenya, (Kibicho, 2008; Mayaka, Croy and Cox, 2018; Manyara and Jones, 2007), South Africa (Hill, Nel and Trotter, 2006), Ghana (Teye, Sirakaya and Sönmez, 2002), Namibia (Lapeyre, 2010) and Tanzania (Nelson, 2012); in Latin America: Brazil (Medeiros, Guerreiro, Vieira et al., 2021), Nicaragua (Zapata et al., 2011), El-Salvador (López-Guzmán, Sánchez-Cañizares and Pavón, 2011) and Peru (Zorn and Farthing, 2007). In the developed world, CBT has been studied in Spain (Ruiz-Ballesteros and Cáceres-Feria, 2016), Romania (Iorio and Corsale, 2014), Croatia (Đurkin and Perić, 2017).

In Malaysia, the Homestay Programme, a niche product under the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, is a form of community-based tourism. The Programme, launched in 1995, has had some level of success in encouraging cultural heritage conservation and providing a source

of income to communities, particularly in rural areas (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010; Moghavvemi, Woosnam, Paramanathan et al., 2017). The Homestay Programme, as a form of community-based tourism, is an immersive tourism experience incorporating accommodation, extensive engagement with host communities in their social and economic life, as well as exposure to unique cultural heritage through food, crafts, music, culture and lived experiences. These Homestay villages are located in rural or semi-rural locations, managed and owned by villagers of each Homestay. It is distinguished from accommodation offered by private home owners on a short-term rental basis in various locations in the country, losely termed as 'homestays', which are made available on various electronic platforms such as Airbnb.com, Booking.com and Agoda.com.

Despite having governmental support and community participation, the uptake of Homestays is developing slower than anticipated with a growth rate of 6.5% in 2015, and less than 5% thereafter (Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, 2018). Particularly, although this tourism product appeals to foreign tourists interested in getting to know the culture and people of the country, it is noted that the increase among international tourists in 2015 was only 1.1% (from 71,034 to 71,830), followed by a trend of decline thereafter (61846 in 2017) (Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, 2018). Information on this tourism product may not be reaching potential tourists in international markets, and there may exist barriers in marketing communication in relation to this unique tourism experience. In Malaysia, the current landscape of access to information on community-based tourism is skeletal due to a lack of resources for marketing experienced by owners of these CBT sites, which are mostly small or medium sized enterprises operating with a basic management structure. Only a very small number have their own blog or website, and the majority of them cannot be found through search engines. Although tourist information search is one of the most researched areas of tourism consumer behaviour (Gursoy and Mccleary, 2003; Hyde 2008), studies on information

search strategies in the context of CBT destinations have so far not been done. Despite it being of central importance in providing consumers with quality information in the appropriate form and at the right time (Schmidt and Spreng, 1996), for CBT, such issues remain largely unexplored. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the causes of this problem within the framework of tourism information search.

1.3.2 Personal values, Destinations and Information Search Strategies

Moreover, it is observed that differentiation of products has become a major challenge for destination marketing organisations (DMOs) because of a globalized world where tourism products have become standardized in terms of their facilities and offerings. Most destinations offer similar attractions such as white beaches, old cities or great shopping, making the actual destination less important to tourists and therefore competition based on attributes of a location may need to be re-examined. As such, it is proposed that positioning through a thematic message based on abstract personal values may allow DMOs to cut through the noise in the marketplace and create competitive advantage for organisations (Pike, 2012). Cohen (1984) also states that as the centre of economic growth, and thus growth in outbound tourism, shifts from the west to emerging markets, it is important to understand the changing consumption patterns within these nations. Linked to this is the need to understand motivations of different tourists linked to cultural and national differences. Knowledge of consumer value orientations can provide useful input to market segmentation variables beyond basic demographic and psychographic differences and enable targeted marketing of tourism products (Vinson, Scott and Lamont, 1977). A destination positioning theme linked to personal values will appeal to a broader range of travellers than themes which focus on one or two cognitive attributes such as facilities or cultural attractions. This perspective allows marketers to target products and messages closely associated with value states which are considered as important for tourists. It also allows marketers to understand the cognitive positioning of current products and allow

development of positioning strategies for new products using a consumer-based orientation instead of a perspective based only on product characteristics.

Literature on the links between value and behaviour suggests that value induces valences on objects and events, and determines the types of activities that have a positive valence for an individual in a particular situation (Lewin, 1951; French and Kahn, 1962; Feather, 1995). Values influence a person's evaluation of a situation both cognitively and affectively in relation to the means and ends. A person who values equality sees any form of discrimination and restriction on equal access as aversive. Actions and outcomes such as the choice of tourism experience is then linked to a person's cognitive and affective aspects through that person's value priorities. This causes a situation to present itself with positive or negative valence depending on the value of the specific individual (Feather, 1995).

Personal values have been studied by researchers in the context of shopping (Swinyard, 1998), online shopping (Koo, Kim and Lee, 2008), food related lifestyle behaviours (Brunsø, Scholderer and Grunert, 2004), education (Ledden, Kalafatis and Samouel, 2007), and communication in social media (Chen, Hsieh, Mahmud et al., 2014), but very limited research has been done to study the extent to which personal values impact tourist decision making (Weeden, 2011; Ahmad, Kim, Anwer et al., 2020), and no significant study has been done on its impact on destination selection or information search.

In relation to information search strategies, the basis for this study is that the personal values prioritised by the tourist may have an influence on how he/she chooses to obtain information, and the sources which are considered credible. In today's information saturated society, knowing the sources of information which tourists rely on for their decision making will enhance destination marketers' ability to design effective marketing campaigns, and enable policy makers to enhance the quality and accessibility to those sources of information (Schmidt

and Spreng, 1996). Hence, knowing the personal values of customers who prefer Homestay destinations will allow providers to reach this niche market by targeting specific marketing channels frequented by these customers, and tailor Homestay products and services which are attractive to them.

Therefore, this study intends to identify the characteristics of tourists who prefer this unique tourism product, particularly their personal values, and the antecedents to information search strategies employed by these tourists. Through a better understanding of the customer and the search processes involved, accurate, timely and relevant information could then be provided through the most suitable mediums to attract and retain tourists to these destinations in a sustainable manner.

1.4 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In view of the gaps identified above, this research aims to study the role of personal values on information search strategies for community-based tourism in order to provide insights on the profile of the customer and the information search strategies employed by them in the context of Homestays. The objectives of this study are to:

1. Identify the personal value profile of tourists visiting Malaysia generally, and those who visit a Homestay specifically
2. Identify the influence of personal values and other antecedents on information search strategies for Homestays
3. Determine the information search strategies employed by Homestay tourists, from the perspective of channels and sources of information
4. Analyse the sufficiency of these sources of information in meeting the information needs of Homestay tourists and any improvements necessary to meet those needs.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In view of the objectives of this study, the research questions are:

RQ1. What is the impact of demographic characteristics on the personal value profile of tourists to Malaysia?

RQ2. What is the dominant personal value profile of tourists who visit a Homestay in Malaysia?

RQ3. What are the information search strategies employed by Homestay tourists in relation to the channels and sources consulted?

RQ4. In terms of online information search strategies, how well do they meet the information needs of the Homestay tourists?

RQ5. Whether improvements are necessary, and what are the areas of improvements which will increase the effectiveness of meeting these information needs?

RQ6. Which are the key antecedents affecting information search strategies of tourists in the context of Homestays?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study can be observed in both its theoretical and managerial contributions.

1.6.1 Theoretical contribution

Theoretically, the study contributes to the body of knowledge concerning information search strategies and its antecedents by identifying the impact of the antecedent of personal values to tourism information search theory. This will enhance information search strategy frameworks in the literature by introducing the element of personal values into analyses of information search strategies for tourism in general, and community-based tourism in particular.

The findings of this study will also contribute to the Schwartz theory of basic human values through the application of the theory within the context of community-based tourism, among respondents of various nationalities in East and Southeast Asia, in addition to other cultural contexts and disciplines previously analysed in various studies.

1.6.2 Managerial implications

The outcomes of this study will shed light on the influence of personal values on information search strategies, particularly in relation to the selection of Homestays. This will inform Homestay stakeholders of the profile of tourists to Homestays, the motivations for their destination selection and allow suitable products which are attractive to this niche market, to be designed. It will also enable practitioners in marketing to strategise and design appropriate marketing approaches and product mix which will appeal to the specific customer base and to enable relevant and timely information to be disseminated to them via the appropriate channels and from the most preferred sources. The prescriptive aspect of this study will provide practical and operational strategies for marketers of this unique tourism product in promoting and penetrating new and unexplored markets, both domestic and international.

1.7 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The following terms used in this study are defined below:

Information search

The motivated activation of knowledge stored in memory or acquisition of information from the environment', referring to both internal and external sources of information.

Internal information search

Knowledge stored in memory, which can come from previous personal experience, experience of friends and family, or knowledge gathered through ongoing search gained from

advertisement and articles in printed or electronic media, which forms part of the existing knowledge base of the consumer.

External information search

The degree of attention, perception and action directed toward obtaining environmental data or information related to the specific purchase under consideration.

Tourism information search

Acquisition of information from the environment, representing a conscious effort of seeking out new information relating to the tourism experience, because of the high risk associated with the purchase of vacations due to its intangibility, separation of purchase and consumption and a lack of familiarity with destinations.

Tourism information search strategies

The combination of sources used by tourists in planning for travel and their role in the various stages of the planning process.

Personal value

Concepts or beliefs about desirable end states or behaviours that transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, ordered by relative importance, as a guiding principle in a person's life.

Tourism

A social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal, business or professional purposes

Tourism product

A combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as natural, cultural and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services and activities around a specific centre of interest which represents the core of the destination marketing mix and creates an overall visitor experience including emotional aspects for the potential customers.

Tourists

Persons away from home to the extent that their behaviour is motivated by leisure related factors.

Community-based tourism

Tourism enterprises that are environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable, using local resources through community ownership and control to achieve community-determined outcomes.

Homestays

Destinations where tourists stay with hosts registered with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, experiencing daily life of Malaysian communities and engaging in experiential community-based tourism activities.

1.8 ORGANISATION OF CHAPTERS

The next chapter provides a detailed discussion of the relevant literature on information search strategies for tourism, and personal values, and its wide application in multi-disciplinary studies. It highlights a lack of research incorporating this element in information search models, and the basis and justification for this study. The research framework will be presented at the end of Chapter 2, outlining the relationships which will be investigated. The concept of

community-based tourism (CBT) and the Malaysian Homestay Programme will be detailed in Chapter 3, tracing the development of research in this area within the broader context of tourism studies before presenting the relevant research hypotheses.

Chapter 4 will explain the research approach and methodology employed, as well as the development of the instrument of the study. It will also report the results of the pilot study with analysis of its initial results and the revised instrument. Chapter 5 will detail the data collection and analyses, as well as the findings of this study. In Chapter 6, discussion of the findings, drawing on analyses of quantitative data and qualitative data from the initial interviews, as well as the implications of these findings will be laid out. Chapter 7 will present the conclusions of this study, highlighting its contributions, limitations and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a review of the literature relevant to this study will be presented. It will begin with a discussion of the role of information search within the consumer decision-making process, explain tourism information and its classifications, highlight the importance of information search for tourism, and present the theoretical foundations of information search for tourism developed over the last 30 years. Literature on personal values, a key variable investigated in this research will then be analysed. Specific studies on personal values in various different disciplines will be discussed, highlighting the paucity of research on the influence of personal values on tourism information search and destination selection. Then, the antecedents affecting information search strategies adapted in this study will be presented. The Chapter will conclude by presenting the proposed framework for this study.

2.2 INFORMATION SEARCH IN CONSUMER DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Consumer behaviour is concerned with activities directly involved in obtaining, consuming and disposing of products and services, including the decision processes that precede and follow these actions (Blackwell, Miniard and Engel, 2001). Based on Blackwell et al.,'s (2001) consumer decision process model, in this series of activities, information search is an important component of the decision making process preceding the purchase of products and services. Consumer information-processing theory states that consumer decision making process involves 5 stages: (1) problem recognition, (2) information search, (3) alternative evaluation and selection, (4) outlet selection and purchase and (5) post-purchase processes (Bettman, Johnson and Payne, 1991). The first stage, problem recognition, refers to the discrepancy between the consumer's perceived current state and the desired state. The second stage,

information search will reveal alternatives. In stage 3, when evaluating alternatives, consumers may utilise different decision rules before a final selection is made. The evaluation process continues after the purchase is made (stage 4) to provide input for future decisions in stage 5.

Information search therefore, is one of the key steps of the decision making process in the information processing theory, applicable for different products and services, including the process of vacation planning (Gursoy and Umbreit, 2004). However, McCabe, Li and Chen (2016) are of the view that tourism as a field of enquiry, rather than a discipline, has adapted theories, often in an ad hoc fashion from other disciplines to suit the context of the phenomena. Existing research on travel behaviour is fragmented due to studies being replicated and borrowed from marketing and management fields and applied to tourism; studies investigate similar variables but cannot be generalised due to specific destinations or tourism segments (Cohen, Prayag and Moital, 2014). Standard conceptual frameworks applicable to other disciplines may not be directly adaptable to tourism (Mazanec, 2009). Travel behaviour is a continuous process involving varied and inter-related stages which makes it difficult to analyse in isolation (Mills and Morrison, 2012); hence, the need for the development of theoretical frameworks with travel and tourism as its foundation.

2.2.1 Nature of tourism and tourism information

In contrast to other products, a key distinguishing feature of tourism products lies in the uniqueness of the characteristics of tourism information. Tourism information search is a dynamic process whereby the product purchase and consumption location is almost always separate, and decision making and consumption are in distinctly different time, space and location (Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005). Hence, a consumer requires accurate and comprehensive information about the product before making a decision to purchase, as inspection either before or after purchase is not possible. A consumer will only be able to

experience the product when he/she arrives at the destination. The product cannot be comprehensively evaluated by the consumer prior to purchase due to its experience-based characteristic. As such, consumers often use a combination of different sources of information in order to evaluate tourism products before making decisions to purchase (Kim, Lehto and Morrison, 2007). Therefore, the multiple decision points and elements specific to vacation itinerary and decision-making processes can be better captured using less-structured methodologies (Cohen et al., 2014) and a combination of perspectives.

Further, tourism products are often a bundle of complex products (Pearce and Schott, 2005) delivered by a variety of different suppliers in order to provide a complete tourism experience to the tourist. The process of composing this multi-faceted product is heavily reliant on information, requiring careful handling and arrangement. Tourism products are also perishable, and cannot be recovered once the time for its availability is past. The risk of loss to suppliers is high, and access to accurate and timely information by both customers and suppliers can help reduce this risk (Kim, Lehto and Morrison, 2007). In view of these unique features of tourism information, various researchers have sought to develop information search strategies specifically based on the tourism decision-making process. Some of these studies will be analysed in the following sections.

2.2.1.1 Internal and external sources of information

According to Blackwell et al. (2001), information search refers to the 'motivated activation of knowledge stored in memory or acquisition of information from the environment', referring to both internal and external sources of information. Knowledge stored in memory refers to internal information search, which can come from previous personal experience, experience of friends and family, or knowledge gathered through ongoing search gained from advertisement and articles in printed or electronic media, which forms part of the existing knowledge base of the consumer (Money and Crotts, 2003). If internal sources are deemed

sufficient for decision making, an external search for information will not be necessary (Gursoy and McCleary, 2003). When internal information search cannot provide sufficient information for decision making, consumers will gather information required from external sources (Blackwell et al., 2001).

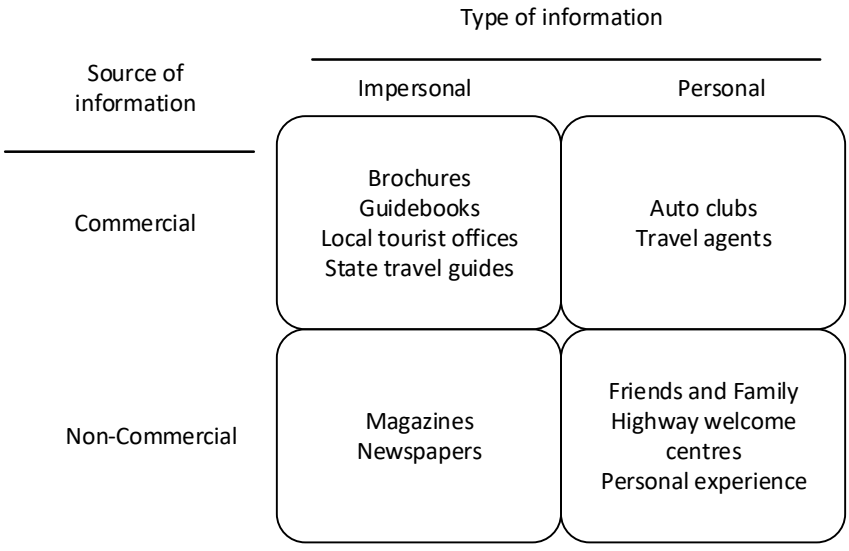
External information search has been defined as 'the degree of attention, perception and action directed toward obtaining environmental data or information related to the specific purchase under consideration' (Beatty and Smith, 1987). There is also information that is acquired externally but may not necessarily be directly related to an imminent purchase, called 'ongoing search' (search activities that are independent of specific purchase needs, for purposes of pleasure or recreation and to augment product knowledge for potential future use), but it is indistinguishable from pre-purchase information search to an observer (Bloch, Sherrell and Ridgway, 1986) and have been treated as external information search generally. **External** information search is the focus of this study, and refers to information acquired from the environment, representing a conscious effort of seeking out new information relating to the tourism experience, because vacations are considered high risk purchases (Litvin, Goldsmith and Pan, 2008); it is intangible and tourists often lack familiarity with destinations (Gitleson and Crompton, 1983).

2.2.1.2 Information sources: classification and importance

Literature reveals different methods of classifying sources of information. Firstly, information can be categorised based on the nature of the source of information. Beatty and Smith (1987), Blackwell et al. (2001) and Money and Crotts (2003) organised information sources into four categories, (1) personal/inter-personal (e.g. word of mouth, advice from friends and family), (2) marketer-dominated (e.g. advertisements), (3) neutral (e.g. third-party sources including travel agents and guides) and (4) experiential sources (direct contact with retailer). In a similar way, Lo, Cheung and Law (2002) had grouped sources into the five categories: (1) media, (2)

neutral, (3) retail, (4) interpersonal and (5) personal experience (internal source). Baloglu and McCleary (1999) classified nine traditional sources of information into four categories: (1) professional advice (tour operators, travel agents, airlines), (2) word-of-mouth (friends, relatives, and social clubs), (3) advertisement (print or broadcast media) and (4) books/movies/news; and found word-of-mouth as the most significant sources influencing the perception of destinations. Kozak (2007) had divided sources into seven dimensions: (1) friends and relatives, (2) trade exhibition, (3) promotion offices, (4) media, (5) tourism entities, (6) others and (7) outside of the above sources.

Others classified information based on dichotomous variables. For example, Mansfeld (1992) classified information into two main types: formal/impersonal and informal/interpersonal, while Fodness and Murray (1997) classified them based on whether they are commercial or non-commercial, and whether they are received via personal or impersonal communication. Their matrix of 11 types of external sources (before the proliferation of internet-based information) are depicted in Figure 2.1 below.



Source: Fodness and Murray (1997) p. 506

Figure 2.1 Fodness and Murray's classification of tourism information sources

Another classification is based on the extent of the consumer's *active involvement* in the search. Organic and induced tourist images are differentiated by the information seeking behaviour of tourists and whether it is passive or active. In line with this, Coromina and Camprubí (2016) categorised active information sources as search engines, official websites, tourism blogs and brochures; and passive information sources as personal recommendations and mass media. Gartner (1994) classified sources as (1) induced (by suppliers and providers) (2) organic (based on own and others' experience) and (3) autonomous (media, books, guides).

In evaluating the importance of these sources of tourism information, earlier studies revealed that one of the most important sources of information is personal sources, such as those from friends and family (Gitleson and Crompton, 1983), employees at destinations and fellow travellers (Fesenmaier, Vogt and Stewart, 1993). Others have considered the credibility of different sources of information and conclude that word-of-mouth from organic sources are the most credible (Buhalis and Law 2008; Camprubí, Guia and Comas, 2013). Schweda and Varan (2004) and Tan and Chen (2012) found that personal experience, and friends and relatives were important sources in decision making for holiday planning due to its perceived high level of credibility, as did Nishimura, Waryszak and King (2006). Among senior tourists, Fall and Knutson (2001) and Murphy, Mascardo and Benckendorff (2007) found word-of-mouth from friends and family to be the most important source relied upon. Similarly, Grønflaten (2009a) found that friends and family has the highest mean importance score followed by travel agents; and friends and family was the most important source for the largest number of respondents. Further, he found that the internet had the highest mean importance score, and was the most important channel for the largest number of respondents for pre-trip planning. As a strategy for risk reduction, consumers rely on friends and family as an important source of information because they perceive it as a trustworthy source (Kim Qu and Kim, 2010). In analysing studies on tourism information search, Grønflaten (2009a) found that over the years (from 1976 to

2007) travel agents and friends and relatives have remained the most important sources of information for travellers (ranked top four in all studies analysed), even though studies involving the internet has been seen as early as 1999. While earlier work has focused attention on sources of information individually when studying tourist information search behaviour, more recent works have recognised the dynamics of multiple inter-connected sources of information used by tourists in their information search strategies (Fodness and Murray, 1997; Gursoy and Chen, 2000).

Turning to online information sources specifically, they have been classified in different ways, some based on information flow, others on typology of web content and functions. No and Kim (2015) presented four clusters of online tourism information sources: (1) personal blogs with reviews of travel related products/services, (2) tourism related public agency websites (government and private DMOs), (3) tourism-related business website (airlines, agencies, hotels), and (4) social media websites. Personal blogs can be considered as web journals arranged in a reverse chronology, sharing information based on their own personal interest (Walker, 2008). In the context of tourism, blogs could be websites where useful information on travel (timetable, photos, maps, tips on locations) are published. Company websites are those in which tourism information and products are provided by companies and travel agencies; while social media are web-based services linking users within a single system to create, share and exchange information. In concluding their study, No and Kim (2015) found that in terms of interaction, trust, accessibility and personalisation, personal blogs are found to score the highest in these elements. In terms of security, even though personal blogs do not have a high level of security compared to company/organisational websites, security is not regarded as an important element as security procedures are not required in the case of blogs/social media information sharing and search.

In terms of online information sources, 'induced' sources originating from destination promoters are also distinguished from 'organic' sources that are generally unbiased and independent of DMOs (Brogan and Smith, 2009). In this context, social-media-based sources such as Facebook, Instagram as well as review sites such as TripAdvisor and other platforms have become important sources for credible tourism information with the proliferation of Web 2.0 and electronic social networks.

Search engines is a popular gateway of tourist information search with over 80% tourists having accessed them in their tourism planning (Fesenmaier, Xiang, Pan et al., 2011), making search engine marketing and optimisation for tourism destination important for DMOs. This is a popular strategy as it has many of the key success factors for websites such as information quality, ease of use, security, interactivity, accessibility and personalisation (Park and Gretzel, 2007; No and Kim, 2015).

Although the amount and variety of online information sources are vast, Gursoy, Del Chiappa and Zhang (2017) found that tourism consumers relied more on the increasing availability of peer-to-peer review portals such as Booking.com and Tripadvisor as sources of information, rather than on social media such as Facebook or Instgram, perhaps due to the cost in terms of time and effort required to sieve through information available on social media, as well as the issue of trust in relation to these sources. They also found that even with the prevalence of online channels, the most important sources of information used by them is still friends and family, followed by online review sites (e.g. TripAdvisor etc) and online search engines (e.g. Google, Yahoo etc).

Undeniably, social media has had a significant impact on information search, particularly for those who are younger, more highly educated and are active contributors and users of user generated comments (Yoo and Gretzel, 2011). Numerous types of user-generated content are

now available through the latest technological developments: microblogs, video blogs and social media comments, all reflecting travel experiences with rich personal stories, images and videos. The advantage of user-generated content is that tourists can access real accounts and knowledge, visuals and emotional experiences of destinations without the branding of DMOs or service providers, which are perceived to be more reliable destination images (Llodra-Riera, Martines-Ruiz, Jimenez-Zarco et al., 2015).

Developments in IT have changed the way information is distributed and the way tourists plan and purchase tourism-related products and services (No and Kim, 2015). One approach which takes into account this development is that by Llodra-Riera et al. (2015), where a combination of different web platforms contribute to an overall information source construct. Because of the dynamic nature of online information sources based on user-generated content, the representation of a destination image changes rapidly, without any control on the part of the service providers. It was found that information sources that are controlled by the authorities and intermediaries are least useful to tourists visiting the destination studied, while autonomous information sources are found to be more popular. Synthesising previous research, information sources were categorised into (1) induced (by suppliers and providers), (2) organic (based on own and others' experience), (3) autonomous (media, books, guides) and (4) various web platforms. Web platforms can then be grouped according to their different dimensions corresponding with traditional information source dimensions of induced, organic or autonomous. This shows that web platforms is seen as a new medium (channel), rather than a source of information. Viewing the web platform as a channel, Llodra-Riera et al. (2015) found search engines as the most important, followed by online maps. Similar to traditional information sources, web pages produced by intermediaries and suppliers were also found to be less useful compared to web pages with user-generated content and appraisals (such as Tripadvisor, Booking.com) and social networks. A distinction is made between Web 2.0

(content generated by users) and Web 1.0 (content generated by platform owners with user evaluation) (Llodra-Riera et al., 2015). It is no longer sufficient to create advertising campaigns with a single purchasing proposition through a single channel, because of the fragmentation of information sources and communication channels, and the participation of users in generating these contents. Destination controlled sources (intermediaries and suppliers websites) were less useful than autonomous information sources such as search engines, online maps and those with user-generated content such as Tripadvisor and social networks, and organic source of friends and acquaintances (Llodra-Riera et al., 2015). Hence, for effective marketing communication and destination image formation, destination marketers will need to consider the fragmented information sources and channels, as well as the significant role played by users on social media and other user content platforms, and find appropriate ways to interact with users through these platforms.

After analysing how different web platforms complement the traditional indicators of information sources, and the weight of these influences on the formation of images, Llodra-Riera et al. (2015) proposed 14 items in the traditional information sources construct and 19 items for sources that present content on web-based platforms. The lists were derived from scales proposed by a number of earlier works including Gartner (1994), Baloglu and Mccleary (1999), Kim and Richardson, (2003) and Beerli and Martín (2004). These items will be adapted into this research to elicit the sources of information relevant to information search strategies for community-based tourism.

In terms of methods used to analyse information search, according to Coromina and Camprubí (2016), researchers have analysed the relevance through frequency of use and the number of sources used, or average of use intensity as stated by (Llodra-Riera et al., 2015), indicating the importance of a source to the tourist's decision making. In this study, the number of sources and the importance of each source will be analysed within the proposed theoretical framework.

2.2.1.3 Channel and sources

From a review of existing literature, it is observed that in most studies on online information search, there was a lack of clarity as to the nature of the Internet. Some view the Internet as a source of information rather than the channel by which information is sought and obtained. In fact, many authors failed to distinguish between the two and have used the internet as a source rather than a channel, or as both source and channel. These include the work of Vogt and Fesenmaier (1998), Luo et al. (2004), Lo et al. (2002), Bieger and Laesser (2004), Schweda and Varan (2004), Pan and Fesenmaier (2006) and Hyde (2007).

Grønflaten (2009a) provided a thorough analysis of research on information search frameworks and analysed them according to variables impacting the information search process, advocating that there should be a clear distinction between channels and sources of information in light of the disintermediation phenomenon in recent years. In view of the fact that the factors affecting the choice of sources (e.g. travel agent, other tourists or tourism service providers) and the choice of channel (e.g. face-to-face or online) may be different, it is important to distinguish between information channels and information sources to accurately redress the issues surrounding disintermediation and to enable marketers to accurately communicate with potential customers of these destinations.

In information theory, the source often refers to the person (or oganisation) providing the information that is communicated to the receiver, while information channel refers to the method used to communicate the information (Grønflaten, 2009b). There should be a clear distinction between *who* (source) is providing the information, and *how it is communicated* (what channels are used). Understanding this distinction will help marketers identify the strategies used by tourists and address issues related to these two dimensions appropriately. In his study, Grønflaten (2009a) found that in terms of channel preference, first time visitors, on organised tours, camping or staying with family and those travelling with non-family members

tend to prefer face-to-face interaction rather than communication over the internet; repeat visitors, independent travellers, those who stay in hotel/motel, those who travel alone or with family tend to prefer the online channel.

The idea of a distinction between sources and channels has been long established in information systems literature. Information from an agent (source) can either be via face-to-face communication, written brochure or online in various forms. It is therefore important to distinguish between the two concepts and highlight both the channels and the sources used by the potential tourist in order to manage and design marketing communication with them effectively. This research will identify the information search strategies of CBT tourists in terms of the channels and sources of information and focus on the extent to which online information channels are meeting information needs of potential tourists. It seeks to identify the information search strategies employed by tourists of CBT sites from the perspective of channels used and sources consulted, and the extent to which information needs are met in the current information systems supporting this tourism product in the context of CBT in Malaysia, specifically the Homestay Programme.

2.3 TOURISM INFORMATION SEARCH

Literature indicates that three key influences on tourism consumer behaviour are technology, Generation Y and the rise of ethical concerns in consumption decisions (Cohen et al., 2014), which are of concern in this study. Bearing in mind decisions can be made before, during and after a trip, effective tourism marketing requires an accurate understanding of how technology is developing and shaping the tourism purchasing landscape. Evaluating tourist activities and preferences as they evolve, and the motivations behind them are essential for successful marketing of tourism products (Godfrey and Clarke, 2000). As social media permeates the whole tourism experience, research on the role played by information especially from online channels is necessary to understand how tourists are integrating different information sources

and their motives for doing so. Some of the most important concepts in tourism consumer behaviour highlighted by Cohen et al. (2014), using a narrative review approach, include decision making, values, motivations, self-concept and personality, expectations, attitudes, perceptions, satisfaction and trust and loyalty, many of which will be incorporated in analysing the behaviour of tourists within the context of CBT in this study.

Information search, information needs and the factors that impact the use of information have been studied by researchers in various fields. Three categories of variables studied by researchers in diverse disciplines such as health communication, personality in psychology, innovation studies and information systems design include: personal characteristics (emotional, educational and demographic), social/interpersonal variables, and environmental variables (environmental and source characteristics) (Wilson, 1997).

Information search has a direct impact on destination image, and Baloglu and Mccleary (1999) state that the types and amount of information sources used, significantly influence the perception of a destination, and therefore consumer choice. From a consumer behaviour perspective, consumers engage in information search to address the perceived risk of purchase, which are multi-dimensional. These risks may be financial, performance, psychological, social, physical or time related. The dimensions may be stronger or weaker depending on the product under consideration. The risk is generally higher for purchase of services compared to goods due to its intangibility, inseparability between production and consumption, perishability, seasonality and its inability to be inventoried; all of which apply to the purchase of travel and tourism products (Curras-Perez, Ruiz, Sanchez-Garcia et al., 2017). These risks, as well as a lack of familiarity with the destinations (Gitleson and Crompton, 1983), results in tourists being highly involved personally in the information search process, particularly external information search. In relation to this, Park and Gretzel (2007) highlighted five key concepts of information

quality; ease of use, security, interactivity, accessibility and personalisation, while (No and Kim, 2015) emphasised accessibility, trust, personalisation, security and interaction.

Intrinsically, tourism can be considered as an information based phenomenon (Jang, 2008), as it cannot be seen or verified in advance by the consumer. Tourism products are perceived to bear significantly higher risks to consumers due to its high cost, intanglibility and experiential nature, with no opportunity to view or sample the product before purchase (Xiang, Magnini and Fesenmaier, 2015). Therefore the gap between decision making and taking action to purchase that experience is bridged by gathering information about the products and services. Understanding how customers acquire information is therefore of utmost importance for effective marketing of tourism products (Bieger and Laesser, 2004).

The internet's global reach, interactive and information rich features, and smart tourism applications which leverage advanced information technologies to enable multi-party interactive tourism experiences (Tavitiyaman, Qu, Tsang et al., 2021), such as livestreaming (Shen, Zhao, Fan et al., 2022), virtual tourism (Verma, Warrier, Bolia et al., 2022) and augmented reality (Fan, Jiang and Deng, 2022) have re-defined the travel and tourism industry. The travel industry was one of the first to adopt electronic methods (Buhalis and Law, 2008) and will continue to lead the way in IT adoption and proliferation. The development of Web 2.0 has meant that communication and distribution of tourism products have been transformed, and with it, changes in travellers' behaviour whereby many depend on user-generated content and online travel service providers more than traditional sources. Web 3.0 and the blockchain technology (Murray, Kim and Combs, 2022) will bring a whole spectrum of challenges and opportunities in the coming years. The nature and extent of tourism information search is one of the aspects most affected by the integration of the internet, mobile networks and social media in recent years (Choe, Fesenmaier and Vogt, 2017). With the proliferation of online markets,

the majority of tourists will consult some online sources in their search for information (Pan and Fesenmaier, 2006).

The challenges of information overload and price competition means that customer retention becomes a crucial factor for competitive advantage (Curras-Perez et al., 2017). Hence, research in online information search has gained importance over the last 15 years. Conversely, the importance of traditional distribution channels such as travel agencies will become less impotant (Gursoy, 2019) as web tools become more sophisticated with dynamic packaging and augmented reality (Beldona, 2005).

With the prevalence of computer-mediated communication and ubiquitous networked mobile computing, tourists become highly dependent on the external 'memories' stored in technological clouds; becoming both information seeker and content creator as they document their travel experiences via social media and other platforms. As information search becomes more mobile and real-time based, information search will increasingly become fragmented, non-linear and spread over the various stages of travel, with more in-trip information search becoming the norm, as opposed to pre-trip planning and decision-making. It is a dynamic and continuous process in the planning and execution of a trip, where it plays a functional role of addressing different questions at different stages of the process (Fesenmaier et al., 1993). This raises concerns about trust, highlighting the importance of customised smart and reliable information sources built on artificial intelligence and big data (Xiang and Fesenmaier, 2020).

Consumers have become increasingly sophisticated in their search for information, particularly with the prevalence of online and mobile technologies. Apart from utilising information provided by DMOs and travel agencies, tourists have themselves become content generators through third party platforms (e.g. TripAdvisor, Booking.com) and social media and other co-creation platforms. Travellers now have access to a variety of user-generated content through

peer-to-peer tourism and hospitality social networks, video sharing platforms, micro-blogging networks which have become increasingly important information sources (Del Chiappa, Alarcón-Del-Amo and Lorenzo-Romero, 2016).

Some of the earlier work in online information search include that of Weber and Roehl (1999), Susskind, Bonn and Dev (2003) and Li and Buhalis (2006). Others are Luo et al. (2004) who studied the relationships between tourists' use of the internet vis-à-vis other information sources and the corresponding characteristics of those tourists. They found that gender and household income, trip purpose and travel party were significantly related to the choice of information source, which in turn were associated with the type of accommodation and expenditure. Beldona (2005) found that there was the greatest increase in online information search among those born between 1973-1977 (the youngest Generation X cohort) at the turn of the century (Year 2000), confirming previous findings that adopters of new technologies tend to be younger than non-adopters. The functional information needs of international tourists were studied by Hwang, Jani, and Jeong (2011) and it was found that the use of online travel forums were mostly used to gain product knowledge rather than for risk reduction or efficiency. It was also found that these needs vary according to destinations.

Interestingly, however, Choe et al. (2017) found that the basic structure of travellers information needs for pre-trip planning has not changed in the last 25 years despite the advent of the internet, mobile technology and smart systems. They found that functional information needs (referring to elements of knowledge, utility, efficiency and uncertainty) remain the most important, although the sources and medium of accessing these information may have changed. That said, it was found that information search for innovation, aesthetic and hedonic purposes increased over the said period, due to the changes to information search brought about by technological advancement. The internet has enabled 'new tourism' where the amount and specifics of information sought by tourists have been refined. It has also created a new type of

tourist who are knowledgeable culturally and environmentally, seeking not only value for their money but greater involvement in society, including the ones they visit as tourists (Buhalis and Connor, 2005).

Apart from that, information search and travel decisions are also influenced by emotional and social aspects such as hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign needs (Vogt and Fesenmaier, 1998). Decrop and Snelders (2004) argue that information search is a continuous process, not only as part of pre-trip planning, but also facilitates the process of daydreaming, nostalgia or fantacising about the destinations on which information is obtained (whether they actually decide to visit or otherwise). McCabe, Li and Chen (2016) argue that tourist decision making for leisure travel particularly, may not follow a rational pattern but rather intuition, emotion and other subjective and situational factors with multiple systems of decision making. This study takes into account these different aspects impacting information search and travel decisions, particularly emotional and social aspects as they relate to key value priorities of tourists. The theoretical frameworks developed in the literature of information search strategies for tourism will be analysed and discussed in the following section.

2.4 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF TOURISM INFORMATION SEARCH STRATEGIES

Information search strategy refers to the combination of sources used by tourists in planning for travel and their role in the various stages of the planning process (Hyde, 2007). Moutinho (1987) defined information search as an expressed need to consult various sources before making a purchase decision. Moutinho's definition highlights three key factors influencing tourist information search: motives, determinants and sources. As pre-purchase information is a necessary pre-requisite of any transaction, the strategies employed in the information search stage of the consumer decision making process become important. Information is necessary for deciding on a destination, as well as decisions at the destinations such as accommodation,

activities, transportation and tours. This decision making involves a complex series of decision choices made up of different elements during the vacation in a chronology of events (Dellaert, Ettema and Lindh, 1998) at different temporal milestones (March and Woodside, 2005).

In view of the distinction between information sources and information channels advocated by Grønflaten (2009b), the definition of information search strategy adopted in this study refers to 'a combination of information sources and channels used by tourists to acquire information from external sources in planning for travel'.

Literature suggests several approaches for models of information search strategy. According to Fodness and Murray (1997) there are two alternative frameworks: the 'strategic model' of Snepenger, Meged, Snelling et al. (1990) and the 'contingency model' proposed by Schul and Cromption (1983), which they expanded on. The strategic model of information search proposes that information search strategies is the combinations of sources of information used by consumers; while the 'contingency model' refers to information search in terms of the individual's effort and incorporates the determinants of information source choice (such as time and number of sources consulted, purpose of trip and other relevant variables). Researchers often use information search constructs as segmentation variables in tourism literature. Fodness and Murray (1999) are of the view that this way for segmenting consumers is inaccurate and should not be considered market segments. Instead, using information search behaviour as a construct can help highlight the sources of tourist with specific travel behaviour, allowing targeted marketing plans that meet the information needs of specific groups of tourists.

Within the framework of the contingency model, there are three theoretical perspectives of consumer information search (Srinivasan, 1990). Firstly, the economic analysis of cost and benefits and how they impact search behaviour, was used by researchers such as Schmidt and Spreng (1996) and Gursoy and McCleary (2004). A second category of theoretical models is

the process approach (Bieger and Laesser, 2004) where it is argued that the choice process of non-routine, high-involvement purchase is phased. Input variables are analysed with the phased process of information acquisition/search, purchase and consumption. The third category of theoretical models is based on psychographic/motivational perspective. This perspective incorporates the individual (customer), the product class and situational/task variables. The third approach is one based on human information processing limitations, which falls within the psychographic/motivational perspective as it involves ability, which affects motivation (Schmidt and Spreng, 1996). These three approaches taken by different authors as presented in Figure 2.2 below, are discussed in the next section, drawing on literature related to information search within tourism studies.

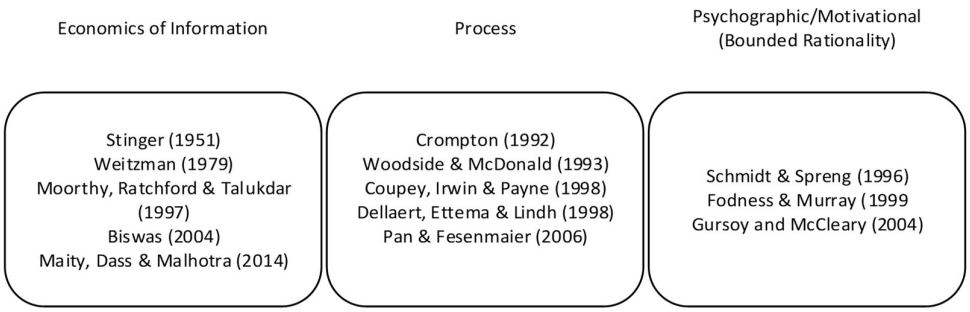


Figure 2.2 Theoretical foundations of tourism information search strategies

2.4.1 Economics of information approach

The economic approach is based on the theory of utility, rationality and rational decision making. In this approach, information search strategy is a function of the expected costs and benefits of the alternative sources of information, with the assumption that the most efficient information search strategy will be that which minimises risk (the conflict between expectation and anticipated outcome) (Mitra, Reiss and Capella, 1999) – where risk is reduced by seeking information about the service and uncertainty, balanced with the costs of information search. The theory of economics of information assumes imperfect market conditions (where all buyers

are not perfectly informed about all alternatives available), and posits that information search behaviour is a function of its utility and cost (Kohn and Shavell, 1974; Jang, 2008). Consumers search for information in order to reduce uncertainties surrounding alternatives, and the cost of such effort depends on the expected difference between the alternatives, inducing the consumer to stop searching when the expected value of the information becomes too low (Hagerty and Aaker, 1984). Therefore, different levels of perceived cost of search and the anticipated benefit of search would affect the consumer's information search behaviour.

Weitzman (1979) argues that the optimal search level is achieved (and search will terminate) when the maximum sampled reward (or benefit) goes above the price (or cost) of the unsampled sources, whether it is in terms of time, finance or other resources. In other words, a consumer would search for information until a point where the marginal cost for acquiring additional information equals or exceeds its marginal benefit (Biswas, 2004).

Search costs may include both monetary (financial) or non-monetary elements (time, inconvenience, difficulties) which are influenced by the consumer's income, experience, knowledge, and perceived risks (Biswas, 2004). Benefits of search include the savings gained from a higher level of perceived price dispersion (the different levels of prices from different sellers), and will depend on the total amount of expenditure anticipated for a specific product; products of higher price will provide greater expected gain from information search.

Search behaviour is driven by the level of perceived uncertainty (such as lack of knowledge about the product) in the consumer's environment, the importance given to the product category and the level of risk aversion of the consumer, where a higher level of importance, uncertainty and risk aversion will result in a higher amount of information search in order to reduce these factors within the environment of the consumer (Moorthy, Ratchford and Talukdar, 1997). As rational decision makers, consumers will employ optimal information

search strategies based on the existing environment involving a trade-off between costs and benefits of information search, such that the benefits are maximised based on the importance, risk aversion and uncertainty perceived. It was found that as experience increases the consumer compares more attributes of a product and the cost of search reduces as the consumer gains more experience (becoming an expert) (Kim et al., 2010). If consumers are clear about each brand's offering but unclear about which brand is best, then this uncertainty will prompt search activity; search activity may not increase if there is no uncertainty about which brand is superior to others, which explains why some researchers have observed low search activities for high involvement products for which the consumer may already be familiar with (Beatty and Smith, 1987).

Maity, Dass and Malhotra (2014) surveyed studies on offline information search and used the economics of information (EoI) theory to develop a framework with four categories of antecedents of information search, comprising (1) cost and benefit of information, (2) potential payoff, (3) knowledge and experience and (4) individual differences. Elements which influence cost and benefit of information include cognitive capacity, time pressure, number of alternatives and price dispersion. In terms of potential payoff, elements include perceived risk, financial constraint and uncertainty. Information search is also affected by knowledge and experience (which affects efficiency of search) and individual differences such as level of involvement/interest and other aspects that differentiates consumers, and this involvement can be distinguished based on association with the product, the consumer or the communication (Gabbott and Hogg, 1999). It was found that search efficiency (influenced by knowledge and experience) and level of search activity is positively related. Apart from these four antecedents, Maity, Dass and Malhotra (2014) also found that although there are some conflicting findings, age has been found to have a negative relationship with the amount of search, due to cognitive

competence and adaptability declining with age, while at the same time older consumers who are more risk averse may tend to increase search activities.

In contrast, a study based on the economics of information in the context of online information search found that although better information flow via the internet removes arbitrage pricing (sellers having different prices across different consumer groups due to information asymmetry), the Web may cause higher levels of price dispersion (hence higher search activity) as a result of "versioning" – the ability of sellers to offer, at low costs, different versions of products/information based on consumer needs (Biswas, 2004). This causes higher search activity as consumers are motivated to search for products that more closely match their requirements. Another reason for higher price dispersion comes from premium pricing of reputable sellers (buyers have higher perceived risks due to apprehensions on the authenticity and lack of cues to determine the reliability of sellers), causing less search activity as consumers are willing to pay a higher price to a reliable seller. This allows for a higher level of brand loyalty and premium pricing in the online environment.

In terms of search efficiency for the web economy, in contrast to traditional media, consumers with a higher degree of expertise with online search activities will benefit from appropriate search agents and higher quality consideration set, resulting in higher search efficiency (lower number of consideration set), and lower amount of search (Biswas, 2004).

2.4.2 Information processing approach

The second category of theoretical frameworks based on the contingency model is the information processing approach, which views information search in the context of the overall tourism decision making process. This process starts with a recognition of the desire or need for travel, causing the traveller to start with an internal search from his/her prior experience, to select a travel destination. If the internal search does not produce suitable alternatives, an

external search for information is undertaken. Memory and cognitive processes will affect the expressed preferences (Coupey, Irwin and Payne, 1998), often analysed through the different phases of the process. Familiarity with the problem domain enables consumers to use prior knowledge to (1) decide on their preference and (2) decide on how this prior knowledge is used, for example to evaluate the options available, or to search for more information based on what they already know about the products. They will either be able to make a preference selection based on their prior knowledge, or know the characteristics that are most important in evaluating a product because of familiarity with the product domain, before embarking on external information search.

Literature shows conflicting positions in terms of the effect of prior knowledge and external search. Some found a negative relationship, whereby more prior knowledge results in less external search (Fodness and Murray, 1999; John, Scott and Bettman, 1986); while others found an inverted U-shaped relationship indicating that in some situations, more prior knowledge may lead to more external search (Maity et al., 2014); in simple terms information search is high when cost of search is at mid-range, but search will be low when cost is either high or low. This inverted-U shape is sometimes explained by differentiating two aspects of prior knowledge: familiarity and expertise. Familiarity refers to the subjective knowledge regarding destinations; and expertise refers to objective knowledge of the decision rules for acting on information relating to a destination (such as interaction with travel agents, exposure to advertisement, purchase and product use). An increase in expertise allows a consumer to formulate more questions about the destination attributes and hence, increases information search (Gursoy and McCleary, 2004).

Crompton (1992) proposed that a traveller's destination choice process goes through different phases of "choice sets structure", especially for high-involvement situations with the purchase task being new and involving a substantive degree of risks, such as the choice of a holiday/trip

destination. Tourism is arguably the sector with the highest level of customer involvement in the process of information search and product selection (Decrop and Snelders, 2004). From an initial set of choices (awareness set), the consumer obtains information in order to reduce the choice set to a smaller number of options (evoked set), before deciding on a final destination after further information search activities (Xiang and Fesenmaier, 2020). The mechanism of choice decisions is influenced by internal factors (e.g. customer's own criteria and motives) and external factors (e.g. advertising, information search), as well as situational factors that affect the customer's final decision on a destination. Destinations which are included in the evoked, action and interaction sets of the choice process would motivate customers to undertake increasing levels of external information search to assist them in arriving at the final selected destination. As tourists' involvement increases, there is a likelihood of more information search activities to gather information that will help answer the questions tourists have about the destination choices (Woodside and Macdonald, 1993). Hence, marketing strategies should focus on enabling the destinations to be included in the choice sets that favour selection, and employing suitable strategies (such as comparative advertising, incentives for getting in touch) throughout this process to result in it being the selected destination.

This phased approach of analysis posits that decisions concerning a trip may not be taken at a specific moment in time, but rather comprises a series of decision making over a number of different stages from the idea of taking a trip, the commencement of information search and the final decision of making that journey. Therefore, greater understanding of the mechanisms of tourist decision making at different aspects and phases of the process will enhance targeted strategic marketing communication in relation to different aspects at different phases of the tourism decision making process (Woodside and Macdonald, 1993). It involves examining a set of inter-related choices for destination, accommodation, activities, areas, shops and attractions. These are viewed as complex multi-faceted inter-dependent choices made at

different points in time, or different stages of the travel planning process (Dellaert, Ettema and Lindh, 1998).

In terms of trip phase, pre-trip information required during the trip planning phase would be distinguishable from in-trip information, which refers to information received during the trip. In recent years, the demand for in-trip information has been growing in line with new mobile internet technology (Grønflaten, 2009b). Hyde's (2008) touring planning theory splits the travel planning into three stages: information search, vacation plans and vacation bookings. This was recognised by McCabe, Li and Chen (2016) who stated that many models of tourism decision making failed to recognise that tourism decisions are often broken down into different phases. This distinction is useful as it identifies the stages of the planning process and how information needs vary in the different stages, in order to provide accurate information for each of the stages in the most effective manner. For example, inspirational and overall information may be useful for initial information search to decide on destinations to consider, while types and prices of accommodation and leisure activities may be more relavant once vacation plans have been made (Schweda and Varan, 2004).

The importance of pre-purchase information search is stated in Bieger and Laesser (2004), where travellers tend to source for information (particularly those who rely on informal sources) before making a definite decision about a trip, with a reducing or negligible need for information after the decision is made. They also found that the starting point of information search is friends and relatives. Hyde (2008) found that the psychological need for novelty, usually found among younger tourists on extended tour duration and on camper or backpacker travel style, results in a low search, low plan and low booking strategy in their trip planning. Hyde (2008) also identified two antecedent factors for information search strategy as characteristics of the vacation and characteristics of the vacationer, two of the three dimensions in Grønflaten's (2009) model. While recognising the different phases in the overall tourism

decision making and the importance of pre-purchase information search, this study therefore, focuses on the analysis of pre-purchase information search strategies and the antecedents affecting it.

2.4.3 Psychographic/motivational approach

The third approach based on the contingency model is psychographic/motivational frameworks which attempted to integrate the frameworks discussed above. Schmidt and Spreng (1996) incorporated the economics of search, information processing (ability) and psychology/motivational approaches using the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) and posits that antecedents of information search are mediated by four factors: (1) ability, (2) motivation, (3) costs and (4) benefits. Ability (part of the information processing approach) is influenced by educational level, subjective knowledge and objective knowledge, whereas economic aspects include the dynamics of various cost and benefit items which in turn affects motivation to search. Motivation to search is dependent on perceived costs and perceived benefits of search. Costs and benefits are in turn influenced by the number of alternatives, product complexity, accessibility of information and time (costs) and antecedents of decision making including satisfaction, perceived risk, degree of involvement and desire for optimal decision (benefits). Apart from costs and benefits, motivation is also influenced by other factors such as the need for recognition, involvement and enthusiasm (Schmidt and Spreng, 1996). In a similar vein, Gursoy and McCleary (2004) also proposed a model integrating the economics of information and psychographic/motivational approach.

Within the psychographic/motivational approach, various authors have modelled information search strategies by considering the three variables: (1) consumer (personal), (2) product and (3) situational variable (Grønflaten, 2009a). Fodness and Murray's (1999) model tested the impact of situational variables, product characteristics, tourist characteristics and search outcomes on information search strategies comprising the spatial, temporal and operational

dimensions. In terms of tourist characteristics, the elements studied include demographics, family life-cycle and socio-economic status. Fodness and Murray (1997) investigated the information search behaviour of tourists by considering the *types (direction of search)* and *number (degree of search)* of sources consulted by homogeneous groups of leisure tourists. They found that information search increased in terms of degree of search (number of sources consulted) when going for holidays in paid accommodation compared to visiting friends and family in their homes. This was also found by Lo, Cheung and Law (2002), whereby the majority of tourists consult more than one source of information in their trip planning process, with leisure travellers using more sources compared to business travellers.

Expanding further on the the third approach and the various frameworks developed within this perspective in the literature, the antecedents of information search that have been explored are elaborated in the next section.

2.5 ANTECEDENTS AFFECTING INFORMATION SEARCH STRATEGIES

Underpinned by the theoretical foundations based on the psychographic/motivational and information processing approaches, this study builds on Grønflaten's (2009) and Fodness and Murray's (1999) work in the formulation of a model of information search strategies. Antecedents affecting information search strategies are classified into three main categories: (1) characteristics of the vacationer, (2) characteristics of the vacation, and (3) situational variables.

These will now be examined before elaborating on the role of personal values in the strategy for information search in the context of community-based tourism and the theoretical framework for this study.

2.5.1 Characteristics of the Vacationer

The demographics of age, gender, education, nationality/culture and other socio-economic elements have been extensively studied in relation to its influence on information search strategy, notably by Gitleson and Crompton (1983), Capella and Greco (1987), Snepenger et al. (1990), Lo et al. (2002), Luo et al. (2004) and others. Findings from previous studies have shown differing results, as discussed in this section.

2.5.1.1 Age

Age is a determining factor for information sources used (Coromina and Camprubí, 2016; Luo, at al., 2004). Grønflaten (2009a) compared the strategies of travel agent face-to-face interaction versus that of service providers online interaction and found that age was one of the significant factors affecting the choice of information search strategy (the combination of sources and channel), although it was not significantly associated with either the channel or the source. The interesting finding from this study was that younger people were more likely to contact service providers directly online while those above the age of 59 prefer to use travel agents in face-to-face interactions. The preference for online channels is more prevalent among younger independent travellers, an important observation for marketers when choosing the channels for their marketing communication. Del Chiappa et al. (2016) also found that the majority of tourists who search for information and make bookings online are those from the younger age groups, below the age of 45. Similarly Jacobsen and Munar (2012) found that more younger tourists (below 35 years old) employed electronic platforms (such as Facebook) and the internet for information search and travel booking arrangements compared to older tourists in Finland and Denmark. Notwithstanding the use of electronic platforms, their study found that more than half the respondents found sources of information from friends and family (non-Facebook) as among the most important. Patterson (2007) concluded that older adults (more than 65 years old) found the most important information source to be personal sources such as family and

friends. In contrast to these findings, Bieger and Laesser (2004) found that younger, more highly educated tourists tend to rely on informal sources of information (friends and family) while older and less educated tourists rely more on official sources of information.

2.5.1.2 Gender

Gender is found to be a significant factor influencing the choice of information sources in a study conducted by Luo et al. (2004). Male respondents were found to be more inclined to use the internet (without identifying specific sources enabled by the internet) than other information sources. Similarly, Coromina and Camprubí (2016) found that gender was a discriminating factor for patterns of active information search (search engines, official website, tourism blogs and brochures) but not for passive information search (recommendation and mass media), whereby male respondents consulted more active sources than females.

Arguing for gender differences in cognitive studies, Kim et al. (2007) said that there is a gender based difference in persuasibility showing women are more easily persuaded than men. However, men are more likely to be selective processors, (do not engage in comprehensive processing of all available information before decision) whereas women are more exhaustive processors in external information search, taking into account a broad variety of information sources and spending more time in information search activities. They also found that females placed more importance on official destination websites and printed materials and guidebooks compared to males.

In view of the increasing ubiquity of mobile internet penetration and mobile commerce, Okazaki and Hirose (2009) found that females are more willing than males to switch media or use complementary media simultaneously in information search, using a more diverse range of media, including mobile internet sources compared to men. They also found that women have a stronger inclination to seek extensive networking and exchange information through social

networks, particularly through mobile devices. Overall, it can be said the women are more thorough in their search for information, and are more willing to use a diverse range of sources and media.

2.5.1.3 Educational level

In terms of educational level, higher levels of education positively affect search activity, due to the fact that a higher level of education increases one's ability to identify, consolidate and assimilate information from a variety of sources (Schmidt and Spreng, 1996). This seems to be echoed by Dodd (1998) who stated that those with higher educational level tend to rely on personal and experiential sources, allowing room for consolidation and assimilation of information from various soures, compared to those with lower educational level who rely more on media sources. Gitleson and Crompton (1983) found tourists with college education tend to rely on literature (print media) specific to the destination while others rely on travel agencies. Several other studies (Jacobsen and Munar, 2012; Del Chiappa et al., 2016) found that those with college education tend to prefer accessing information via online sources and channels.

2.5.1.4 Culture/Nationality

In studies investigating the impact of culture on information search, the element of culture has often been equated with *national culture*, defined as 'patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted' (Kluckhohn, 1954). Gursoy and Umbreit (2004) studied the impact of national culture on the use of eight types of information sources and identified five distinct market segments of EU travellers based on information search patterns and concluded that national culture is likely to influence a traveller's information search behaviour, although findings from different studies present somewhat inconsistent findings with different emphasis on the type of visitors as well as their cultural background. Gursoy and Chen (2000) studied the impact of culture on information search behaviour by considering the behaviour of tourists

from three countries, Germany, the UK and France, and found that British and French tourists were more likely to use travel agents when travelling to the US, while German tourists rely more on the internet and travel offices at the destinations. Kozak (2007) found that visitors from developed countries (United Kingdom, Netherlands, Germany, Ireland, etc.) tend to use media and tourism entities as their main source of information, while those from developing countries (Tunisia, Bulgaria) tend to obtain information from promotion offices and trade exhibitions. Interestingly, word of mouth seems to be the preferred source for those from Sweden, Spain, Serbia, Australia and Poland, who are caucasian tourists.

Chen (2000) compared the use of 12 sources of information (all but one were offline/traditional sources), used among Korean, Japanese and Australian travellers and found that business travellers from Korea and Japan rely more on travel professionals (corporate travel department, travel guides and travel agencies) compared to those from Australia who rely on a broader range of sources, such as tourist information office and internet sources; attributing this difference to collectivist and individualism dimensions (Hofstede, 1991) of culture. In line with the above finding, Money and Crotts (2003) found that cultures with higher levels of uncertainty avoidance (such as Japanese) tend to rely more on information sources which are related to channel members (such as travel agents) rather than personal, destination marketing-related, or mass-media sources. It was also found that they tend to prefer package tours, travel in larger groups and staying shorter durations at destinations.

Mihalik, Uysal and Pan (1994) discovered that both the Germans and the Japanese relied heavily on multiple sources of information, with the travel agent being the number one information source for both groups. However, the Japanese relied more heavily on the print medium for their secondary information source. The Germans' main secondary information source was word-of-mouth advice from family and friends.

Chen (2000) found that business travellers from Korea and Japan (together with Australia) ranked travel agencies as the most important source. When comparing business and leisure travellers, it was found that corporate travel department was the main source of information for business travellers while printed materials and friends and family are the preferred sources for those travelling for leisure. It is argued that those with a collectivist culture tends to refer to and depend on the opinion of others (friends and family) when acquiring travel information.

Apart from the studies on Korean and Japanese cultures mentioned above, very few studies have investigated non-european cultures in relation to information search strategies (Chen, 2000). Lo et al. (2004) investigated the search strategy of mainland Chinese business and leisure tourists in Hong Kong and found similar results, where business travellers consider corporate travel department of companies as an important source, and leisure travellers consider personal experience, either of themselves or others known to them, as the most important. In view of the lack of evidence in relation to information search strategies among non-caucasian/European tourists, this study focuses on a location with a majority of non-European tourists, with a view towards contributing insights on the information source preference of tourists from Malaysian, Asian and non-European cultures.

2.5.1.5 Personal values

The effect of personal values of tourists on their information search strategy has not been explored in the same detail as other characteristics mentioned above. Fall (2000) is one of the few researchers who has studied the relationship between personal values and information sources. Her work used Kahle's List of Values to study the relationship between personal values and information sources and other tourism related choices such as destination choice and type of accommodation. Personal values is a key variable in this study and will be explored further in Section 2.6 below.

The elements highlighted in this section relating to the characteristics of the vacationer will form part of the consideration for this study to investigate their effect on information search and destination selection for CBT.

2.5.2 Situational variables

Some situational variables that have been the subject of past studies include travel party (Gitleson and Crompton, 1983; Luo et al., 2004; Fodness and Murray, 1999; Hyde, 2008), length of stay (Money and Crotts, 2003; Bieger and Laesser, 2004), planning horizon – the length of time taken for planning (Vogt, Stewart, and Fesemmaier, 1998; Money and Crotts, 2003 and Hwang et al., 2011) and the phase of the trip at which particular types of information sources were most useful (Nishimura et al., 2006). Some studies also identified the type of transportation as a relevant factor in their investigation (Fodness and Murray, 1997; Hyde, 2007). In the context of this study, travel party is a situational variable relevant for investigation due to the nature of the product, with a wide range of group compositions visiting Homestays.

2.5.2.1 Travel party

Travel is often a product consumed together with others, and travel party has been shown to have an impact on information search strategies, as well as travel activities. Fodness and Murray (1999) found that those with family (travel party) consulted more sources compared to single people or couples without children who tend to consult a single decisive source, and those who stayed longer consulted more sources. They also found that families with children rely more on travel agents as decisive information sources in their decision making. Those who travel as part of a tour group are more likely to use a travel agent rather than service providers compared to those who travel independently, and travel style (travel party composition) had an impact on overall information search strategy (Grønflaten, 2009a).

2.5.3 Characteristics of the vacation

The impact of characteristics of the vacation on information search, and vice-versa have been studied from various angles. Some elements which have been investigated include purpose of trip (Fodness and Murray, 1999; Luo et al., 2004), length/type of vacation (Hyde, 2008), and preferred activities and accommodation (Snepenger et al., 1990; Luo et al., 2004). The complexity of the product (with multiple attributes) and a greater perceived difference among products in a category is found to increase external information search activities (Schmidt and Spreng, 1996).

In terms of 'purpose of trip', the basis of this element is the theory of classified purpose, using leisure, visiting friends/relations or business as motivation for travel. It was found that those going for vacation rely on information sources from friends and family more than other sources (Fodness and Murray, 1999). They also found that *more sources* of information were consulted when tourists visit a destination for holidays (purpose of trip) rather than visiting family or friends. However, this sheds little light on the actual reasons or motives of different categories of travellers (Kamakura and Novak, 1992).

Choice of destination was a variable studied by Bieger and Laesser (2002) who found that the product offering of the destination and the quality of the communication impact the motivation of travellers in their choice of destination, especially for those who focus on culture and hedonism, and meeting with friends and relatives in their trips. However, a survey of the literature shows that the relationship between a specific tourism *product category* and information search strategy has not been explored, except for Dodd's (1998) study on information search for wineries as an industrial tourists destination focusing mainly on higher income visitors, where he found that word of mouth is the most important source of information, followed by previous experience of tourists. This study will focus on a category of tourism product – community-based tourism, specifically the Malaysian Homestay

Programme, and consider its unique characteristics in terms of how it attracts a particular group of customers (with specific personal values), and how this particular group of customers search for information on this product category when making plans to purchase. The strategy employed by CBT tourists in their information search behaviour will inform providers about the profile of the target market and methods of providing high quality information to them. It will look at the unique elements which distinguish this type of product from other tourism products, making it destination choice for tourists with a particular set of personal values.

2.5.3.1 Destination attributes

Destination characteristics include climate, scenery, services, amenities and cultural attributes (Coshall, 2000). The image of the destination reflects the tourist's perceptions of the characteristics of destinations. Studies which try to identify destination attributes have used pre-determined destination attributes and asked survey respondents to rate each one. A large majority of studies on destination image used lists of over 100 attribute themes in structured questionnaire surveys (Pike, 2003). These lists are often generated by service providers and not consumers. However, the prevalence of online advertising and media bombardment has made it difficult for the tourist to process and make decisions about holiday destinations. Further, destinations are often represented in multi-dimensional images, making it challenging to determine the differentiating attributes of destinations in the decision making process of tourists. Some attributes of destinations could be individualistic, and these unique characteristics are commonly ignored in survey instruments with standardised lists. Therefore there is a need to investigate specific product features of individual destinations or types of destinations to understand how it impacts information search behaviour and destination selection.

Cohen (1984) classified tourists as 'drifter', 'explorer', 'individual mass tourists' and 'organised mass tourists' based on the traveller's role, which helps us understand the effect of

institutionalised travel on tourism behaviour, but does not reveal the nature of the attractiveness of destinations. The affective images that people have of a destination affects their evaluation of how much that destination meets their needs and their decision of destination selection (Beerli and Martín, 2004). Baloglu and McCleary (1999) also viewed destination image as a composite of cognitive and affective evaluation, using 14 perceptual evaluation items generated from literature and content analysis of destination guidebooks. Woosnam, McElroy and Van Winkle (2009) compared lists of motivation in the literature and consulted staff working at the destination being investigated in order to identify the most appropriate motivation items to be included in their survey.

Another classification of travel motivations is based on the tourists' definition of their activities or needs: physical, cultural, interpersonal, commercial and status/prestige. Again, this does not show a link between the traveller's needs and the different components of destination environments. These are often identified in literature as 'push factors' that push the tourist away from home, based on a desire to go and be somewhere else. In Bansal and Eiselt (2004), five categories of motivators were used: climate, relaxation, adventure, personal reasons and educational motives. These seem to be pull factors of the destinations. Kozak (2002) used a list of 14 items, factor analysed to produce 4 dimensions of culture, pleasure seeking, relaxation and physical factors, to investigate the motivations of tourists in two destinations. Leisen's (2001) study used 24 image measurement items in its image measurement component. While Crompton (1979) has identified the push and pull factors for destination choice, literature linking the impact of tourist motivations on the selection of destinations appear to be scarce (Nicolau and Ma, 2006). Iso-Ahola (1982) and Awaritefe (2004) attempted to connect these needs (push factors) to attractions of destinations (pull factors) in order to identify the determinants of travel motivations. These attractions or 'pull factors' are classified into (1) static factors: climate, landscape (natural/cultural), distance to facilities, historic/cultural

features; (2) dynamic factors: accommodation, catering, services, and (3) current decision factors: marketing and prices (Witt and Mountinho, 1995). Based on the literature from previous studies, Awaritefe (2004), in studying tourism destinations in a developing country, developed a series of travel needs factors and destination attractiveness factors by analysing qualitative responses from tourists and developing 8 clusters of factors. Travel needs factors are divided into physiological, self-actualisation and belonging and love elements; while destination attractiveness include dynamic, current decision, static, commercial and information/advertisement factors. In this study, in line with Woosnam et al. (2009), the list of motivation for selecting a Homestay was identified both from literature as well as through interviews with destination managers and visitors in order to elicit a comprehensive list of produce features relevant to this research.

2.6 PERSONAL VALUE

As stated in Section 2.5.1.5, personal values is an antecendent that has been neglected in studies on information search strategies for tourism. In this section, literature on personal value will be discussed, highlighting various studies on constructs of personal values, the nexus between personal values and human behaviours, specifically consumer behaviour, and its relevance in the context of tourism generally and community-based tourism particularly.

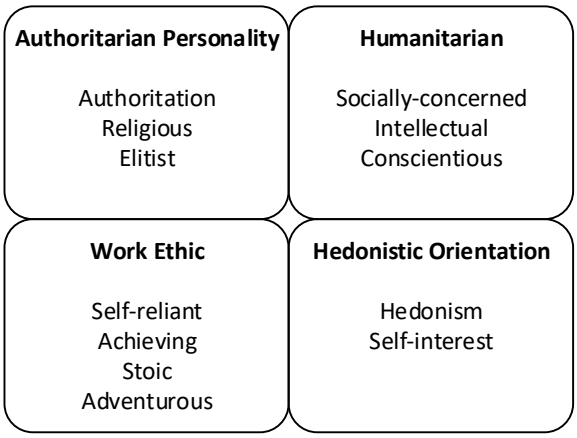
Originally developed in the field of psychology and philosophy, values have been studied as a concept since the early 1950s in various disciplines such as politics, sociology, marketing and more recently, information systems. It is argued that values is a complex concept and can be analysed by considering the levels at which the values are held, whether at individual (personal values), organisational (professional/work values), societal/national (national/cultural values) or global level (Agle and Caldwell, 1999). In this study, values are studied mainly at a personal or individual level.

Even though there is a proliferation of research on values across different areas of social sciences, and a lack of precision in the expression of values at different levels (individual, organisational or societal), the construct of value itself is fairly well defined (Agle and Caldwell, 1999), with the key proponents being Kluckhohn (1954), Rokeach (1973), Senger (1971) and Schwartz and Bilsky (1987). Kluckhohn's (1954) definition of value, as cited by Lorr, Suziedelis and Tonesk (1973) is the 'conception of the desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action'. Lorr et al. (1973) described normative values as 'beliefs or conceptions of what rules and goals are desirable or personally mandatory'. According to them, these values indicate what modes of conduct towards others are right rather than wrong, and what end-states are good rather than bad. Senger (1971) defined values as 'a hierarchy of competing, fundamental life directions which act as criteria for psychological behaviour'. Rokeach's (1973) definition of value is "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence". All these definitions point towards the idea of values as desirable end-states which affects behaviour and conduct.

Parsons (2011) posits that the basic social function of values is to motivate and control behaviour of groups through two ways. Firstly, social actors or leaders invoke values to define behaviours that are socially appropriate to influence others to behave in a particular way, ensuring group survival and prosperity. These values are passed on through customs, practices and norms within their society. Secondly, values also serve as internal guides for people, influencing their behaviour and decision making.

Two components of a normative value are cognitive and affective components (Lorr et al., 1973). The former refers to the belief that a particular behaviour or goal is desirable, while the affective component refers to the degree of desirability felt for a given target. This normative value guides the individual to respond in the preferred behaviour. In Lorr et al.'s (1973)

research, respondents were asked to state the importance of a list of 12 items comprising goals or behaviours in his/her life on a 5 point scale. From these constructs, Lorr et al.'s (1973) developed a structure of values which consists of four dimensions of positively co-related factors depicted in Figure 2.3 below: (1) Humanitarian, comprising Socially Concerned, Intellectual and Conscientious values; (2) Authority Personality dimension consisting of Authoritarian, Religious and Elitist values; (3) Work Ethic dimension consisting of Achieving, Stoic, Self-Reliant and Adventurous values, and (4) Hedonistic Orientation dimension characterised by Hedonistic, and Self-Interest values. Each of these value dimensions reflects a specific ethic. Authority Personality represents compliance to rules regarding authority – that it should be recognised, respected, maintained, obeyed and defended. Work Ethic indicates the proper behaviour in relation to work – that we should keep busy, endure stress, work hard and be self-reliant. The Humanistic dimension emphasises the importance of concern for others, being helpful, sympathetic, egalitarian, responsible and appreciative of culture and the environment. Hedonistic orientation emphasises enjoyment, self-indulgence and freedom, a view which is common among the young.



Source: Adapted from Lorr et al. (1973)

Figure 2.3 Four dimensions of Lorr et al.'s structure of values

In applying Rokeach's definition of personal value, Vinson et al. (1977) stated that the term value reflects multi-disciplinary interests of anthropology (lifestyles and cultural patterns), sociology (ideology, customs) and psychology (attitudes and personal motives), They state that values are "centrally held beliefs which stimulate motivation for behavioural response". Values are assumed to be derived from culture, society and its institutions, and personality. Vinson et al. (1977) proposed a value framework which integrates global values (centrally held personal values which guide actions and judgements across specific situations), domain-specific values (values acquired through experience in specific situations or domains of activity such as economic transactions or social interaction) and evaluative beliefs about attributes of products or brands. Values exist in an interconnected, hierarchical structure in which global values are related to generalised consumption-related values, which are, in turn associated with product attributes. Consumer research often centres on the third type of value, using expectancy-value approach to predict brand choice.

Kamakura and Novak (1992) state that personal values are foundational to a person's cognitive structure and more enduring than attitudes. Personal values can affect an individual's judgment of which attributes of an object are important to their decision making and behaviour. This impact can be direct (Corfman, Lehmann and Narayanan, 1991; Gutman, 1990), or indirect, through choice criteria, beliefs, attitudes or other factors (McCarty and Shrum, 1994). Many of these studies have chosen specific personal values, such as 'sense of belonging', 'self-actualisation' or 'security', based on value theories of Kahle and Kennedy's (1989) LOV and Rokeach's (1973) Value Survey to be examined in relation to consumer behaviour.

Kahle and Kennedy (1989) and Rokeach (1973), prominent researchers on personal/social value and consumer psychology agree that the core reason consumers choose a product is often value fulfilment. Rokeach's (1973) concept of value as an enduring belief that a specific end-state of existence or mode of conduct is preferable to an opposing one, serves as a basis for a

plan for conflict resolution and decision making. Value is distinguished from attitudes in this way: a value is a single prescriptive belief, while attitudes are clusters of beliefs that can be prescriptive, cognitive, affective or behavioural. Values are fewer in number compared to attitudes, and are sometimes considered core beliefs guiding behaviour and actions, applicable across different situations. Rokeach's (1973) view is that human values have an impact on virtually all social science phenomena which a social scientist may wish to investigate, making it a central element guiding actions, attitude and judgments. Rokeach's (1973) value theory explains that people are driven to reduce inconsistencies in their lives to regain cognitive balance. Inconsistency creates a need for change, and values serve as general plans for resolving conflict and making decisions which will reduce this inconsistency. The Rokeach Value Survey (RVS), developed in 1973 as a tool for measuring personal values consists of 18 instrumental and 18 terminal values. Subjects rank each value list in order of its importance. Evidence supporting the proposition that values influence behaviour is amply supported by research such as Kahle and Kennedy (1989), Beatty, Kahle, Homer et al. (1985), Johnston (1995) and Grunert and Muller (1996) who built on the elements found in the RVS. This can be operationalized through two theoretical perspectives, namely, a 'macro' perspective based on sociology and standard survey research methodology and classification scheme which categorise respondents into clusters and thereafter these clusters are correlated to behaviours through inference; and a 'micro' perspective based on psychology and investigation of the linkages between products and the personally relevant role it has in the life of the consumer, called the 'means-end chain analysis' (Reynolds and Gutman, 1988). Personal values is a source of motivation which can induce valences (the subjective attractiveness or aversiveness of an object, experience or events in the immediate circumstances encountered) on different decisions and actions. Actions that promote attainment of valued goals are more attractive to those who prioritise such values (Feather, 1995).

Kahle and Kennedy (1989) emphasised the importance of value research to the field of marketing, human resource management and a wide spectrum of social science research from regionalism to innovation. The basis of Kahle's theory is the principle of abstraction, which seeks to relate something specific (product) to an abstract concept (value) to imbues the specific something with some of the positive attributes associated with the concept (value). They state that human beings seek to develope abstract classification of things to facilitate information processing, and the communication means that aid such a process should be more effective. Market segments identifiable on the basis of value profiles allow marketing strategies to be developed with greater precision, identification of new products and designs, and implementation of promotional strategies which will reach and enhance important values of consumers.

Kahle's List of Values (LOV) has 9 elements of value which was adapted from Rokeach's (1973) list of 18 terminal values and Maslow's hierarchy of values. The nine values are Self-respect, Self-fulfilment, Sense of Accomplishment, Excitement, Fun and Enjoyment in Life, Warm Relationships with Others (internally oriented), Being Well Respected, Security and Sense of Belonging (externally oreinted). Externally oriented values refer to those which are dependent on external parties or circumstances while internally oriented values do not. Kahle advocates value segmentation as a specific occurrence of needs/benefit segmentation.

While building on the RVS, several authors have highlighted some of the weaknesses in Rokeach's (1973) measurement tool. Firstly, gaps in preference is not taken into account in the ranking exercise, and it is difficult to have a large number of items (18 in each list) in short-term memory in order to make the assessment of values (Kahle and Kennedy, 1989). Rokeach (1973) himself recognised that respondents ranked extreme values more accurately than middle values. In evaluating Rokeach's theory of personal value, Kahle and Kennedy (1989) argued that there is also an issue of the different impact of different values on a particular variable

based on the nature of the activities which are the subject of a particular study. Some values are self-centred (self-respect), while others are community-centred (warm relationship with others). Therefore in circumstances relating to micro-level activities such as taking a holiday, there will be a greater influence of values which are self-centred compared to those which are community-centred. Social desirability is also a factor influencing the ranking of values.

Additionally, Rokeach's Value Survey when used to undertake factor analysis must first be adjusted to make the initial data suitable for factor analysis, and because of the need for this process, may cause the results of such analyses to be questioned (Johnston, 1995). Johnston (1995) was investigating the existence of any underlying value dimensions in the 18 value of RVS, and found that the underlying structure of values consists of two dimensions very similar to the individualism-collectivism continuum of Hofstede (1991), but imply that this continuum is not a single bipolar dimension but rather two distinct dimensions. It also supports the argument that the level of an individual's development, such as that proposed by Maslow, may influence his/her perceptions of value.

In discussing how data is collected in relation to personal values across different cultures, Grunert and Muller (1996) highlighted the difference between people's real life and their ideal life values. They state that there is a need to focus attention on the measurement methodology for obtaining data especially in cross-national research. This is because there is a distinction between 'real life' values – the extent to which value fulfilment is actually achieved with the realities and demands of everyday life; and 'ideal' values – values which one would like to attain if no constraints were imposed on value fulfilment; which may cause methodological problems for a researcher using the concept of values. Rokeach's Value Survey as well as Kahle's (1989) LOV although based on strong theoretical foundations still depend on how survey respondents understand and evaluate the value ratings to determine the outcome of those

surveys. Due to the abstract nature of human values, obtaining unambiguous value priority data from surveys is a challenging task.

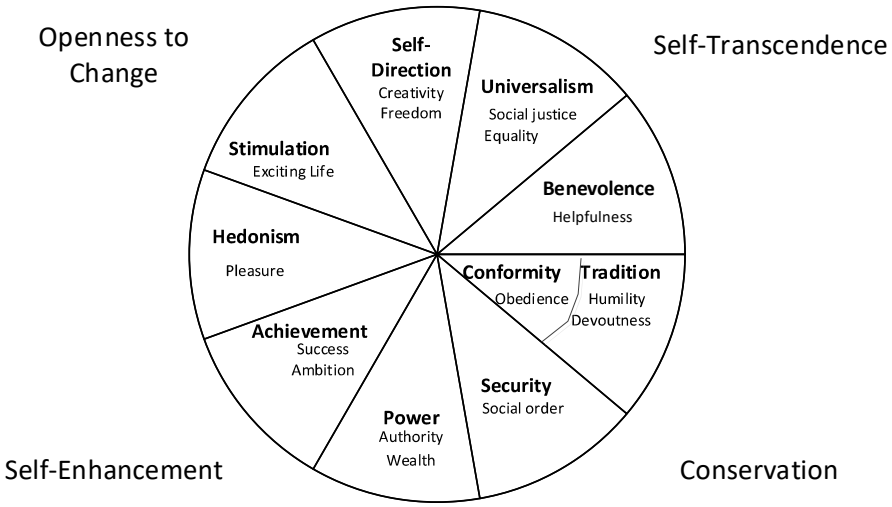
2.6.1 Schwartz theory of the structure of values

Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) who also built on Rokeach's work, defined value "as concepts or beliefs about desirable end states or behaviours that transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and are ordered by relative importance", as a guiding principle in a person's life. Schwartz and Bilsky's (1987) model is based on three universal human requirements: (1) needs of individuals as biological beings, (2) requisites of coordinated social interaction, and (3) survival and welfare needs of groups. These requirements are represented cognitively in the form of values, through socialisation and cognitive development. Individuals are then able to use culturally shared terms to communicate about these goals and values, attributing varying degrees of importance to them. They also identified marker values for each domain and highlighted the structural relations among the different domains of values. This structural model of human values which has been supported cross-culturally, has been used in over 82 countries to measure values in different categories of respondents for different purposes (Schwartz, 2012). For example, some of the behaviors and behavioral intentions to which values are related in the hypothesized manner include choice of medical specialty (Schubot, Eliason and Cayley, 1995), consumer purchases (Doran, 2009), managerial behaviour (Smith, Peterson, Schwartz et al., 2002) , counselee behavioural style (Sagiv and Schwartz, 2004), delinquent behaviour (Bond and Chi, 1997), environmental behaviour (Grunert and Juhl, 1995; Bianchi and Rosova, 1995; Karp, 1996), intergroup social contact (Sagiv and Schwartz;, 1995), well-being (Sagiv and Schwartz, 2000), religiosity (Schwartz and Huismans, 1995), religious observance (Roccas and Schwartz, 1997) and politics (Barnea and Schwartz, 1998).

Schwartz proposes an integrated system of the structure of values with 10 values identified (initially 7 values in earlier work) forming a circular structure of motivationally opposed and compatible values. The current model has a total of 10 motivational domains, which are: Self-Direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Conformity, Tradition, Security, Power, Achievement, Hedonism and Stimulation, as depicted in Figure 2.4 below.

The 10 values in the structure are listed below, each with its motivational goal.

i. Self-Direction: Independent thought and action: choosing, creating, exploring
ii. Stimulation: Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life
iii. Hedonism: Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.
iv. Achievement: personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards
v. Power: social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources
vi. Security: safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships and of self
vii. Conformity: restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms
viii. Tradition: respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion provides
ix. Benevolence: preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact
x. Universalism: understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature



Source: Schwartz (2012) p. 9

Figure 2.4 Schwartz's theory of the structure of values

Supported by samples from more than 80 countries (Schwartz, 2012), these values forming a circulate continuum as presented in Figure 2.4, reflects the compatibilities and contrasts among the motivational goals expressed by them. The values adjacent should have similar associations with other variables, and this association with other values should decrease in both directions around the circle from the most positively to the most negatively associated value. This dynamics is based on the assumption that people's value preferences are organised by the psychological, practical and social consequences of pursuing or expressing values from the different domains simultaneously. They propose that some values are mutually compatible with others. For example, strong evidence suggests the values of restrictive Conformity, pro-social and Security supports conservation, while Achievement, Hedonism and Power promote self-enhancement. Conversely, some values are mutually conflicting. For example, the pursuit of social justice and equality (elements of the value of Universalism) is challenging if an individual also values authority and wealth, which are elements within the value of Power. The ten values can be further classified into four broad sets forming two bipolar dimensions of conflicting values. Self-Transcendence values (Universalism, Benevolence) are opposed to

Self-Enhancement values (Power and Achievement); while Conservation values (Security, Conformity and Tradition) are opposed to Openness to Change values (Self-Direction, Stimulation and Hedonism).

The instrument used by Schwartz and Bilsky (1987), now known as the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS) has 2 lists of value items. The first list contains 30 items describing desirable end-states in noun form; and the second list has 27 items describing potential desirable ways of acting in adjective form. This is in line with Rokeach's (1973) view that end values and means values operate differently. The instrument has since been translated into more than 47 languages, and used in more than 200 studies in over 70 countries (Vecchione, Schwartz, Alessandri et al., 2016). Each item expresses one aspect of the motivational goal of one value. Instead of asking for ranking of different value items (as in Rokeach's Value Survey), respondents rate the importance of each value item 'as a guiding principle in my life' on a 9 point non-symmetrical scale (stretched at the upper end and condensed at the lower end) to map the way people think about values. The number of items used to measure each value range from three (hedonism) to eight (universalism), indicative of the breadth of each value concept. The value items that have near-equivalence of meaning across cultures are included in the indexes.

In 2001, Schwartz, Melech, Lehmann et al. (2001) developed an alternative instrument called the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) to measure the 10 basic values. It is cognitively less demanding and can be applied to respondents who are younger and less educated. It comprises short descriptions of 40 different people, gender-matched with the respondent, describing the goals, aspirations or wishes pointing implicitly to the importance of a particular value. Respondents report their own similarity to people described on a unipolar asymmetric scale of 6: 1 not at all like me, 2 not like me, 3 a bit like me, 4 somewhat like me, 5 like me, 6 very much like me. Through descriptions of what is important, the tool captures the person's values without explicitly identifying or working with the values as the topics being investigated. The

number of portraits for each value range from three to six and the score for the importance of each value is the average rating given to these items. The number of portraits for each value reflects the breadth of its conceptual definition with six for universalism, five for security, four each for tradition, conformity, benevolence, self-direction, and achievement, and three each for stimulation, hedonism, and power. Portraits are arranged randomly in the questionnaire with the condition that at least three other portraits separate those that represent the same personal value. The language used is that of 11 year olds, hence allowing anyone above 11 years old to be able to answer the questionnaire. This Portrait Value Questionnaire was used as a foundation for the European Social Survey, which has 21 PVQ items. The PVQ has been used in numerous studies with different categories of respondents, including Cieciuch and Schwartz (2012) - Polish; Zimmermann, Firnkes, Kowalski et al. (2014) - German soldiers; Kjærgaard, Venables, Leon et al. (2013) - Danish polar expedition team; and Daniel and Benish-Weisman (2019) - Jewish and Arab students.

Perrinjaquet, Furrer, Usunier et al. (2007) however, critiqued the validity of the quasi-circumplex structure of human values proposed by Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) by highlighting that the structure was validated through multidimensional scaling, an exploratory rather than confirmatory data analysis tool. Perrinjaquet et al's (2007) analysis of French and Swiss data sample using confirmatory factor analysis method shows that Tradition and Conformity were separate while Schwartz's model shows these values to be located at the same polar angle. They also used structural equation modelling to test the circumplex models in their study. It was found that there was a high level of multi-collinearity between the values especially for Benevolence and Self-Direction, between Power, Achievement and Self-Direction, and between Conservation and Security. Because of the high level of multi-collinearity, it was observed that there was a lack of discriminant validity in all 10 pairs of adjacent value types in the model. Despite the criticisms presented, numerous other studies such as Beierlein,

Davidov, Schmidt et al. (2012), Bilsky, Janik and Schwartz (2011), Fontaine, Poortinga, Delbeke et al. (2008) and Schwartz and Bardi (2001) have been done with a variety of samples including the use of confirmatory factor analysis (Schwartz and Boehnke, 2004; Cieciuch and Davidov, 2012) which supports the validity of the circular structure of human values and the relationship between these values.

Using data from the European Social Survey, Bilsky et al. (2011) corroborated the circular structure of basic values across countries and within countries across time, and stated that the theoretical approach of Schwartz's model is conceptually and empirically appropriate for cross cultural research. They also found that the deviation from the circular structure is less in countries with higher societal development compared to those with lower societal development. Countries with higher levels of societal development also showed a stronger contrast between protection and growth values. As people pursue growth values (increased interest in what is unique, novel, challenging, and different), they are required to forgo some security of conformity to norms and traditions (protection values). This results in a higher level of conflict between protection (Security, Power, Achievement, Conformity, Tradition) and growth values (Self-Direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Stimulation, Hedonism) among people in more developed countries. These findings are similar to those made by Fontaine et al. (2008), using the SVS as a measurement instrument. It is also found that the 21 PVQ value items (used in the Europoan Social Survey) parallel many of the items in the SVS.

2.6.2 Schwartz structure of values – average value hierarchies

While value priorities may be different among different groups of people based on cultural and natural differences as evidenced by studies such as Markus and Kitayama (1991) and Schwartz (1997) as well as differences at the individual level based on variance in background, social locations and experiences (Mayton, Ball-rokeach and Loges, 1994; Schwartz, 1997), there is widespread similarity in the average value hierarchies of samples from different countries. It

was found that the order of importance in different representative samples are that Benevolence, Self-Direction and Universalism are consistently most important, while Tradition, Stimulation and Power values are least important and Security, Conformity, Achievement and Hedonism are in between (Schwartz, 2015; Schwartz and Bardi, 2001). Benevolence/Self-Direction and Security/Conformity/Achievement, while having a high and medium mean average score respectively, did not differ significantly from each other, while for every other value type, there was a significant difference with all other values (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001). Using societal functioning as a basis, they stated that one reason for this observation could be that the pan-cultural similarities in value importance are likely to reflect the shared bases of values in human nature and the adaptive functions of each type of value in maintaining societies, which will oppose values which clash with human nature and the smooth functioning of important members or the larger society. At a societal level, the following hierarchical order of the value priority derived from respondents from 13 countries and corroborated by respondents from 61 countries provides a baseline for comparing with other samples: Benevolence, Self-Direction-Universalism (joint 2nd and 3rd), Security, Conformity, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, Tradition, Power (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001).

Benevolence was found to be at the top of the hierarchy of values among various groups with diverse cultural backgrounds. This was because the values of helpfulness, honesty and loyalty are values which form the basis of the internal motivation that promotes and supports group functioning and cooperative relations, firstly in the family (where values are first acquired) and later in other secondary groups (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001). While Benevolence is important to sustain primary groups, Universalism values focus on the welfare of those outside the primary group and are important when relating to those outside a person's primary group for social cohesion and co-operation. Hence, this value is ranked 2nd-3rd in Schwartz and Bardi's (2001) analysis on the mean importance score across cultures. Another important value was

Self-Direction (ranked 2nd) which results in innovation, creativity and exploration; contributing to group prosperity and the satisfaction of self-oriented needs, such as travel and tourism, with the aim of personal enjoyment, without posing a threat to social functioning.

They also found Security and Conformity to be ranked third and fourth respectively in terms of the mean importance score. As harmonious relations among members of a group depend on people being able to avoid conflicts and violation of norms, Security value which focuses on safety, harmony and stability of society and relationships and Conformity (restraint of actions that violate societal norms) rank moderately important (4th - 5th).

Achievement values were of moderate importance where it allows a balance between self-enhancing pursuits with group welfare, motivating people to pursue self-oriented goals without disrupting the social relations of group members. Hedonism and Stimulation are ranked low in the cross cultural value hierarchy because of their focus on self-gratification and the needs of the individual, sometimes at the expense of those of the group, but not as much as the pursuit of Power values. Power was found to be the value at the bottom of the hierarchy of values. This is likely to be a result of a rejection of dominance over people and resources (which may often involve exploitation) to achieve positive social relations among members of a group.

When comparing the personal value profile of one group of sample to the cross-cultural value hierarchy, Schwartz and Bardi (2001) are of the view that the ratings of value importance is a better unit of comparison than the difference in the arrangement of rankings of these values between the two groups, because ranking is less sensitive to differences than ratings. They found that there is a distinct difference between eastern culture (Singapore) and western culture (United States) in terms of its hierarchy of value priorities. Singapore had Security, Benevolence and Conformity at the top; whereas United States had Benevolence, Achievement and Hedonism at the top and both had Power at the bottom of the hierarchy.

2.6.3 Personal values and demographic variables

The relationship between personal values on respondents' background and demographic characteristics provide insights into the profile of respondents, and some of these results are discussed in this section.

Different life circumstances influence the extent to which one can express some values more easily than others. It makes the pursuit of different values more or less rewarding. For example, those who are wealthy will find it easier to pursue Power values, while those with children will be limited in pursuing Stimulation values to avoid risks to themselves and impacting their children negatively. Background variables influence value priorities, while values also influence our life circumstances. Hence, the influence of values and life circumstances is reciprocal (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987). One one hand, values have an effect on the level of education attained, priorities for Self-Direction and Achievement or Conformity. Stronger Tradition values may promote persistence through higher education. Values also influence how we choose friends, jobs, travel opportunities and whether we move to environments with particular political economic or religious systems. These choices in turn create life-circumstances to which we then adapt our values.

Conversely, background variables also influence value priorities. People upgrade the importance attributed to values they can readily attain and downgrade the importance of values whose pursuit is blocked. Age, education, gender and other demographic characteristics affect people's life circumstance such as their social roles, expectation and sanctions they face and the opportunities they have to develop different skills, which in turn affect their value priorities.

2.6.3.1 Age

In considering changes to personal values over the course of life, three sources of impetus can cause value change: historical events that have an impact on specific age cohorts (war,

depression), physical ageing (loss of strength or memory) and life stage (child-rearing, widowhood) – all affect value relevant experiences, determining the opportunities and constraints people have and the resources for coping with them (Schwartz, 2005). Researching on stability and change of values among young adults between 20 to 28 years old, which is a period associated with dynamic and challenging period of life with new social roles and life transitions, Vecchione et al. (2016) concluded that values are substantially stable even during this period of transitions where long-term value change is most likely to occur. However, they did find that the mean importance of Conservation, Self-Transcendence, and Power values increased over time (as respondents grow older), while the mean importance of Achievement values decreased, and Openness to Change values remained stable over time. Age is positively correlated with Universalism and Benevolence as it brings a greater awareness and concern for others, for nature and a higher level of sympathy for the welfare of others and the awareness of our own mortality and vulnerability. As young adults adapt to socially prescribed roles, they will seek to avoid conflicts and violation of social expectations, explaining the positive relationship between age and Conservation values such as Security, Tradition and Conformity, especially in early adulthood.

Schwartz (2005) found that age correlated positively with Conservation and Self-Transcendence values and negatively with Openness to Change and Self-Enhancement values. Younger adults value Achievement and Stimulation more than older people (at the expense of conformity, security and tradition) because they may be at the stage in life where career opportunities and establishment of families present exciting challenges and they are eager to proof themselves. Those in middle adulthood would have established families and careers that they wish to protect, hence value security, conformity and tradition as they move towards pre-retirement and conclusion of their careers. Older adults value security more than younger people as a result of physical aging (reducing people's capacity to cope with change), hence

also resulting in conformity and tradition values becoming more important for them because accepted ways of operating are less threatening. Achievement and Power also become less important as people grow older, as their ability to meet demanding challenges would reduce as they age. Age correlates positively with Security at a decreasing degree of correlation in both directions around the circular structure of values, with Hedonism at the other end.

2.6.3.2 Gender

In considering the element of gender, Schwartz and Rubel (2005) say that men sees Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation and Self-Direction values as more important while women sees Benevolence, Universalism, Conformity and Security values as important. This has its roots in psychological theories where women are more affiliated and communal due to a focus on caring for members of their in-group or family; and men tend to be autonomous and instrumental in their social relations and often perform their societal role through exploitation of power and status, resulting in a higher priority placed on Self-Enhancement values. Similar results were found by Vecchione et al. (2016) where males rated Power more important but females rated Benovelence and Security more important than males did. There is a clear link between gender and Benevolence and Power values, while relationships with other values are weaker and inconsistent across different samples studied.

2.6.3.3 Education

Education correlates positively with Self-Direction, Stimulation, Achievement, and Universalism values, and negatively with Conformity, Tradition, and Security values (Schwartz, 2006). Higher levels of education moves a person further away from supervision towards freedom and self-management, complex problem solving, independent thought and intellectual flexibility. These tend to encourage Self-Direction and weaken Conformity and Tradition values. Education also enable people to have higher levels of confidence to deal with

uncertainties and pursue financially secure jobs, resulting in a positive correlation with Achievement and reducing their priority on Security.

Education is positively correlated to Stimulation and Hedonism because those more highly educated would have the time and resource to explore non-routine activities and novel experiences, and indulge in pleasurable activities and self-enjoyment, including holidays. Nevertheless, it is useful to note that research in this area has shown contradictory results with no consistent pattern of mean-value change as a result of attaining higher levels of education (Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer, 2019).

From all the studies done using Schwartz' theory of values, it is noted that apart from China, Hong Kong and Singapore, other studies have been done within the context of cultures and groups of respondents in North and South America, Europe, and the Middle East. No study using this theory has focused exclusively on the context of Malaysia, and this research will provide input to theory in relation to personal values from a Malaysian, and a Southeast Asian perspective. In one previous study reported in Schwartz and Bardi (2001), some of its data was collected from teachers and students in Penang, Malaysia, in 1989 as part of a wider study of culture and personal values, and Smith et al.'s (2002) study of 47 nations included 40 respondents from Malaysia, but these were the only limited engagement within the context of Malaysia.

2.7 PERSONAL VALUES AND DESTINATION SELECTION

Linked to the concept of personal value is a key trend influencing travel behaviour, which is a rising concern for the morality of consumption. According to Cooper-Martin and Holbrook (1993), ethical consumer behaviour refers to decision making, purchases, and other consumption experiences that are affected by the consumer's ethical concern. In the field of tourism, consumption of eco-tourism and other sustainable tourism products represent a form

of ethical consumption, often reflecting values that are important to the tourist. In this section, the connection between personal values and destination selection will be explored and the theoretical basis of this relationship discussed.

In linking value priority with behaviour, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) state that the higher the priority given to a value, the more likely plans will be made to take action and demonstrate the expression of that value. Planning focuses people on the pros (advantages) of desired actions rather than the cons (disadvantages). It increases the person's belief that they have the ability to reach the valued goal and motivates them to be persistent in facing obstacles and distractions. By promoting planning, value importance increases value-consistent behaviour. Personal values is a source of motivation which can induce valences (the subjective attractiveness or aversiveness of an object, experience or events in the immediate circumstances encountered) on different decisions and actions. Actions that promote attainment of valued goals are more attractive to those who prioritise such values (Feather, 1995).

This link is based on the connection between our personal values, and what we possess and do (Friese, 2000), for example, the type of destinations and vacations we choose. Although value cannot be linked to behaviour in a causal way, it can illuminate the *motivation* for action. Values that are high on the hierarchy of priority will cause a person to pursue decisions and actions which attain those values, as they are linked to the person's concept of self. Value then influences a person's attention and perception of situations, and the effect of each situation is defined by the values that are important to each person. This interpretation based on the value priority will lead to planning for actions, such as decisions on destinations for vacations, or activities during a trip, that will realise those values (Schwartz, 2005). Planned actions allow a person to focus, overcome obstacles and increase the likelihood of expressing value-based behaviour. Reviewing over 190 articles, Cohen et al. (2014) found that the concept of values

is one of the dimensions least researched both in developed and emerging markets, hence this research will clearly be able to fill this gap.

Values are relatively stable throughout one's life based on each person's hierarchy of values. Hoewever, each value may be prioritised at different life stages based on the needs at each stage (Agle and Caldwell, 1999). As stated by Schwartz and Bardi (2001), to ascertain the self-reported value priorities are more than just lip service to value, but instead are true endorsement of its importance, we should investigate how these professed values relate meaningfully to actual behaviour. Schwartz and Bilsky's (1987) value theory has been used to study a variety of different perspectives in tourism such as ethical tourism (Weeden, 2011), consumption of international tourism (Hsu, Woodside and Marshall, 2013), trade-offs between different value expressive holidays (Ye, Soutar, Sneddon et al., 2017), and sustainable tourism (Imran, Alam and Beaumont, 2014).

According to Schwartz (2006), value-relevant aspects of situations activate values. Further, values influence action in that those which promotes a certain value becomes more attractive as options are considered in decision making. When opportunities to attain a value which is highly prioritised are available, an automatic positive affective response is triggered towards those actions and opportunities that will enhance the specific value, causing a person to make decision and take action accordingly. People define situations in light of their own important values. A destination may be attractive for those who value Self-Direction because of the rugged nature of the destination and the freedom to engage in some adventure and novel activities based on the preference of the visitor, but be completely unattractive to others who value Achievement highly and finds satisfaction in staying at top rated hotels with six-star facilities to demonstrate their success in life.

Using personal values to segment the tourism market has been a strategy studied by various researchers. One of the earliest pieces of work studying the relationship between personal values and tourism markets is that of Pitts and Woodside (1986) who proposed a segmentation based on personal values and its relationship to destination benefits or attractions. Different researchers have used different value scales in their study of the relationship between personal values and tourism behaviour. McCleary and Choi (1999) used the Rokeach Value Survey to examine the behaviour of travellers from the US and Korea; Hede, Jago and Deery (2005) used Kahle's LOV and found those who placed importance on connectedness and hedonism were more satisfied with their attendance and experience at a theatre event.

Woosnam et al. (2009) used Kahle's LOV to examine the personal values and motivations of festival event attendees and found that the value of 'belonging' even though having the lowest mean importance score, was significant in predicting motivations for attending the festival event studied. It was also observed that those who valued enjoyment, excitement and a sense of belonging were motivated to attend the festival event; and that internally oriented values (self-respect, fun and enjoyment in life, self-fulfillment, accomplishment, security, excitement) were rated more highly by participants compared to externally oriented values (warm relationship with others, being well respected, belonging) generally. Hence, offering activities of personal enrichment and connectivity with others would be valued by festival attendees, as well as mixing entertainment with educational opportunities that are fun. Understanding personal values of visitors will allow planners to enhance the offerings of the destinations for greater satisafaction of visitors, and increase the chances of return visits.

Madrigal and Kahle (1994) studied the relationship between vacation activities and personal values among British tourists visiting Scandinavia, where they grouped personal value into higher order value domains which co-related with vacation activities preferred by different tourists. Mehmetoglu, Hines, Graumann et al. (2010) studied the relationship between personal

values and tourism activities preference. Using a customised value scale called the Norwegian Monitor Approach, they mapped the Norwegian population into four segments by personal values, providing support for the proposition that, segments of the market differentiated by personal values exhibit different patterns of tourism behaviour.

One study of some relevance is Gration and Raciti's work (2014) on the link between personal values and tourists' perception of the social and natural environment of destinations, without touching on the information sources used. The basis of the link between personal values and perception of destination environment is the intrinsic needs of tourists which are sought to be met through the consumption of tourist experiences that are in line with their personal values, because our personal values underpin behaviours (decisions and actions).

The argument for studying the influence of personal values on consumer behaviours is that values have a significance influence on certain consumer bahaviours, especially those which have personal meanings, such as vacation planning and media preferences attached to them (Fall and Knutson, 2001). Fall and Knutson (2001) used a list of 19 information sources which were then clustered into 4 categorries, and found that mature travellers valued self-respect, warm relations with others and security above other values, and two-thirds of them rely on recommendations from others when making travel plans.

One study which investigated the connection between personal values and information search strategy was that of Fall (2000). She used Kahle's LOV and found that three dimensions where observed: hedonism, interpersonal and achievement. Five dimensions of information sources were also identified in this research, being journalistic, advertising, organisational, interpersonal and new media. Two conclusions from her study are that hedonic value factor is positively related to interpersonal sources, and achievement factor is positively related to journalism sources and advertising sources. People who value fun, enjoyment and excitement

(hedonic) consider interpersonal sources (travel agent, tradeshow, friend) as most useful. Individuals who place a high regard on achievement values prefer sources which are mass-media oriented. This could be due to two reasons. Firstly, these individuals may be conditioned to refer to media sources as a means of accomplishing their travel planning in order to obtain the most beneficial information to make an educated and knowledgeable decision. Furthermore, journalism source (with earned publicity) may be a trustworthy reference.

As far as demographics is concerned, Fall's (2000) research indicates a negative relationship between age and hedonic value factor. As people age, the importance placed on hedonic values decreases. Full time employees view hedonic values as less important. This means that marketing efforts targeting mature audience should not promote activities based on hedonic values.

2.7.1 Theoretical foundations for personal values and tourism behaviour

A key theory used to understand personal values in tourism research is the means-end theory, which states that consumers have a cognitive hierarchy to achieve consumption goals, using laddering technique to understand how cognitive attributes are perceived to provide benefits which satisfies personal values. According to the means-end theory, consumers are motivated to buy a product to the extent that it, in the mind of the consumer, contributes to the fulfillment of personal values (Kahle, 2000). Means refer to objects (products) or activities which people consume or engage in, and ends are value states of being, such as happiness or security (Gutman, 1982). The means-end chain theory explains how a product or service selection facilitates achievement of desired end states through consumer processes that link values to behaviour. The means-end theory provides a theoretical framework which is useful for analysing how consumer choice behaviour results in attainment or achievement of personal values. Watkins and Gnoth (2011a) are of the view that using the means-end approach provides

a method for exploring the validity of value items prior to the selection of a choice of value scale. It can help uncover variations and extensions to existing lists of values.

The means-end theory assumes that links between cognitions form hierarchical belief systems in the human memory. A means-end chain are elements of linked beliefs which determine a person's perception of objects and behaviours. For example, a means-end chain starts from a desired "end" (personal values) to "means" (benefits and attributes) and then to "behaviour" (purchase decision). The higher stages of a means-end hierarchy contain abstract self-knowledge (life goals/values) and the lower stages contain concrete knowledge of product attributes and benefits. The theory states that the personal values of a consumer provide motivation to seek potential benefits provided by a product/service. Further, the consumer is further motivated to evaluate the attributes of the product that are associated with these benefits, leading the consumer to purchase the product.

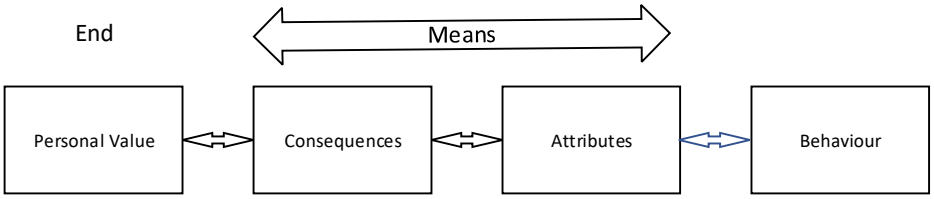


Figure 2.5 Means-End Chain Hierarchy

The relationship is illustrated in Figure 2.5 above whereby the physical aspects of products or services (means) produces consequences when consumed or purchased, which allows consumers to achieve desired valued states (ends). Consumers make choices about products and services in order to achieve desired consequences. Therefore, they will need to know which product attributes produce these desired consequences (consequence-product attribute link). These consequences lead to fulfilment of valued end-states sought by consumers. This means-

end chain of related meanings reflects how products obtain their meaning or relevance from the perspective of consumers.

The foundational assumptions of the model are that values play a dominant role in guiding choice patterns and that people cope with the tremendous diversity of products, which can potentially satisfy their values by grouping them into sets to reduce the complexity of choice. Further, it is assumed that all actions have consequences and consumers learn to associate particular consequences with particular actions. Applied to the context of this study, the relationship between personal values and the selection of a Homestay destination is illustrated in Figure 2.6 below.

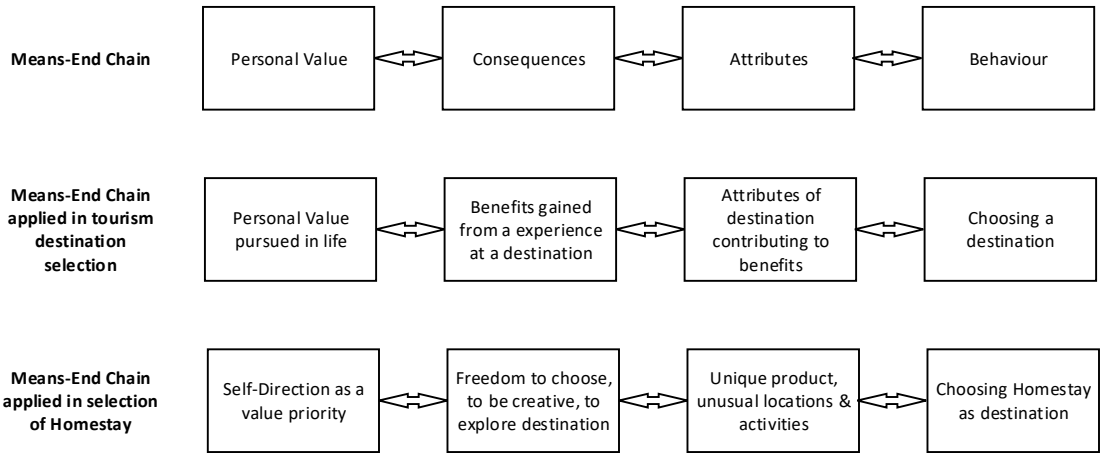


Figure 2.6 Illustrative means-end chain hierarchy applied to Homestay selection

Gutman (1982) defined consequences as any result (physiological, psychological or sociological) accruing directly or indirectly to the consumer from his/her behaviour. This consequence may be immediate or delayed, and may be desirable (benefit) or undesirable. Consequences may be physiological, such as satisfying hunger, thirst or other needs, or psychological, such as self-esteem, or outlook for the future. Sociological consequences include status enhancement and group membership. Consequences can be direct, resulting from the product or service consumed or indirect, from reactions of other people because of the

consumption behaviour, or when direct consequences produce other consequences. Some consequences occur immediately while others are delayed or only experienced after a lapse of time, such as obesity or illness.

One important point highlighted by Gutman (1990) is that not every consumer act will have a link to values, and especially for low enduring involvement products (such as beverage or stationery), which may show very little linkage between consequences from using the product and a consumer's values, when compared with high enduring involvement products (such as insurance, housing or automobiles).

McIntosh and Thyne (2005) stated that the means-end theory is useful for analysing personal values as the basis of tourist behaviour. Essentially, the theory adopts a micro-approach to marketing research by incorporating individual psychological perspectives into analysis of consumer behaviour to understand the link between the product and the personally relevant role of the product in the life of the consumer. Based on a model of consumer's cognitive structures, it depicts the links between product characteristics to valued end states desired by consumers.

The means-end theory was applied in tourism research to investigate value-based motivations for tourist behaviour in relation to destination choice, types of tourism experience, accommodation choice and host attitudes (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2009), and attractiveness of tourism destinations (Klenosky, 2002). Watkins and Gnoth (2011b) presented a set of culturally motivated values among Japanese tourists using the means-end approach to link values to attributes and benefits, to understand the benefits that are important to them. It is found that the means-end theory is effective as a basis for exploring values in a cross-cultural context, either on its own or prior to further quantitative investigation. Klenosky (2002) used the means-end theory to investigate the relationship between the pull attributes of a destination

(the means) and the motivational forces of the traveller (the ends). The study examined the factors affecting the selection of different vacation destinations and found that personal values may contribute to the push factors towards a decision to travel. In terms of techniques, although laddering is the main technique employed to operationalise research based on the means-ends theory, it is argued that the theory can be used independently of its associated method (Ter Hofstede, Audenaert, Steenkamp et al., 1998) including quantitative methodologies to measure means-end chains.

Previous research has established links between values and behavioural intentions, but gaps exist in the nexus between personal values, ethical consumer behaviour (Cohen et al., 2014) and the information search strategies for consumption of sustainable tourism products such as CBT. This research seeks to fill this gap by extending the investigation of the influence of personal values, using the full spectrum of personal values in Schwartz's (1997) structure of values and employing the PVQ as a tool, on information search behaviour and the selection of types of destinations in the context of community based tourism. It will investigate the connections between the selection of Homestays as a travel destination and the personal values of tourists using a quantitative approach, underpinned by the means-end theory as the foundation, and incorporating personal values as an antecedent in the framework for information search strategies. By identifying the individualistic attributes of Homestays which are important to tourists, destination managers can identify and target specific groups of potential customers with the appropriate marketing communication highlighting the attributes attractive to them, and position their products through a value-based approach which underpin the information processing and decision making of tourists.

2.8 THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

Based on the survey of the literature on information search strategies and its antecedents, it is observed that there is a lack of in-depth investigation on the effect of personal values of tourists

on their information search strategy and destination selection as discussed above, particularly within specific tourism product categories such as community-based tourism. Hence, this research seeks to study the contribution and effect of Schwartz's (1997) structure of personal values to the strategy for information search and destination selection of tourists. This will be done within the context of tourists who choose community-based tourism, specifically Homestays, because it is hypothesised that in this context, tourists who have a unique set of personal values will choose to spend their time and financial resources to experience this unique type of tourism product not typically sought by tourists in the pursuit of leisure, reflecting their unique value priorities. It is important to understand tourists' strategy for searching for product information in the process of decision making in order to reach them with relevant information in an appropriate way.

The key elements of the framework for this study are characteristics of the vacationer comprising demographic characteristics and personal values, situational variables, characteristics of the vacation and information search strategies. These will be briefly explained in the following section, highlighting the gaps in literature identified which will be investigated in this research. The research questions will be presented, together with the relationships to be investigated in this research and the corresponding hypotheses, based on the proposed theoretical framework. A graphical representation of the proposed theoretical framework is presented in Figure 2.7 below.

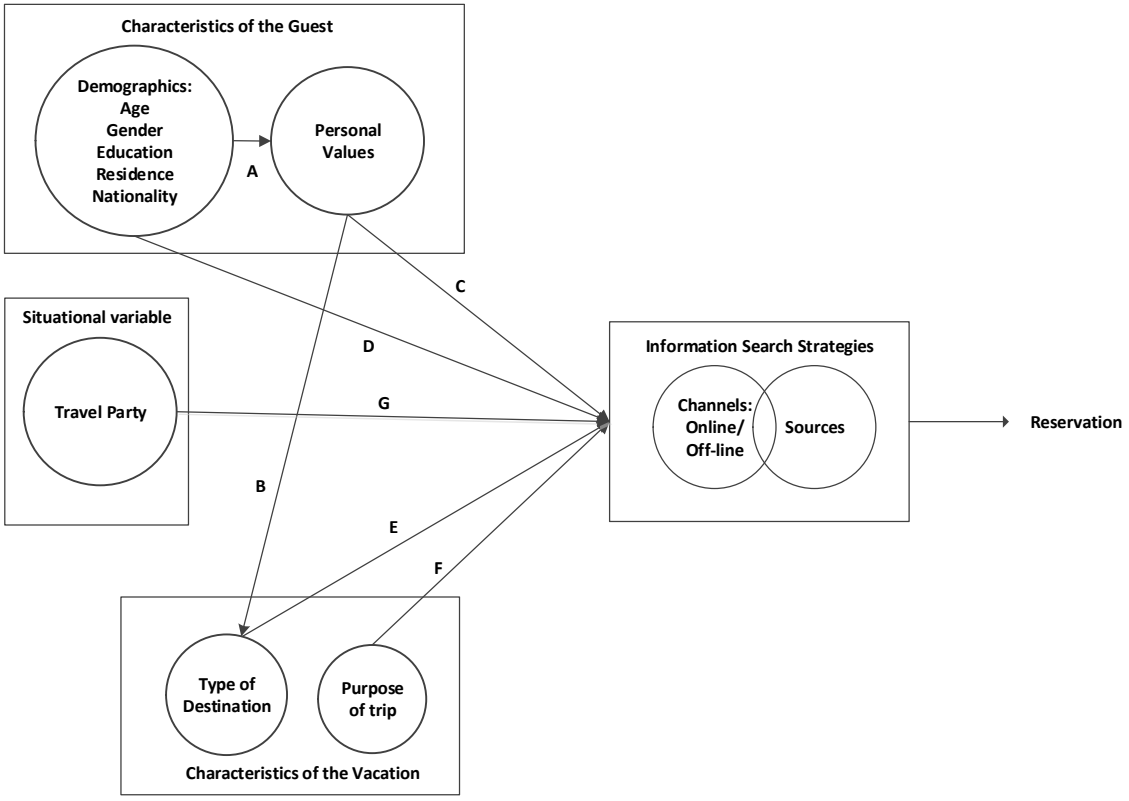


Figure 2.7 Proposed theoretical framework for the study

2.8.1 Personal values and demographics

The relationship between personal values and demographics of respondents will be investigated in this study. In view of the varied findings of the relationhip between personal values and demographic characteristics of respondents, this relationship will be investigated within the context of tourists visiting Malaysia in relation to age, gender, educational level, and nationality. Schwartz' structure of values has not been applied to respondents in the region of Southeast Asia, or Malaysia specifically, and this study seeks to contribute to knowledge in this respect.

2.8.2 Personal values and destination selection

Among studies focusing on personal values and its relationship with tourism behaviour, very few have focused on specific categories of tourism destinations, although some, such as Pitts and Woodside (1986) have studied the nexus between personal values and destination

attractions, and Hede et al. (2005) and Woosnam et al. (2009) who studied it in connection with attendance at events and festivals.

This study will investigate the personal value profile of visitors and identify unique personal value priorities among visitors who select Homestays (as a type of community-based tourism destination), in order to highlight the unique personal value characteristics of this group of tourists.

2.8.3 Personal values and information search strategies

Despite the proliferation of research on information search strategies, very few researchers have looked at the link between values and information search strategies. Work done by Fall (2000) attempted to investigate the link between personal values and information sources, investigating the influence of values on sources of information for planning trips and the personal values which significantly influence destination choice and other elements of the trip.

Fall's (2000) research did not specifically investigate specific types of tourism product although there was some attempt to link personal values with destination choice, but the research did not find any significant relationship between personal values, information sources and travel variables except a negative relationship between organisational information sources and destination choice.

2.8.4 Information search strategies

While extensive research has been conducted on information search strategies in a variety of different contexts, studying different stages of the trip planning process, almost all of them have not specifically distinguished between the sources of information and the channels through which information is communicated. This weakness, highlighted in Grønflaten's (2009b) work, is addressed in this study, where sources and channels of information are clearly distingushed.

Another aspect of information search of interest is the growing significance of new media and its nexus with income, as those with higher income place more reliance on computer-based information sources, and are more knowledgeable in obtaining information from computer databases. However, the results indicate that as people age, new media becomes less useful as an information source. This study will include various types of new media in its investigation to elucidate its significance in information search in the context of Homestay destinations, and its co-relation with other demographic characteristics.

In view of the gaps in the literature summarised above, this study seeks to investigate the contribution and effect of Schwartz's structure of personal values to the strategy for information search and destination selection of tourists, and the relative importance of online information search behaviour within the context of tourists who choose community-based tourism. The focus of this study is on information search for pre-purchase decision making during pre-trip planning stage, which is the first stage of Hyde's (2008) three phase model, called "information search" phase, in the context of the Malaysian Homestay Programme.

2.9 SUMMARY

This chapter presented a review of the literature on tourism information and the development of information search strategies for tourism. The theoretical foundations of information search strategies were analysed, highlighting a gap in relation to personal values which have not received much attention despite extensive research carried out over the last thirty years. Thereafter, the concept of personal values is discussed, and the theoretical foundations linking personal values to decision making, particularly to destination selection, is explained. This chapter ends by presenting the proposed theoretical framework for this study. The next chapter will describe the context of this study, covering the nature and concept of CBT, and the Malaysian Homestay Programme as an expression of CBT. It will then conclude by presenting the research hypotheses to be tested in this study.

CHAPTER 3 COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM: OVERVIEW OF PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The context of this study is community-based tourism, specifically the Malaysian Homestay Programme. In this chapter, the concept of community-based tourism, its development and unique position in the field of tourism will be highlighted. Thereafter, the preliminary exploratory study conducted will be explained, providing background information on the Malaysian Homestay Programme, a unique expression of community-based tourism. This provides pertinent information on the background of the development of Homestays, its management structure, tourists and their information search, as well as issues and challenges of the Homestays. The chapter concludes by explaining the research hypotheses developed based on the research questions.

3.2 DEFINING COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM

The 1970s saw the emergence of what is known as community-based tourism (CBT) as a response to the adverse environmental, socio-cultural and economic impacts of international mass tourism (Cater, 1993). In the early years, most of the CBT initiatives were based in small rural communities with ecology and nature as its main attractions. This has since been expanded to include cultural, gastronomy, traditional craft with diverse management models across different parts of the world. (Zapata et al., 2011). Instead of being the centre of attention, tourists in CBT is viewed as a part of the sustainable tourism system, a bourgeoning inter-disciplinary field of study in tourism, having a symbiotic relationship with other stakeholders (Salazar, 2012). CBT brings three main benefits through: (1) rural development and poverty eradication via employment and infrastructure development; (2) sustainable use of resources

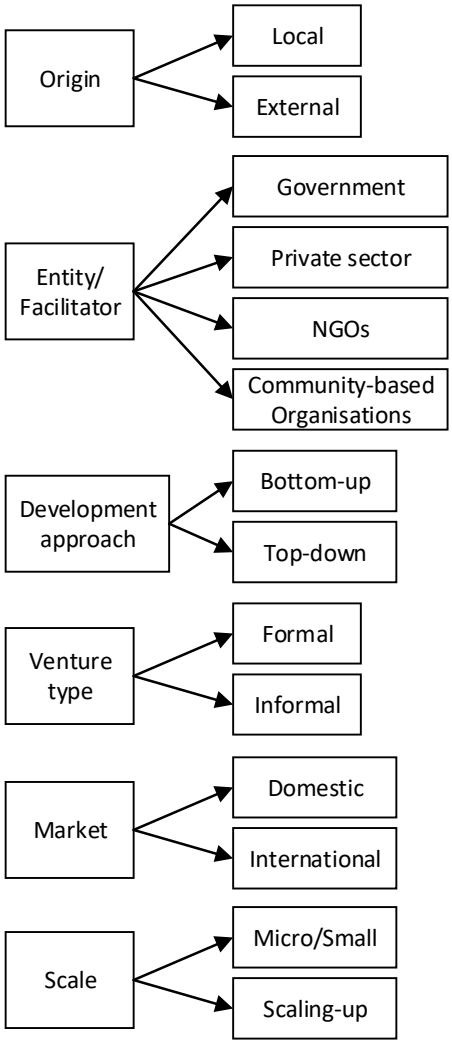
for tourism, and regeneration and preservation of cultural heritage; and (3) diversification of tourism products (Salazar, 2012).

There are significant divergent studies on the concept, implementation and evaluation of CBT in the literature. There are different understandings of CBT and diverse opinions on what constitutes a successful CBT based on the perspectives and expectations of the evaluator, having been linked to related concepts such as pro-poor tourism, community-based enterprises, alternative tourism (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2016), social enterprises (Aquino, 2022), sustainable tourism (Pasanchay and Schott, 2021), eco-tourism (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005) and cultural tourism (Salazar, 2012), such that there is no common definition or exact nature of CBT. In fact, since its early introduction about 50 years ago, there has been no common definition of CBT nor agreement of what it encompasses. As a result, there are diverse models of CBT developed over time, moving from a radical socially oriented approach of mobilising the marginalised to achieve social justice to a softer environmentally oriented view of CBT towards preserving environmental and cultural heritage of communities.

To incorporate this range of expressions, Goodwin and Santilli (2009)'s definition is suitable, where CBT is "tourism enterprise that are environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable, using local resources through community ownership and control to achieve community-determined outcomes". Similarly, CBT is described by the World Bank as "community driven development that aim at giving a voice to the stakeholders, involve them in identifying their own needs and the ensuing decision making, encourage them to take responsibility, and mobilize the majority of actors in a given community through a participatory process". Quoting a definition from the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Zapata et al. (2011) defines CBT as "any business organisational form grounded on the property and self-management of the community's patrimonial assets, according to democratic and solidary practices; and on the distribution of the benefits generated by the supply of tourist services, with the aim at

supporting intercultural quality meetings with the visitors". In the context of Southeast Asia, a common definition adopted by ASEAN countries is that CBT is "tourism activity, community owned and operated, and managed or coordinated at the community level that contributes to the well-being of communities through supporting sustainable livelihoods and protecting valued socio-cultural traditions and natural and cultural heritage resources" (The ASEAN Secretariat, 2016).

While it is acknowledged that there is difficulty in presenting a universally acceptable definition of CBT, Mtapuri and Giampiccoli (2016) proposed a useful model of various typologies of CBT ventures based on the CBT's origin, facilitation, development approach, formality, market and scale of the venture. The six dimensions of the trajectories of CBT is presented in Figure 3.1 below.



(Source: Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2016)

Figure 3.1 Six dimensions of CBT trajectories

Dodds, Ali and Galaski (2018) also presented six key elements for CBT success which provides a useful framework for understanding the elements of CBT. They are:

i. Participatory planning and capacity building
ii. Collaboration and partnerships facilitating links to market
iii. Local management/empowerment of community members
iv. Establishment of environmental/community goals
v. Assistance from enablers
vi. Focus on generating supplemental income for long-term community sustainability.

A detailed analysis covering the range of expressions captured by the definitions and typologies envisioned in literature will be provided in the following sections together with relevant expressions of these typologies in the Malaysian Homestay programme.

3.2.1 Origin, development and management

CBT may either be initiated by the community independently or externally supported by partners such as NGOs, government or the private sector, based on the socio-economic imperatives and objectives of involvement. In terms of ownership, CBT can either be individually or collectively owned (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2016), or a combination of both.

In CBT destinations, usually groups of tourists are kept small to minimise the cultural and environmental impacts, apart from an emphasis of respect for local culture and social structures of the host communities. Activities within CBT should not require members of the community to perform any ceremonies they are not comfortable with, but allows the community not to participate in the industry if they so choose. Communities can participate in CBT in different ways with different levels of engagement (Mayaka et al., 2018). CBT being an alternative approach to reverse the excesses and pressures on the environment of the host community (including large scale repatriation of profits from developing nations by multinational firms), is a form of alternative economic activity which engages grassroots participation and empowerment. The main attraction of most CBT products is for tourists to experience the traditional way of life of small communities, where the operations are usually controlled and managed by the community itself. Mayaka et al. (2019) in reviewing literature on CBT state that, although there may be other elements used to analyse the concept of CBT, the common characteristics of CBT identified are: (1) participation - the degree of resident community in the tourism enterprise and development; (2) power and control – the level of power and control of the community over the development and management of the CBT and (3) outcomes – the outcomes achieved and the resulting benefits enjoyed by the community.

While general tourism literature acknowledges that community support will benefit tourism activities, CBT considers the role of the local community and its relationship to tourism central to the success of the business. CBT differs from traditional tourism in that there is a stronger relationship between tourists and the community, and a greater engagement of tourists with cultural, social and economic activities of host communities (Nyaupane, Morais and Dowler, 2006). It is often managed through the business structure of co-operatives, with community ownership at its core. The key objectives of CBT as envisioned by the UNWTO are (1) community empowerment and ownership, (2) social and economic development (3) conservation of natural and cultural resources and (4) high quality visitor experience. CBT aims to include and benefit the communities based at these destinations where they host tourists in their homes, manage activities of interest to the tourists and obtain most of the profits from these ventures (Richards and Hall, 2000). CBT enables local communities to control the development of the industry, allows consensus based decision making and equitable flow of the benefits to all affected parties (Pearce, 1992). CBT is able to overcome structural barriers to participation and allow the community to respond to local developments through direct involvement and decision making.

According to Okazaki (2008) participation in CBT consists of four elements: 'ladder of citizen participation', power redistribution, collaboration processes and social capital creation. Participation of the community is advocated because of several reasons. Firstly, the community's issues have a direct impact on the tourist experience. Therefore, the environment for tourists should be in harmony with the social climate of the destination, where the community benefits from tourism and are not disadvantaged because of it. In many instances the image of the destination is derived from the assets of the community, including the environment, infrastructure, cultural calendar and festivals. Without the participation of the local community, the image will be incomplete. Furthermore, community participation protects

the natural environment and culture as tourism products. To be sustainable, tourism should be a part of the overall social development agenda of the community (Okazaki, 2008). Participation within the context of CBT is demonstrated through participatory decision-making, with the power to control and determine outcomes of the venture (Tosun, 2000).

In terms of organisational setup, CBT often exists as an informal organisation within an informal economy, such as in the Philippines (Calanog, Reyes and Eugenio, 2012), Nicaragua (Zapata et al., 2011), Thailand (Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen and Duangsaeng, 2013) and many other parts of the world where CBT welcomes visitors. It should be noted that the informality of the industry does not hinder its contribution to the economy, whether local or national.

The developmental approach of CBT could be either bottom-up or top-down, with either domestic or international markets or a combination of both, either via micro/small scale ventures or scaled up (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2016). In many development initiatives funded by agencies, the level of community engagement and participation is usually a requirement specified by project funders (Ruhanen, Saito and Axelsen, 2021). In these cases, communities are often viewed as less powerful citizens being included in decision making, in the shadow of external development agencies or NGOs, evaluated using Western participation frameworks focusing on outcome-based business models (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Further, the strategies designed by experts and consultants (advising on behalf of the funders) may be rigid, and may not reflect the desires of the community or visitors to these destinations (Ruhanen et al., 2021). Researchers are critical of these top-down strategies which result in resentment of communities, a lack of continuity and empowerment, and continued dependency on external parties without effective exit strategies, resulting in the eventual failure of these projects and damage to the social fabric and economic life of the communities (Sakata and Prideaux, 2013; Dolezal, 2015; Salazar, 2012).

Instead, a bottom-up approach of meaningful participation through embedded socio-cultural background that facilitates building relationships of trust is advocated (Mayaka et al., 2018). This approach generates a sense of community which enhances contribution to CBT by different segments of the community, thus increasing the sustainability of the venture over time. Where funders are involved in the enterprise, a joint venture effort where the community and funders co-create user-driven knowledge and management experience of the destination, taking into account cultural and local context, local knowledge and ownership have met with more success in maintaining sustainable ventures (Ruhanen et al., 2021).

3.2.2 Outcomes and impact of CBT

CBT has been used as a development strategy with varying degrees of success in different underdeveloped communities around the world (Messerli, 2011; Aquino, Luck and Schanzel, 2018; Asker, Boronyak, Carrard et al., 2010). The success of these ventures also involves various levels of trade-off in the form of structural independence, social cohesion and ecological sustainability in some cases (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005). Outcomes of CBT for the community may be in the form of social, economical, cultural or conservational benefits (Dodds et al., 2018; Goodwin and Santilli, 2009). Reseachers have measured various outcomes such as inclusion of stakeholders (in CBT activities), recognition of individual and mutual benefits, appointment of legitimate convenor, formulation of aims and objectives and implementation of collective decisions (Kibicho, 2008). Others have considered, social capital and empowerment, economic development, conversation, livelihood and collective benefits as some of the key measurements of success factors (Goodwin and Santilli, 2009).

Although some have highlighted its shortcomings in terms of local participation and capacity (Dolezal, 2015), it is still a meaningful strategy for poverty reduction among marginalised and rural communities (Moghavvemi et al., 2017) and enhancing their economic, social and environmental welfare (Sakata and Prideaux, 2013). In some instances, it is seen as a form of

community centric social innovation and social transformation as a solution for the issues faced by the community (Moayerian, McGehee and Stephenson, 2022), such as economic marginalisation, depopulation, deterioration of culture or social problems (Jørgensen, Hansen, Sørensen, et al., 2021). If implemented successfully, CBT can contribute to each of the pillars of sustainability, meeting economic, environmental and social objectives of sustainability (Asker et al., 2010). In many developing countries, CBT has developed alongside traditional economic activities of the communites, many of which are seasonal in nature, and providing a complementary source of income, as a rural diversification strategy (Novelli, Klatte and Dolezal, 2017). It is common for rural communities to pursue a combination of different livelihood approaches (Tao and Wall, 2009) and tourism is a diversification strategy, mostly as micro-enterprises and supplementary activities (Duncombe and Heeks, 2005) in these communities.

3.3 PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS: EXPLORATORY STUDY OF HOMESTAYS

This section details the findings of an exploratory study of Homestays in Malaysia – its historical development, evolution, management, and tourist information search and motivation for selecting Homestays as a travel destination. It reports the establishment of field relationships, the interview protocol, data analysis and key findings from the exploratory study. Preliminary interviews were conducted as an initial part of this research, to understand the industry, its key impetus, stakeholders and current information search scenario. They were conducted as a precursor to quantitative studies to provide important background information for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and to inform the conceptual and instrument development for the study (Venkatesh, Brown and Bala, 2013). When analysing data, qualitative data can be used to shed light on quantitative findings and vice-versa (Johnson and Turner, 2003).

3.3.1 Establishment of field relationships and interview protocol

The process of access (Maginn, 2007) to the field was developed over a period of several months. Access was first obtained in 2016 through contact established with one of the pioneering managers of Homestays in Malaysia (gatekeeper) (Yin, 2016), who then facilitated access to other managers in other sites in the country, including committee members of the Malaysian Homestay and Kampungstay Association (MHKA). Field relationships were established with them over time, through multiple interactions and meetings, site visits, informal discussions and collaboration resulting in a continuous working relationship over four years, establishing trust over time (Flick, 2014; Griffin, 2018). During these visits, informal conversations and discussions were also held with visitors who were present at the Homestays at these times, to discover the reasons they were visiting the Homestays and their overall experience. Two main types of data obtained were through interviews (accounts of facts and behaviours) and collection of printed materials, observations and photographs.

The interview respondents and general description of the Homestays are as provided in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Participants of interview

Respondent Code	Respondent Role	Description of Homestay	Interview duration (min)
P1	Manager of Homestay A	Village with rubber and oil palm plantations, streams and goat and bee farms	40
P2	Manager of Homestay B	Three villages operating as one Homestay, with co-operative management structure, rubber and oil palm plantations and cottage industries	60
P3	Manager of Homestay C	Village with oil palm and rubber plantations, oil palm distribution station	60
P4	Manager of Homestay D	Village by the river near the sea, with cultural musical ochestra, fishing and plantations	25
P5	IT executive of Homestay D	Village by the river near the sea, with cultural musical ochestra, fishing and plantations	40
P6	Manager of Homestay E	Village by the sea, with paddy farming and cottage industries	45
P7	Accommodation owner in Homestay E	Village by the sea, with paddy farming and cottage industries	20

Two visits were made to Homestays A, B and D, and four visits each to Homestays C and E. The author joined a group of 20 visitors for a visit to Homestay C and as an observer in 2018, and field notes were recorded of activities that visitors engaged in during their visit. This allowed opportunities for insights into the operations and product offerings of Homestays, in addition to observations of various activities carried out by villagers and visitors, enabling data collection through direct observations during the course of these field visits (Patton, 2002). These multiple interactions provided a nuanced view of different aspects of Homestays and its development, challenges and potential. Observation notes and photo documentation were taken during these field visits.

A total of seven preliminary semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with Homestay managers and staff. The Homestays were selected based on (1) reputation, (2)

diversity of location and environment (seaside, plantations, paddy farms), and (3) conceptual relevance to the study (businesses that have been in existence from between 9 to 24 years) for purposes of maximum variation (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The Homestays selected were those that had a substantial visitor base, from different locations in the country to avoid bias that could be derived from geographic concentration (Kim, Qu and Kim, 2010). Purposive sampling with snowballing (where Homestay managers were asked to recommend other Homestays that they are aware of, with different characteristics) was done until a reasonable level of saturation was achieved, where little new information was forthcoming with additional respondents, and it has reached a point of redundancy (Yin, 2016).

The respondents who were members of staff were selected purposefully because of their extensive knowledge of the development of the industry and availability for extended interviews, which would yield the most relevant and broad range of information and perspectives on the topic under investigation. Most of the interview respondents were either part of the pioneering group in the community or the second generation of managers trained by the pioneers, enabling them to provide detailed information regarding different aspects of the Homestays. Data relating to the establishment, management and customer profile were gathered, and provided valuable input for the development of the survey questionnaire and pertinent background information for this study. The environment of the destinations were different, with different socio-economic activities and product offerings, such as those involving plantations, beaches and paddy farming. All the cases chosen were Homestays that had obtained certification by the Tourism Board (and operate under their oversight), with full compliance of the Malaysian Homestay standards (MOCAT, 2005) for operation as determined by the Tourism Board. They are all community-owned (through a co-operative business structure) and managed by the villagers through a management committee.

Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview protocol, each lasting between 20 minutes to 60 minutes. Questions for the interview comprised of open-ended questions based on the aims of the study, and directed questions about the main categories and themes as informed by the theoretical framework and research questions (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The topics covered include the history of the development and establishment of the Homestay, and the processes involved in getting the endorsement and license to operate from the Tourism Ministry. This information is crucial in developing an accurate representation of the distinctive features of the Homestay Programme in comparison to those in other countries, and tourism products. This was followed by questions regarding the profile of visitors to these destinations, marketing strategy and online presence, the methods of communicating with potential customers, and the typical reservation process. The semi-structured conversational mode enabled the views and experience of the respondents to be captured with detailed descriptions of the various topics of interest in this research, as well as verification of information as the narrative develops in the conversations (Longhurst, 2016).

Permission to record the interviews were obtained prior to the interview session. The recordings of the interviews conducted in Bahasa Malaysia (Malay Language) were then transcribed, and translated into the English language from the original text. To ensure the accuracy of this process, the transcripts were reviewed and the translation checked. Where there are ambiguities, the original recording is referred to and corrections are made after verifying the accuracy of the data transcribed and translated.

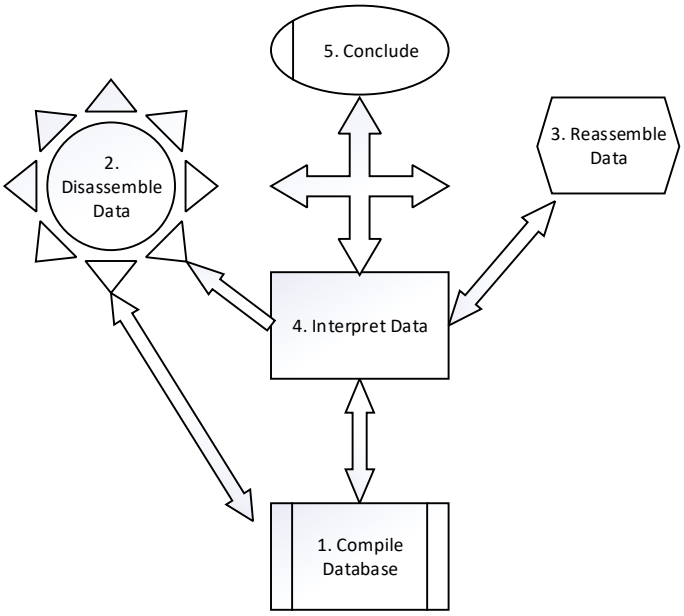
The interviews were complemented by other information such as promotional brochures for the destinations, organisational charts showing the management committees of Homestays, and field notes of the researcher during site visits to the destinations. Questions relating to personal values did not form part of the interview guide as data could be collected only from visitors using Schwartz's (2001) Portrait Value Questionnaire, and not via interviews.

3.3.2 Reliability and validity

The concept of validity of a study and its findings has to do with whether data has been properly collected and interpreted, so that the conclusions accurately reflect the real situation or phenomenon. Strengthening the validity of a qualitative study involves validating the many claims presented by the respondents. In this context, validity is less of a bivariate concept; but rather involves examining the strength of the claims put forth by respondents. Threats to validity in qualitative research are addressed by the researcher engaging with the respondents in multiple occasions throughout a period of 4 years, from 2016 to 2019, from a total of 14 visits to Homestays, involving meetings, conversations and observations on site to build trust, and to ensure an in-depth understanding of the field situation, which allowed the researcher to obtain rich data from extended interviews and detailed data via informal conversations, observation and documentary evidence collected throughout this period (Yin, 2011). Follow-up visits also allowed the researcher to check the accuracy of data collected earlier. Similar questions were presented to different respondents to allow for opportunities of informant triangulation (Decrop, 1999), for example asking similar questions to different respondents in the same location, and in different Homestays. Data triangulation was further strengthened through comparison of interview data with documentary data, and other independent sources such as brochures and government agency reports and official guidelines and handbooks. Field notes were made and photographs taken during these visits, documenting the setting of the Homestays and obversations of physical artefacts. Triangulation can strengthen qualitative findings and enhance the credibility of qualitative enquiry, reducing methodological and personal biases by showing that different and independent sources converge or do not contradict each other (Decrop, 1999).

3.3.3 Qualitative data analysis

Yin (2016) proposes five stages for analysing qualitative data, which are (1) compiling, (2) disassembling, (3) reassembling, (4) interpreting and (5) concluding. The stages are non-linear and a researcher can move from one stage to another, and go back to an earlier stage when required, as indicated by the two-way arrows in Figure 3.2 below. In this research, this process occurred both at the preliminary stage (as preparation for the development of the survey instrument) as each additional interview was conducted, and later at the discussion stage (where qualitative data is used to explain and elaborate on the findings from the survey).



Source: Adapted from Yin (2016)

Figure 3.2 Five phases of analysis and their interactions

In analysing data from these interviews and the field notes, directed content analysis, one of three forms of qualitative content analysis approaches, was employed because it is intended to inform some sections of the questionnaire design dealing with certain specific research questions, where specific categories or themes have already been identified. Qualitative content analysis is defined as a research method employing the subjective interpretation of the content of text data using a systematic categorisation process of coding and the identification of themes

(Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). It is the application of language and contextual clues to attribute meanings in the communication process. While in conventional (inductive) content analysis, coding categories originate from the text itself, directed content analysis uses theoretical frameworks and other findings (with its categories and themes already identified) as a starting point for analysis (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005), where codes are determined with reference to the theoretical framework or other research findings. When coding, themes should feature internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Morse, Barrett, Mayan et al., 2002).

Using Nvivo 12 software, directed content analysis, guided by Assarroudi, Nabavi, Armat et al.'s (2018) stepwise method, was conducted on the data with reference to the different topics and sections of the questionnaire which was based on the theoretical model, with the following themes: (1) background and structure of business, (2) customer profile, (3) information search, (4) marketing activities and (5) purpose of trip. To achieve construct validity, coding schemes should reflect theoretical elements; while representation validity is achieved by having coding schemes that 'capture the socially defined reality of the social situation' (Potter and Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). The coding method used in this study, based on the theoretical model and reflecting the socially defined concepts under study within the context of Homestays and its various elements, operations and members, allows construct validity and representation validity to be achieved.

The coding schemes for each category are as follows:

Table 3.2 Coding schemes for exploratory interviews

Item	Theme	Codes
A	Background and structure of business	1. History 2. Management 3. Size 4. Characteristics of Homestay /Reason for visiting
B	Customer demographics	1. Age 2. Education 3. Group Size 4. Nationality 5. Residence
C	Information search	1. Channel 2. Source 3. Challenges
D	Marketing activities	
E	Purpose of trip	1. Business 2. Leisure

These coded data were then used to inform the questionnaire design process (preliminary stage); and to explain, elaborate, corroborate and complement the findings of the quantitative data (discussion stage). The following section will explain the findings detailing background information, current Homestay management and information search which provided input into the questionnaire design process. The second part, where qualitative data is used to explain, corroborate or offer further insights when compared with the findings of the quantitative data, will be discussed in Chapter 6.

3.4 BACKGROUND AND ESTABLISHMENT OF HOMESTAYS

Established in 1995, The Malaysian Homestay Programme was awarded the UNWTO Ulysses Award for Public Policy and Governance in 2012, in recognition of innovation and application of knowledge to tourism (MOTAC, 2012). Government oversight and policy guidance is common in rural tourism development, for example in the UK (Planning Policy Guidance Note 21, Tourism), Spain (Plan FUTURES) and Poland (National Strategy for Rural Tourism Development), moving tourism from congested cities and beaches to isolated and rural areas

in many of these countries (Augustyn, 1998). The Malaysian Homestay Programme is one where "tourists stay with Homestay hosts registered with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, experiencing daily life of Malaysian communities and engaging in experiential community-based tourism activities" (MOCAT, 2005). Tourists live with a local family in a village and learn about the life in the community through friendships, food and lifestyle activities. Over 4000 operators from more than 200 villages throughout the country were trained and licenced by the Tourism Ministry. Statistics from the Tourism Ministry indicate that in 2017, Homestays welcomed 382,961 visitors (Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, 2018).

The Homestay Programme in many of the villages were developed by the communities and driven by various different impetus. Managers of Homestays indicated that they initiated the establishment of Homestays by consulting with villagers who were keen on the venture. Some villagers were motivated to venture into Homestays as a strategy to preserve the traditional way of life, enhance employment opportunities for villagers and diversify sources of income for villagers. Others developed following success in village renewal projects which attracted visitors, resulting in initiatives by villagers who provided accommodation and hosting visitors overnight in their homes. P3 initiated the Homestay programme pioneered by him and several other villagers as a replacement for animal farming which was discontinued following an outbreak of disease, and to create a new source of revenue for the villagers; a clear example of social innovation and social transformation providing a solution to challenges faced by the community (Jørgensen et al., 2021).

In order to obtain a licence from the Tourism Board to operate as a Homestay, various requirements need to be fulfilled, including accessibility by road, facilities for visitors, security and a high standard of hygiene. Full guidelines for the establishment, operation standards and management of Homestays are detailed in the Guidelines for the Malaysian Homestay

Experience (MOCAT, 2005). Operators must not have any criminal records or communicable diseases (Mohamad and Hamzah, 2013). CBT are generally small scale (Asker et al., 2010), and so are the Homestays in Malaysia. As part of the licensing requirements, each Homestay enterprise would have a minimum of ten households participating, but rarely goes above 30 in total. P6 stated that training in various aspects of hospitality are given to new Homestay operators with

> "a four-day course … they are sent to the Homestays at the West Coast (of Peninsular Malaysia). Thereafter, they come back and prepare everything that is needed for the licensing. Two weeks after that, the officer from the Ministry (of Tourism, Arts and Culture) will came with other officers (for inspection). After they are done, 31 houses got the approval".

In the initial years, government support was provided in the form of publicity on Tourism Malaysia promotional channels, and micro-grants for upgrading of basic hygiene facilities and training. Once the venture is a going concern, Homestays are managed wholly by the village Homestay committee, most of whom are volunteers with a minority of them paid a modest salary. Revenue from these tourism ventures is then distributed among villagers who were involved in providing various services to groups of visitors to each Homestay.

3.5 OWNERSHIP, PARTNERSHIPS AND OUTCOMES

Within a Homestay, resources can be owned individually, such as accommodation (houses and or chalets owned by villagers) as well as vehicles, open spaces and meeting halls which are owned collectively by all members of the Homestay entreprise. The level of community engagement and ownership depends on the power to make decisions on the resources for tourism development – the labour, capital, culture and natural resources and the profits derived from tourism enterprises (Salazar, 2012). In Malaysia, it is observed that Homestays are often

structured around a joint venture between the community (or some of its members) with business partners, which was observed to be the most successful option in the field (Asker et al., 2010). Partnerships with businesses in the vicinity are often initiated by the Homestay to supplement services and products offered to visitors. All the managers indicated that their Homestay enterprises have arrangements with various cottage industries in or near the villages where visitors can opt to visit these facilities to learn about traditional snacks, and purchase products from these small factories when visiting the Homestays.

The prevailing mode of operation is informal, with family members managing the business and a community business model whereby co-operation between families involved in the venture is based on mutual agreement, negotiation and tolerance, rather than formal written agreements and organisational structure. P7 stated that all five of his children and seven grand-children chip in to help host the visitors – helping to clean, cook, serve, and interact with guests. “The whole family is involved. If they are around, they help to prepare and get things ready”, he said.

While many CBT projects are heavily supported and funded by NGOs and development agencies, the CBT model of Malaysia’s Homestay programme has developed from grass-root initiatives, along with governmental support and endorsement through capacity building and publicity. This prevented it from being a top-down initiative, with community engagement and ownership being key elements of these ventures, bringing much needed development of rural informal economies. Local leadership, a key indicator associated with a bottom-up approach (Sakata and Prideaux, 2013) in these Homestay locations have been a key factor driving the success through the years. Each of the Homestays is led by a key community leader or pioneer, who are then supported by other members of the community.

Other members of the community who are not directly involved in the Homestay may play a peripheral role as partners of the enterprise by allowing tourist access to their farm, plantation or factory as part of the activities of the Homestay visit, based on prior arrangement with the Homestay management. These partnerships may sometimes be formalised; for example P7 stated that they signed MOUs with several food factories in the vicinity to enable Homestay guests to visit these traditional cottage industries during their stay.

In terms of outcomes, Homestays bring enhancement to various dimensions of the assets of the communities: human, natural, social, physical and financial assets (Shen, Hughey and Simmons, 2008). As it is often a diversification strategy (Novelli et al., 2017), Homestay operators who are paddy farmers, plantation owners or small enterprise owners would engage their family in the Homestay business during the months between sowing and harvest, increasing their income with this venture. Most of the entrepreneurs have multiple sources of income. According to P3, who was engaged with the Homestay enterprise on a full time basis,

> "I get three sources of income. One from commission (for bringing in tourists to the Homestay), one from taking care of guests that rent my room and one from managing the Homestay enterprise. The other small amount comes from allowing visitors to visit my small oil palm estate, but that is not a lot. Of course, I also earn from the harvest of the palm oil".

The impact of the improvement in the livelihood of the villagers is clearly seen in what P7 shared:

> "Before (having) Homestay, from the paddy field we get about x amount per year. There is some additional income from other occasional work outside the paddy field (before harvest), another x amount. Now, with the paddy field, and Homestay, I don't do other work outside. (In) a year, estimate from Homestay we get 4 times x amount.

> That is why I expand the land to make more space for Homestay (new hall being built adjacent to the house). This is all from my own capital, from income derived from the business. No aid or loans from banks".

Apart from profits from the venture, communities who operate Homestays find the unintended benefits of rejuvenation of cultural heritage as cultural expressions in music, art and crafts become objects of tourist attraction, strengthening the cultural assets of the community (Duncombe, 2007). Through their involvement in Homestays, members of the community developed new skills in hospitality management, communication and digital literacy, enhancing the human capital in these rural communities. P3 said that during the early stages, "the villagers didn't even know what is WhatsApp. In fact, N, …. was still a young girl three years ago, she had not started using smart phone yet. Now they do!". P2 stated that having Homestay enterprise in the village allowed villagers the opportunity for -

> "exposure to the outside world,… to interact with many of the visitors (who) come from developed countries, …the villagers' minds open up … because (they are) being exposed to the outside world and to cultures that are different from their own".

In some Homestays, the need to provide an attractive and safe environment for tourism has resulted in communities becoming more focused on beautifying their village, improving infrastructure and eliminating social problems such as substance abuse, petty crimes and environmental polution, and concerted efforts to enhance the physical and natural assets of their villages. P3 said, "thus, when it turns into a tourist area, the society will automatically take care of (the environment in) this area".

3.6 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

The Homestay Programme is managed at a communal level with the locus of control being a village committee set up specifically to organise and manage the business of the Homestay. It

is usually led by a senior member of the community, either the head of the village or his designated representative. Different members of the community lead different divisions of the Homestay operations such as logistics, culture and performance, communication and marketing, catering, grounds and administration. P2 provided a description of the management structure of Homestay B, which had been in operation for more than 20 years as follows:

> "We don't only have the Committee for the Homestay, we have a co-operative (to manage the Homestay). We have our Manager who receives a salary. He has a clerk… we established this co-operative body and it is 'supervised' by the Government. So it has internal audit and external audit. We want it to work the right the way….we want to be totally transparent".

Generally, Homestays provide accommodation for guests in the homes of host families. Many host families join the Homestay programme when there are vacant rooms in their home, often due to migration of children to urban areas. Guests eat with host families and engage in social, economic and leisure activities of the community to experience life in the village within the Malay cultural setting. Tourists learn about local culture, language and traditional customs and artefacts of each village.

Since 2012, in some locations and where resources permit, villagers have built small clusters of accommodation for tourists adjacent to their own homes in order to increase the number of guests they can host at any particular time, and this became known as 'Kampungstay', translated as "village-stay". This operates alongside Homestays and allows villagers to increase the scale of their operations and increase their revenue, while allowing visitors to have their own private space but still interact with villagers and engage in activities hosted by them. As explained by P6,

> "the building of chalets is a result of the development of tourism here. These are not the core Homestay group (of accommodation). They do it because there are many visitors and so they started to take advantage of the opportunity to make additional accommodation". Homestay means that the guests live with the villagers. Chalets are 'back-up' for those who are not interested to stay with hosts".

Information from these interviews was helpful in the overall design and specific description of a Homestay in the survey instrument, to distinguish the Homestay programme from bed and breakfasts and other home-based accommodations. It also provided inputs to questions relating to destination characteristics in the survey.

3.7 INFORMATION SEARCH AND RESERVATION

Due to its bottom-up approach as evidenced in the study by Salleh, Othman, Nordin et al. (2014) and from interviews with Homestay operators in this study, similar to CBT in other countries (Zapata et al., 2011; Salazar, 2012) the market for Homestays is mostly domestic, with a varying mix of small international market. Statistics from the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (2018) indicate that in 2017, only 61,846 (16%) of the tourists to Homestays were foreign.

Based on data from the interviews, currently around 95% of the foreign visitors make reservations for a Homestay experience through travel agents, while the rest make direct reservations with the Homestay management. It is not clear how tourists who make direct reservations discovered about the Homestays, hence this study aims to provide some insight into this process. According to P5, "overseas tourists get to know (about the Homestay) via travel agents". Foreign tourists obtain information from travel agencies in their own countries who have collaborative relationships with travel agencies in Malaysia (P5). P5 said that "every year, we provide them (foreign agencies) with the schedule, and price list, and they will

promote to their customers. For Singapore, the regulation there states that if a school or organisation would like to come and visit, when they contact us, we would advise them to contact a travel agent (in Singapore). They are not allowed to come on their own through direct arrangement. They have to go through travel agents. For Japan (and other countries), they can make direct arrangements with us".

Most local tourists make reservations directly with the Homestay management, via information found on the internet, mostly in the Malay language. P7 stated that "sometimes after a program ends, friends of tourists who have came and left, who are interested would also directly e-mail us".

Most of the Homestays do not have a webpage and the minority of them that do, have it in the Malay language. Problems occur when they "cannot assign somebody to take care of the website because we do not have a budget with fixed income to pay that person to do (it) full time and take care of the website" (P3). The situation is better in Homestay D, where "coincidentally, the management consists of people who are able to utilise the technology, hence a unit was established and is currently handling it (P5). However, there is presence on Facebook pages managed by each Homestay, providing information ranging from basic contact details to active pages with detailed chronology of activities at specific Homestays. In some of the Homestays, though, similar issues of non-maintenance exist, "because of the person in-charge do not stay in this village anymore, the Facebook page is no more, there use to be (a website), but inactive now " (P1). On the current status of the online presence of Homestays, P3 stated that "when the public search about Homestays, they couldn't find us on the internet".

Current promotional strategies for Homestays include tourism exhibition (P1, P2, P3, P4), television programmes (P1, P2, P7), newspapers and magazines (P3, P7) and travel agencies (P2, P3). According to P7, "we keep in contact with MOTAC and also the Tourism Board to

see any incoming (promotional) programmes in Kuala Lumpur and Melaka especially and so we will try our best to attend and take part in the programmes". P4 stated that "we have already promoted via many media, such as social media, print media, electronic media and including word of mouth".

Information systems used in the management of Homestays include emails and chat applications for communication with agents and visitors, and among members of the community involved in the business. P3 described the use of information system as follows:

> "I'm using email to correspond with all the agents. Also, we communicate with customers through emails and mobile phone. If they want to do any bookings, they go through emails…(internally) we will communicate through WhatsApp between the committees".

Understanding how current marketing and reservation of Homestay experiences are made informed the design of questions related to information sources and reservation processes in the survey.

3.8 MOTIVATION FOR VISITING HOMESTAY

Homestay managers indicate that a significant number of Homestay visitors are students from universities, colleges and schools. From informal discussion with visitors and interviews with Homestay managers and staff, several key themes were identified as elements that draw visitors to these Homestays. Aspects of the Homestay experience which are key attractions include the traditional architecture of the buildings and the peaceful village atmosphere (P1), cultural practices in eating, festivals, celebrations, traditional music (P3), traditional crafts such as batik painting, kites (P6), economic activities such as tapping rubber, visiting goat farms, fishing," (P1), harvesting and processing rice, coffee and coconuts with traditional methods (P2, P4, P6), and learning to make traditional traditional food (P4). According to P5, "Malaysians are usually

on the hunt for food… they are here ultimately for the food and… actually we want them to be aware of our food, because it is an attraction".

For foreign tourists, the normal life of the community is a key attraction due to its novelty. P3 stated:

> "our village does not have mountain nor waterfall…only rubber trees and oil palms, local crafts such as batik and wau (giant kite) making…we don't have enough natural beauty to attract local customers, but the blessing in disguise is that foreigners (who) have never seen this (plantations, crafts) … they want to see…".

According to P5, tourists enjoy "a river cruise using traditional boats, which many European tourists are very fond of. This is because the boats are made of wood".

The following is a summary of themes, the frequency of occurance noted in the interviews and the description of each theme in the survey instrument:

Table 3.3 Motivation to visit Homestay

Theme	Frequency	Description for survey instrument
Culture	19	To have an authentic cultural experience
Rural lifestyle	13	To experience the lifestyle of rural Malaysia
Food	11	To taste local traditional food
Location	5	It is near and convenient to get to the Homestay
Interaction with locals	5	A chance to interact with local people in a natural setting
Quiet environment	4	It is a quiet place to rest and relax

3.9 CHALLENGES

Over the years, Homestays have had commendable success in enhancing the welfare of communities and strengthening their assets in various dimensions. However, as small rural enterprises, Homestays have also encountered various challenges.

One of the key challenges identified is a lack of human resources skilled in digital technologies to support the operations and marketing of Homestays. Many of the pioneers of Homestays are

now older, and struggle with communication and marketing via online channels. As stated by P5, “many of those who are handling it are people in the village and veterans who are ‘far from’ technology”. P2 expressed his perspective by saying that “we have encouraged the young to learn. The older people like me maybe cannot achieve a very high level (of digital literacy)”. As stated by P1, many who are able to contribute have left the village to work in cities, hence exacerbating the problem. On the topic of younger people in the community, P1 went on to highlight a related problem of sustainability. He said that “We need to include the youngsters and the next generation (in the enterprise)…to prepare them as apprentices from now. So that when it is their time to take over, the Homestay won’t have to be closed down… this will happen when there is no continuation. It is one of the things that we are doing, training a second layer (of manpower) to take over”.

Another challenge identified is a lack of promotional information on Homestays available to potential tourists. Homestays have traditionally been promoting their products through conventional marketing channels, such as tourism exhibition (P1, P2, P3, P4), television programmes (P1, P2, P7), newspapers and magazines (P3, P7) and travel agencies (P2, P3). P6 states that in the early stages,

> “Back then mobile phones were less common…. no internet, so, our promotion was through the print media, and radio and tv. We invited journalists from all over Malaysia to gather here and ..they then wrote about this place. Then, together with Tourism Malaysia and other agencies, we were involved in roadshows, promotion, from the south to the north, throughout Malaysia”.

However, the extent of this effort is limited due to resource constraints. P1 revealed that “we are not able to carry out marketing activities and promotions due to (limited) finance”. P6

estimates that “only about 30% of the people in Malaysia know about Homestays, but many are still not aware, actually”.

This problem is particularly severe on the online channel. Limited information on websites and social media platforms are almost exclusively in the Malay Language, preventing access to information for foreign tourists, thus causing the foreign market for this product to be under-developed. P1 explained that “the villagers not fluent in English. Probably we need to upgrade ourselves in terms of communicating in English”. This will allow them to expand their marketing to foreign tourists via online channels.

Several Homestay managers (P3, P4, P6) had tried to make use of reservation platforms such as Agoda.com and Airbnb.com, but with limited success. The main reason is because these online promotional platforms were not able to cater to the operation mechanisms of Homestays and the multi-stakeholder service delivery nature of its product. P5 explains that

> “Homestay it is not like a hotel. If there are visitors wishing to come, we have to discuss with the hosts…because this is on a voluntary basis, sometimes the hosts agree, when they are available. Sometimes they have to decline if there is a problem, or they are occupied. Because when we serve, we have to serve with gladness. If not, we are not able to serve well. We also need to co-ordinate with other service providers at other locations such as farm or plantation owners”.

These issues surrounding the operations of Homestays merit investigation to uncover the underlying causes and develop potential solutions to enhance its progress. Survey of literature on Malaysian Homestays found a paucity of research in this area in spite of the uniqueness and potential of this niche tourism product. Several authors who have studied this tourism product have considered aspects of information technology, perceived risks and purchase intention (Mohseni, Jayashree, Rezaei et al., 2018), community participation and engagement (Hasani,

Moghavvemi and Hamzah, 2016; Din, 1996; Prabhakaran, Nair and Ramachandran, 2014; Mohamad and Hamzah, 2013 and Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2017) and its impact on community development (Harris, 2009; Nair, Munikrishnan, Rajaratnam et al., 2017).

Despite the significant financial and social benefits of CBT to host communities, Forstner (2004) states that one major problem faced by CBT is the barriers to market access faced and their dependence on external intermediaries, similar to those faced by other rural producers. Findings from the interviews reveal that this is also the experience of Homestay entrepreneurs. However, there has been no study that considers this issue by investigating the information search strategies for Homestays or the effect of personal values on information search strategies and destination selection within this context, towards enhancing the potential and widening access to markets, thus enhancing the socio-economic development of communities involved in this unique tourism product, hence the impetus for this study.

3.10 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

In view of the findings of the preliminary interviews, based on the research framework and context of investigation described above, the research questions and its corresponding set of hypotheses to be tested will be explained below:

3.10.1 RQ1: What is the impact of demographic characteristics on the personal value profile of tourists to Malaysia?

Figure 2.7 depicts the conceptual model which shows the influences on information search strategies based on the literature examined in the literature review section. Personal values and demographic characteristics constitute the construct of "characteristics of the guest". To address the first research question, it is necessary to investigate whether personal value profiles of respondents are impacted by their demographic variables to provide a wholistic description of the characteristics of the guest. Therefore, the first set of hypotheses that will be examined

is the effect of demographic characteristics on the personal values of a respondent (item 'A' in the conceptual model).

Personal values are a reflection of various demographic characteristics. Historical events, aging and life stage are factors which influences changes in personal value as a person goes through different stages of life (Schwartz, 2005). Personal values have been shown to be influenced by gender (Vecchione et al., 2016), education (Schuster, Pinkowski and Fischer, 2019) and nationality and culture (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001; Schwartz, 2007; Fontaine et al., 2008). The element of location of residence has not been explored in literature but may be a relevant factor due to the location of Homestay destinations in rural and semi-rural areas. Hence, the following hypotheses seeks to examine these relationships:

H1: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on age of the respondent

H2: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on the gender of the respondent

H3: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on the educational level of the respondent

H4: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on the location of residence of the respondent

H5: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on the nationality of the respondent

3.10.2 RQ2: What is the dominant personal value profile of tourists who visit a Homestay in Malaysia?

The second research question looks at the relationship between personal values and the destination selected by respondents, item 'B' in the theoretical framework.

Value priority motivates behaviour through plans that demonstrate the expression of values prioritised (Feather, 1995). Values that are highly prioritised will cause a person to pursue decisions and actions which allows those values to be attained (Friese, 2000). Destination selection which promotes the attainment of valued goals are attractive to those who prioritise these values. Hence,

H6: There is a difference in the personal value priorities between guests who visit Homestays and those who do not visit a Homestay.

3.10.3 RQ3: What are the information search strategies employed by Homestay tourists in relation to the channels and sources consulted?

To address this research question, the relationship between type of destination and information search strategy, relationship "E" in the theoretical framework, will be studied. The types of information consulted by respondents are compared, and analysed by group (Homestay and Non-Homestay) and by channel.

Information search strategies should be distinguished in terms of sources and channels of information (Grønflaten, 2009). Interview data (P3, P7) also indicate that sources of information for Homestay visitors differ from tourism products. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed to be tested:

H7a: There is a difference in the information search sources employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists in terms of the types of sources used.

H7b: There is a difference in the information search sources employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists in terms of the *number of sources* used

H8a: There is a difference in the information search **channels** employed by CBT tourists compared to other tourists

H8b: There is a difference in the *traditional* information search **channel** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists

H8c: There is a difference in the *online* information search **channel** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists

3.10.4 RQ4: In terms of online information search strategies, how well do they meet the information needs of Homestay tourists?

By considering the information sources used by Homestay tourists, the extent of use of online information search strategies can be identified to evaluate the effectiveness of this information source for Homestay tourists. For this purpose, the results from analyses conducted for Research Question 3 are evaluated in light of data collected via interviews with Homestay managers and staff, as well as CBT tourists to determine the provision and use of such information in the context of CBT products.

3.10.5 RQ5: Whether improvements are necessary, and if so, what are the areas of improvements which will increase the effectiveness of meeting these information needs?

To address this research question, responses to the survey will be analysed to identify the most appropriate strategies to improve the effectiveness of addressing the information needs of Homestay tourists.

3.10.6 RQ6: Which are the key antecedents affecting information search strategies of tourists who select Homestay destinations?

To determine the relationship between personal values and information search strategies for Homestay visitors, the theoretical model is analysed as a whole, consolidating the dynamics of all the variables in the model, to consider the impact of the three elements (characteristics of the vacationer, situational variables and characteristics of the vacation) on information search

strategies within the model. This will provide a deeper understanding of the impact of these antecedents on information search strategies within the context of CBT products.

To achieve this, the theoretical framework of this research is analysed as a whole (items C, D, E, F and G in the theoretical framework), whereby it is hypothesised that preferences for information search strategies will be influenced by a range of factors.

Based on the discussions in Chapter 2 above, firstly, the demographic characteristics of the vacationer, including the age, gender, education, nationality, residence and personal value of the respondents may have an effect on the way a visitor search for information. Hence, information search strategies is hypothesised to be influenced by:

(a) the demographic characteristics of the vacationer:

H9: the age group of the respondent

H10: the gender of the respondent

H11: the educational level of the respondent

H12: the location of residence of the respondent

H13: the nationality of the respondent

H14: the personal values of the respondent

Secondly, information search strategies may be influenced by the travel party (Fodness and Murray, 1999). Single people and those traveling with family and children demonstrated different strategies when searching for travel information. Therefore, it is hypothesised that inforamtion search strategies is influenced by:

(b) the situational variable:

H15: the travel party

Finally, the characteristics of the vacation, such as purpose of the trip (Luo et al,. 2004) and preferred activities and accommodation type (Snepenger et al, 1990; Luo et al., 2004) have an impact on inforamtion search. Hence, information search strategies is hypothesised to be influenced by:

(c) the characteristics of the vacation:

H16: the destination type of the respondent

H17: the purpose of the trip of the respondent

3.11 SUMMARY

The findings from the preliminary in-depth interviews provided information on the historical development, scale and modes of operation as well as the human resource involved in the venture. It also provided useful insights on the current state of promotional strategies, information search and communication system between tourists, agents, and Homestay management, highlighting gaps in various aspects of information systems within the operations. This information is useful for the design and development of the research questions and hypotheses, and the survey instrument focusing on sources and channels of information for tourists. The focus of the empirical enquiry of this study will be on information strategies for Homestay visitors and their motivation for selecting Homestays as a travel destination, as well as their personal value profile and its influence on their information search strategies and destination selection.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 OVERVIEW

In this chapter, the research approach and methodology used for this study will be described, underpinned by the theoretical foundations of quantitative method of investigation to justify the research design adopted (Creswell, 1994). Firstly, the research paradigm will be explained, followed by a review of the research philosophy, epistemology and methodology adopted to explore the empirical data based on the conceptual model and hypotheses presented in Chapter 2. Next, the research design will be outlined, explaining the development and design of the survey instrument, considerations of reliability and validity, the structure of the questionnaire and the details of each section of the questionnaire with justification of the measures for various elements of the conceptual model. The next section describes the pilot study conducted and its findings, together with adjustments made to the survey instrument based on the results of the pilot study. The chapter concludes with a summary of the above with a view to addressing the research objectives of this study.

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The research paradigm of a researcher provides the foundational basis for developing a research design and inquiry. Paradigms has been defined as world views that reflect ontological, epistemological, methodological and axiological positions that affects how one views the world and our interaction with its different elements (Sandelowski, 2000). A paradigm is informed by the philosophical assumptions of social reality (ontology – what we believe about reality, whether one verifiable reality or multiple socially constructed realities), the ways of knowing (epistemology – how do we know what we know – whether knowledge originates from proven concrete data or does it include what society believes to be the truth) and ethics and value

systems (axiology – what we believe as truth) (Patton, 2002), a debate that goes back to ancient Western philosophy (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007). This paradigm then leads to specific approaches to enquiry, known as methodology, that can be employed to discover the knowledge; while methods refer to the tools, techniques and procedures for data collection and analysis (Pernecky, 2012).

Ontologically, researchers traditionally subscribe to either the positivist/objectivist perspective of reality, which can be objectively measured in a manner detached from the influence of the researcher; or the constructivist view which argues that reality is a multi-faceted dynamic evolving phenomena which is subjectively constructed and interact with the actors within a dynamic complex relationship (Goles and Hirschheim, 2000), thus requiring a critical and interpretive approach to understand their interactions. In terms of its epistemology, positivists aim to seek one unambigious truth (Davies, 2003), based on the assumption that there is one absolute truth and rational behaviour which is subject to constraints with the view of an ideal state of the world. Its stance is that of objectivity and dualism, where the researcher is separate from the research participants and an unbiased observer of the phenomenon. It believes that there is an order to events occuring in the social world which can be discovered and analsyed (Nudzor, 2009). Positivists embark on this discovery through a systematic observation of phenomema within the context of a theory or model, through hypotheses testing using descriptive and inferential statistics obtained through quantitative methods of controlled experiments or surveys. These statistics are then interpreted in light of the relevant theories and models to explain the phenomena and predict behaviour (Prayag, 2018). Using standardised and systematic investigation methods and statistical tools, its focus is to verify a priori hypotheses stated quantitatively and can be tested (Walle, 1997).

Objective reality that relies fully on empirical description and causal relationships has been criticised for disregarding the complex system of socio-behavioural phenomenon with its

variety of values, perspectives and meanings, in relation to individuals as well as groups within society. It is argued that human behaviour cannot be fully explained through a set of variables connected via quantitative relationships (Hasan, 2016). The context of experiences cannot be captured using statistical techniques and does not allow participants to explain how they interpret a particular phenomenon or experience, the personal, contextual and situational factors that impact the meanings they associate with these phenomena (Griffin, 2018). A positivist perspective may result in artificial forms of scenarios which are the creation of the researcher, rather than a representation of the behaviour of members being investigated. Hence, the importance of insights, intuition and subjective knowledge of both the participant and the researcher cannot be under-estimated (Walle, 1997).

In view of the issues related to the positivist approach, and in response to its weaknesses, the constructivist approach is an alternative adopted in social science research. Constructivists view social reality and knowledge as construed through the mind of individuals from interaction with people and their environment, rather than objective entities to be discovered (Griffin, 2018). Ontologically, constructivists sees reality as relative to the individual, and their social, historical and environmental context. Constructivists believe that multiple constructed realities exist and generalisations that are free from its context is not possible, as subjective persons are the source of reality (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Instead, the existence of multiple realities is a certainty (Pernecky, 2012). Constructionism, which is often used interchangeably with constructivism, is in fact distinguisable in that while constructivism focuses on the epistemological considerations examining the derivation of meaning in the mind of individuals, constructionism emphasises the *collective* generation and transmission of meanings shaped by culture and history (Crotty, 1998; Schwandt, 2000; Pernecky, 2012), and believe that while an objective reality may not be proved, its existence cannot be disproved. Therefore, constructionism and constructivism see reality as sociality constructed and the focus

is to understand the social constructions of reality in pursuit of truth, that which is negotiated and agreed between members of a community (Griffin, 2018; Schwandt, 2000).

Acknowledging the researcher's involvement and influence on the research, constructionists approach a subject without pre-determined hypotheses, recognising that knowledge is generated via interaction and the direction of those involved, including with the researcher. Within this framework, the origins of social meanings can be investigated, and these can in turn be challenged through the emergence of new meanings as a result of research activities. It is particularly useful to give voice to marginalised groups or people in terms of the shared construction of discourses that impact them. Knowledge is constructed proactively through lived experiences of participants, articulated from their own perspective and reflecting the meanings assigned and understood within the cultural and social context of the participants (Griffin, 2018).

At the design stage, qualitative data can inform conceptual and instrument development. Quantitative data can help provide baseline information for qualitative data collection. When analysing data, qualitative data can be used to shed light on quantitative findings and vice-versa (Johnson and Turner, 2003). Data obtained is analysed through different methods involving organisation of data, reduction of data through summarisation and categorisation and identification and linking of patterns and themes in the data (Patton, 1987).

Apart from these two paradigms, the trend towards a more pragmatic approach to research has given rise to the legitimacy of mixed-methods founded on the position of respect for the wisdom of both positivist and constructivist perspectives while aiming for a pragmatic and workable mid-point solution to address certain types of research problems, which may not be sufficiently addressed with either one of these two approaches . It dates back to the late 1980s, from the fields of sociology (Brewer and Hunter, 1989; Fielding and Fielding, 1986),

management (Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth et al., 1988), nursing (Morse, 1991), medicine (Crabtree and Miller, 1992) and education (Creswell, 1994). These early works later developed into a systematic analysis based on mixed methods as a complete research approach. In recent years, some researchers have argued that stringent alignment to a particular perspective and set of methods and an antagonistic view of the opposing perspective may not be useful, and multiplicity of methods and paradigms can be helpful to understand the purpose and ways of conducting research (Johnson et al., 2007).

Grounded in pragmatism, it is based on the premise that instead of focusing on a discovery of reality (which is in dispute between positivist and constructivist), pragmatism seeks to understand and discover reality so as to facilitate problem solving (Powell, 2001). Assuming that reality is plural and dynamic rather than static (Johnson and Stefurak, 2013), pragmatism posits that the mind interacts with the world through transactions which are processes of adjustments resulting in individuals engaging and transforming the world around them, resulting in new knowledge generated and re-construction of reality. This means that knowledge is simultaneously constructed and real (Biesta, 2010). This presumes that reality is changing and therefore requires adaptive behaviour to test and validate truth and knowledge. Experiments and verification of truth allows future actions to be decided, leading to what Dewey (1938) calls intelligent action (Hall, 2013).

Other authors (Downward and Mearman, 2007; Maxwell, 2012; Maxwell and Mittapalli, 2010) have proposed critical realism as a foundation which supports mixed methods research, merging the realist ontology (there is a real world that exists apart from our perceptions, theories and contructions) and constructivist epistemology (the way we understand this world is a construction based on our own perspectives and viewpoints) (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2017).

Instead of being value free (positivist position) or value bound (constructivist position), pragmatism believes that value plays an important role in research and interpreting results, and a researcher should accept the external reality and apply theories to produce desired outcomes that address the reseach problem (Pansiri, 2005). Combining methods, research designs and philosophical orientation, Creswell and Plano Clark (2017) say that in mixed methods, the researcher

> 'collects and analyses both qualitative and quantitative data rigorously in response to research questions and hypotheses, integrates … the data and their results, organises these procedures into specific research designs … and frames these procedures within theory and philosophy'.

Pragmatism takes the approach that research methods should be led by research questions in a way that provides the best chances of obtaining useful answers. In many instances these questions are most adequately addressed by using mixed methods solutions (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). It sees truth, meaning and values as provisional and changing over time, as new discoveries are made. In fact, Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that good social science reesearch is driven by problem rather than methods, and advocates for both quantitative and qualitative methods in answering research questions. Pragmatism takes a value oriented approach (the end result or outcome sought) to research in that it advocates a needs based or contingency approach in research design (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Mixed methods is advocated to achieve a reduction in the inherent bias of a particular data source, and to allow the convergence of truth through multi-angled investigation of a social phenomenon, which can result in convergence, inconsistency or contradiction that enable researchers to arrive at better explanations of observations made (Denzin, 1982). This indirectly helps to enhance the reliability of qualitative data gathered in the study, through

evaluation of data from different sources (Onwuegbuzie and Daniel, 2003). Mixed methods attempts to consider multiple perspectives, positions and viewpoints, with a synthesis of quantitative and qualitative standpoints (Johnson et al., 2007) at different stages of the study, for research design, data collection and data analysis.

A distinction is made between mixed methods and multi-method research, wherein mixed methods refer to research with a combination of methodologies and worldviews, involving a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods; and multi-method research (Mingers, 2003) refers to the use of more than one research methods for data collection and analysis which may (or may not) be restricted to a single paradigm (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). As mentioned by Creswell and Plano Clark (2017) multi-method research are studies that employ more than one method (either multiple qualitative or multiple quantitative methods but not both), while mixed methods research integrate both quantitative and qualitative methods. Hence multi-method research may have methods of data collection which are all qualitative, or quantitative, or a combination of both; whereas mixed methods will combine qualitative and quantitative methods in a single study (Venkatesh, Brown and Bala, 2013).

The symbiosis of both methods will enable verification of facts and examination of complex reality to be done (Davies, 2003), overcoming the inherent shortfalls of the limited conclusions that can be drawn from using any single method. Further, mixed methods also allow for different conclusions to be made, whether complementary or contradictory; referred to as the approaches of ‘bridging’ and ‘bracketing’ respectively by Venkatesh et al. (2013), based on the two strands of inquiry.

4.3 RESEARCH APPROACH IN TOURISM AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS STUDIES

Turning the focus to the field of tourism, a similar pattern of development is observed. The positivist perspective has dominated since its early years (Crawford-Welch and McCleary, 1992; Dann, Nash and Pearce, 1988), with a bias towards quantative methodologies, as tourism research draws upon concepts and theories from other fields which favour a positivistic paradigm (Walle, 1997). Similarly, research in the field of information systems has also been anchored on a positivist framework, and more specifically research on tourist information search and decision making, has been dominated by quantitative methods using questionnaire as an instrument (Hyde and Lawson, 2003). Ballantyne, Packer and Axelsen's (2009) review indicates that 59% of journal articles in the top 12 tourism journals employed a quantitative research design, with 70% using statistical analysis.

In more recent years, there has been a growing interest in the interpretive approach among leading researchers in the field. However, the opportunities to use qualitative approaches for research enquiry has not been appropriately recognised in tourism research (Wilson and Hollinshead, 2015). This approach recognises tourism as a social phenomenon and seeks to understand tourism from a critical and interpretive standpoint. Qualitative research techniques have been widely accepted in many fields including education, sociology, anthropology and consumer behaviour, allowing questions within these fields to be addressed from new and different dimensions (Riley and Love, 2000). These include investigation of various tourism phenomena, including Hyde and Lawson (2003) who studied the nature of independent travel, Abd Mutalib, Soh, and Wong (2017) on medical tourism in Malaysia and Thailand, Luo and Ren (2020) on generative motivation for heritage tourism, and Ruhanen et al. (2021) on co-creation of knowledge in tourism for development. Other inquries focused on social-cultural

construction of tourism space (McCabe and Marson, 2006), and the socially constructed identity of backpackers (Sorensen, 2003).

Instead of holding a dichotomous perspective, researchers are urged to consider qualitative and quantitative research methodologies as situated on an interactive continuum, its use driven by theory and objectives (Onwuegbuzie and Daniel, 2003). With the use and reliance on information technology becoming a critical function of organisations, the plurality of research paradigms is required to understand the role played by information systems through a multi-disciplinary investigation covering many different disciplines (Mingers, 2001) and has been said to significantly strengthen information systems research (Lee and Hubona, 2009; Sidorova, Evangelopoulus, Valacich, et al., 2008) . The same can be observed in research on tourism where a pluralist and multi-dimensional epistemologies are embraced to create a new awareness of reality as a construction of human imagination away from the masculine tradition of western thought which used to consider place, space, time and identity as fixed (Morgan and Bischoff, 2003). These different findings provide valuable bases for examining and evaluating frameworks and assumptions underlying each strands of research inquiry, and allow new theories to be generated, while providing a holistic view of the phenomenon and the inter-relationships among the different components (Venkatesh et al., 2013), particularly where the context of the investigation is significantly different from other those found in existing literature, for example this research which is conducted in a different context compared to other pieces of work on information search strategies, the majority of which are based in the US and Europe. Mixed methods also enable new lines of thinking and theory development by paying attention to contraditory findings through the different strands of enquiry (Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarsha et al., 2002). Using mixed methods can be beneficial at different stages of the research process. At the design stage, qualitative data can inform conceptual and instrument development. Quantitative data can help provide baseline information for qualitative data

collection. When analysing data, quantitative data can be used to shed light on qualitative findings and vice-versa (Johnson and Turner, 2003).

Tribe (2001) argued that methods that are exclusively positivistic may lack the 'holistic' component to fully understand tourism phenomena. In fact, mixed methods have been applied in 6% of key tourism journals between 1994 and 2005 (Ballantyne et al., 2009) and around 12% of journals in the area of sustainable tourism (Molina-Azorín and Font, 2016). In view of the complex inter-dependence of various elements in human behaviour, and tourism behaviour specifically, an eclectic approach of choosing research methods is useful (Walle, 1997).

That said, although studies in tourism employing mixed methods is increasing (Seaton, 1997; Lundtorp and Wanhill, 2001) the field is still dominated by quantitative approaches and paradigms (Davies, 2003). Particularly, among the studies in information search strategies reviewed for this study, the majority of them have centered around quantitative methods with a positivistic paradigm.

Specifically, as tourism is a research field with eclectic features and origin (Downward and Mearman, 2007) (embracing a wide spectrum of social science disciplines from geography, politics, psychology to management, law, economics, operations management, marketing and other areas), situated on the continuum between positivist and interpretive epistemoloigcal dimensions, pragmatism based on critical realism is the paradigm which will allow comprehensive investigation of the phenomena within this area. (Pansiri, 2005).

In mixed methods, it is possible for one method to address some of the research questions and others to answer a different set of questions within the same context of investigation (Davies, 2003), as in this study, where customers responded to a survey to address some of the research questions and interviews were conducted with Homestay managers to address other questions,

as well as to complement, triangulate or expand some results from the survey. The next section explains the research design adopted for this study.

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design details the plans of appropriate ways of collecting data. The research design employed in this study is a descriptive design, whereby the relevant variables are described, highlighting their inter-relationships through hypotheses. Adopting a mixed methods approach, this study uses both qualitative and quantitative data in different stages of the inquiry to operationalise this comprehensive investigation, with the view to enhancing the understanding of the problem surrounding CBT products and Homestays specifically. Qualitative data was collected in the exploratory stage of the research, allowing participants of the Homestay business to elucidate the historical development, progress, management, information search structure and current operations of each Homestay cluster through semi-structured interviews, bearing in mind the stakeholders who manage these products may be less economically and politically empowered, and that solutions proposed take into consideration these realities on the ground. Thereafter, based on inputs from these interviews and literature, a structured questionnaire based on Schwartz's value theory is developed, using the PVQ (Schwartz et al., 2001) as a part of the instrument, administered via online and conventional methods.

The mixing of methods occurred in the design of the research instrument, data collection and data analysis stages of the research. Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and direct field observations were used to inform the design of the quantitative survey instrument. The preliminary in-depth interviews conducted provide an understanding of the industry, its historical development, current state of operations, and the use of technology. The purpose here is developmental (Koh, Ang and Straub, 2004), to inform the design and development of the questionnaire in order to increase the quality and accuracy of the data collection instrument. At the data collection stage, qualitative data helped guide the determination of survey

respondents at the different locations of Homestays so that there is maximum potential of reaching respondents of different demographic profiles in these different locations. In the data analysis stage, quantitative data was used to assess the level of generalisation that is possible; and qualitative data provide more complete understanding of the circumstances reviewed by the survey data, as well as non-participative observations in several locations of the CBT. This enabled a richer narrative to be presented as a result of better contextualisation and increased depth of investigation of the phenomena. Qualitative data shed light by explaining, contrasting and validating some of the quantitative findings of the study. Here, the purpose is both corroborative (Brickson, 2005) and to provide completeness (Moeckli, Stewart, Ono et al., 2017) to the data. It may also serve to compensate (Dennis and Garfield, 2003) for any shortfall or lack of depth in the quantitative data collected.

4.5 SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The survey instrument is divided into four sections covering: demographic information, personal values, Homestay experience, non-Homestay experience. The first section gathers demographic information of travellers who have visited destinations in Malaysia. The second section adopts the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) (Schwartz et al., 2001), which is based on the Schwartz theory of basic human values (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987). It consists of a 40-item measurement scale based on a 6 point Likert type scale anchored on “very much like me” to “not at all like me”. The PVQ has 40 short portraits of a person, describing the goals, aspirations or wishes pointing implicitly to the importance of a particular value. Respondents report their own similarity to the person described on a scale of 6. The number of portraits for each value range from three to six and the score for the importance of each value is the average rating given to these items.

Then the survey is split into two sections, one for those who have had a Homestay experience and the other for those who have not. In each of these sections, respondents are asked about

their information search strategies for a visit to the Homestay, or a visit to a destination in Malaysia, in the last three years.

The initial survey instrument was assessed by several senior academics to evaluate the face validity of the measurement instrument and feedback was provided to improve the clarity and scale, and additional option of "others" were added to several of the questions to provide for respondent inputs which are not within the prescribed elements. The instrument was then pre-tested by 8 persons, some of whom have never been to a Homestay, as well as several guests at a Homestay, from a variety of different backgrounds, to solicit feedback on layout, wording of the questions and the ease and accuracy of understanding of the instructions and measurement items in the questionnaire. Input from the pre-test was incorporated into the revised questionnaire. The responses and feedback from the pre-test highlighted ambiguities or difficulties faced by respondents in responding to the survey questions (De Vaus, 2002). Based on these inputs, the questionnaire is revised and finalised.

The survey was then pilot tested on a convenience sample of 35 persons from various backgrounds. The results of the pilot study are useful for making improvements to the design and process of the research. They are reported in the following section.

4.6 PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF PILOT STUDY RESULTS

The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee on 28 February 2017 and a copy of the approval letter is in Appendix 2. The pilot study was conducted via online survey method from March to April 2017. The survey was shared with participants gathered for a social event, who were of different races and educational background, but of similar age group. Thirty five responses were collected and analysed to provide descriptive statistics of some of the preliminary elements of the constructs.

Through an initial analysis of the results from the pilot study, it is found that among the respondents surveyed, 48% of them have visited a Homestay and 52% have not. In terms of demographics, 68% of the respondents were female and 32% male. 64% of them have tertiary education and 32% have a postgraduate degree while 4% has a secondary school education. 72% of them live in an urban area, 12% in a rural area and 16% in a sub-urban area. All the survey respondents were Malaysian citizens. Among the respondents, it is found that the highest mean score for personal value is *Security*, followed by *Universalism*.

The issues identified in this pilot study are noted and changes made to the survey instrument. The final form of the survey instrument is described in the following section, together with changes made as a result of the issues and ambiguities identified in the pilot study.

The instrument was then translated to Mandarin and Malay respectively by native speakers and discussions were held with translators to compare both versions for common meanings, and to identify potential areas of ambiguity, to ensure that the translation was accurate. It was then reverse translated to English to further ensure the accuracy of meaning in the translated instrument. This process took into account translation equivalence including that of idiomatic (linguistic use of words) and experiential equivalence (meaning of words for people in daily experiences), apart from grammatical and lexical perspectives. This is important especially when data collection involves a variety of different respondents from different cultures in consumer-related tourism surveys (Moswete and Darley, 2012), The PVQ items in the translated questionnaires adopted authorised translated versions of the instrument for Chinese (Simplified) and Malay languages. The Chinese translation of the questionnaire was intended for tourists from China who would normally make up a significant percentage of the total tourist arrivals in Malaysia. However, during the data collection period, none of the respondents who participated in the survey were from China. The Malay translation of the questionnaire was used for Malay speaking local tourists who make up approximately 50

percent of the visitors to Homestays. The English version of the instrument was used for other foreign tourists and local tourists who understood English.

4.7 STRUCTURE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is developed with a view to enable the research questions to be addressed. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1. After providing information on the purpose of the survey and contact information for the researcher, the first section of the survey requires respondents to provide demographic information such as age, education level, nationality and location of normal residence (rural to urban). This provides input for the demographic segment of the theoretical framework as depicted in Figure 2.7.

The next section of the survey instrument comprises the Portrait Value Questionnaire developed by Schwartz et al. (2001) consisting of 40 items describing 40 different people in the third person, in terms of his/her goals, aspirations or wishes pointing implicitly to the importance of a particular value using the following unipolar asymmetric scale of "1 - not at all like me" to "6 - very much like me". Respondents report their own similarity to people described on a scale of 1 to 6. Through descriptions of what is important, the tool captures the person's values without explicitly identifying or working with the values as the topics being investigated. The number of portraits for each value range from three to six and the score for the importance of each value is the average rating given to these items. From responses gathered, the personal value profile of the respondent will emerge after being analysed in the prescribed manner of the instrument as detailed in (Schwartz, 2012). The aim of this section is to measure the value priority of respondents; not only the importance of any one value, because the trade-off among relevant values affects behaviour and attitudes. Therefore, the respondent's mean response to all the value items is subtracted from his/her response to each item. This converts the ratings into *relative importance scores* for each person's value (value priorities) .

The analysis from this section of the survey will relate to the construct of *personal values* in the framework and will address RQ1 and RQ2 of this study.

In the next section, the respondents are asked whether they have ever had a Homestay experience. The term Homestay is explained as follows:

> *A Homestay refers to a place where you would **interact and/or stay** with people in the community instead of in a hotel, and participate in activities common among the community as part of their daily life.*
>
> *For example, you could stay in a village where they have fruit orchards and you engaged in fruit picking and played traditional games etc.*

Based on the response of the survey participant, they will be directed to the relevant scenario with its corresponding questions:

1. Those who have been to a Homestay will be asked questions relating to their Homestay experience (referred to as "Section A" in the survey);
2. Those who have never been to a Homestay will be asked questions relating to a trip or holiday they had in Malaysia. They can choose any trip/holiday they had in Malaysia in the last 3 years (referred to as "Section B" in the survey).

4.7.1 Section A

The first question in this section focuses the respondent's attention on their first encounter with a Homestay experience. If the respondent has been to a Homestay more than once, the period of the first visit should be stated. This will provide some indication as to the availability of different sources of information on Homestays for the first visit, as the development of awareness of this type of holiday over the last 10 years have been significant, based on interviews with Homestay managers.

The rest of the questions in this section refer to this first experience as the purpose of the study is to uncover the strategies taken by respondents in discovering about Homestays and how this information search was carried out. After the first experience, tourists will either rely on previous experience or employ a familiar strategy (Gursoy and Chen, 2000) to search for information on the same kind of destinations that they have visited.

Elements relating to purpose of the trip is adapted from extant literature (Gursoy and Chen, 2000) and include business, leisure, business and leisure, with an open ended option for other specific purposes. The items for travel party is adopted from those used in Hyde (2009) and Luo et al. (2004).

The next two questions are intended to determine whether the respondent was leading the travel party and responsible for planning and reservation for the trip, and therefore the level of decision making power linked to his or her response.

Question 6 requires respondents to state the importance of different reasons which affects the decision to select a Homestay. Preliminary conversations with Homestay visitors revealed various reasons visitors selected a Homestay. The scale items for this element of the framework is developed by adapting the list of motivating factors identified from literature and comparing them with those inductively gathered through inputs from conversations with Homestay visitors to identify appropriate items to be included (similar to the technique employed by Woosnam et al. (2009)), with a 5-point Likert type scale anchored on *extremely important* to *not at all important*. This method of deriving items enhances internal validity as it is contextually relevant and based on inductive qualitative input from those involved in the activities of the destination studied (Hinkin, 1995).

Question 7 addresses the construct of information search strategies by drawing on existing literature. With reference to Gursoy and Chen (2000), Gursoy and Umbreit (2004), Pearce and

Schott (2005), Xiang and Gretzel (2010) and Llodra-Riera et al. (2015), the options of information sources were adapted and a list of all possible sources of information identified in these studies were compiled, starting with non-digital information and then digital sources. Through this distinction, it is envisioned that a distinction between sources of information and the channel through which information is obtained can be identified. For example, a visitor may have heard of the Homestay from a friend who has visited it, or he/she may have read about the visit from the friend's social media page. In this case, the source will be the same (a friend) but the channel will be different (off-line/face to face and online via the social media page).

A total of 15 items representing non-digital information sources such as documentary, government agencies and travel agents, and 22 items representing digital sources such as webpages of travel agent, search engines and portals for hotel reservations are included in this question. Respondents were required to indicate the importance of a particular source on a 5 point Likert-style scale from 1 to 5, with 1 = extremely important, 2 = important, 3 = somewhat important, 4 = not important, 5 = not at all important, with 'important' being a surrogate of 'used/consulted'.

This question was revised from its original version after the pre-test revealed that there is a possibility that respondents will respond to each of these sources by stating its importance as an information source without considering whether they have actually consulted that particular source of information. The instructions to do so was then included in the question in bold and capitalised to ensure the clarity of the intention and meaning of the question.

An open-ended question invites respondents to comment on any unique processes or experience they had in discovering the information about the Homestay they visited. This question attempts to capture potential unknown features of this unique tourism experience

which may be of importance to this study. These questions provide input to address RQ3 above, in terms of the information search strategies employed by visitors to Homestays.

The next two questions ask respondents to consider the process of making a reservation for the Homestay. From interviews with Homestay managers, it was found that the majority of reservations for Homestays are now made through travel agencies, due to a lack of online presence and online reservation systems for this type of tourism experience. The next question seeks to measure the extent of reliance on different sources among respondents who have been to Homestays, and to investigate the feasibility of other forms of reservation systems with follow-up questions in the section.

The last question addresses RQ5 by asking respondents to provide their view on how online information sources on Homestays can be most effectively provided to meet the information needs of these visitors.

4.7.2 Section B

Section B deals with the second scenario whereby respondents have not been to a Homestay but have visited a tourism destination in Malaysia. Respondents are requested to respond to questions by referring to a visit they made within the last 3 years. Questions in this section mirror those in Section A as it is intended as comparison of the experiences and information search processes between these two groups of respodents. Respondents were asked about the purpose of their trip, travel party and whether they had responsibility for planning and reservation. They were then asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale, from extremely important to not at all important, the reasons for choosing the destination. The items indicating the reasons were adapted from lists of motivating factors identified from literature.

Next, respondents were asked to indicate sources of information consulted by them in planning for their trip, and the list of sources are identical to those in Question 7 in Section A above

except that the reference is now to any destination in Malaysia, and not to Homestays. The survey ends by asking respondents whether they made their reservation directly with the providers or via a travel agent, and the channels used for making the reservation. Data from this section allows a comparative study to be done for the two types of destinations in terms of all the constructs within the theoretical framework.

A summary of the questions and sources from which they are developed and adapted is provided in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1 Summary of questions and sources

Survey Question	Construct	Measures sourced/ adapted from
Demographics	Characteristics of the guest	Gitleson and Crompton (1983); Capella and Greco (1987) Lo et al. (2002); Snepenger et al. (1990); Luo et al. (2004).
Statements of value (40 items)	Characteristics of the guest: Personal value	Schwartz and Bilsky (1987); Schwartz et al. (2001)
Section A	Homestay visitors	
Q1: Frequency of visit	Characteristics of the vacation	Gursoy and Chen (2000); Focus group with visitors
Q2: Purpose of Trip	Characteristics of the vacation	Fodness and Murray, 1999; Luo et al., 2004)
Q3: Travel party	Characteristics of the vacation	Hyde (2009) and Luo et al. (2004)
Q4 & Q5: Decision making and selection of destination	Characteristics of the vacation	Hyde (2008) Woosnam, McElroy and Van Winkle (2009) Hinkin (1995)
Q6: Reasons for selection (7 items)	Characteristics of the vacation – unique features of product	Interviews with Homestay owners; discussions with visitors
Q7: Information sources and importance	Information search strategies	Gursoy and Chen (2000), Gursoy and Umbreit (2004), Pearce and Schott (2005), Xiang and Gretzel (2010) and Llodra-Riera et al. (2015)
Q8 & Q9: Channel of information and reservation	Information search strategies	Grønflaten (2009b)

Q10: Open ended question relating to information search	Information search strategies	Discussions with visitors and interview with Homestay managers
Q11: Valuable aspects of the Homestay	Characteristics of the vacation – unique features of product	Awaritefe (2004) Interviews with Homestay managers; discussions with visitors
Q12: Sufficiency of information	Information search strategies	Interviews with Homestay managers; discussions with visitors
Section B	Comparative analysis for non-Homestay visitors	
Q1: Destination selection	Characteristics of the vacation	Gursoy and Chen (2000)
Q2: Purpose of Trip	Characteristics of the vacation	Fodness and Murray, 1999; Luo et al., 2004)
Q3: Travel party	Characteristics of the vacation	Hyde (2009) and Luo et al. (2004)
Q4 and Q5: Decision making and selection of destination	Characteristics of the vacation	Hyde (2008) Woosnam, McElroy and Van Winkle (2009) Hinkin (1995)
Q6: Information sources and importance	Information search strategies	Gursoy and Chen (2000), Gursoy and Umbreit (2004), Pearce and Schott (2005), Xiang and Gretzel (2010) and Llodra-Riera et al. (2015)
Q7: Channel of information and reservation	Information search strategies	Grønflaten (2009b)

4.8 DATA COLLECTION

The survey was the most appropriate method to collect data in order to achieve the objectives of this study, in view of the adoption of the instrument for measuring personal values developed by Schwartz et al (2001), and also in line with other studies examining information search strategies which employed a similar method (Fodness and Murray, 1999; Gursoy and Chen, 2000; Luo et al., 2004; Fall and Knutson, 2001).

Given the objectives of this study to investigate the influence of personal values on information search strategies and destination selection, non-probability purposive and convenience

sampling were appropriate (Adams, Khan and Raeside, 2014). It is also cost effective in comparison to other methods of data collection (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

The survey was distributed to potential respondents who have visited a destination in Malaysia in the last three years, using online and hard copies of the questionnaire. Hard copies of the survey were also distributed to five Homestay destinations in five different states in Malaysia, with a variety of settings to collect data from respondents who visit Homestays. Using both online and conventional methods to collect survey data help reduce the bias against respondents who may not have internet access, and enable those who use offline search strategies to be accessed, as they may not have access to the internet.

4.9 SUMMARY

This chapter explained the research approach and methodology for this study and situated the research within the positivist tradition while acknowledging the contribution of qualitative exploratory data collection to inform quantitative data collection, as well as provide important background and historical development of this industry and the experience of its key stakeholders; which are useful to provide greater depth in explaining the results of quantitative data analysis. Thereafter, the research design was described, followed by the development of the survey instrument for this study. The results of the preliminary analysis of the pilot study were presented, leading to the fine-tuning of the survey instrument, followed by a detailed explanation of the structure of the questionnaire and the data collection process. The next chapter will explain the data collection results and findings of the data analysis.

CHAPTER 5 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the procedures and processes used to analyse quantitative data are explained and the findings of this study are detailed. Data gathered from survey respondents were analysed using several statistical tools. Firstly, general descriptive analyses of the respondents' demographic characteristics were done, using univariate analysis of the relevant variables. Secondly, multi-variate analyses were employed to examine relationships between different variables investigated in the study. The final stage involved exploratory factor analysis to identify categories of information sources and regression analysis to identify the impact of various antecedents on the factors identified within the theoretical model. Data was analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25.

5.2 PRELIMINARY PROCEDURES

5.2.1 Sampling

The sampling process involved specifying the target population which is those who have visited destinations in Malaysia. Convenience sampling was used for the online survey where invitations were sent to the public via social media channels and respondents may or may not have visited a Homestay. The design of the online survey was optimised for responses using computers as well as hand-held or mobile devices, which has been found to have a positive effect on the response rates of online surveys (Fan and Yan, 2010). Online survey is consistent with the context of this study since the focus is on information search and information sources, including online information sources. It is effective for reaching out to online virtual community members. Online survey has the advantage of low cost and geographical diversity. However, there are concerns that online surveys may be preferred only by certain categories of

respondents and do not reach out to people who avoid online surveys or have no access to the internet. Hence, paper-based surveys were also used to increase the response rate and to have a better spread of leisure tourists from different age groups, background and destinations (Tan and Chen, 2012). Paper-based surveys were distributed to several Homestays and visitors were invited randomly to respond to the survey during the data collection period between October 2018 and January 2019. These Homestays were selected through purposive stratified sampling for the surveys in order to allow for the research questions related to Homestay visits to be addressed.

The size of the sample is generally inversely related to the likelihood of sampling error. The bigger the sample, the less the sampling error (Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch, 2000). Considerations in determining the sample size include the expectations of non-response (particularly in respect of hard-copy questionnaires) and the degree of confidence (90%-95%) desired for observations made based on the sample. A total of 271 surveys were collected, from which a final number of 239 responses were retained after the data cleaning process. Generally, a sample size of more than 200 is considered adequate for robust statistical analysis (Field, 2016).

In relation to the sample size for regression, different authors have different guidelines for the required number of responses. The issue at stake is one of generalisability. Small samples do not allow the results obtained to be generalised, resulting in little scientific implication and value. Tabechnick and Fidell (2013) provides a formula for calculating the sample size as follows:

$N > 50 + 8m$, where m = number of independent variables.

The number of predictors in this analysis are the 10 personal value scores, 5 demographic elements, travel party, type of destination and purpose of trip (18 in total), hence a sample size

of more than 194 would be adequate, based on this formula. Sekaran and Bougie (2010) state that a minimum of 30 respondents is required per regression, and the number should be within the range of 30-500. This research will involve not more than 6 regressions. Therefore, a sample of 180 would meet the requirement based on this guideline. According to Field (2016), where a medium effect is expected, a sample size of 160 or more will suffice with up to 20 predictors. As such, the sample size of 239 for this research can be considered adequate based on the guidelines presented above.

5.2.2 Data cleaning

Questions where respondents were allowed to provide more than one option in their responses, such as question 9 in Section A and question 7 in Section B required editing in order to obtain all of the responses reflected in the data file separately in different columns. Responses to questions with open ended response option, and "other" option, such as Question 3, 4 and 10 were edited and the relevant value assigned to each of these responses. For example, a respondent who stated "family reunion" as a purpose for visiting a destination would have this response edited as "leisure" for Question 2 in Section B of the questionnaire.

In relation to missing data, there were 2 respondents with significant item non-response (no responses for any of the questions related to travel), and these were removed from the data set during the cleaning process. Other responses were omitted due to incomplete responses preventing analysis, particularly on the Portrait Value Questionnaire segment of the survey.

5.2.3 Data coding

After missing and incomplete data have all been removed from the data set, all the responses are coded and a code book is developed to ensure the responses correspond to options in the questionnaire. The codebook is presented in Appendix 3. The codebook presents a column-by-column description of the relationships between the codes and the responses to the questions

which have been selected by the respondents. The codebook allows the data in the data set to be interpreted. For example, the variable "Age Group" is given a name "Age Grp" and assigned coding instructions of 1 to 6 as detailed in Table 5.1 below. For some variables, such as nationality, an additional variable is added which transforms all responses for Malaysians into "1" instead of splitting them into different races as initially reflected in the survey instrument. This is done to facilitate analyses based on nationality, and not race or ethnicity, in RQ1.

Table 5.1 Example of information in codebook

Variable	Variable name	Coding instructions
Identification number	ID	Number assigned to each survey
Age Group	Age Grp	1 = 18-29 years old 2 = 30-39 years old 3 = 40-49 years old 4 = 50-59 years old 5 = 60-69 years old 6 = > 70 years old
Gender	Gender	1 = Male 2 = Female 3 = Unstated

Data from the PVQ have been clustered according to each personal value as assigned by the instrument (Schwartz et al., 2001). The mean score for each value is calculated based on the items that index each value. This score is then converted to value *priorities* by centring each person's score on his or her own mean. The overall mean for all 40 items that comprise the PVQ is computed for each respondent. Then, the score for each value is subtracted by this overall mean to arrive at the value priority score for each value for each respondent. The outcome of this process is 10 centred value scores for each respondent, indicated with the number 2 after the label for each value in the Codebook in Appendix 3. The basis for this is that the scale should measure people's value priorities, i.e. the relative importance of the different values because it is not the absolute importance of a value that influence behaviour and decision making, but the relative importance of one value compared to the others, also

referred to as the "trade-off" among relevant values which affect decisions and actions (Schwartz, 2012).

The PVQ scale has been used in over 70 countries where its validity and reliability was supported for measuring the 10 values (Schwartz, 2012). The internal consistency of the scale (the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute) can be measured using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Cronbach's coefficient α for the values in the current sample (with between three to six items each) were: Benevolence 0.64, Universalism 0.76, Self-Direction 0.62, Stimulation 0.68, Hedonism 0.72, Achievement 0.80, Power 0.68, Security 0.67, Conformity 0.70 and Tradition 0.59. The average Cronbach's α reliability is 0.69. This is consistent with previously reported reliability score averages of 0.68 in Schwartz (2006), 0.71 in Vecchione et al. (2016) and higher than 0.55 in Schwartz et al. (2001). Generally, it is also in line with Hair, Black, Babin et al.'s (2013) recommendation of 0.7, and with Nunally and Bernstein (1994) who stated that it can be smaller (0.6) for scales with six or fewer items. Corrected item-total correlation for all 10 personal value scales are all more than 0.3 indicating an acceptable degree of correlation each item has with the total score (Pallant, 2013).

5.2.4 Data input errors

It is prudent to conduct a thorough checking of the data entered before any analysis is done, in order to avoid mistakes in the analyses due to data entry errors, and to avoid the costly effort of repairing the damage caused by those mistakes. To do this, the data is screened for errors, to check for values outside the range of possible values for each variable. For example, gender is coded 1 = male and 2 = female. Frequencies analysis was conducted to ensure only these 2 values are present. This is conducted for all categorical variables in the data set. Wherever it is observed that variables carry any value other than the permitted values, this is checked against the data collected and any errors corrected. In this data set, one error for the variable nationality

was noted, where the value of 8 was entered in error, when values allowed in this variable is between 1 to 7. This was discovered to have been entered wrongly, and the corrected value of 7 is inserted in place of the wrong value. After this cleaning process, the data is then useful for analysis. The following section details the analyses done to address the research questions presented in Chapter 4.

5.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF RESPONDENTS

The first category of analysis done is univariate analysis of demographic variables of respondents. The demographic profiles of respondents are presented in this section, obtained through univariate analyses of frequencies. A total of 271 surveys were collected, with a total of 248 complete responses after excluding incomplete surveys with significant missing data. Of the 248 respondents, 9 of them have had to be excluded because they were under the age of 18, leaving a total of 239 valid responses for analysis (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Survey response

	Homestay visitors	**Non-Homestay visitors**
Total Responses	182	89
Less incomplete	10	13
Less unusable	9	0
Total	163	76
Grand total	**239**	

Table 5.3 below provides a breakdown of the age of respondents by category. Half of the respondents (51.5%) were between 18 to 29 years old, the grouped frequency of respondents in this age group being 123.

Table 5.3 Age group distribution

Age Group	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
18-29 years old	123	51.5
30-39 years old	32	13.4
40-49 years old	59	24.7
50-59 years old	19	7.9
60-69 years old	5	2.1
> 70 years old	1	0.4
Total	**239**	**100.0**

Table 5.4 below indicates that more females responded to the survey, accounting for over 65% (154) of the total number of respondents.

Table 5.4 Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	85	35.6
Female	154	64.4
Total	**239**	**100.0**

As for educational background, more than half of the respondents (58.6%) had tertiary education, with another 25.1% having postgraduate education and 39 (16.3%) with secondary education. The 9 respondents excluded from the analysis were children with only primary school education. The distribution of respondents according to education level is presented in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5 Educational background

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Secondary	39	16.3
Tertiary	140	58.6
Postgraduate	60	25.1
Total	**239**	**100.0**

As for place of residence, two thirds of the respondents (66.5%) live in urban areas while 25.1% live in sub-urban areas. 8.4% of them live in rural areas, as indicated in Table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6 Residence

Residence	Frequency	Percentage
Urban area	159	66.5
Sub-urban area	60	25.1
Rural area	20	8.4
Total	**239**	**100.0**

The survey respondents were mostly from Malaysia (78.2%), with 21.7% of them being foreigners. The sub-categories are provided in Table 5.7 below.

Table 5.7 Distribution of respondents by nationality

Ethic Group/Nationality	Frequency	Percentage
Malay Malaysian	73	30.5
Chinese Malaysian	93	38.9
Indian Malaysian	11	4.6
Others Malaysian	10	4.2
Non-Malaysian Japanese	17	7.1
Non-Malaysian Korean	24	10.0
Non-Malaysian Others	11	4.6
Total	**239**	**100.0**

5.3.1 Travel party and destination

Respondents travelled with family (38%), with friends and family (33%) or with a tour group (29%). Of the 239 respondents, 163 (68.2%) of them have visited a Homestay while 76 (31.8%) of them have never been to a Homestay, as provided in Table 5.8 below. Of those who have visited a Homestay, close to 60% were visiting a Homestay for the first time, while 40% have been to a Homestay more than once.

Table 5.8 Distribution of respondents by destination visited

Homestay Visit	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	163	68.2
No	76	31.8
Total	**239**	**100.0**

5.4 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF HOMESTAY RESPONDENTS

Turning to data on those Homestay visitors, the distribution based on demographic profiles are as follows:

Table 5.9 shows the distribution of Homestay respondents by age group. The majority of them (79%) were younger, below the age of 40 years old, followed by 16% of 40-49 year-olds, 13% of 30-39 year-olds and 4% above 50 years old.

Table 5.9 Distribution of Homestay respondents by age group

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
18-29 years old	109	66.9
30-39 years old	21	12.9
40-49 years old	26	16.0
50-59 years old	7	4.3
Total	**163**	**100.0**

As shown in Table 5.10 below, 66.3% of the Homestay respondents were female, while 33.7% were male.

Table 5.10 Distribution of Homestay respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	55	33.7
Female	108	66.3
Total	**163**	**100.0**

In terms of educational level, more than half of them had tertiary level education (57.7%) and the rest of them either had a secondary education (20.2%) or postgraduate education (22.1%), as detailed in Table 5.11 below.

Table 5.11 Distribution of Homestay respondents by educational level

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
Secondary	33	20.2
Tertiary	94	57.7
Postgraduate	36	22.1
Total	**163**	**100.0**

In terms of residence, 63.8% of Homestay respondents live in an urban area, while the rest live in sub-urban (25.8%) or rural (10.4%) areas, as shown in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12 Distribution of Homestay respondents by location of residence

Residence	Frequency	Percentage
Urban area	104	63.8
Sub-urban area	42	25.8
Rural area	17	10.4
Total	**163**	**100.0**

Among the respondents who visited a Homestay, 73% were Malaysians while the rest were non-Malaysians. This is shown in Table 5.13 below.

Table 5.13 Distribution of Homestay respondents by nationality

Nationality	Frequency	Percentage
Non-Malaysian	44	27.0
Malaysian	119	73.0
Total	**163**	**100.0**

5.4.1 Travel party and motivation for Homestay visit

More than a third of Homestay respondents (38%) travelled as part of a group on field trip or study tour. Others travelled with family (26%), with friends and family (28%), and as part of a tour group (4.1%).

Respondents were also asked to indicate the purpose for which they have made the trip to visit the Homestay, and the responses are provided in Table 5.14 below. More than half of the respondents visited for leisure. Among responses in the 'others' category, respondents have indicated their visit as being related to education, such as school or college field trips, team building events and cultural exposure programmes for foreign students.

Table 5.14 Purpose of Homestay visit

Purpose	Frequency	Valid Percent
Business	10	6.8
Leisure	81	55.1
Business and leisure	16	10.9
Others	40	27.2
Total	**147**	**100.0**

Investigating further, respondents were asked to indicate the importance of each reason for selecting a Homestay as their destination, the results of which are as presented in Table 5.15 below. Essentially, most of the reasons had a mean score of less than 3, indicating that these reasons were extremely imporant (1), very important (2) or moderately important (3). Apart from being a quiet place with beautiful scenery in a rural setting, most of the guests were

attracted to Homestays because of its rich cultural and traditional heritage, food, rural lifestyle and the natural rural environment. A unique feature of Homestays, which guests selected, was also the opportunity to interact with local people and to have an authentic cultural experience as guests stay with hosts and engage in social (food, games, events) and economic activities together with their hosts.

Table 5.15 Reasons for visiting a Homestay

Rank	Reason	Mean
1	A quiet place to rest and relax	2.10
2	To taste local traditional food	2.19
3	The scenery	2.21
4	For an authentic cultural experience	2.27
5	To appreciate the natural/unique environmental features	2.29
6	To interact with local people	2.37
7	Recommended by my acquaintances/family	2.38
8	To experience rural Malaysian lifestyle	2.50
9	It is cheaper than other destinations	2.50
10	Near and convenient to get to	2.59
11	To engage in games and outdoor activities	2.67
12	To view animals in their natural habitat	2.80
13	It was the location of business/meeting	3.06
14	Others	3.27

Considering the demographics detailed above, visitors to Homestays tend to be younger people who are Malaysians from urban areas, with tertiary education, more of whom are Malaysians compared to non-Malaysians. Half of them visit Homestays for leisure, while slightly more than a third do so as part of their school or college field trip. The most important reasons for selecting a Homestay, apart from its cultural elements, are its seclusion and contrast with city life.

5.5 NORMALITY

The continuous variables in the sample are the value priorities of respondents derived from the PVQ, as well as scores of importance for various questions relating to information sources and motivations for selecting a destination. For continuous variables, before deciding on the type of tests, it is necessary to determine whether the data is normally distributed, or has a normal

distribution (having a symmetrical, bell-shaped curve). If the data has a normal distribution, then the tests to be used are parametric tests, but if not, then non-parametric tests will have to be used (Field, 2016). It is observed that based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic provided in Table 5.16 below, the distribution for the following value priorities fulfills the assumption of normality (Sig. value of more than .05): Benevolence, Universalism, Self-Direction, Security and Conformity. The value priorities of Stimulation, Hedonism, Achievement, Power and Tradition did not meet the assumptions of normality. However, depending on the sample size, the assumptions of normality may be satisfied if the sample is large enough, and it may still be acceptable to use parametric statistical procedures. A sample is generally considered large enough if it is above 30, although for heavy tailed distributions (where outliners are common) a sample size of 100 may be necessary (Field, 2016). With large samples the impact of departure from normality (skewness and kurtosis) diminishes and will not have a substantive effect on analysis; in particular, with samples of 100 or more cases in relation to positive kurtosis, and 200 or more cases in relation to negative kurtosis (Tabechnick and Fidell, 2013). Hence, data can be analysed using parametric tests in this study.

Table 5.16 Test of normality – Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic

Personal Value	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Benevolence	0.051	239	.200*
Universalism	0.051	239	.200*
Self-Direction	0.044	239	.200*
Stimulation	0.060	239	0.035
Hedonism	0.079	239	0.001
Achievement	0.093	239	0.000
Power	0.059	239	0.043
Security	0.052	239	.200*
Conformity	0.053	239	0.099
Tradition	0.073	239	0.004
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.			
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction			

5.6 ASSUMPTION OF INDEPENDENCE OF OBSERVATIONS

Another assumption that must be met in parametric techniques is that the observations must be independent of one another, i.e. that each respondent's response is not influenced by those of any other respondents. Respondents were either invited to respond to the survey online or given hard-copies of the surveys to complete at their own leisure, during their visit to the Homestays. These two scenarios for data collection did not gather respondents together in groups for data collection purpose. Therefore, this assumption of independence is not violated.

5.7 PERSONAL VALUES AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The following sections will now present the results of the analyses performed on the data set in addressing each of the research questions enumerated in Chapter 2 (Section 2.9) above.

RQ1: What is the impact of demographic characteristics on the personal value profile of tourists to Malaysia?

In order to address this research question, the personal values of respondents and the relationship between the demographics of the respondents and their personal value, identified in Figure 2.7 as "Characteristics of the Vacationer" will be analysed. The aim is to understand whether the demographics of a respondent have any impact on his/her personal value priorities, and to have a full picture of the personal value profile of the respondent in light of various demographic characteristics that may have an influence on their personal value profile.

5.7.1 Personal values and age

The first hypothesis to be tested in addressing this research question is:

H1: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on age of the respondent

The circular structure of value relations proposed by Schwartz et al. (2001) and adopted in this research is presented in Figure 2.4 above. A one-way ANOVA between groups analysis of

variance was conducted to explore the impact of age on personal values. There were 5 age groups, labelled as Group 1 (18-29 years old), Group 2 (30-39 years old), Group 3 (40-49 years old), Group 4 (50-59 years old) and Group 5 (60-69 years old).

Selected results of the post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test on eight relevant personal values are presented in Table 5.17 below, while the full results are provided in Appendix 4. In terms of age groups, it is observed that there is statistically significant difference between the age groups in terms of all the personal values except for Self-Direction and Hedonism, where there is no significant difference between the age groups. The mean for each age group is provided in Appendix 4.

Table 5.17 Post-hoc Tukey HSD test for personal values and age groups

Personal Value	Age Group	Age Group Compared	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Benevolence	Group 1	Group 2	-0.324	0.115	0.042
Universalism	Group 1	Group 3	-0.333	0.075	0.000
		Group 4	-0.505	0.117	0.000
Stimulation	Group 1	Group 3	0.394	0.125	0.016
Achievement	Group 1	Group 3	0.784	0.124	0.000
		Group 4	0.811	0.193	0.000
	Group 2	Group 3	0.655	0.172	0.002
		Group 4	0.682	0.226	0.024
Power	Group 1	Group 2	0.506	0.172	0.030
		Group 3	0.630	0.137	0.000
		Group 4	1.180	0.214	0.000
Security	Group 1	Group 3	-0.311	0.082	0.002
		Group 4	-0.481	0.128	0.002
	Group 2	Group 3	-0.318	0.114	0.044
		Group 4	-0.487	0.150	0.011
Conformity	Group 1	Group 3	-0.299	0.108	0.048
Tradition	Group 1	Group 3	-0.433	0.105	0.000

There was significant difference in the mean scores observed for eight of the ten personal values analysed between the different age groups. For all eight personal values where there is significant difference between the age groups, the youngest age group of 18-29 years old (Group 1) has a mean score that is statistically different with at least one other group. This

indicates that this group of respondents is somewhat unique in their personal value priorities. Each of these personal values will now be discussed in relation to the different age groups, all at the $p < .05$ level, with post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test. It is noted that for Group 5 (60-69 years old), there are no significant differences observed in the test results even though the mean scores for some of the values were almost identical to those of Group 4 (50-59 years old), because of heterogeneity of the sample in this age group, with standard deviation significantly higher than for other groups. This is seen, for example in the mean scores for Achievement, Power and Security in particular.

Benevolence (defining goal: preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact)

For Benevolence, it is observed that the mean score for Group 1 ($M = 0.088$) is significantly lower than for Group 2 ($M = 0.413$), indicating a much higher priority among respondents in Group 2 for this personal value. Group 2 emphasizes a focus on others such as caring for the needs of others and being loyal and devoted, seeing the good in others much more than Group 1.

Universalism (defining goal: understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection of the welfare of all people and for nature)

Respondents in Group 1 ($M = 0.137$) has a mean score which is significantly different from Group 3 ($M = 0.470$) and Group 4 ($M = 0.643$). This shows that respondents in Group 1 are less concerned about equality and justice between people as well as the place of people within the natural environment.

Stimulation (defining goal: excitement, novelty, and challenge in life)

For Stimulation, a significant difference is observed between those in Group 1 (M = -0.187) and those in Group 3 (M = -0.581). Although both these groups (in fact all the age groups) scored negatively for this personal value, indicating their lack of priority for it, there is a contrast in terms of its extent, where Group 3 has the highest negative score whereas the youngest group of respondents indicated a relatively lower negative score. Respondents in Group 3 have the least preference for surprises, variety and risk taking.

Achievement (defining goal: personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards)

In terms of Achievement, significant difference in mean scores is observed between Group 1, and Group 3 and Group 4, as well as between Group 2, and Group 3 and Group 4, as presented in Table 5.17 above. Again, all age groups scored negatively for Achievement, and this aversion is stronger in the older age groups of Group 3 (M = -0.852) and Group 4 (M= -0.879) compared to the youngest, Group 1 (M = -0.068). The same is observed when Group 2 (M = -0.197) is compared to two order groups of respondents, Group 3 and Group 4.

Power (defining goal: social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources)

All age groups scored negatively for Power, indicating a lack of priority for this personal value. Significant difference in the mean score is observed between Group 1 (M = -0.493) and Group 2 (M = -0.999), Group 3 (M = -1.123) and Group 4 (M= -1.673). A lower mean score among the youngest group (Group 1) indicates that between the different age groups, they have the least aversion to being rich, having a lot of money and being the one who makes decisions and being the leader.

Security (defining goal: safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships and of self)

For the personal value of Security, there is a statistically significant difference in the mean score for Group 1 (M = 0.253), compared to Group 3 (M = 0.565) and Group 4 (M = 0.734). There is also a significant difference between the mean score for Group 2 (M = 0.247) when compared to Group 3 and Group 4. We can therefore observe a split between those under 40 years old and those above 40 years old in the priority placed on the personal value of Security. Based on the elements included in this personal value, those who are above 40 years old value safety, security, being organized and healthy and having a stable government, more highly than those who are younger; under the age of 40.

Conformity (defining goal: restraint of action, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms) and

Tradition (defining goal: respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion provides)

Conformity and Tradition are two personal values that are especially close motivationally. They are located in a **single wedge** in the circular structure of value relations (Figure 2.4) because of this reason. While both share the goal of subordinating the self in favour of socially imposed expectations, they differ in the objects to which this subordination is directed. Conformity entails subordination of self to those whom we interact closely with, such as parents, teachers, bosses, while Tradition refers to subordination to abstract objects such as religion and culture (Schwartz, 2006).

In terms of the difference observed in the mean score between respondents of different age groups, Group 1 has a mean score that is significantly different from Group 3 for both Conformity and Tradition. For Conformity, the mean score for Group 1 (M = -0.011) is

significantly lower than Group 3 (M = 0.288), indicating less importance placed on Conformity by the youngest group.

Similarly for Tradition, although all groups have a negative score, indicating that all the respondents do not prioritise this value, the mean for Group 1 (M = -0.489) is much lower than for Group 3 (M = -0.056), i.e. it is the least important for the youngest group of respondents.

Interestingly, while Conformity has a weak positive score, Tradition has a negative score, indicating that while they place some importance on being subordinate, polite and obedient to people, there is a lack of importance placed on culture or religion.

H1 was tested for all personal values and the findings are described above. The hypothesis is accepted for the following personal values: Benevolence, Universalism, Stimulation, Achievement, Power, Security, Conformity and Tradition, but not accepted for Self-Direction and for Hedonism.

5.7.2 Personal values and gender

To find out whether personal values is affected by gender, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the personal value scores for males and females (Table 5.18). The full results of the t-tests and the mean scores for each personal value are provided in Appendix 5.

Table 5.18 Independent sample t-tests results for Hedonism and Conformity

Group Statistics				t-test for Equality of Means	
Gender		**N**	**Mean**	**t**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Hedonism	Male	85	-0.202	-3.221	0.001
	Female	154	0.150		
Conformity	Male	85	-0.013	-2.051	0.041
	Female	154	0.177		

There was no significant difference in scores for males and females for all the personal values except for Hedonism and Conformity. For these two personal values, the Levene's test for homogeneity of variance scores show a significance level of more than .05, indicating that the

assumption of homogeneity of variance is not violated. For Hedonism, there was significant difference in the mean score for males (M = -0.202) and females (M = 0.150; t (239) = -3.221, p = 0.001, two-tailed). This shows that female respondents have a low priority for this value but male respondents have an aversion towards Hedonism (negative mean score). Similarly, for Conformity, there was significant difference in the mean scores for males (M = -0.013) and females (M = 0.177); t (239) = -2.051, p = 0.041, two-tailed). Females scored low in their priority for Conformity, but male respondents scored even less for this value, as indicated by the negative mean score for this value. Male respondents have a lower personal value score for Hedonism and Conformity compared to female respondents. Therefore, the following hypothesis is accepted for the personal values of Hedonism and Conformity, and rejected for all other personal values in the value structure:

H2: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on the gender of the respondent

That said, the partial eta squared effect size statistics for Hedonism is 0.04 while for Conformity, 0.17, indicating less than moderate magnitude of association between these differences in priority for these values due to gender.

5.7.3 Personal values and educational level

To investigate whether there is any effect on personal values due to educational levels of respondents, one-way ANOVA was used. For all the personal values analysed, the Levene's test for homogeneity of variances scores shows a significance level of more than .05, indicating that the assumption of homogeneity of variance is not violated, as presented in Appendix 6. There were 3 educational levels, Group A (secondary education), Group B (tertiary education), Group C (postgraduate education). Selected results of the post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test are presented in Table 5.19 below, while the full results are provided in Appendix 6.

Table 5.19 Post hoc tests Tukey HSD results for personal values and educational level

Personal Value	Education level	Education level compared	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Benevolence	Group A	Group B	-0.354	0.105	0.002
Universalism	Group A	Group B	-0.291	0.089	0.004
		Group C	-0.346	0.101	0.002
Power	Group A	Group B	0.443	0.169	0.025
Tradition	Group A	Group B	0.400	0.122	0.003

As with the analysis for different age groups, it is observed that mean scores that are significantly different occurs between Group A, in this case those with secondary education, and other groups. This is observed for Benevolence, Universalism, Power and Tradition, where there is a statistically significant difference at $p < .05$ level in the mean scores between respondents with different educational levels. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test as presented in Table 5.19 above indicated that the mean score for Benevolence for Group A (M = -0.057) is significantly different compared to Group B (M = 0.297). This shows that those with secondary education put less priority on preserving and enhancing the welfare of those close to them, compared to those with tertiary education.

For the personal value of Universalism, the mean score for Group A (M = 0.028) is significantly different from Group B (M = 0.320) and Group C (M = 0.374). Again, there is less emphasis of this value (understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection of the welfare of all people and for nature) for Group A compared to the other two groups.

For Power, the mean score for Group A (M = -0.493) is significantly different from Group B (M = -0.936), indicating that those with secondary education have less aversion towards being rich, having a lot of money and being the one who makes decisions and being the leader, compared to Group B.

The mean score for Tradition for Group A (M = -0.025) was also significantly different from Group B (M = -0.425), showing that although all groups do not place importance on this value;

those with tertiary education place much less importance on this value (subordination to abstract objects such as religion and culture) compared to those with secondary education. The following hypothesis is accepted for the above four personal values: Benevolence, Universalism, Power and Tradition but rejected for Universalism, Security, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation and Conformity:

H3: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on the educational level of the respondent

5.7.4 Personal values and area of residence

In terms of the location of respondents' normal residence (urban, semi-rural or rural areas) it is observed that there was no significant difference in the mean scores of all the personal values between the groups. The statistical outputs for the one-way ANOVA is presented in Appendix 7.

Therefore, the following hypothesis is rejected for all personal values:

H4: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on the location of residence of the respondent

5.7.5 Personal values and nationality

When respondents are split into Malaysians (187) and Non-Malaysians (52), it is observed that there are statistically significant differences between the two groups in the mean score for some of the personal values, as presented in the independent sample t-tests results in Table 5.20 below. The full results of the tests are provided in Appendix 8.

Table 5.20 Independent sample t-tests results for personal values by nationality

Nationality		N	Mean	t-test for Equality of Means	
				t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Achievement	Malaysian	187	-0.434	-2.567	0.011
	Non-Malaysian	52	-0.093		
Power	Malaysian	187	-0.941	-4.103	0.000
	Non-Malaysian	52	-0.426		
Tradition	Malaysian	187	-0.193	5.926	0.000
	Non-Malaysian	52	-0.790		

The difference in mean scores between Malaysians and Non-Malaysians for Achievement, Power and Tradition are statistically significant, although they are all negatively scored, indicating these three values are not prioritised relative to other values in the spectrum of personal values for both Malaysians and Non-Malaysians. Independent sample t-tests results indicate that the mean score for Achievement among Malaysians (M = -0.434) is significantly less than for non-Malaysians (-0.093). This means that Malaysians value Achievement much less than non-Malaysians, and the same is true for Power (Malaysians M = -0.941, Non-Malaysians M = -0.426). On the other hand, non-Malaysians scored significantly lower (M = -0.790) for Tradition compared to Malaysians (M = -0.193), indicating that non-Malaysians' lack of emphasis on the value of Tradition is much more than Malaysians. The following hypothesis is accepted for Achievement, Power and Tradition, but rejected for all other personal values:

H5: there is a difference in the personal value scores based on the nationality of the respondent

5.7.6 Summary of analysis for personal values and demographics

From the analyses above, respondents from different age groups demonstrated significantly different mean scores for all personal values except for Self-Direction and Hedonism. The demographic variable of age seems to have the most effect on the personal value profiles of respondents. The personal value scores for Benevolence, Universalism, Power and Tradition are different for those with different educational levels; while a difference is observed for

Achievement, Power and Tradition when comparing respondents who are Malaysians and non-Malaysians. Hedonism and Conformity scores seem to defer between male and female respondents. In addressing RQ 1, "What is the impact of demographic characteristics on the personal value profile of tourists to Malaysia?", these demographic variables have had different effects on different value profiles of tourists to Malaysia, as detailed above.

5.8 PERSONAL VALUE PROFILES AND CBT TOURISTS

RQ2: What is the personal value profile of tourists who visit a Homestay in Malaysia?

The second research question looks at the relationship between personal values and the destination selected by respondents, item "B" in the theoretical framework presented in Figure 2.7. This relationship can be represented by the following hypothesis:

H6: There is a difference in the personal value priorities between guests who visit Homestays and those who do not visit a Homestay.

5.8.1 Personal value profiles: comparison between homestay and non-homestay guests

Figure 5.1 below shows the mean values of each of the personal values for the whole sample (239 respondents) and the relative importance of these ten personal values, which are: Security (M = 0.376), Self-Direction (M = 0.311), Universalism (M = 0.286), Benevolence (M = 0.190), Conformity (M = 0.109) and Hedonism (M = 0.024). The other personal values have a negative score, indicating an aversion towards these values: Stimulation (M = -0.298), Tradition (M = -0.323), Achievement (M = -0.359) and Power (M = -0.829). It is noteworthy that Power, which is a personal value directly opposing Universalism in the circular structure of values relations, has the highest negative score, indicating that it is the least important value relative to the other nine values.

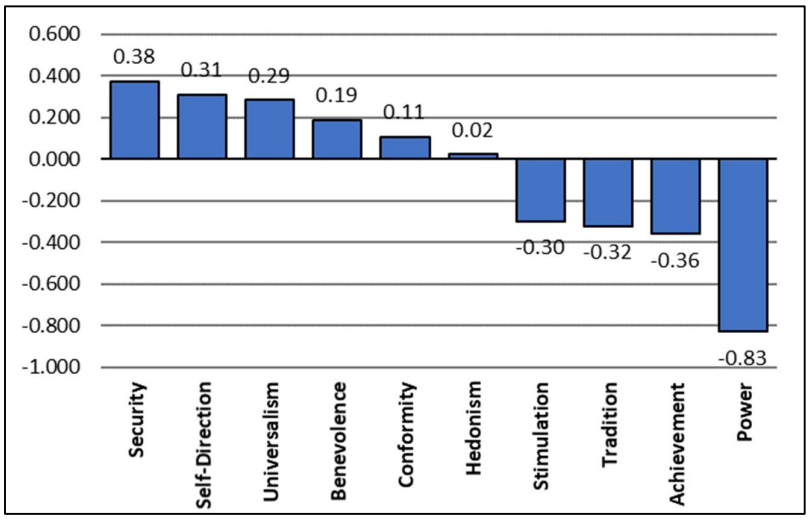


Figure 5.1 Relative importance of 10 personal values of tourists who visit Malaysia

When respondents are split into Homestay and Non-Homestay groups, Homestay guests (Figure 5.2) prioritised the personal value of Self-Direction (M = 0.327), followed by Security (M = 0.292), Universalism (M = 0.229), Benevolence (M = 0.190), Hedonism (M = 0.076) and Conformity (M = 0.052). Again, Power (M = -0.701) appears to be the least important personal value for visitors of Homestay destinations in Malaysia.

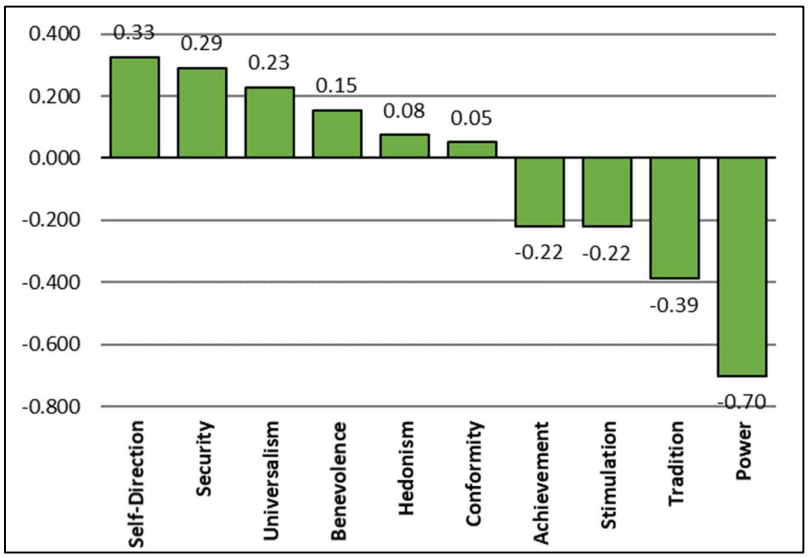


Figure 5.2 Relative importance of 10 personal values of tourists who visit Homestays

As shown in Figure 5.3 below, for Non-Homestay guests, the personal value with the highest mean score is Security (M = 0.557), followed by Universalism (M = 0.407), Self-Direction (M = 0.278) and Benevolence (M = 0.265) . Again, Power (M = -1.104) appears to be the least important personal value for visitors of Non-Homestay destinations in Malaysia.

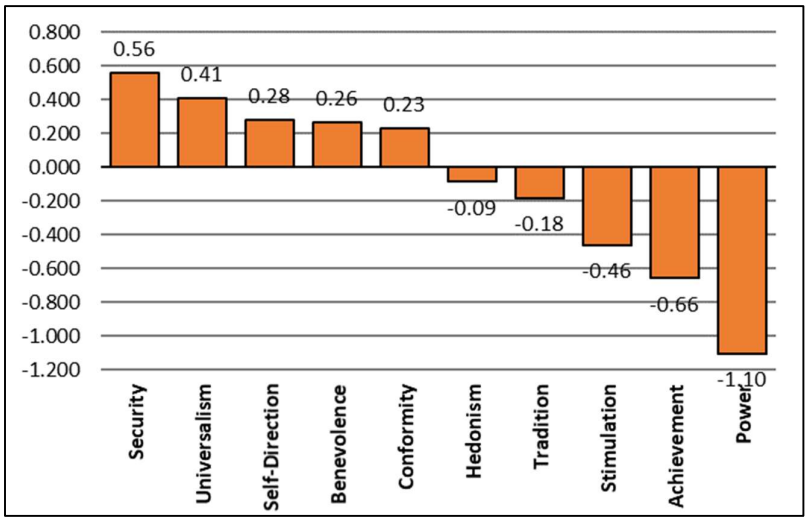


Figure 5.3 Relative importance of 10 personal values of Non-Homestay guests

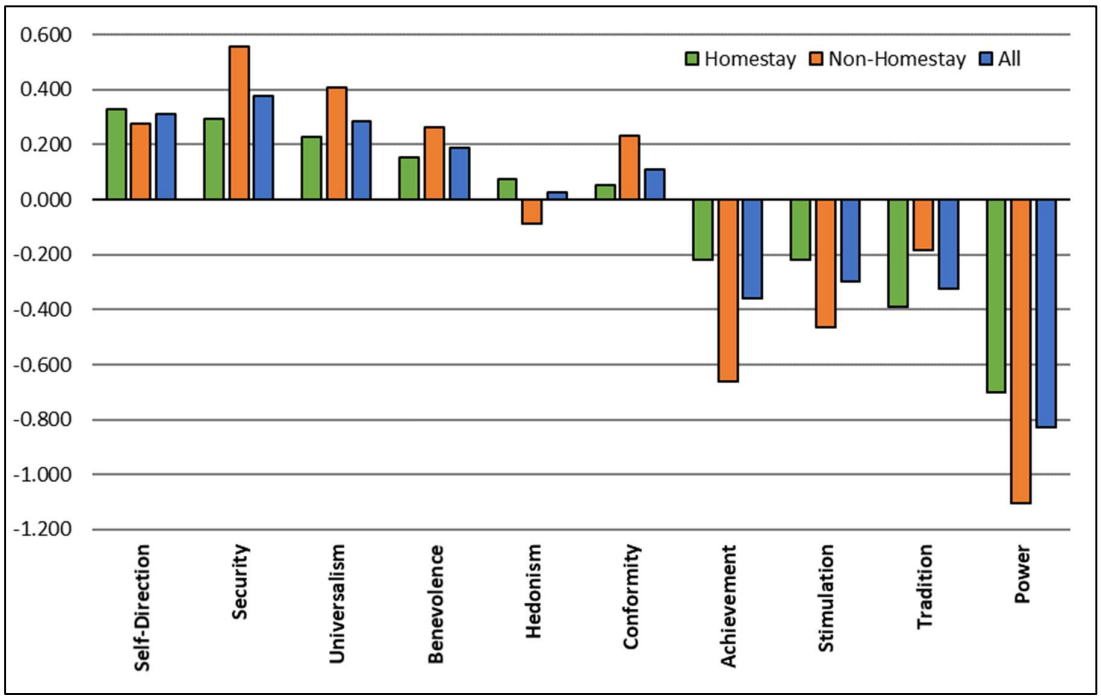


Figure 5.4 Comparison of personal value scores for Homestay and Non-Homestay visitors

From Figures 5.4 above, it is noted that the four personal values of relative importance for Homestay guests and Non-Homestay guests are the same as that of the whole sample (i.e. all visitors to Malaysia): Security, Self-Direction, Universalism and Benevolence. However, while Security has the highest mean score for all guests generally, as well as for guests to Non-Homestay destinations, Self-Direction is the personal value with the highest mean score for Homestay visitors. It is observed that for the two groups of guests (as well as for the whole sample), the same four Personal Values are highly prioritised, but their rankings are different between the groups.

To determine whether the difference in the mean score for each value between the two groups (Non-Homestay, Homestay) is in fact significant, independent sample t-test was conducted and selected results of this analysis is presented in Table 5.21 below, with full results provided in Appendix 9.

Table 5.21 Independent sample t-tests results for personal values by destination choice

Group Statistics				t-test for Equality of Means	
Homestay Visit		**N**	**Mean**	**t**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Universalism	Yes	163	0.229	-2.574	0.011
	No	76	0.407		
Stimulation	Yes	163	-0.221	2.199	0.029
	No	76	-0.463		
Achievement	Yes	163	-0.219	3.801	0.000
	No	76	-0.660		
Power	Yes	163	-0.701	3.129	0.002
	No	76	-1.104		
Security	Yes	163	0.292	-3.590	0.000
	No	76	0.557		
Tradition	Yes	163	-0.388	-2.171	0.031
	No	76	-0.183		

The results of the Levene's test for equality of variances for all six personal values with significantly different means presented in Appendix 9 all show a Sig. value of more than 0.05 (0.851, 0.894, 0.062, 0.570, 0.149 and 0.520 for Universalism, Stimulation, Achievement,

Power, Security and Tradition respectively) indicating that equal variances is assumed, i.e. the variance of scores for the two groups of respondents are the same.

The results in Table 5.21 show that for the personal value of Universalism, there was significant difference (sig. 2 tailed 0.011) in the mean scores between Homestay guests (M = 0.229) and Non-Homestay guests (M = 0.407) . The same is observed for Security, where there was significant difference in the mean score between the Homestay guests (M = 0.292) and Non-Homestay guests (M = 0.557). There was also a significant difference in the mean scores for Stimulation (Homestay M = -0.221; Non-Homestay M = -0.463), Achievement (Homestay M = -0.219; Non-Homestay M = -0.660), Power (Homestay M = -0.701; Non-Homestay M = -1.104), and Tradition (Homestay M = -0.388; Non-Homestay M = -0.183).

Hence, it is observed that Security and Universalism are significantly more important for Non-Homestay guests compared to Homestay guests. The other four personal values with significant difference in the mean scores all have a negative value, indicating a lack of priority for both groups. The aversion towards Stimulation, Achievement and Power is stronger among non-Homestay guests compared to Homestay guests; while the aversion towards Tradition is stronger among Homestay guests compared to Non-Homestay guests.

For Benevolence, Self-Direction, Hedonism and Conformity, there was no statistically significant difference in the mean scores between Homestay and Non-Homestay groups.

In terms of value priority between the two groups of respondents, it is observed therefore that Security is significantly more important for Non-Homestay guests compared to Homestay guests, and Universalism is significantly more important for Non-Homestay guests than Homestay guests; whereas Self-Direction and Benevolence are found to be equally important for both groups (there being no significant difference in the mean scores for Self-Direction and Benevolence from the t-test results above).

Based on the analyses discussed above, the following hypothesis is accepted:

H6: There is a difference in the personal value priorities between guests who visit Homestays and those who do visit a Homestay.

In all groups, Power was the least important, indicating a lack of emphasis among all respondents on values which relate to being in charge, instructing and making decisions, being a leader and being rich. Other values that are not prioritised among all groups are Tradition, Stimulation and Achievement.

5.9 INFORMATION SEARCH STRATEGIES

RQ3: What are the information search strategies employed by Homestay tourists in relation to the channels and sources consulted?

In order to better understand the sources of information employed by visitors to Malaysia, and specifically by Homestay visitors, an analysis of the information search strategies adopted by respondents has been conducted. In conducting this analysis several questions will need to be addressed, sequentially for each group of visitors. Thereafter, it will enable the relationship identified as item "E" in the theoretical framework presented in Figure 2.7 to be investigated. In this context, the following hypotheses will be tested:

H7a: There is a difference in the information search **sources** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists in terms of the *types* of sources used.

H7b: There is a difference in the information search **sources** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists in terms of the *number of sources* used

H8a: There is a difference in the information search **channels** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists

H8b: There is a difference in the *traditional* information search **channel** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists

H8c: There is a difference in the *online* information search **channel** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists

Respondents were asked to identify the importance of each source of information by indicating their score from 1- extremely important to 5 - not at all important, on a five-point Likert scale on 15 items of information source enabled by the traditional channel (offline) and 22 items of information source via web-based (online) channel. The lists of information sources in the survey and its labels in this report are presented in Table 5.22 below.

Table 5.22 Lists of information sources (traditional and online channels)

Label in data set	Information Sources	Label in Figures and text
Traditional Channel		
TM01	Official sources of tourist information for promoting the destination (by government agencies, including tourist information centre)	Govt and TIC
TM02	Suppliers (transport, accommodation, complementary offers)	Suppliers
TM03	Travel agencies or tour operators in my country (outside Malaysia)	Overseas travel agencies
TM04	Travel agencies or tour operators in Malaysia	Malaysian travel agencies
TM05	Media specialising in tourism (tv, radio, magazine)	TV, magazine on tourism
TM06	Media specialising in areas of thematic interest (sports, wines, cinema, women)	TV, magazine on others
TM07	Consultant at tourism Fairs & Exhibitions (MATTA, MITA)	Fairs and exhibitions
TM08	Books	Books
TM09	Travel guides	Travel guides
TM10	Documentaries	Documentaries
TM11	Films and TV series	Films and TV
TM12	Advertising	Advertising
TM13	Friends, acquaintances and family	Friends and family
TM14	Opinion leaders	Opinion leaders
TM15	Other sources: _____	Other sources
Information Sources (Web-based/online channel)		
OM01	Search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo)	Search engines
OM02	Web pages of official tourist information	Web page (official)
OM03	Web pages of unofficial tourist information	Web page (unofficial)
OM04	Web pages of intermediaries (lastminute, Expedia, trivago)	Web page (intermediaries)

OM05	Web pages of travel agent in Malaysia	Web page (travel agent Malaysia)
OM06	Web pages of travel agent in my country (outside Malaysia)	Web page (travel agent Overseas)
OM07	Web pages of suppliers (transport, accommodation, complementary offers)	Web page of suppliers
OM08	Web pages with assessment by users (e.g., TripAdvisor)	Web page with assessment (TripAdvisor)
OM09	General social networks of friends & family (Facebook, Twitter)	General social networks (FB, twitter)
OM10	Social networks specialised in tourism	Tourism social networks
OM11	Blogs/video logs (vlogs) specialised in tourism	Tourism Blogs/vlogs
OM12	Portals for letting private houses or rooms (e.g., Airbnb)	House letting portals (Airbnb)
OM13	House swapping portals	House swapping portals
OM14	Portals for tourist accommodation letting (e.g., HomeAway)	Portals for tourist accommodation letting (HomeAway)
OM15	Portals for hotel reservations (Booking.com, Agoda etc.)	Portals for hotel reservations (booking, Agoda)
OM16	Portals for tourist activities and resources (wikitravel)	Portals for tourist activities (wikitravel)
OM17	Applications for sharing photos (Instagram, Flickr, Pinterest)	App for photo sharing (Instagram, Flickr)
OM18	Applications for sharing videos (e.g., YouTube, vimeo)	App for video sharing (YouTube)
OM19	Forums (e.g., lonely planet)	Forums (lonely planet)
OM20	Portals for traveller hospitality (couchsurfing)	Portals for traveller hospitality
OM21	Maps (e.g., maps.Google)	Maps
OM22	Other sources: _____	Other sources

5.9.1 Information search strategies for visitors to Malaysia

For all guests who visit Malaysia, based on Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6 below, which show the mean scores for sources enabled by traditional channels and sources enabled by online channels respectively, the most important source of information is search engines (online channel) (mean 2.64) followed by friends and family (traditional channel) (mean 2.69). No other source of information had a mean score below 3, indicating that only these two sources, “search engines” and “friends and family” are important for respondents in searching for information for their trip. Moderately important sources of information include social networks such as Facebook and Twitter (mean 3.08), hotel reservation portals (mean 3.3) and maps (mean 3.33).

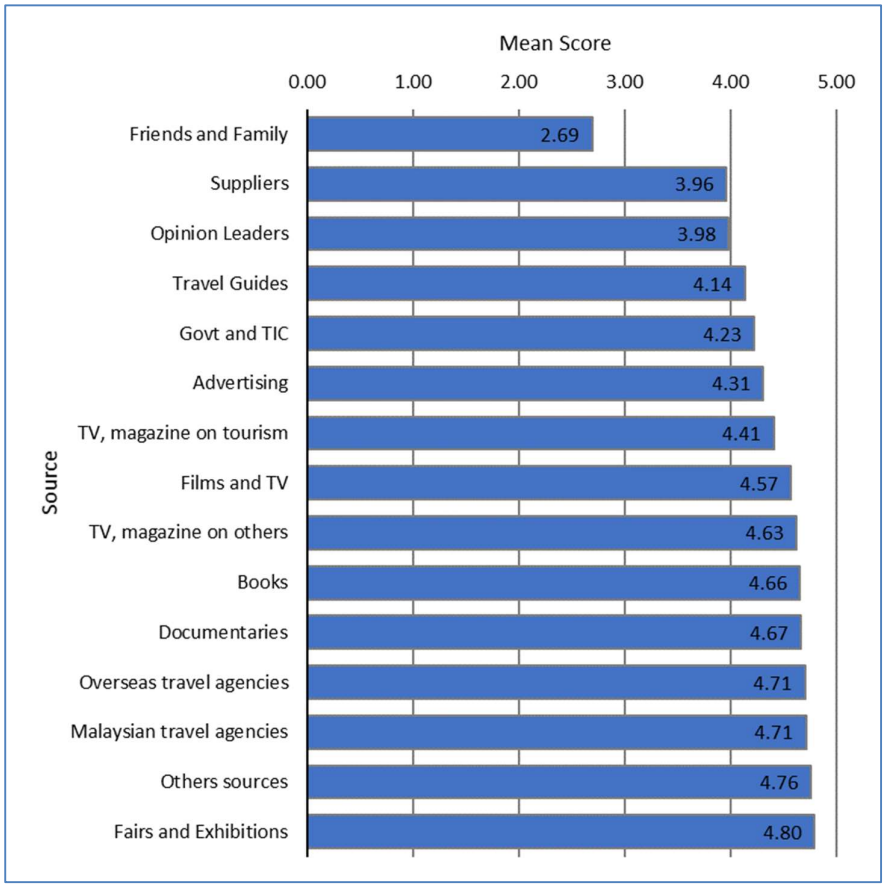


Figure 5.5 Information sources (traditional channel) for all visitors

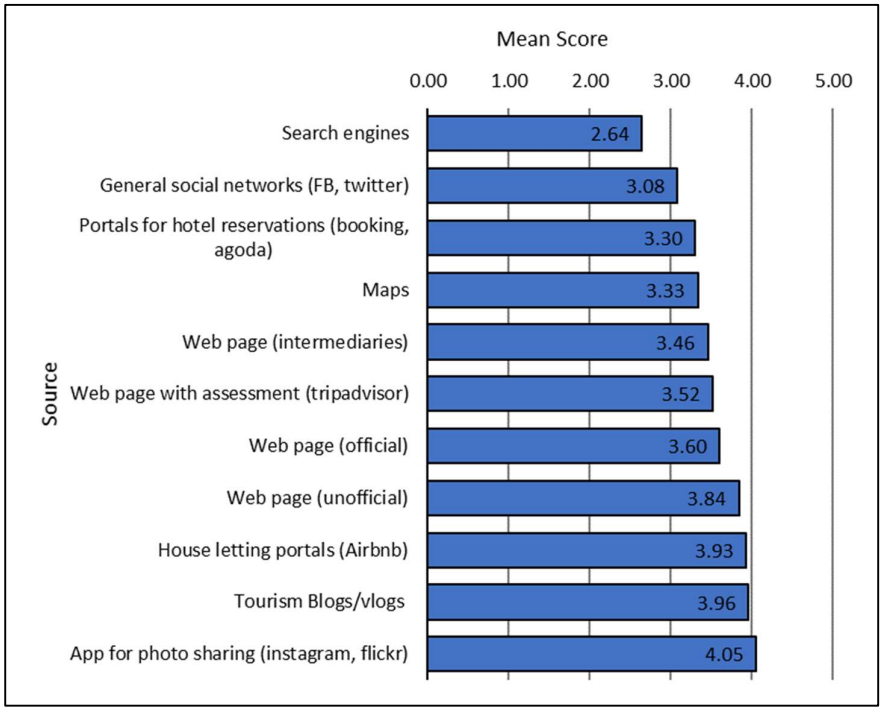


Figure 5.6 Information sources (online channel) for all visitors

5.9.2 Information search strategies for visitors to Homestays

For those who visited Homestays, respondents were asked how they initially got to know of the existence of Homestays as a tourist destination. 90 out of the 163 respondents who visited a homestay responded to this question. Most of the respondents first heard of the existence of Homestays through friends and family (60%). This is followed by search engines including online accommodation portals (18.9%) and advertising (13.3%) by travel agencies and the mass media (television).

This observation is reinforced by the results of respondents' evaluation of the importance of various sources of information in the survey. For Homestay guests, based on the charts in Figure 5.7 and Figure 5.8 below, it is clear that the most important source of information is from friends and family (traditional channel) (mean 2.37), followed by search engines (mean 3.1) and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter (mean 3.24) (online channel). It is useful to note that essentially, for Homestay guests, the *only* important source of information is from friends and family, as the mean scores for all other sources are all above 3, indicating that these are less than moderately important. There is very little reliance on online sources to obtain information about Homestay destinations.

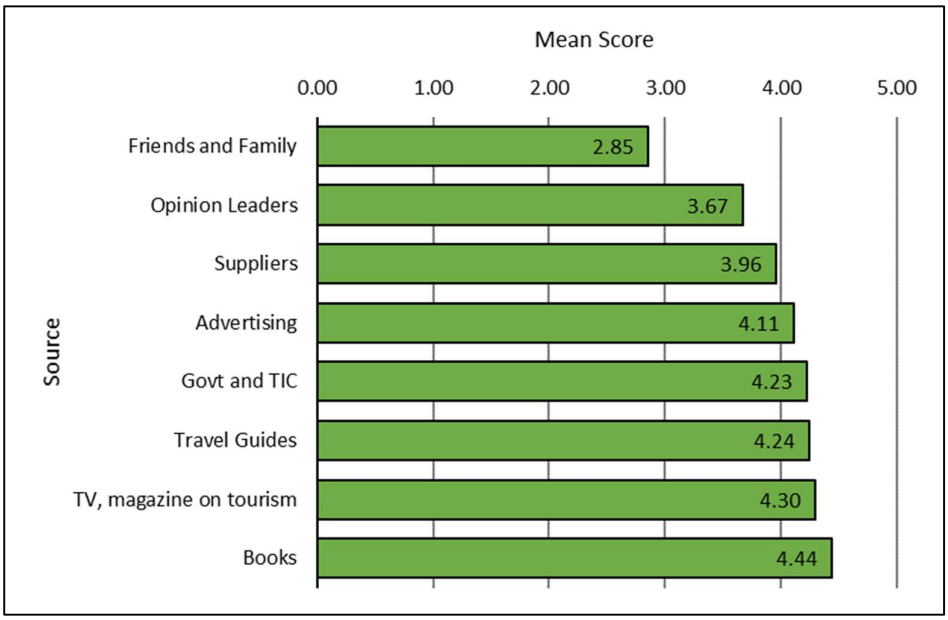


Figure 5.7 Information sources (traditional channel) for Homestay guests

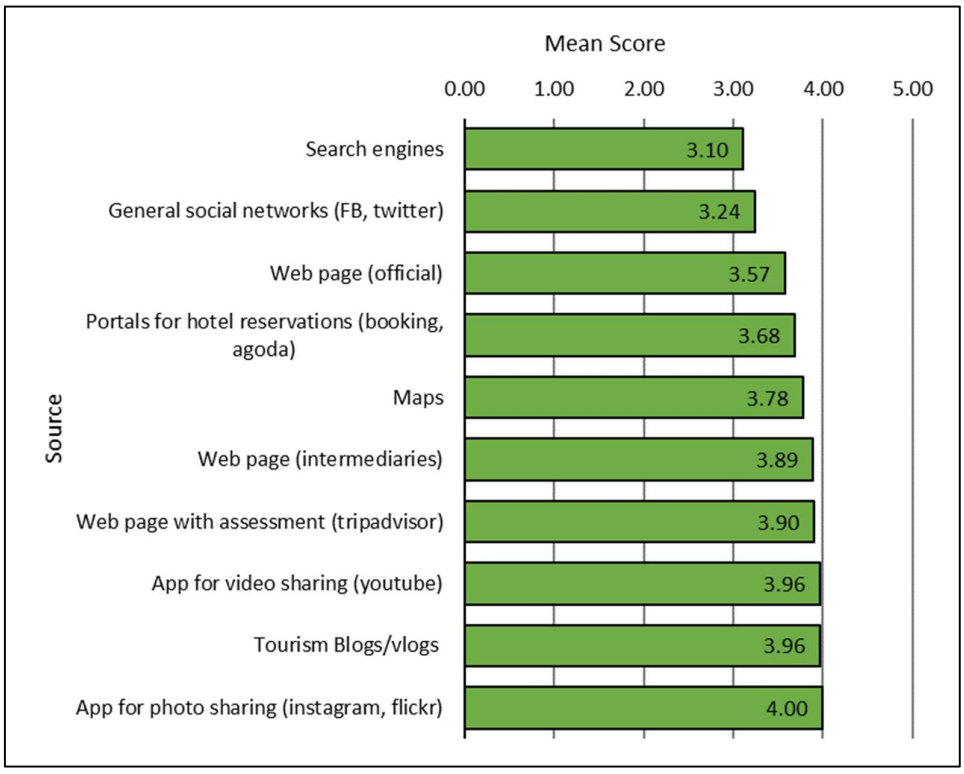


Figure 5.8 Information sources (online channel) for Homestay guests

5.9.3 Information search strategies for visitors to non-Homestay destinations

For guests visiting a non-Homestay destination, as presented in Figure 5.9 and Figure 5.10 below, the most important source of information is search engines (mean score 1.7) (online), followed by friends and family (mean 2.37) (traditional). They also use maps (mean 2.42) and hotel portals (mean 2.51) as well as web-pages of intermediaries (such as lastminute, expedia and trivago) (mean 2.61) to obtain information on the destinations. General social networks (such as Facebook and Twitter) (mean 2.76) and webpages with assessment feature (such as TripAdvisor) (mean 2.77) were also important. All other sources had a mean score of more than 3, indicating that they are less important sources of information for guests to Non-Homestay destinations in Malaysia.



Figure 5.9 Information sources (traditional channel) for non-homestay guests

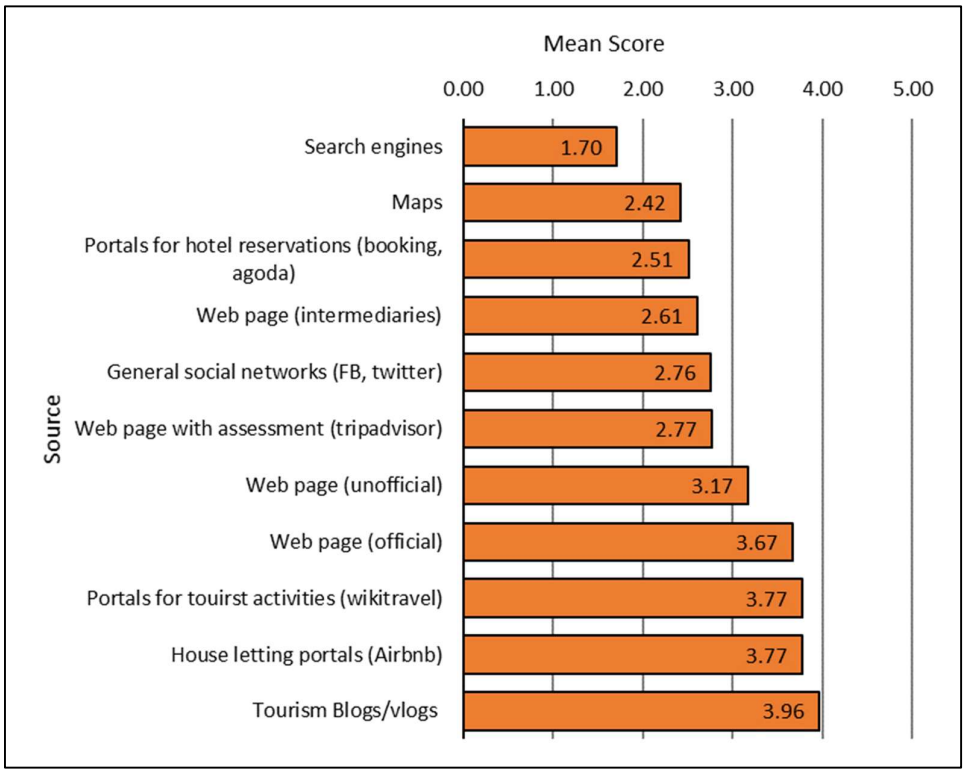


Figure 5.10 Information sources (online channel) for non-homestay guests

Based on the findings above, the information search strategies of Homestay and Non-Homestay guests can be summarized in Table 5.23 below. Clearly, the information search strategies employed by guests visiting Homestays is the traditional source of friends and family, supplemented by online sources of search engines and social media networks and web pages.

Table 5.23 Summary of search strategies between Homestay and Non-Homestay guests

Homestay	Mean	Non-Homestay	Mean
Friends and Family (Traditional)	2.85	Search engines (online)	1.70
Search engines (online)	3.10	Friends and family (traditional)	2.37
General social networks (FB, twitter) (online)	3.24	Maps (online)	2.42
Web page (official) (online)	3.57	Portals for hotel reservations (booking, Agoda) (online)	2.51
Opinion leaders (Traditional)	3.57	Web page (intermediaries) (online)	2.51

The results in Table 5.23 above indicate that the most important information source employed by Homestay guests is different compared to non-Homestay guests; friends and family is the

most important source of information for Homestay guests, while for non-Homestay guests, search engines is the most important source. The results also indicate that for Homestay guests, only one source of information is important, which is 'friends and family' (mean score <3), while for non-Homestay guests, several different sources were important, with 'search engines' being the most important. Hence, the following hypotheses are accepted:

H7a: There is a difference in the information search **sources** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists in terms of the *types* of sources used, and

H7b: There is a difference in the information search **sources** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists in terms of the *number of sources* used

5.9.4 Comparison of information search channels for visitors to non-Homestay destinations

It is also clear from the above analysis that for Homestay guests, the most important channel employed is the traditional channel (linking them to friends and family via face to face or telephone interactions), whereas for Non-Homestay guests, the channel prioritised is online channel (search engines). Hence, the following hypothesis is accepted:

H8a: There is a difference in the information search **channels** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists

Further statistical tests are required in order to investigate whether there is a difference in the use of different information search channels (offline and online), and to test the following hypothesis:

H8b: There is a difference in the *traditional* information search **channel** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists

H8c: There is a difference in the *online* information search **channel** employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists

5.9.4.1 Traditional Channel

Focusing on the mean scores of traditional channel for information search strategies for both Homestay and Non-Homestay guests, the top five traditional sources of all respondents are identified and the mean scores for each source are as detailed in Table 5.24 below. The consolidated mean for these top five sources via the traditional channel used by all respondents are computed and is presented in Table 5.24 below.

Table 5.24 Top five sources of traditional media

Traditional sources	Mean
Friends and family	2.77
Suppliers	3.98
Opinion leaders	4.03
Travel guides	4.18
Govt and TIC	4.23
Consolidated Top 5	**3.84**

Table 5.25 Descriptive statistics and t-tests results for traditional channel

Descriptive statistics				t-test for equality of means		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
HSTMTOP5	142	3.832	1.294	-0.054	211	0.957
NHSTMTOP5	71	3.842	1.175			

Next, to compare the mean scores of traditional channel use between Homestay (HSTMTOP5) and Non-Homestay groups (NHSTMTOP5), independent samples t-test was conducted and the result is presented in Table 5.25 above, with the full results in Appendix 10. The Sig. value for Levene's test is larger than 0.05, meaning that the variances for the two groups are assumed. Based on the results in Table 5.25 (Sig. (2-tailed) 0.957), there is *no significant difference* in the mean scores between the use of traditional channel for Homestay guests (M = 3.832) and for Non-Homestay guests (M = 3.842; t(211) = -0.054, p = 0.957, two-tailed) (t-test results when equal variances assumed). Traditional channel is less than moderately important for both

groups of guests (mean 3.832 and 3.842 for Homestay and Non-Homestay groups respectively), and there is no statistically significant difference between the two mean scores.

Therefore, the following hypothesis is not accepted:

H8b: There is a difference in the *traditional* information search channel employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists

5.9.4.2 Online Channel

The top five online sources of all respondents are identified and the mean scores for each source are as detailed in Table 5.26 below. The consolidated mean for these top five sources enabled by the online channel used by all respondents are computed and presented in Table 5.26 below.

Table 5.26 Top five sources of online media

Online sources	Mean
Search engines	2.67
General social networks (FB, twitter)	3.13
Portals for hotel reservations (booking, Agoda)	3.36
Maps	3.41
Web page (intermediaries)	3.52
Consolidated Top 5	**3.21**

Table 5.27 Descriptive statistics and t-tests results for online channel

Descriptive statistics				t-test for equality of means		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
HSOMTOP5	146	3.604	1.630	6.355	189	0.000
NHSOMTOP5	70	2.400	1.113			

To compare the mean scores of online channel use between Homestay (HSOMTOP5) and Non-Homestay groups (NHSOMTOP5), independent samples t-test was conducted and the result is shown in Table 5.27 above. The Sig. value for Levene's test is smaller than 0.05, meaning that the variances for the two groups are not assumed. It can be concluded that there is *significant difference* in the mean scores for the use of online channel for Homestay guests (M = 3.604) and for Non-Homestay guests (M = 2.400), t(189) = 6.355, p = 0.000, two-tailed) (t-test results

when equal variances are not assumed). This means that the online channel is significantly more important (mean 2.400) for Non-Homestay guests than for Homestay guests (mean 3.604). Hence, the following hypothesis is accepted:

H8c: There is a difference in the *online* information search channel employed by CBT tourists compared to other tourists

In conclusion, the use of the online channel is more important for Non-Homestay guests than Homestay guests, while there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups in the use of the traditional channel.

5.9.5 Online information search strategies for CBT

RQ4: In terms of online information search strategies, how well do they meet the information needs of Homestay tourists?

Results from the analysis for RQ 3 indicate that traditional information sources, specifically friends and family, is the most important, and in fact, the only important source of information for Homestay guests. Further, it was also found that the mean score for all online information sources for Homestay guests are above 3, indicating a lack of importance for all of these online sources (search engines, general social networks, web-pages (official), hotel reservation portals) for Homestay guests. Figure 5.7 and Figure 5.8 above show that the only source of information which has a mean score of less than 3, is friends and family. Therefore, it can be concluded that as far as online information search strategies is concerned, at present, it is not meeting the information needs of Homestay tourists, since the only important source of information identified by the respondents is friends and family, a traditional source. The online equivalent of friends and family (general social networks) does not seem to appear important, with a mean score of 3.24 as depicted in Figure 5.8 above.

Ultimately, search strategies would result in reservations for trips, and the respondents were asked about the methods used for making such reservations, i.e. who they approached to make the reservation. Based on Table 5.28 below, 142 respondents answered this question, and it is found that for Homestay guests, the main method used to finalise this process is to book directly with the Homestay owner or management (45.8%) followed by others (39.4%).

Table 5.28 Homestay booking source

Homestay booking source	Frequency	Percentage
Directly with homestay owner/management	65	45.8
Others	56	39.4
Travel agent	14	9.9
Third party website including booking sites	7	4.9
Total	142	100.0

Respondents were also asked how they went about making this reservation for a Homestay visit, in particular, the types of communication/applications they used. Respondents were encouraged to identify not just one, but all of the relevant channels/applications they used to do so (multiple options may be selected from the list of options for this question). It was observed that offline/traditional channels of face to face and telephone contact contributed 29% of such communication, whereas for online channels, the highest mode was through email (26%) followed by chat apps (such as WhatsApp, WeChat, Line) (23%) and web booking system of the agents (10%), as presented in Table 5.29 below.

Table 5.29 Channels used for reservations

Channel	Homestay		Non-Homestay	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Face to face	26	13	6	4
Telephone	34	16	21	15
Chat apps	48	23	11	8
Email	53	26	24	17
Web-chat online	4	2	5	3
Hotel web booking system			26	18
Agent's web booking system	21	10	8	6
Others	20	10	41	29
Total	**206**	**100**	**142**	**100**

In comparison, as presented in Table 5.29 above, non-Homestay guests used less of offline channels (19%) and rely more on online channels, specifically hotel web booking system (18%) and emails (17%). Less reliance was placed on chat apps (8%) and agent's web booking system (6%) compared to Homestay guests.

So, while sources enabled by the online channel do not feature as an important **source of information**, respondents did make use of the online channel to **make reservations**, albeit without relying on online sources of information to do so. Typically, information about the Homestays would have been obtained through friends and family, and contact made with homestay management through various online media such as chat apps, and emails in order to secure the reservations.

5.9.6 Online information search strategies: areas of improvement

RQ5: Whether improvements are necessary, and if so, what are the areas of improvements which will increase the effectiveness of meeting these information needs?

In order to investigate how the reservation of a Homestay trip can be improved, a question regarding the areas of improvement which will increase the effectiveness of meeting the information needs of visitors was asked. In response to this question, respondents indicated that the key improvement to meet the information needs of Homestay guests would be to have a website with information on Homestays and how they may be contacted (39%), having a central online reservation system for homestays (26%), having travel agencies abroad (15%) and travel agencies locally (13%), as presented in Table 5.30 below.

Table 5.30 Suggestions for improvement – Homestays

Improvement	Frequency	Percentage
Foreign travel agencies	22	15.0
Malaysian travel agencies	19	1.9
Central online homestay booking system	38	25.9
Website with homestay info and contact	58	39.5
Others	10	6.8
Total	**147**	**100.0**

Table 5.31 Suggestions for improvement (by nationality)

	Non Malaysian		Malaysian	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Foreign travel agencies	22	52.4	0	0
Malaysian travel agencies	2	4.8	16	15.5
Central online homestay booking system	2	4.8	35	34.0
Website with homestay info and contact	12	28.6	46	44.7
Others	4	9.5	6	5.8
Total	**42**	**100.0**	**103**	**100.0**

Among foreign guests, the key suggestion would be to have travel agencies in their home countries (52%) and to have websites with Homestay information (29%). For Malaysian guests, the most popular improvement strategy proposed is to have websites with Homestay information (45%), followed by having a central online booking system for Homestays (34%), as presented in Table 5.31. These results indicate that creating and maintaining a digital presence and updated information online is crucial to improving the information provision of Homestays, and thus meet the information needs of potential homestay guests.

5.10 PERSONAL VALUES, INFORMATION SEARCH STRATEGIES AND COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM

Based on the theoretical model proposed in this research, the relationships between personal values, information search strategy and the selection of Homestay destinations require closer examination in order to address the final research question as follows:

RQ6: Which are the key antecedents affecting information search strategies of tourists who select Homestay destinations?

In order to investigate the dynamics between personal values and demographics (characteristics of the vacationer), travel party (situational variable), the selection Homestays, purpose of trip (characteristics of the vacation) and information search strategies and to address RQ6, multiple

regression analysis was done to investigate the influence of these antecedents on information search strategies for Homestay tourists. Before performing this analysis, to identify any patterns or groups of information sources which may be correlated or clustered, exploratory principal components analysis was conducted. Thereafter, multiple regression was done on each factor identified to discover which of these specific variables (personal values, demographic characteristics, travel party, purpose of trip and destination type) have an impact or influence on the information search factors (identified through factor analysis).

5.10.1 Exploratory PCA

To discover the existence of patterns or clusters within the data among the various sources of information in the list, exploratory principal components analysis (PCA) is carried out on all the sources; 15 items in the traditional sources list and 22 items in the online sources list were included with varimax (orthogonal) rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = 0.807, which is well above the 0.5 recommended by Kaiser (1974). This score is considered 'meritorious' according to the Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999) guidelines, meaning the patterns of correlations are compact and should yield clear and distinctly reliable factors. Eight factors had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained 70.54% of the variance, but after analysing each of the elements contained in the factors, some of the elements are found to be co-related to more than one factor, and a decision is made to cluster them to the most appropriate category based on the description of each of these elements.

For example, "app for video sharing" appears to co-relate to the factor 'general traditional sources" with a factor score of 0.646, but also co-relate to the factor 'influencers' at a lower factor score of 0.450. As video sharing is not a traditional (offline source), the factor 'influencers' is more appropriate because this item is connected to sharing information online, associated with 'influencers' - which include both online and offline sources, together with

other similar sources such as ‘app for photo sharing’ and ‘general social networks (Facebook etc)’. Other elements in the list have been clustered based on its factor loadings, with the highest factor loading selected for each element, except for five items which were allocated to an alternative factor with a lower factor loading, because the items are more appropriately associated with those factors, instead of its original factor based solely on the loading scores, as presented in Table 5.32 below.

This results in seven factors retained, one being “other sources” with only 100 (out of 239) responses for TM15 and 96 respondents for OM22. Six other factors that are categorised with factor loadings after rotation are presented in Table 5.32 below.

Table 5.32 Summary of exploratory factor analysis results for information search strategies

Rotated Component Matrix[a]									
		Component							
		General traditional sources	Search portals	Agencies - offline	Agencies - online	Tourism specific portals	Other sources (to drop)	Influencers	(to drop)
TM11	Films and TV	**0.789**							
TM08	Books	**0.780**							
TM10	Documentaries	**0.780**							
TM09	Travel guides	**0.725**							
TM05	Media (tv, radio, magazine) on tourism	**0.671**				0.396			
OM18	App for video sharing (youtube)	0.646						**0.450**	
TM12	Advertising	**0.588**		0.342					0.336
TM06	Media on thematic interest	**0.570**				0.560			
OM17	App for photo sharing (instagram, flickr)	0.531						**0.517**	
OM08	Web page with assessment (Tripadvisor)		**0.755**						
OM03	Tourism Web page (unofficial)		**0.742**						
OM15	Portals for hotel reservations (booking, agoda)		**0.725**						0.316
OM01	Search engines		**0.648**						
OM12	House letting portals (Airbnb)		**0.635**				0.339		
OM11	Tourism blogs/vlogs	0.316	**0.471**						
TM02	Suppliers			**0.788**					
TM01	Govt and TIC			**0.745**					
TM04	Malaysian travel agencies	0.314		**0.646**	0.383				
TM03	Overseas travel agencies	0.450		**0.599**					
TM07	Fairs and exhibition	0.428		**0.540**	0.317				
OM05	Web page (travel agent Malaysia)				**0.806**				
OM06	Wep page (travel agent Overseas)	0.400			**0.669**				
OM10	Tourism social networks				**0.557**	0.304			0.311
OM02	Tourism Web page (official)		0.466	0.330	**0.482**				
OM19	Forums (lonelyplanet)	0.373				**0.558**	0.438		
OM20	Portals for traveller hospitality (couchsurfing)	0.391				**0.540**	0.403		
OM16	Portals for tourist activities (wikitravel)		0.339			**0.535**			0.320
OM07	Web page of suppliers			0.379	**0.390**	0.498			
OM14	Portals for tourist accommodation letting (Homeaway)	0.319			0.421	**0.490**	0.475		
TM15	Other sources						0.846		
OM22	Other sources						0.798		
OM13	House swapping portals				0.414	**0.464**	0.471		
TM14	Opinion Leaders							**0.771**	
TM13	Friends and family							**0.598**	
OM09	General social networks (FB, Twitter)		0.443			0.313		**0.560**	0.301
OM21	Maps		**0.326**						0.662

OM04	Web page of intermediaries (lastminute, expedia, trivago)		**0.507**						0.517

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.[a]
a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations.

In order to perform multiple regression analysis to determine the effect of various antecedents on information search strategies for Homestay guests, new variables representing respondents' scores on each of the new categories of information sources are created by totalling the scores on items in the category of information source for each respondent. For example, to obtain the score for 'General traditional sources', the respondent's score for items TM11, TM08, TM10, TM09, TM05, TM12, TM06 are added up. The new variables and its associated sources are presented in Table 5.33 below.

Table 5.33 Factors representing information search categories

Factor	Name	Information sources
1	General Traditional sources	Films and TV; books; documentaries; travel guides; media on tourism; advertising; TV, magazine on thematic interest;
2	Search portals	Web page with assessment; tourism web page; portals for hotel reservations; search engines; House-letting portals, tourism blogs/vlogs; maps; web-page of intermediaries
3	Agencies - offline	Suppliers; Govt & TIC; Malaysian travel agencies; Overseas travel agencies; Fairs & exhibition
4	Agencies - online	Web page (travel agent-Malaysia); web page (travel agent-overseas); tourism social networks, tourism web page (official); web page of suppliers
5	Tourism specific portals	Forums; portals for traveller hospitality; portals for tourist activities; portals for tourist accommodation letting; house swapping portals
6	Influencers	App for video sharing; App for photo sharing; opinion leaders; friends and family; general social networks
7	Other sources	Other sources

5.10.2 Multiple regression analysis

5.10.2.1 Types of regression

With these new factors identified, multiple regression analysis was used to assess the ability of the characteristics of the vacationer, situational variables and the characteristics of the vacation

to predict the effect on information search strategies. There are three types of multiple regression analyses:

1. Standard or simultaneous
2. Hierarchical or sequential
3. Stepwise

Hierarchical regression method involves selecting predictors based on past work and the order of entering these predictors is determined by the researcher; with known predictors entered first in order of their importance in predicting the outcome, followed by new predictors either all at once, or hierarchically by importance.

The stepwise method of regression is generally not favoured because the decisions about the order in which predictors are entered are based purely on statistical criteria selected by the computer. This takes away the autonomy of the researcher in selecting which method to adopt, and because it is derived by the computer, decisions made can be based on random slight differences in the data, which may conflict with the function of the predictor in the model.

In standard multiple regression, predictors are forced into the model simultaneously. This method is strongly advocated for testing models and theories (Field, 2016). This is because random variation in the data in stepwise techniques are unlikely to have replicable results if the model is retested. In this research, the regression method used is the standard or simultaneous regression in order to allow the model to be tested by checking how much variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables included in the 'characteristics of the vacationer', 'situational variables' and 'characteristics of the vacation' as presented in the theoretical framework. The results of the regression analyses for each dependent variable (factorised information sources) are presented below:

5.10.3 Regression on General Traditional Sources (factor 1)

To investigate the influence of the independent variables on the group of information sources categorised as General Traditional Sources, regression analysis was conducted. The results of the regression are presented in Table 5.34 below.

Multicollinearity exists when independent variables are highly correlated and a high correlation will affect the quality of the regression model. Multicollinearity in this model is within acceptable range. To determine this, two values are relevant. Tolerance indicates how much of the variability of a particular independent variable is not explained by the other independent variables in the model, and a tolerance score of more than 0.1 is acceptable (Pallant, 2013). Menard (1995) states that a tolerance below 0.2 indicates a potential problem. VIF (variance inflation factor) is the inverse of tolerance and a value of above 10 would indicate multicollinearity (Bowerman and O'Connell, 1990). From Table 5.35, the tolerance score for all the independent variables is more than 0.2; and the VIF is less than 5.

Table 5.34 Model summary for regression analysis (General Traditional Sources – factor 1)

Model Summary[b]									
				Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square		R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.490[a]	0.240	0.175	8.552	0.240	3.669	17	197	0.000

b. Dependent Variable: General traditional sources

The R^2 square of the model as presented in Table 5.34 indicates how much of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model, and the adjusted R^2 indicates how well the model generalises to the population, i.e. how much of the variance in the dependent variable would be explained by the model if it was based on the population rather than the sample. In this model, the adjusted R^2 is 0.175, which means that 17.5% of the variation in the dependent variable, General Traditional Sources is explained by the variation in the independent variables

of the model. The F statistic in this model is 3.669, with a significance of 0.000, indicating that the independent variables included in the model forming the constructs of characteristics of the vacationer, situational variables and characteristics of the vacation have a statistically significant influence on the factor categorised as General Traditional Sources.

Table 5.35 Regression analysis results for General Traditional Sources (factor 1)

Coefficients[a]										
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	34.679	6.434		5.390	0.000	21.990	47.368		
	Age Grp	-0.089	0.718	-0.011	-0.124	0.901	-1.505	1.327	0.500	2.001
	Gender	0.164	1.336	0.008	0.123	0.902	-2.471	2.800	0.829	1.207
	Education Level	0.562	1.031	0.038	0.545	0.586	-1.471	2.595	0.772	1.295
	Residence	1.772	0.987	0.121	1.795	0.074	-0.175	3.720	0.851	1.175
	Nationality split	-4.536	2.022	-0.203	**-2.243**	**0.026**	-8.524	-0.549	0.473	2.115
	Benevolence	0.865	1.337	0.055	0.647	0.519	-1.772	3.501	0.525	1.905
	Universalism	0.612	1.766	0.033	0.346	0.729	-2.870	4.094	0.424	2.357
	Self-Direction	-0.680	1.343	-0.044	-0.506	0.613	-3.329	1.969	0.520	1.924
	Stimulation	-2.130	1.046	-0.184	**-2.037**	**0.043**	-4.193	-0.068	0.471	2.124
	Hedonism	0.000	1.035	0.000	0.000	1.000	-2.041	2.041	0.505	1.982
	Power	0.356	1.265	0.036	0.282	0.778	-2.138	2.851	0.239	4.177
	Security	-1.687	1.569	-0.100	-1.076	0.283	-4.780	1.406	0.444	2.251
	Conformity	-0.099	1.342	-0.007	-0.074	0.941	-2.746	2.548	0.394	2.541
	Tradition	-3.112	1.220	-0.231	**-2.551**	**0.012**	-5.517	-0.706	0.469	2.133
	Homestay visit	-4.751	1.605	-0.238	**-2.961**	**0.003**	-7.915	-1.586	0.597	1.674
	Purpose of Trip	0.291	0.764	0.027	0.381	0.704	-1.216	1.798	0.785	1.273
	Travel Party	1.412	1.073	0.123	1.316	0.190	-0.704	3.528	0.444	2.250

a. Dependent Variable: General Traditional Sources

The beta value in Table 5.35 for each independent variable indicates the contribution made by that variable to the model, positive values indicating a positive relationship between that variable and the dependent variable, if the effects of all other predictors are held constant. The standard error of each beta value indicates the extent of its variation across different samples,

and the t-statistic indicates whether the beta value is significantly different from zero (the regression line is horizontal), i.e. whether the independent variable is making a significant contribution to the model.

The results in Table 5.35 above indicate that the demographic characteristic of Nationality (standardised β -0.203, t statistic -2.243, p = 0.026), the personal value of Stimulation (standardised β -0.184, t statistic -2.037, p = 0.043) and Tradition (standardised β -0.231, t statistic -2.551, p = 0.012) and the selection of Homestay (standardised β -0.238, t statistic -2.961, p = 0.003) have a statistically significant influence on the use of General Traditional Sources as an information source. This means that a change in the nationality of the guest (Non-Malaysian to Malaysian) tend to explain the change in the importance placed on General Traditional Sources from less important to more important (lower score indicating higher importance). It also means that an increase in the emphasis on Tradition and on Stimulation results in a greater importance of General Traditional Sources. In the same way, a move towards selection of Homestay results in an increase in the importance of General Traditional Sources.

Malaysians (who make up the bulk of homestay guests), who prioritise the personal value of Tradition and Stimulation when making a decision to choose a Homestay destination, would rely more heavily on General Traditional Sources as sources of information.

5.10.4 Regression on Search Portals (factor 2)

To investigate the influence of the independent variables on the group of sources categorised as Search Portals, regression analysis was conducted. The results of the regression are presented in Table 5.36 and Table 5.37 below.

Table 5.36 Model summary for regression analysis (Search Portals – factor 2)

Model Summary[b]									
				Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square		R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.586[a]	0.343	0.287	7.873	0.343	6.113	17	199	0.000

b. Dependent Variable: Search Portals

Table 5.37 Regression analysis results for Search Portals (factor 2)

Coefficients[a]										
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	22.274	5.841		3.813	0.000	10.755	33.793		
	Age Grp	0.174	0.659	0.021	0.263	0.792	-1.126	1.474	0.499	2.003
	Gender	-0.347	1.226	-0.018	-0.283	0.778	-2.764	2.071	0.830	1.204
	Education Level	-1.802	0.935	-0.125	**-1.927**	**0.055**	-3.646	0.042	0.781	1.281
	Residence	2.640	0.893	0.184	**2.956**	**0.003**	0.879	4.402	0.855	1.169
	Nationality split	-7.675	1.851	-0.345	**-4.147**	**0.000**	-11.325	-4.026	0.477	2.096
	Benevolence	-1.641	1.230	-0.106	-1.335	0.184	-4.066	0.784	0.525	1.905
	Universalism	1.286	1.623	0.070	0.792	0.429	-1.915	4.487	0.420	2.383
	Self-Direction	-0.099	1.233	-0.006	-0.080	0.936	-2.531	2.332	0.516	1.938
	Stimulation	-1.344	0.960	-0.118	-1.400	0.163	-3.237	0.549	0.467	2.140
	Hedonism	-0.092	0.952	-0.008	-0.097	0.923	-1.970	1.786	0.503	1.989
	Power	0.055	1.164	0.006	0.048	0.962	-2.239	2.350	0.238	4.201
	Security	-0.867	1.442	-0.052	-0.601	0.549	-3.710	1.977	0.440	2.272
	Conformity	-0.595	1.227	-0.044	-0.485	0.628	-3.014	1.824	0.399	2.507
	Tradition	-0.810	1.118	-0.061	-0.724	0.470	-3.015	1.395	0.466	2.145
	Homestay visit	1.283	1.468	0.065	0.874	0.383	-1.612	4.179	0.602	1.661
	Purpose of Trip	0.465	0.699	0.043	0.665	0.507	-0.914	1.844	0.793	1.261
	Travel Party	1.819	0.984	0.159	1.849	0.066	-0.121	3.758	0.448	2.231

a. Dependent Variable: Search Portals

The tolerance score for all the independent variables is more than 0.2, indicating multicollinearity is not a concern. The VIF score is less than 5, which is within the acceptable bounds. The adjusted R^2 square of the model is 0.287, indicating that 28.7% of the variation in

factor 2, Search Portals is explained by the variation in the independent variables of the model. The F statistic in this model is 6.113, with a significance of 0.000, indicating that the independent variables within the construct of characteristics of the vacationer and the characteristics of the vacation have a statistically significant influence on the factor categorised as Search Portals.

The results in Table 5.37 above indicate that the demographic characteristic of Nationality (standardised β -0.345, t statistic -4.147, p = .000), Residence (standardised β 0.184, t statistic 2.956, p = .003) and Education Level (standardised β -0.125, t statistic -1.927, p = .055) have a statistically significant influence on the use of Search Portals as an information source. The influence of Nationality is stronger than Residence and Education level, with the highest standardised β score if -0.345.

A change in the nationality of the respondent from non-Malaysians to Malaysians tend to increase the importance of Search Portals as a source of information. A change of residence from rural to urban location increases the importance of Search Portals. Similarly, an increase in their educational level tend to increase the importance of this factor as their information search strategy.

5.10.5 Regression on Agencies-offline (factor 3)

To investigate the influence of the independent variables on the group of sources categorised as Agencies-offline, regression analysis was conducted. The results of the regression are presented in Table 5.38 and Table 5.39 below.

The tolerance score for all the independent variables is more than 0.2; and the highest VIF is less than 5, within the acceptable range of less than 10. Therefore, the multicollinearity assumptions have not been violated. The F statistic in this model is 2.652, with a significance of 0.001, indicating that the independent variables within the construct of characteristics of the

vacationer and the characteristics of the vacation have a statistically significant influence on the factor categorised as Agencies-offline, factor 3.

Table 5.38 Model summary for regression analysis (Agencies-offline – factor 3)

Model Summary[b]									
				Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square		R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.430[a]	0.185	0.115	6.594	0.185	2.652	17	199	0.001

b. Dependent Variable: Agencies-offline

Table 5.39 Regression analysis results for Agencies-offline (factor 3)

Coefficients[a]										
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	28.044	4.892		5.733	0.000	18.397	37.691		
	Age Grp	0.533	0.552	0.087	0.965	0.336	-0.556	1.622	0.499	2.003
	Gender	-1.126	1.027	-0.077	-1.097	0.274	-3.151	0.899	0.830	1.204
	Education Level	0.150	0.783	0.014	0.192	0.848	-1.394	1.695	0.781	1.281
	Residence	-0.150	0.748	-0.014	-0.200	0.842	-1.625	1.325	0.855	1.169
	Nationality split	-4.301	1.550	-0.257	**-2.775**	**0.006**	-7.357	-1.244	0.477	2.096
	Benevolence	0.000	1.030	0.000	0.000	1.000	-2.030	2.031	0.525	1.905
	Universalism	1.038	1.359	0.075	0.764	0.446	-1.642	3.719	0.420	2.383
	Self-Direction	-0.123	1.033	-0.011	-0.120	0.905	-2.160	1.913	0.516	1.938
	Stimulation	-1.197	0.804	-0.139	-1.490	0.138	-2.783	0.388	0.467	2.140
	Hedonism	0.075	0.798	0.008	0.094	0.925	-1.498	1.648	0.503	1.989
	Power	-0.592	0.974	-0.080	-0.608	0.544	-2.514	1.329	0.238	4.201
	Security	-1.002	1.208	-0.080	-0.830	0.408	-3.384	1.379	0.440	2.272
	Conformity	-0.043	1.027	-0.004	-0.042	0.967	-2.069	1.983	0.399	2.507
	Tradition	-2.451	0.937	-0.245	**-2.617**	**0.010**	-4.297	-0.604	0.466	2.145
	Homestay visit	-1.886	1.230	-0.127	-1.534	0.127	-4.311	0.539	0.602	1.661
	Purpose of Trip	0.022	0.586	0.003	0.038	0.970	-1.132	1.177	0.793	1.261
	Travel Party	-0.293	0.824	-0.034	-0.356	0.723	-1.917	1.332	0.448	2.231

a. Dependent Variable: Agencies-offline

The adjusted R^2 square of the model is 0.115, indicating that 11.5% of the variation in factor 3, Agencies-offline, is explained by the variation in the independent variables of the model. The results in Table 5.39 above indicate that the demographic characteristic of Nationality (standardised β -0.257, t statistic -2.775, p = .006), and the personal value of Tradition (standardised β -0.245, t statistic -2.617, p = .01) have a statistically significant influence on the use of Agencies-offline as an information source.

This means that a change in the nationality of the guest (Non-Malaysian to Malaysian) and an increase in the value priority for Tradition influences the variation (increase) in the importance of Agencies-offline. Malaysian guests who tend to prioritise the value of Tradition would tend to rely more heavily on Agencies-offline as sources of information.

5.10.6 Regression on Agencies-online (factor 4)

To investigate the independent variables on the group of sources categorised as Agencies-online, regression analysis was conducted. The results of the regression are presented in Table 5.40 and Table 5.41 below. The F statistic in this model is 2.914, with a significance of 0.000, indicating that the independent variables within the construct of characteristics of the vacationer and the characteristics of the vacation have a statistically significant influence on the factor categorised as Agencies-online, factor 4. The tolerance score for all the independent variables is more than 0.2; and the highest VIF is less than 5, within the acceptable range of less than 10. Therefore, multicollinearity assumptions have not been violated.

Table 5.40 Model summary for regression analysis (Agencies-online – factor 4)

Model Summary[b]									
				Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square		R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.447[a]	0.200	0.131	6.961	0.200	2.914	17	198	0.000

b. Dependent Variable: Agencies-online

Table 5.41 Regression analysis results for Agencies-online (factor 4)

Coefficients[a]										
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	28.972	5.167		5.607	0.000	18.782	39.161		
	Age Grp	-0.571	0.583	-0.088	-0.978	0.329	-1.721	0.580	0.500	1.999
	Gender	-1.294	1.087	-0.083	-1.191	0.235	-3.438	0.850	0.827	1.209
	Education Level	-0.335	0.830	-0.029	-0.403	0.687	-1.972	1.302	0.782	1.279
	Residence	0.890	0.790	0.077	1.126	0.262	-0.669	2.448	0.856	1.169
	Nationality split	-4.152	1.637	-0.233	**-2.536**	**0.012**	-7.380	-0.924	0.477	2.095
	Benevolence	-1.145	1.087	-0.092	-1.052	0.294	-3.289	1.000	0.525	1.906
	Universalism	-0.137	1.435	-0.009	-0.095	0.924	-2.967	2.694	0.423	2.366
	Self-Direction	0.846	1.091	0.069	0.776	0.439	-1.304	2.997	0.515	1.940
	Stimulation	-1.558	0.851	-0.169	-1.832	0.068	-3.236	0.119	0.474	2.111
	Hedonism	-0.650	0.845	-0.069	-0.770	0.442	-2.317	1.016	0.506	1.977
	Power	-1.162	1.029	-0.147	-1.130	0.260	-3.191	0.866	0.238	4.197
	Security	-1.347	1.276	-0.100	-1.056	0.292	-3.863	1.169	0.448	2.233
	Conformity	-0.441	1.085	-0.041	-0.407	0.685	-2.580	1.698	0.401	2.495
	Tradition	-1.380	0.990	-0.130	-1.393	0.165	-3.333	0.573	0.465	2.151
	Homestay visit	-2.973	1.300	-0.187	**-2.287**	**0.023**	-5.535	-0.410	0.607	1.649
	Purpose of Trip	0.070	0.618	0.008	0.113	0.910	-1.149	1.289	0.794	1.260
	Travel Party	1.426	0.870	0.155	1.639	0.103	-0.289	3.142	0.450	2.220

a. Dependent Variable: Agencies-online

The adjusted R^2 square of the model is 0.131, indicating that 13.1% of the variation in factor 4, Agencies-online, is explained by the variation in the independent variables of the model. The results in Table 5.41 above indicate that the demographic characteristic of Nationality (standardised β -0.233, t statistic -2.536, p = .012) and Homestay visit (standardised β -0.187, t statistic -2.287, p = .023) have a statistically significant influence on the use of Agencies-online as an information source.

This means that a change in the nationality of the guest (Non-Malaysian to Malaysian) and a change towards the selection of Homestay destinations influence the variation (increase) in the importance of Agencies-online. Malaysian Homestay guests tend to prioritise the use of Agencies-online as sources of information compared to non-Malaysian guests and those who do not select Homestay destinations.

5.10.7 Regression on Tourism Specific Portals (factor 5)

To investigate the influence of the independent variables on the group of sources categorised as Tourism Specific Portals, regression analysis was conducted. The results of the regression are presented in Table 5.42 and Table 5.43 below.

Table 5.42 Model summary for regression analysis (Tourism Specific Portals – factor 5)

Model Summary[b]									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.407[a]	0.166	0.099	5.259	0.166	2.471	16	199	0.002

b. Dependent Variable: Tourism Specific Portals

The F statistic in this model is 2.471, with a significance of 0.002, indicating that the independent variables within the construct of characteristics of the vacationer and the characteristics of the vacation have a statistically significant influence on the factor categorised as Tourism Specific Portals, factor 5.

Table 5.43 Regression analysis results for Tourism Specific Portals (factor 5)

Coefficients[a]										
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	26.994	3.914		6.897	0.000	19.275	34.713		
	Age Grp	-0.882	0.442	-0.183	**-1.997**	**0.047**	-1.752	-0.011	0.501	1.996
	Gender	-0.401	0.822	-0.035	-0.489	0.626	-2.022	1.219	0.835	1.197
	Education Level	0.290	0.628	0.034	0.462	0.645	-0.949	1.529	0.783	1.278
	Residence	0.631	0.599	0.074	1.053	0.294	-0.550	1.812	0.854	1.170
	Nationality split	-3.367	1.239	-0.255	**-2.718**	**0.007**	-5.810	-0.924	0.478	2.093
	Benevolence	-0.691	0.823	-0.075	-0.840	0.402	-2.315	0.932	0.525	1.905
	Universalism	-0.609	1.087	-0.056	-0.560	0.576	-2.751	1.534	0.420	2.381
	Self-Direction	-1.341	0.825	-0.147	-1.624	0.106	-2.968	0.287	0.516	1.938
	Stimulation	-1.198	0.643	-0.177	-1.865	0.064	-2.466	0.069	0.467	2.140
	Hedonism	-0.942	0.639	-0.135	-1.474	0.142	-2.202	0.318	0.505	1.981
	Power	-0.959	0.779	-0.164	-1.231	0.220	-2.495	0.577	0.238	4.200
	Security	-1.526	0.966	-0.154	-1.581	0.116	-3.430	0.378	0.442	2.264
	Conformity	-1.353	0.823	-0.169	-1.644	0.102	-2.976	0.270	0.398	2.514
	Tradition	-1.408	0.749	-0.179	-1.879	0.062	-2.886	0.070	0.466	2.144
	Homestay visit	-1.795	0.985	-0.152	-1.823	0.070	-3.736	0.147	0.606	1.651
	Purpose of Trip	-0.261	0.468	-0.041	-0.558	0.577	-1.185	0.662	0.793	1.260
	Travel Party	-0.244	0.659	-0.036	-0.370	0.712	-1.542	1.055	0.451	2.219

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism Specific Portals

The tolerance score for all the independent variables is more than 0.2; and the highest VIF is less than 5, within the acceptable range of less than 10. Therefore, the multicollinearity assumptions have not been violated. The adjusted R^2 square of the model is 0.099, indicating that 9.9% of the variation in factor 5, Tourism Specific Portals is explained by the variation in the independent variables of the model. The results in Table 5.43 above indicate that the demographic characteristic of Nationality (standardised β -0.255, t statistic -2. 718, p = .007),

and age group (standardised β -0.183, t statistic -1.976, p = .047) have a statistically significant influence on the use of Tourism Specific Portals as information sources.

This means that a change in the nationality of the guest (Non-Malaysian to Malaysian) and an increase in the age of the guest influences (increases) the importance of Tourism Specific Portals as sources of information.

5.10.8 Regression on Influencers (factor 6)

To investigate the influence of the independent variables on the group of sources categorised as Influencers, regression analysis was conducted. The results of the regression are presented in Table 5.44 and Table 5.45 below.

The tolerance score for all the independent variables is more than 0.2; and the highest VIF is less than 5, within the acceptable range of less than 10. Therefore, the multicollinearity assumptions have not been violated. The F statistic in this model is 4.804, with a significance of 0.000, indicating that the independent variables within the construct of characteristics of the vacationer and the characteristics of the vacation have a statistically significant influence on the factor categorised as Influencers, factor 6.

The adjusted R^2 square of the model is 0.233, indicating that 23.3% of the variation in factor 6, Influencers is explained by the variation in the independent variables of the model. The results in Table 5.45 below indicate that the demographic characteristic of Nationality (standardised β -0.388, t statistic -4.451, p = .000), Age group (standardised β 0.187, t statistic 2.197, p = .029), Residence (standardised β 0.130, t statistic 2.009, p = .046) and Travel party (standardised β 0.220, t statistic 2.463, p = .015) have a statistically significant influence on the use of Influencers as information sources.

Table 5.44 Model summary for regression analysis (Influencers – factor 6)

Model Summary[b]									
					Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.542[a]	0.294	0.233	6.265	0.294	4.804	17	196	0.000

b. Dependent Variable: Influencers

Table 5.45 Regression analysis results for Influencers (factor 6)

Coefficients[a]										
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	22.289	4.676		4.767	0.000	13.067	31.511		
	Age Grp	1.158	0.527	0.187	**2.197**	**0.029**	0.118	2.197	0.499	2.003
	Gender	0.580	0.979	0.039	0.592	0.555	-1.351	2.510	0.836	1.197
	Education Level	-1.321	0.751	-0.119	-1.760	0.080	-2.801	0.159	0.787	1.270
	Residence	1.432	0.713	0.130	**2.009**	**0.046**	0.027	2.838	0.857	1.167
	Nationality split	-6.586	1.480	-0.388	**-4.451**	**0.000**	-9.504	-3.668	0.475	2.107
	Benevolence	0.110	0.998	0.009	0.111	0.912	-1.859	2.080	0.524	1.907
	Universalism	1.960	1.303	0.140	1.505	0.134	-0.609	4.529	0.417	2.398
	Self-Direction	-0.006	0.982	0.000	-0.006	0.996	-1.942	1.931	0.520	1.923
	Stimulation	-1.150	0.764	-0.132	-1.505	0.134	-2.658	0.357	0.467	2.143
	Hedonism	-0.065	0.774	-0.007	-0.084	0.933	-1.591	1.461	0.499	2.003
	Power	1.212	0.936	0.159	1.295	0.197	-0.634	3.057	0.239	4.181
	Security	-1.771	1.152	-0.136	-1.538	0.126	-4.042	0.500	0.458	2.185
	Conformity	0.399	0.982	0.039	0.406	0.685	-1.538	2.336	0.397	2.517
	Tradition	0.305	0.899	0.030	0.340	0.734	-1.467	2.078	0.466	2.147
	Homestay visit	-2.134	1.170	-0.141	-1.823	0.070	-4.441	0.174	0.604	1.655
	Purpose of Trip	-0.303	0.561	-0.036	-0.541	0.589	-1.409	0.803	0.794	1.259
	Travel Party	1.938	0.787	0.220	**2.463**	**0.015**	0.386	3.490	0.450	2.224

a. Dependent Variable: Influencers

This means that a change in the nationality of the guest (Non-Malaysian to Malaysian) and a change from rural to urban residence affects the variation (increase) in the importance of Influencers as sources of information. As respondents move towards urban and younger age groups, they tend to rely more heavily on Influencers (factor 6) as sources of information.

Smaller travel parties consisting of friends and family tend to prefer Influencers as a source of information compared to larger travel parties such as field trips and package tours.

Based on these regression analyses, the following hypotheses, that preferences for information search strategies will be influenced by the following factors are accepted:

(a) the demographic characteristics of the vacationer:

H9: the age group of the respondent

H11: the educational level of the respondent

H12: the location of residence of the respondent

H13: the nationality of the respondent

H14: the personal values of the respondent

(b) the situational variable

H15: the travel party

(c) the characteristics of the vacation:

H16: the destination type of the respondent

The hypotheses were not accepted for H10 - gender of the respondent, and H17 - the purpose of the trip.

5.11 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the demographic characteristics of the sample, with particular emphasis on the sub-sample of Homestay guests as the focus of this research is centred on this group of respondents. Homestay visitors are found to be younger people who are Malaysians from urban areas, with tertiary education, usually travelling with friends or family or with a tour group.

Half of them visit Homestays for leisure, while slightly more than a third do so as part of their school or college field trip. The most important reasons for selecting a Homestay, apart from its cultural elements, are its seclusion and contrast from city life.

The chapter also presented the analyses on the impact of demographic characteristics on personal values, with differences observed for all demographic characteristics studied except for location of residence. The personal value priorities of Homestay and non-Homestay guests are different. Homestay guests has Self-Direction as their top priority, followed by Security, Universalism and Benevolence; while Non-Homestay guests value Security the most, followed by Self-Direction, Security and Universalism.

In terms of information search strategies, while Homestay guests rely mostly on friends and family as their only important source of information, Non-Homestay guests use search engine as their most important source of information. There is no difference in terms of the use of traditional channel between the two groups; but there is a difference in terms of the online channel, with Non-Homestay guests prioritising this channel more than Non-Homestay guests. Results show that online information search strategies currently available, are not meeting the information needs of Homestay visitors. Having a dedicated website with information on Homestays and how they may be contacted is the most effective way of improving information access to meet their needs.

Six categories of information sources have been identified through exploratory PCA analysis and variances in each of these factors are explained by the variance in a variety of independent variables presented in the theoretical model as described above. These results will be discussed in detail in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the analyses and findings presented in Chapter 5. This chapter will discuss the findings of the univariate analyses, the multi-variate analyses investigating the relationship between personal values and the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the impact of personal values on destination selection, the information search strategies employed by Homestay tourists, followed by the discussion of the results of the regressions in the context of the theoretical model presented in Chapter 2.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This research aims to study the impact of personal values on information search strategies in the context of community-based tourism and address the following research questions:

RQ1. What is the impact of demographic characteristics on the personal value profile of tourists to Malaysia?

RQ2. What is the dominant personal value profile of tourists who visit a Homestay in Malaysia?

RQ3. What are the information search strategies employed by Homestay tourists in relation to the channels and sources consulted?

RQ4. In terms of online information search strategies, how well do they meet the information needs of Homestay tourists?

RQ5. Whether improvements are necessary, and what are the areas of improvements which will increase the effectiveness of meeting these information needs?

RQ6. Which are the key antecedents affecting information search strategies of tourists in the context of Homestays?

This study was based on the theoretical model in Figure 6.1 below, developed from the multi-dimensional nature of information search strategies, within the context of tourism, and specifically for community-based tourism. The first set of variables in the model relates to the characteristics of the vacationer. The findings of this set of variables will be discussed first, followed by analyses of the relationship between personal values and the characteristics of the vacation (type of destination - Homestays), and the features of information search strategies employed by Homestay visitors. Finally the theoretical model will be discussed based on the findings of the regressions.

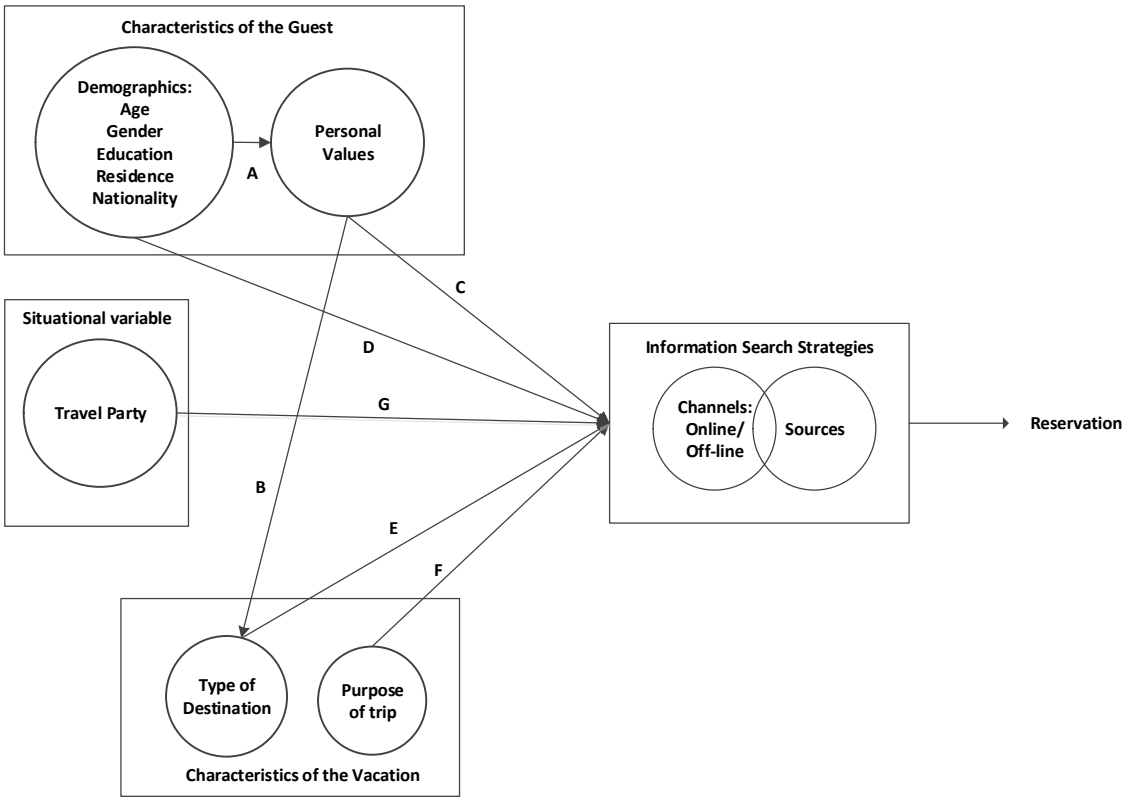


Figure 6.1 Theoretical framework for the study

Data was collected from respondents who were Homestay and non-Homestay visitors. Seven extensive semi-structured interviews were conducted with staff and managers of Homestays providing crucial background information on the historical development of this niche product,

its management and operation structure and current marketing strategies, as well as key information from the perspective of the suppliers of the product. This enhances the quality of the data and analysis, as data from two different independent sources (survey respondents who were guests and interview respondents who were staff of the Homestays) were obtained and analysed. Where relevant, findings from these exploratory preliminary interviews are presented to triangulate, explain and complement the findings from the survey (Venkatesh et al., 2013).

6.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF RESPONDENTS

Univariate analyses of demographic characteristics of respondents, both Homestay and non-Homestay tourists, provide insights into the profile of visitors to Malaysia, helping destination managers to better understand the characteristics of their customers, and enable them to provide information, products and services which are attractive to their target customers. This section will discuss some of these demographic characteristics found in this study.

6.3.1 Age and education

The demographic profiles of respondents presented indicate that more than 50% of the visitors to Malaysia are below 30 years old, followed by 13% who are between 30 to 39 years old. For Homestays, the percentage is higher at 67% (below 30 years old), which, together with those between 30 to 39 years old (13%), make up 80% of total Homestay visitors. In terms of educational level, more than half of the respondents indicated that they have tertiary level education (58.6%), and 25% have postgraduate education. Among Homestay visitors, 57.7% have tertiary level education, 22.1% have postgraduate education and 20.2% are secondary school students. Read together with the statistics on the distribution by age group, it can be seen that two thirds of Homestay visitors are young adults under the age of 30, most of whom are either college students or university graduates.

These findings are in line with findings from interviews with managers of Homestays, where all of them stated that customers were mostly students from schools and universities, and some of them were independent travellers. The qualitative data analysis provided further details of the profile of visitors, where P1 stated that the majority of the visitors to Homestay A are local and international students; whereas P3 stated that 50% of their customers are students, and P4 stated that visitors were mostly on university programmes. Other customers are local and international tourists who wanted to "experience village life" (P6).

These comments provide a richer picture of the spectrum of visitors to Homestays comprising a majority of younger people with tertiary education seeking an immersive experience.

6.3.2 Residence

Survey results indicate that two-thirds (66.5%) of the visitors live in urban areas. The responses to the question on reasons for selecting a Homestay indicate that urban dwellers seek a quiet place to rest and relax, which is found in rural and often remote settings such as Homestays (mean 2.1 – important). There is a great desire among urban dwellers to 'get out of the city', hence, a large percentage of the visitors to Homestays are from urban areas. Further, urban dwellers would find the activities in Homestays more attractive, as there would be a great contrast compared to city sights. For example, according to Homestay managers, tourists can "stay in houses with traditional architecture, try tapping rubber, visit goat farms, go fishing, learn to make traditional snacks" (P1), harvest and process coffee (P2), make traditional crafts such as batik, kites, scarecrows (P6). P4 stated that "tourists will request to eat with their hosts so that they can taste traditional dishes". Homestays provide a unique experience of rural lifestyle sought after by many visitors from urban areas looking for a quiet time of escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. It is also a great opportunity for experiential learning (Morgan, 2010) and transformative learning (Inversini, Rega and Gan, 2022) through tourism, as observed when a group of secondary school students from Singapore (who had never had any

exposure to a rural environment) visited the Homestay managed by P6, during a field visit by the researcher. This niche product should receive greater attention and development, as it has unique features which are attractive to those who live in urban areas.

6.3.3 Nationality

Among the respondents who have visited a Homestay, more than two-thirds (73%) were Malaysians while the rest were non-Malaysians. Non-Malaysian respondents originate from East Asian countries such as Japan, Korea and China, and Southeast Asian nations including the Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand and Indonesia. From the interviews, all the Homestay managers indicated that they have a mix of local and international tourists and the percentage of international tourists range from 10% to 80%, with an average of 40% foreign tourists. For Homestay B, which had been in operation for more than 20 years, apart from Korean and Japanese tourists who make up the majority of foreign tourist arrivals, they had received tourists from Australia, England, and America, while Homestay E had also received tourists from Australia, America, the Netherlands, Singapore as well as Mauritius. P3 stated that foreign tourists bring in more income to the Homestay because they are willing to pay higher prices for the Homestay experience compared to local tourists.

The percentage of foreign tourists is still low for many Homestays, even though the product has particularly unique attraction for foreign visitors. This shows that it is still a challenge for Homestays to bring in significant number of foreign tourists, in spite of the unique attraction that Homestays provide, particularly for foreign tourists who are keen to immerse themselves in the local culture and have an authentic cultural experience.

As the majority of Homestay visitors are still local tourists, marketers for Homestays should focus on this segment of the market and design marketing campaigns that can effectively communicate with them. This segment of the market (young, highly educated urban

Malaysians) is the most technologically savvy; hence the importance of focusing on electronic communication and online marketing channels and sources to attract this group of potential customers who form the majority of visitors to Homestays. Homestay managers also indicated that some groups from schools and universities are normally led by tutors or older adults, and marketing communication should be targeted at the leadership of schools and colleges in order to provide timely and relevant information to potential decision makers who will then mobilise these young adults to visit Homestays as part of their extra-curricular or study tour programmes.

6.4 PERSONAL VALUES AND BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

RQ1 seeks to identify the impact of demographic characteristics on the personal value profile of tourists to Malaysia. To address this question, the effect of specific elements of respondents' demographic characteristics are discussed in this section.

Demographic variables have a reciprocal influence on personal values (Schwartz, 2006). Different life circumstances influence the extent to which one can express some values more easily than others. It makes the pursuit of different values more or less rewarding. People upgrade the importance attributed to values they can readily attain and downgrade the importance of values whose pursuit is blocked. For example, those who are wealthy will find it easier to pursue power values, while those with children will be limited in pursuing stimulation values to avoid risks to themselves. Reciprocal influence is observed for values and demographics. Stronger tradition values may promote persistence through higher education. Values also influence how we choose friends, jobs, travel opportunities and whether we move to environments with particular political economic or religious systems. These choices in turn create life-circumstances to which we then adapt our values. The findings in this study that relates to the relationship between demographic characteristics and personal values are discussed in the following sections.

6.4.1 Personal values and age

The first hypothesis tested in addressing RQ1 is:

H1: There is a difference in the personal value scores based on age of the respondent.

The hypothesis is accepted for the following personal values: Benevolence, Universalism, Stimulation, Achievement, Power, Security, Conformity and Tradition, but not accepted for Self-Direction and for Hedonism. The age of a person does not affect the importance placed on the values of Self-Direction and Hedonism, but age does affect the importance that is placed on the other eight values.

Of the eight personal value priorities affected by age, three of them [Benevolence, Universalism (both from the Self-transcendence value dimension) and Security (Conservation value dimension)] showed a positive mean importance score, indicating that respondents placed importance on these values whereas five other personal values had a negative score, which is an indication of a lack of priority placed on these five values. It is interesting to note that the youngest group of respondents (18-29 years old) have a score that is statistically different for *all three values* (Benevolence, Universalism and Security) compared to other age groups, and their score is *the lowest* for each of these values, indicating the lowest priority for these three values among those in the youngest age group when compared to other age groups. The same trend is observed for Conformity and Tradition, although these values had a negative score in the sample.

The personal value of Benevolence focuses on helpfulness and has the defining goal of preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact, while Universalism refer to social justice and equality and the goal of understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection of the welfare of all people and for nature. The personal value of Security focuses on safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships and of

self. These values are least prioritised by the younger visitors as they may be at the early stages of developing a deep appreciation of people, nature and the environment.

Although values are stable and remain constant through time (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004; Schwartz, 2006), it does tend to change through adaptation to significant experiences and circumstances as a person moves through his/her life span. This adaptation may arise because of planned or unplanned changes, or age-related tasks and changing social roles (e.g. schooling, work, retirement). Hence, it is reasonable to expect younger people to have a lower score for these values, which increases as they age. With more responsibility, it is reasonable to expect that we will become more concerned about the welfare of those close to us and being helpful (Benevolence), especially as those in Group 2, as they mature and have families of their own to care for. For Universalism, the mean for the youngest group is markedly different when compared to Group 3 and Group 4; showing a greater awareness of social justice and equality as people approach middle-age and old age because of life experiences, as well as holding positions of responsibility over others, whether in organisations or community, which enhances their awareness, appreciation and the need to protect the welfare of other people and nature.

These findings are in line with literature where it was noted that the mean importance of Conservation (including Security) and Self-Transcendence (including Benevolence and Universalism) dimensions increased as the respondents grew older (Vecchione et al., 2016). As people grow older these values promoting co-operation and support between individuals (Universalism and Benevolence), and avoiding conflicts and promoting normative behaviour (Security, Conformity and Tradition) become more important in line with our adaptation to socially prescribed roles as we develop into adulthood; in line with the social investment principle (Lodi-Smith and Roberts, 2007). It also resonates with some of the earliest findings on the relationship between personal value to age reported by Schwartz (2005) where he found that age correlated positively with conservation and self-transcendence values.

The implication of the Schwartz's (2006) circular structure of values is that while these values increase with age, it will be accompanied by a decline in self-enhancement (Power and Achievement) and openness to change values (Self-direction, Stimulation and Hedonism). In this study, this decline is observed for Power, Achievement and Stimulation, with antipathy increasing as respondents' age increased, showing a similar pattern with previous studies (Vecchione et al., 2016). Also, in relation to Achievement and Power, within the Asian context (100% of the respondents originated from Asian countries), culturally, the respondents may not consider showing others his abilities, ambition, being successful and getting ahead in life as values that they agree with or prioritise. The results of this study also affirms the assumptions of Schwartz's circular structure of values where the increase in importance of self-transcendence values (Universalism and Benevolence) is accompanied by a corresponding decrease in the importance of self-enhancement values (Achievement and Power); and the increase in importance of conservation values (such as Security, Conformity and Tradition) is accompanied by a decrease in importance of openness to change values (Stimulation). Nevertheless, in this study, this corresponding decrease of openness to change values of Hedonism and Self-Direction was not observed because it was not significantly different when different age groups were compared.

6.4.2 Personal values and gender

From the analysis, it appears that gender impacts only 2 of the personal values, Hedonism and Conformity. For Hedonism, female respondents have a low priority for this value but male respondents have an aversion towards Hedonism. Elements of Hedonism such as having pleasure and enjoyment and self-gratification are less important to male respondents compared to female respondents. It was the same for Conformity, where male respondents had a much lower mean score than female respondents, indicating that their priority for subordination of self to those whom we interact closely with, who have positions of authority over ourselves, is

lower compared to female respondents. Hence, H2 is accepted for Hedonism and Conformity; gender has an impact on these two values but not others.

Schwartz and Rubel's (2005) findings that males value achievement, **hedonism**, stimulation and self-direction values; while women sees benevolence, universalism, **conformity** and security values as important, is in contrast to the findings of this study for Hedonism, but consistent for Conformity. The apparent contradicting results for Hedonism would require further investigation due to the low effect size statistic, which indicates a less than moderate magnitude of association between these scores.

6.4.3 Personal values and educational attainment

Schwartz (2006) argues that education promotes intellectual openness and enhances our perspective and flexibility, which promotes Self-Direction values. These developments also encourage people to evaluate social norms and expectations, which will undermine Conformity and Tradition values. Higher levels competency gained through education increases the importance placed on Achievement and Power, due to an increased capability for higher levels of career achievements, and reduces a person's priority on Security value. It also causes an increase in Universalism and Benevolence values especially among those who attend university, caused by a broadening of perspectives and a greater awareness and concern for the welfare of others.

In this research, it is found that the mean scores for Benevolence, Universalism, Power and Tradition is statistically different for those with secondary education when compared to respondents with higher levels of education.

For the personal value of Benevolence, it is expected that those with secondary education place less priority on this value compared to those with tertiary education. The elements of enhancing the welfare of those close to them; being helpful, honest, forgiving, responsible, loyal, true

friends and mature love, which contributes to a sense of belonging, meaning in life and a spiritual development in life, tend to develop as a person matures, and becomes more prominent as they attain higher levels of education resulting in a greater ability to appreciate the importance these virtues. Further, personal development gained from a higher level of education and the associated enhancement of their own financial ability and resources allow them to contribute and be responsible for the welfare of those close to them.

Those who value Universalism highly are more likely to be broadminded, prioritise social justice, equality and protection of the environment. Higher levels of education broadens the horizon and creates a greater awareness of social justice and concern for the environment. As for Tradition, those with tertiary education shows a stronger dislike for the value of Tradition (a posture of subordination to religion and culture) compared to those of lower educational levels. In line with Schwartz (2006), exposure through education increases openness to non-routine ideas and challenges the prevailing expectations and traditions, hence reducing the importance placed on the value of Tradition among those with higher levels of education.

However, while findings in Schwartz (2006) found inconsistent relationship between Power and education, this study finds that those with lower levels of education have less aversion to the value of Power compared to those with higher levels of education. While all respondents have a negative value for Power, reflecting aversion to this value (because the pursuit of power values may result in harm or exploitation of others, damaging social relations), those with tertiary education demonstrates a stronger aversion compared to those without. This indicates that social status, prestige and dominance over people decline in importance as our perspectives are enlarged through attainment of higher levels of education, because they often result in exploitation and work against maintaining good social relations.

6.4.4 Personal values and nationality

The difference in mean scores between Malaysians and Non-Malaysians for Achievement, Power and Tradition are statistically significant, although they are all negatively scored, indicating these three values are less important relative to other values in the spectrum of personal values for both Malaysians and Non-Malaysians. The mean score for Achievement among Malaysians is significantly less than for non-Malaysians. This means that Malaysians put much less emphasis on the value of Achievement, which emphasises demonstrating competence based on cultural standards and being seen as ambitious, successful, capable and influential. The same is true for Power. This difference may be attributable to the cultural difference between Malaysians and other East Asians, who demonstrate a greater emphasis on the pursuit of success in career and ambition than Malaysians.

On the other hand, non-Malaysians scored significantly lower for Tradition compared to Malaysians, indicating that non-Malaysians' aversion to the value of Tradition is much more than Malaysians. Non-Malaysians are more averse to submitting to the dictates of religion and cultural customs compared to Malaysians. This may be due to the fact that a higher percentage of Malaysians tend to have a higher level of religiosity (77% says religion is very important) compared to other East Asian countries (Japan 10%, Korea 16%) (Pew Research Centre, 2018), from which most of the non-Malaysian respondents originate.

6.4.5 Personal values and culture

Literature indicates that there is a reciprocal relationship between value and life circumstances, development and culture. It was found that eastern culture (such as Singapore) reflects a hierarchy of value priorities which is quite different from western culture (the USA) (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001). Schwartz and Bardi (2001) found that eastern culture had Security, Benevolence and Conformity at the top of the hierarchy whereas the USA had Benevolence,

Achievement and Hedonism at the top, although both cultures have Power at the bottom of the hierarchy.

In this study, it was found that respondents who visited Malaysia (all of whom are from countries with eastern culture (Malaysia, Japan, Korea, Cambodia, the Philippines) had the following hierarchy of value priorities: (1) Security, (2) Self-Direction and (3) Universalism. In line with Schwartz and Bardi's (2001) findings, Security is also the most important value among eastern cultures, a value in the *Conservation* dimension, emphasising a priority for safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self. Interestingly, among those who visited Homestays, although all respondents were Asian, there is a clear distinction, whereby the top value prioritised by them is Self-Direction (Openness to Change dimension) instead of Security (in second place). This shows that among those who visit Homestays, the sense of independent thought and action; of choosing, creating, and exploring is higher than the need for Security common among people of eastern cultures.

Another interesting observation relates to Power, which had the lowest score among all the 10 values, regardless of the nationality of the respondent. This concurs with previous research findings, that regardless of cultural differences, Power appears to be at the bottom of the hierarchy of values (Fontaine et al., 2008), due to the conflict that this value (pursuit of dominance over others) has with maintaining good social relations in both work and social settings (Vecchione et al., 2016). This result also agrees with Schwartz and Bardi (2001) who argued that the pan-cultural similarities in value importance reflect the shared bases of values in human nature and the adaptive functions of each type of value in maintaining societies, opposing values which clash with its smooth functioning of important members or the larger society.

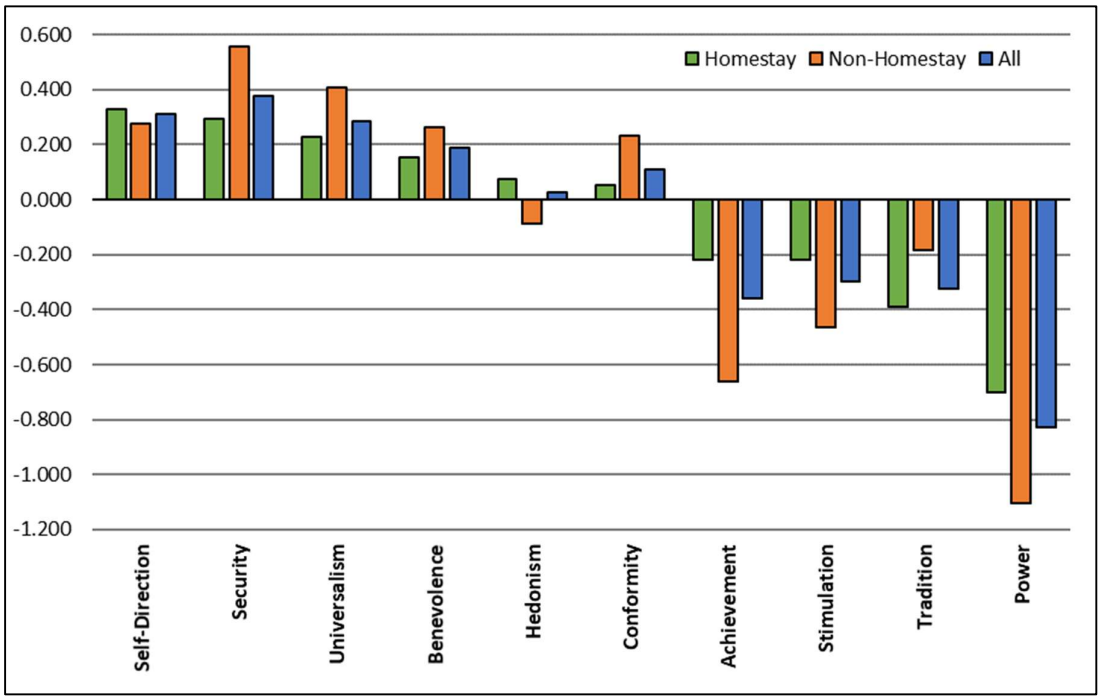


Figure 6.2 Comparison of personal value scores for Homestay and Non-Homestay visitors

When considering the mean score for all personal values among all the survey respondents, as presented in Figure 6.2 above, it can be said that the top four personal values prioritised by all the groups are the same, which are Self-Direction, Security, Universalism and Benevolence. This indicates that for all the respondents, regardless of their choice of destination, age, gender, level of education, nationality or culture, these four values feature strongly relative to other values in the ten-value structure.

Another important finding is that, while these four values are *identical* to the top four value priorities of respondents in the European Social Survey (ESS) of 20 European countries reported in Schwartz's (2007) work, the difference, however, is in the sequence of priority among these four values. While the ESS countries had the hierarchy of value priorities of Benevolence, Universalism, Self-Direction and Security, the Asian respondents in this study had their hierarchy of value priorities as Security, Self-Direction, Universalism and

Benevolence, which is the exact opposite of the ESS countries in terms of position and hierarchy, as shown by the contrasting pattern presented in Figure 6.3 below.

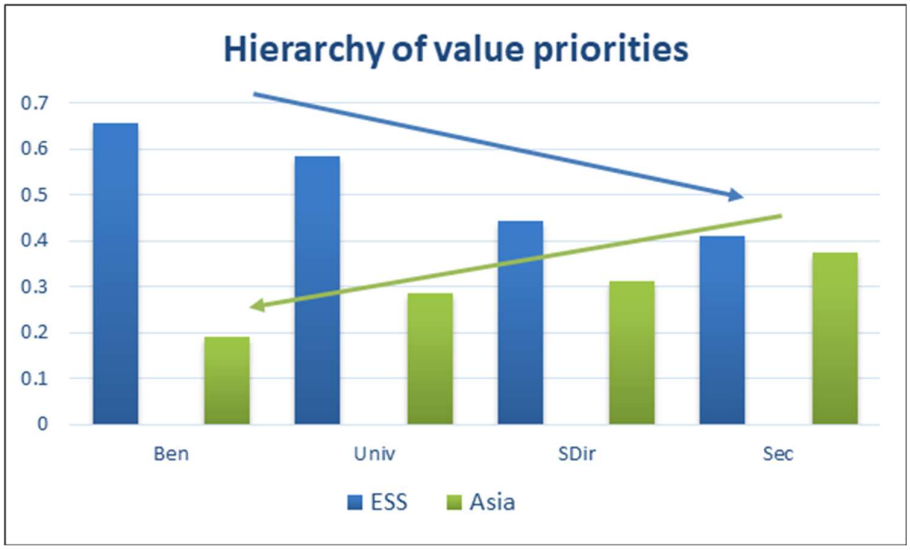


Figure 6.3 Hierarchy of value priorities – a comparison of European and Asian respondents

While European respondents put the highest priority on Benevolence and Universalism, Asian respondents tend to prioritise Self-Direction and Security. Benevolence and Universalism (Self-transcendence values) focuses on the welfare of others, in contrast to Security and Self-Direction, which are geared towards ensuring the interest of self rather than others. Self-Direction emphasizes the autonomy to make decisions with independent thought, and this very often leads to a tendency of taking action that lean towards actions which will be of benefit to self rather than others. Security refers to safety, social order and harmony. These are also values which serve the individual interests rather than the interest of others or the wider group. Even where it relates to social order or national security, the existence of the group or national level security tend to ensure the security of the individual, hence an overall focus on the self and not others. This is in clear contrast to respondents from Europe who tend to favour values that ensure the protection of the welfare of others and the environment, and not that of the individual.

6.4.6 Summary: personal values and demographics

The demographic variable that shows the most effect on personal value is age. This affirms earlier research findings in Vecchione et al. (2016) and Schwartz (2006) that although values tend to remain constant across different situations (Rokeach, 1973), as a person matures and life circumstances change, their value priorities tend to change in tandem.

Education has an effect on a few personal values: Benevolence, Universalism (self-transcendence values) increase in importance with higher levels of education; while two values with negative mean scores, Power and Tradition decrease in importance with transition to higher levels of education. This finding aligns with Schwartz's (2006) view that exposure through education increases openness to non-routine ideas and challenges the prevailing expectations and traditions.

Nationality affects only some values, all with negative mean scores: Achievement, Power and Tradition. Gender seems to have little effect on values, except for Hedonism and Conformity, both with either low or negative mean scores indicating a lack of priority among the respondents.

Significantly, the top four values prioritised by respondents, while identical to those found among European respondents, are in contrast in terms of their hierarchy of importance, with Security at the top for Asian respondents but at the fourth place for European respondents. This reflects to a greater focus on the self (conservation values) among Asian respondents, while Europeans tend to priortise self-transcendence values.

6.5 PERSONAL VALUES AND CBT TOURISTS

RQ2 addressed in this research, represented by item "B" in the theoretical framework presented in Figure 6.1 above:

What is the dominant personal value profile of tourists who visit a Homestay in Malaysia?

The purpose of analysing this relationship is to understand Homestay customers in terms of the personal values that motivate their actions, and how it relates to the selection of travel destinations. By investigating the dominant personal values of Homestay tourists, destination managers will be able to better understand their customers, thus tailoring suitable promotional messages and attractive products to meet the requirements of this category of customers.

The dominant personal values among all respondents (Homestay and non-Homestay visitors) are: Security, followed by Self-Direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Conformity and Hedonism. While Security is the personal value with the highest average mean score for all respondents (and for Non-Homestay guests), it is not so for those who were Homestay guests. Homestay guests have Self-Direction as the personal value with the highest mean score, followed by Security and Universalism and Benevolence, Hedonism and Conformity. This distinction may be a result of the negative correlation between age and Self-Direction value (Schwartz, 2005) whereby younger respondents scored higher for values in the Openness to Change dimension, such as Self-Direction. Visitors to Homestays tend to prioritise the freedom to choose, to be creative and to explore. They value independence, autonomy and the ability to choose their own goals. They are curious, independent and value privacy more than others. These characteristics reflect the motivation and decision to choose a non-traditional holiday such as a Homestay experience because of the value they place on independent investigation and curiosity, and the freedom to choose their own version of the activities they enjoy during a vacation. Homestays provide the opportunity to explore a different type of destination, to go

on an adventure which is different from a typical holiday destination of beach, shopping or historical monuments. The main attraction of most community-based tourism products such as Homestays is that it allows tourists to experience the traditional way of life of small communities (Moayerian, McGehee and Stephenson, 2022), where the operations are usually controlled and managed by the community itself (Mayaka et al., 2018).

Some of the activities which allow guests to explore, investigate and engage in new experiences are as stated by Homestay managers such as staying in houses with traditional architecture, tapping rubber, visiting goat farms, fishing, learning to make traditional snacks" (P1), harvesting and processing coffee using traditional methods (P2), making traditional crafts such as batik, kites, scarecrows (P6) and eating traditional dishes with host families (P4). Hence, Homestays are a natural choice for people with this value priority, as other holiday destinations may be much more predictable in terms of experience, with standardised activities compared to Homestays. Compared to other tourists, it can be said that Homestay tourists are more adventurous, wanting to venture into unknown or unfamiliar experiences, and be innovative in their holiday experience by choosing a Homestay.

Therefore, Homestays should enhance their services and products by focusing on these elements of adventure, exploration, tourist participation and flexibility in selection of activities to ensure they remain attractive to their target customers. Developments in these destinations should seek to preserve the original traditional rural flavour (architecture, infrastructure, artefacts, culture, food, festivals) so that the authentic village life experiences, which are the key attractions for Homestays, can be maintained.

It is clear that there is a difference in personal value priorities among Homestay guests, and destination managers should be cognisant of this nexus and insight into the personal value priorities of tourists so as to enhance product features which cater to those seeking

independence, autonomy and the ability to choose their own tourism experience, as well as fulfill their preference for curiousity, independence and privacy.

In comparison, Security is the leading personal value priority for non-Homestay guests, followed by Universalism, Self-Direction and Benevolence. This is similar to the pattern observed for all respondents, although the average mean score for Security for the Non-Homestay group is signficantly higher than for all respondents, indicating a much higher priority, and may have an impact on their decision to select conventional holiday destinations and accommodation with expected levels of service, safety and quality of holiday experience, and less risk, uncertainty and exposure to perceived dangerous circumstances.

As a strategy to widen the market for Homestays to capture this group of visitors who prioritise Security, Homestay managers will need to implement strategies that will enhance elements relating to Security, such as safety, security, being organized and healthy. Homestays in Malaysia are required to adhere to the ASEAN Community-Based Tourism Standard (The ASEAN Secretariat, 2016) and the Malaysian Homestay Guidelines (MOCAT, 2005). Apart from features of culture and heritage, messages that assures visitors of the health and safety standards adhered to by Homestays and the details of layout and activity packages may encourage this group of visitors to include Homestays in their choice set (evoked set) (Woodside and Macdonald, 1993; Xiang and Fesenmaier, 2020) and meet their functional information need of reducing apprehension and uncertainty (Choe et al., 2017).

6.6 INFORMATION SEARCH STRATEGIES

The next key variable studied in this research is information search strategies. The aim of the questions asked was to address RQ3, to identify the information search strategies employed by Homestay tourists in relation to the channels and sources consulted. In order to address this question, firstly analysis was done on all respondents, then on Homestay visitors, and those

who did not visit a Homestay. A comparison is then made to identify any distinctive features for Homestay visitors in their information search strategies.

6.6.1 Information search strategies for visitors to Malaysia

6.6.1.1 Search engines

Respondents were asked to identify the importance of each source of information by indicating their score from 1-extremely important to 5-not at all important, on a five-point Likert scale on 15 items of information source via traditional channel and 22 items of information source via online channel. A summary of the most important sources of information for different categories of respondents is presented in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Information search strategies for different categories of respondents

Homestays	Mean	Non-Homestay	Mean	All respondents	Mean
Friends and Family	2.85	Search engines	1.7	Search engines	2.64
Search engines	3.10	Friends and family	2.37	Friends and family	2.69
General social networks (FB, twitter)	3.24	Maps	2.42	Social networks	3.08
Web page (official)	3.57	Portals for hotel reservations	2.51	Hotel reservation portals	3.30

From Table 6.1, it is clear that search engines play a crucial role as the most important information source for visitors to Non-Homestay destinations, as well as all respondents generally. This concurs with findings of Fesenmaier et al. (2011) and Llodra-Riera et al. (2015) who found search engines to be the most important platform for tourism information search and planning, and Grønflaten (2009a) who found that the internet was the most important channel for information search in pre-trip planning. Hence, all DMOs should recognise the crucial role played by search engines and other internet enabled sources because the majority of information search for tourism are enabled by these sources, particularly in this age of mobile internet and digital technologies (Jacobsen and Munar, 2012). DMOs should analyse their operational decisions, particularly marketing and promotion strategies by focusing on the use

of search engines and the latest digital technologies such as livestreaming (Shen, Zhao, Fan et al., 2022), virtual tourism (Verma, Warrier, Bolia et al., 2022), augmented reality (Fan, Jiang and Deng, 2022) and Web 3.0 (Murray, Kim and Combs, 2022) to reach the widest possible market.

6.6.1.2 Friends and family

It is useful to note that for all categories of respondents, friends and family is an important source of information (mean of 2.37-2.85), being the most important source for Homestay guests, and second for non-Homestay guests and for all respondents. This can be attributed to the high level of trust and reliability of this source of information (Kim et al., 2010), which was in fact affirmed in Gursoy et al. (2017), where it was found that even with the prevalence of online channels, the most important sources of information used is still friends and family, followed by online review sites (TripAdvisor etc.) and online search engines (e.g. Google, Yahoo etc.).

DMOs must recognise the importance of recommendations from friends and family as a highly reliable source of information, regardless of channel used, and design marketing strategies surrounding this source. Inducements for recommending destinations, whether through online or offiline channels, can be part of the marketing tool-kit whereby past visitors can obtain monetary incentives when someone they recommend then makes a purchase for the destination recommended.

6.6.2 Information search sources for Homestay visitors

The survey found 60% of Homestay visitors first heard of the existence of Homestays through friends and family, 19% through search engines and 13% from advertising by travel agencies. This is reinforced by the results of respondents' evaluation of the importance of various sources of information, where the most important source of information (the only source with a mean

score of less than 3 - moderately important) is from *friends and family*. All other sources were less than moderately important. Essentially, for Homestay guests, the only important source of information is from friends and family. In contrast to other visitors, there is very little reliance on online sources, or any other sources for Homestay visitors. Clearly the information search strategies employed by guests visiting Homestays is different compared to Non-Homestay guests who use search engines and other sources as their information search strategies. Hence, the following hypotheses are accepted:

H7a: There is a difference in the information search sources employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists in terms of the *types* of sources used.

H7b: There is a difference in the information search sources employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists in terms of the *number of sources* used

This finding is not surprising, as personal sources such as friends and family was the main source of information before the proliferation of the internet (Gitleson and Crompton, 1983), and even after the internet became widely available, many studies (Schweda and Varan, 2004; Grønflaten, 2009a; Tan and Chen, 2012) found that friends and family remain an important source due to its credibility and trustworthiness, as well as a strategy to reduce risk (Kim et al., 2010). Fodness and Murray (1999) similarly found that those going for vacation rely on information sources from friends and family more than other sources. Often, friends and relatives is also the starting point of information search (Bieger and Laesser, 2004), and in the case of Homestays, where information is not generally available elsewhere, this became the only important source of information.

Based on data from interviews, this reliance on friends and family as a source of information was due to two main reasons. Firstly, the nature of the Homestay holiday is different from others in that it comprises a series of engagement and immersion activities together with

accomodation provided by host families, requiring co-ordination with multiple stakeholders such as accommodation providers, farm owners, and musical teams. These platforms were not able to cater to the operation mechanisms of Homestays and the multi-stakeholder service delivery nature of its product, which makes it difficult for reservations to be made via these platforms without prior negotiation. Hence, usual sources of information, especially those that are enabled by the internet, such as search engines or DMO websites, are not useful for Homestay guests.

Secondly, a lack of resources caused Homestays not to be able to provide a robust marketing strategy. Some Homestays which initially set up their own websites, or pages on social media, found that it was not sustainable, as they "could not assign somebody to take care of the website because (they) do not have a budget with fixed income to pay that person" (P3) and "many of those who are handling it are the village people and veterans who are not familiar with technology; but coincidentally in (Homestay D), the management consists of people who are able to utilise the technology, hence a unit was established and is currently handling it" (P5). According to P1, once the person in-charge moves away from the village, the presence of the Homestay online becomes neglected and Homestays are not able to maintain its presence as a source of information online. Further, due to a lack of financial resources, there is only limited access to other promotional channels such as travel fairs, major advertising campaigns and promotions via the mass media.

The implication for Homestays is that with the current marketing strategy, information about Homestays are not reaching the public via the usual media such as advertising or agencies, either through traditional or online channels. Therefore, the dual pronged strategy for enhancing the visibility of Homestays would be to design strategies for public and agency promotions and at the same time enhance promotion via the Homestay's current and past customer base. This can be done on various social media platforms via online channels, as has

been implemented by some Homestays which do have members of staff with the skills and knowledge to do so. As observed by P5, many customers discovered the existence of the Homestay through Facebook posts and contacted them to make reservations. The challenge for many Homestay managers is having members of staff who are proficient in the use of digital technologies and are willing to work in this capacity in these rural and semi-rural locations.

In this regard, with the proliferation of remote working and broadband internet, it is not always necessary for IT professionals to be based at Homestay locations. Hence, Homestay managers can consider engaging those with skills to maintain the digital presence of Homestays from among those who live in urban areas through remote working arrangements, so as to fill the gap in human resources and enable information on Homestays to be made available online. With proper co-ordination and teamwork, it is possible for staff members based in cities to implement digital marketing strategies remotely in order to address the weaknesses identified in information search strategies for Homestays.

6.6.3 Information search channels for Homestay and non-Homestay visitors

6.6.3.1 Traditional channel

To study the difference in the use of information search channels (offline and online), the consolidated mean score for traditional channel (average from each of the five most important scores in the channel) for both Homestay, and Non-Homestay visitors indicate that as a whole, the traditional channel was less than moderately important for both groups of respondents. There was also no significant difference in the mean score of the two groups, leading to the non-acceptance of H8a, that there is a difference in the *traditional* information search channel employed by Homestay tourists compared to other tourists. Generally, both categories of tourists did not prioritise traditional channels, even though for Homestay guests, friends and

family (which is a source associated with traditional (offline) channel) was the most important information search strategy employed.

This shows that for Homestays, while the traditional channel is less important, it is still the main method of obtaining information about these destinations. It is the starting point of information search (Bieger and Laesser, 2004), and in the absence of other sources, became the only important source. Further, as stated by Grønflaten (2009b), in terms of channel preference, for first time visitors on organised groups or with family or friends, face-to-face interaction rather than communication over the internet was preferred while repeat visitors prefer to use the online channel. This may explain the scenario of information search for Homestay visitors found in this study, the majority of whom were first-time visitors to these destinations.

While striving to improve communication via online sources, concurrently, Homestay managers and stakeholders can focus on strategies to enhance the visibility of these unique destinations through traditional and conventional channel such as mass-media, travel agents and tourism fairs, in order for potential tourists to be able to obtain information on these destinations and be able to experience the unique offerings of Homestays. In fact, these have been implemented by several Homestays as part of their marketing strategy, such as tourism exhibition (P1, P2, P3, P4), television programmes (P1, P2, P7), newspapers and magazines (P3, P7) and travel agencies (P2, P3).

6.6.3.2 Online Channel

For information search using the online channel, there is a signicifant difference between the use of online channel for Homestay guests compared to Non-Homestay guests. The online channel is significantly more important for Non-Homestay guests then for Homestay guests. Hence, H8b – that there is a difference in the *online* information search channel employed by Homestay tourists compared is **accepted**.

This resonates with other findings in this study, that the main source of information for Non-Homestay guests is search engines, which is accessed via the online channel; while for Homestay guests, the main source of information is through friends and family, via a traditional channel, and online channels are less important. This may be due to the severe lack of online presence for Homestays as stated by Homestay managers. For instance, P1 stated that their website developed initially had become inactive because of a lack of skilled manpower to manage it, while some Homestays did not have any online presence to start with (P2). Some Homestays attempted to develop an online presence via social media such as Facebook and Instagram, but the great challenge is maintaining and managing them because of a lack of technical competency among Homestay operators, many of whom are older and lack technological and digital skills.

In summary, the use of the online channel is more important for Non-Homestay guests than Homestay guests, while there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups in the use of the traditional channel. Even though the use of traditional channel generally is not preferred by both groups of tourists, Homestay guests have little option but to refer to the only important source of information via the traditional channel – through friends and family.

6.6.4 Online information search strategies for Homestays

In view of the findings above, RQ4 concerns the extent to which the use of online information search strategies are able to meet the information needs of Homestay tourists. While respondents to non-Homestay destinations indicated that various online information sources are important as their search strategies, this is not the case for Homestay visitors. For them, all online sources of information had a mean score of more than 3 – moderately important (Table 6.1), and the only source with a mean score of less than 3 is friends and family which is a traditional (offline) source; meaning online information sources are not a priority. As mentioned above, online information sources for Homestays remain sketchy and are not

accessible to potential customers, either because they do not exist, or have become dormant and neglected. Respondents indicate that reservations for Homestays are made via face to face interactions or via the telephone with Homestay management, and via social texting applications such as WhatsApp; indicating a lack of systematic reservation, ad-hoc arrangements and a reliance on social applications (Gan, Inversini and Rega, 2016) to communicate with destinations.

Therefore, it can be concluded that at present, online information search strategies is not meeting the information needs of Homestay tourists, since the only important source of information identified by the respondents is friends and family, a traditional source, in contrast to the information search strategies employed by non-Homestay visitors.

The purpose of information search is ultimately to enable visitors to make reservations for their trip and plan for their holiday. In this study, respondents were also asked about the methods used for making such reservations, i.e. who they approach to make the reservation. Respondents who visited a Homestay indicated that the main method used to finalise this process is to book directly with the homestay owner or management (45.8%) followed by others (39.4%), as indicated in Table 5.29. It is clear that Homestay visitors are still using a traditional method of confirming their reservations, which is to deal with the Homestay management directly, rather than through third parties such as agencies (which contributed only 9.9%). The reservation system for Homestays is still manually managed; as described by P3, potential customers will get in touch with them via the telephone or email, and once details are finalised with all stakeholders and service providers at the Homestay, the reservation will be confirmed via email, or text message. This observation concurs with responses in the survey, where Homestay respondents indicated that offline channels of face to face and telephone contact together contributed 30% of the communication/applications used to make reservations

for their stay, then email (26%), followed by chat apps (such as WhatsApp, WeChat, Line) (23%) and web booking system of the agents (10%).

In comparison, non-homestay guests used less of offline channels (19%) and rely more on online channels, specifically hotel web booking system (18%) and emails (17%). Less reliance was placed on chat apps (8%) and agent's web booking system (6%) compared to Homestay guests.

In summary, while online channels was not an important **source of information**, Homestay respondents did make use of online channels to **make reservations**, albeit without relying on online sources of information to do so. Typically, information about the homestays would have been obtained through friends and family, or other advertising channels, and contact made with homestay management through various online media such as chat apps, and emails or traditional channel (face to face, telephone) in order to secure the reservations.

It is clear from the discussion above that the current online information sources are inadequate to meet the information needs of potential visitors to Homestay. Therefore, it is imperative to discover what improvements may be proposed to increase its effectiveness in meeting these information needs. This is investigated in RQ5 which considers areas of improvements that will increase the effectiveness of meeting these information needs.

Respondents (local and foreign visitors) indicated that the key improvement to meet the information needs of Homestay guests would be to have a website with information on Homestays and how they may be contacted (39%), having a central online reservation system for Homestays (26%) and having travel agencies abroad (15%) and in Malaysia (13%). This will address the key weakness in information sources identified above, where online presence of Homestays is virtually non-existent, resulting in the only important source of information

being friends and family, as there is currently no other viable means of obtaining information on Homestays.

Among foreign guests however, the key proposal was to have travel agencies in their home countries (52%) and to have websites with homestay information (29%). From these results, it is clear that foreign tourists would prefer to have the assistance of tour agencies in their own countries to facilitate the whole information search and reservation process for Homestays. This is important for Homestay managers to take note, and to consider stategies where collaborative relationships can be established with tour agencies in different countries with significant number of tourists who may be interested in this type of experience for their vacations. To some extent, Homestay managers are already developing and strengthening this collaboration, as confirmed by P1, P2, P4, P5, who stated that promotional trips to Southeast Asian and East Asian countries were organised, some of which were facilitated by the Malaysian Tourism Board. The second most important improvement strategy is to have websites with Homestay information. Naturally, this will help enhance the visibility of Homestays and the products on offer. In fact, for Malaysian guests, the most popular improvement strategy is to have websites with Homestay information (45%), followed by central online booking system for Homestays (34%). This is because Malaysians who are looking for unique destinations such as Homestays are currently unable to find such information online, as stated by P3.

Also, the current reservation and communication system is mostly through personal communication with Homestay managers, and one area of improvement is to be able to do so via online booking systems (including negotiations and arrrangements for the visit) which is the norm for tourism destinations around the world, regardless of their size.

In view of the above, while tourists to other destinations use online channel as their main medium for information search and reservation of holidays, visitors to Homestays are still reliant on information from friends and family. This has several managerial implications, particularly for Homestay management in developing enhancement strategies to overcome this challenge. Firstly, there is a need to develop a wholistic strategy to increase the online presence in order to build awareness of this unique tourism product. In addition, Homestay managers can also engage IT workforce remotely in urban areas to fill this gap as high speed internet and digital technologies make remote working feasible and effective.

In view of the limited capacity of individual Homestays in this regard, and the lack of skilled human resource to design and implement a bespoke online promotion and reservation platform for Homestays, there is a need for governmental or private sector intervention in the development of this information system. This information infrastructure would have to be customised for Homestays, reflecting the co-ordination and operations of Homestays reservation processes, which allows potential customers to search for information on Homestays, contact Homestay management and make all the arrangements and reservations, and for Homestay managers to co-ordinate internal arrangements with all the stakeholders and service providers in the enterprise. This can either be driven by government or private initiative, but will require large scale co-ordination and implementation facilitated by government agencies, private entities and Homestay stakeholders.

6.7 PERSONAL VALUES, INFORMATION SEARCH STRATEGIES AND CBT

After considering all the relationships of the variables in the theoretical model individually, the model is now considered as a whole, to understand the dynamics between the different antecedents of demographic characteristics including personal value, travel party, destination selection, purpose of trip and information search strategies and therefore address RQ6:

Which are the key antecedents affecting information search strategies of tourists who select Homestay destinations?

6.7.1 Exploratory PCA: information sources

Firstly, exploratory factor analysis conducted on all the sources: 15 items in the traditional media list and 22 items in the online media list with varimax (orthogonal) rotation (KMO=0.807) resulted in 7 factors which explained 70.54% of the variance. These are: General Traditional Sources, Search Portals, Agencies-offline, Agencies–online, Tourism Specific Portals, Influencers and Other Sources. These factors presents clusters of sources which are classified with the perspective of a clear distinction between channels and sources (Grønflaten, 2009b). General Traditional Sources and Agencies-offline use the traditional (non-internet) channel, while Search portals, Agencies-online, Tourism Specific Portals, use the online channel. The only factor which uses both online and offline sources is Influencers, which refer specifically to the informal social networks of friends, acquaintances and popular figures and opinion leaders, both online and offline. Other Sources was not retained because there was no significant effect on this factor in the analysis. The original list of individual sources was clearly categorised based on its channel, and this provides input to literature by presenting a classification of sources based on its corresponding channel, addressing the criticism of a lack of clarity between sources and channel (Grønflaten, 2009b). The factors from the EFA were also able to reflect this pattern, except for Influencers, which comprised sources from both online and offline channels. The factors are represented in Figure 6.4 below.

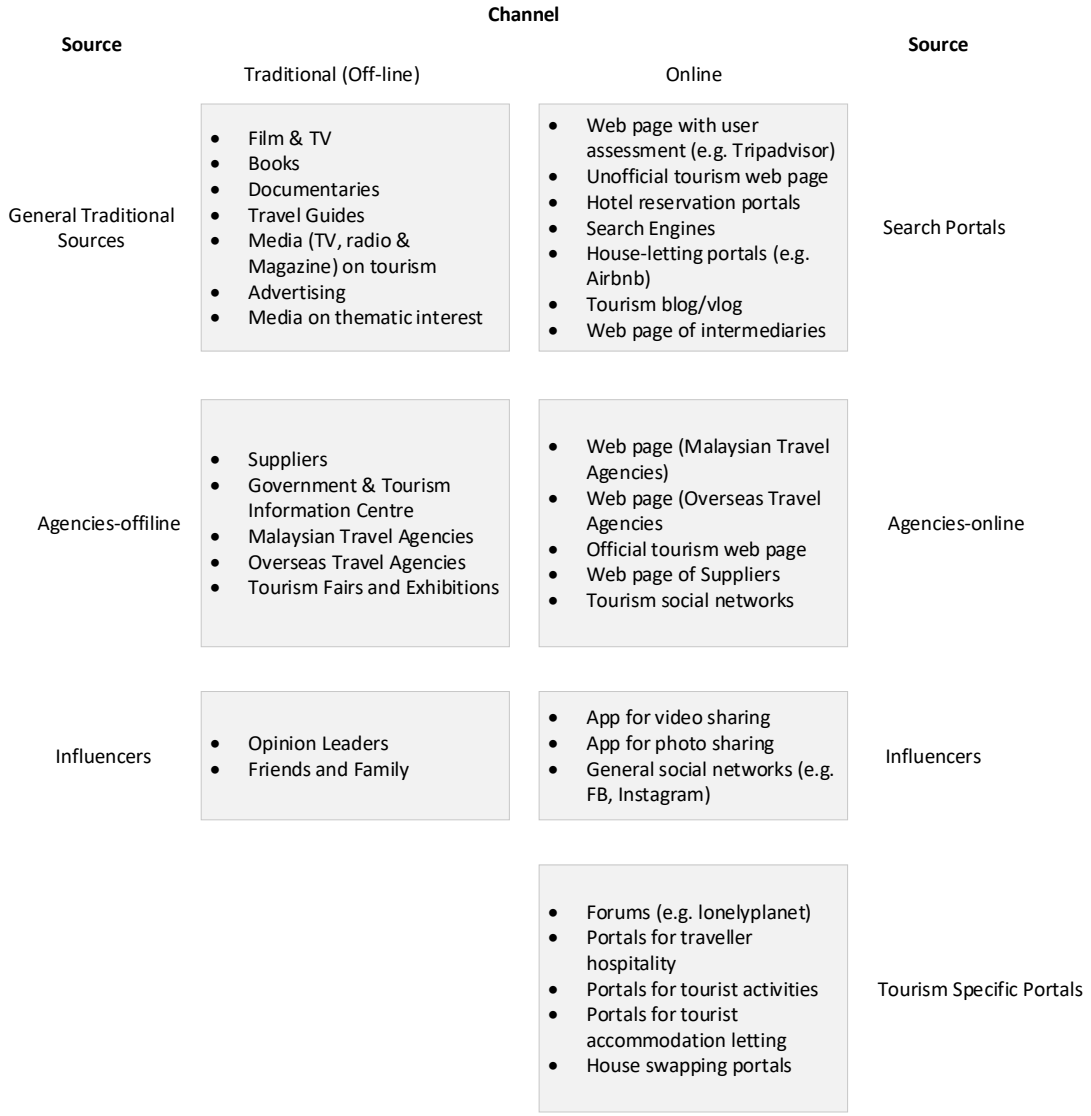


Figure 6.4 Classification of information by sources and channels

This method of classification is in contrast to earlier classifications that are based on personal-marketer (Money and Crotts, 2003; Lo et al., 2002); formal/impersonal-informal/personal (Mansfeld, 1992); and commercial/non-commercial-personal/impersonal (Fodness and Murray, 1997) dimensions. It is also distinguished from classifications of online information based on consumers involvement (active/passive) (Gartner, 1994; Coromina and Camprubí, 2016); induced (marketer generated)-organic (unbiased user generated) (Brogan and Smith, 2009); or typology of web content and functions (No and Kim, 2015).

The classification in this study contributes to literature in this area by using the channel/source dimensions which allows a clear distinction to be made between these two elements, and enables consideration of channel and sources separately, so that more accurate and appropriate analyses of issues surrounding these two concepts can be done. It also addressed the confusion observed in previous studies such as Luo et al. (2004), Lo et al. (2002), Bieger and Laesser (2004), Schweda and Varan (2004), Pan and Fesenmaier (2006) and Hyde (2007), whereby the internet have been identified as a source, when it refers to a channel by which information may be transmitted from various sources.

With the proliferation of Web 2.0, and social media, it is arguable that Influencers tend to relate more to online sources. The awareness of this distinction between channel and sources will aid in appropriate analyses of issues related to these two dimensions. For example, choices of information sources (e.g. travel agent, other tourists or primary service providers) and channels (face to face, print media or the Internet) may be quite different. Homestay managers currently faced challenges both in developing promotional materials which effectively promote these destinations due to a lack of financial resources and expertise in marketing, broadcasting and advertising (a problem relating to sources); as well as the challenge of navigating the channels of communication, specifically electronic communication via the internet, due to a lack of expertise in the use of information and digital technologies.

In order to further investigate the dynamics between the variables in the model, multiple regression analysis was done to identify the influence of antecedents of information search on the various categories of sources identified above.

6.7.2 General Traditional Sources (factor 1)

General Traditional Sources include film and TV, books, documentary, travel guides, media on tourism and thematic interests and advertising. The results of the regression analysis for

General Traditional Sources indicate that a change in the nationality of the guest (Non-Malaysian to Malaysian), an increase in importance of the personal value of Tradition and Stimulation and the selection of Homestay result in an increase in the importance of this factor.

This finding is significant as it reveals that Homestay visitors who prioritise the value of Tradition – who tend to be older visitors, as indicated by the positive relationship between age and Tradition in Section 6.3.1 above, prefer General Traditional Sources when searching for information for their trip. As for Stimulation, it may be attributable to the respondents' perspective of Homestay holiday, as something exciting in their life, an unusual and novel experience that they are interested to explore. Hence, this result shows that Malaysian visitors (who make up the majority of visitors) to Homestay destinations, particularly those with a value priority of Tradition (respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion provides) and Stimulation (excitement, novelty, challenge in life), rely more heavily on these traditional sources as sources of information in their travel planning.

Data from the interviews indicate that the main marketing strategies employed by Homestays are promotional flyers, tourism fairs, tour agencies (P1, P2, P3, P4), television, newspapers and magazines (P1, P2, P3, P7), and government tourism programmes (P3, P5). All these current strategies correspond with sources under this factor, 'General Traditional Sources'.

Therefore, for older visitors, the current marketing strategies is the best way of reaching them. However, older visitors only account for 20% of Homestay tourists, while the majority of them are below the age of 40 (80%). The problem that Homestay destinations face in this respect is that their current marketing approach may not be reaching out to their target customers (young, urban and educated Malaysians) below 40 years old, due to a mis-match between the media favoured by their target customer base and the media currently available.

Regression analyses on other sources indicate that Agencies-online is preferred by Malaysian Homestay visitors, and younger visitors prefer Tourism Specific Portals and Influencers, most of which are facilitated by online technologies. Urban, highly educated respondents also prefer Search Portals as information sources. Hence, there is a need to put more emphasis on media that are used by younger people, such as those utilising internet channels and social media platforms. These strategies are not costly to implement, but would require appropriate technical expertise and broadband infrastructure, which are currently lacking especially in rural areas (Dwivedi and Lal, 2007) in which most Homestays are based.

6.7.3 Search Portals (factor 2)

In analysing Search Portals, results of the regression analysis show that Nationality, Residence and Education Level have a statistically significant influence on the use of Search Portals as information sources. Search portals include tourism portals such as webpages with assessment (e.g. TripAdvisor), unofficial tourism websites/vlogs, portals for hotel and accommodation reservations (Booking.com, Airbnb), portals of intermediaries (e.g. trivago, Expedia etc.) and general search engines.

This result shows that urban Malaysians (with higher levels of access to the internet due to their location), and those who have higher educational levels have a greater preference for Search Portals when conducting information search. It is interesting to note that while personal values and choice of destination have no significant influence on the use of Search Portals based on this result, its use is influenced by the place of residence and level of education. The selection of Homestays doe not have an influence on this factor, reasonably so, since earlier analyses has shown that friends and family is the main source of information, and that sources via online channels were less than moderately important as a source of information for Homestay visitors. At the same time, findings in this study (Section 5.9.4 and Section 5.9.5) also indicate that

online channels are more important for non-Homestay visitors and 53% of them use online channels for reservation.

The influence of education and residence on Search Portals is likely due to the higher level of digital skill competency among urban Malaysians with higher levels of education, compared to those in rural areas where digital skill compentency tend to be lower, as a result of lower internet penetration rates in rural parts of the country (Malaysia Communications and Multimedia Commission, 2020). This finding also echoes Dodd's (1998) results where those with higher educational level tend to rely on sources which allow them to consolidate and assimilate information from various sources (including personal and experiential sources found on feedback by customers on search portals) compared to those with lower educational level who rely more on media sources.

This finding also affirms previous studies which found search engines as a popular gateway of tourist information search, whereby 80% tourists have accessed them in their tourism planning (Fesenmaier et al., 2011), and it is one of the aspects most impacted by the integration of the internet, mobile technology and social media in recent years (Choe et al., 2017). Search Portals are also effective sources of information as they provide higher quality consideration set, resulting in higher search efficiency (lower number of consideration set), and lower amount of search (Biswas, 2004).

Search Portals are popular information sources because they contain user-generated content in the form of feedback from customers, ratings and other pertinent information relating to the destination or tourism products, as well as sophisticated web tools with dynamic packaging and augmented reality (Beldona, 2005). This interaction with customers is an attractive feature, especially for those who are younger and more highly educated (Yoo and Gretzel, 2011; Del Chiappa et al., 2016); allowing them to access comments from past customers with rich

information and personal stories and experiences, interacting directly with customers as first hand sources of information (Xiang and Fesenmaier, 2020). This can be done without interference from service providers, providing more reliable destination images because they are generated by users with real accounts, images and emotional experiences from their travel (Llodra-Riera et al., 2015). This type of information source is even more important than sources on social media (such as Facebook or Instagram) (Gursoy et al., 2017) perhaps because of the higher cost of search required in searching for user-generated information scattered throughout social media platforms compared to those relating to travel destinations which are easily available on Search Portals.

As the travel industry was one of the first to adopt electronic methods (Buhalis and Law, 2008) and will continue to lead the way, Search Portals is an important marketing strategy and DMOs, including Homestays, should consider ways of optimising it, as it fulfills many of the key success factors mentioned by Park and Gretzel (2007) and No and Kim (2015), such as information quality, ease of use, security, interactivity, accessibility and personalisation. Specifically, collective effort by Homestay management is required towards establishing a tailor-made search platform which can cater to the management processes of Homestays (as the current platforms are unable to do so – highlighted by P6 when he described the challenges of using current online platforms for reservation of Homestays), in order to significantly enhance the marketing of these unique tourism destinations.

6.7.4 Agencies-offline (factor 3)

The results of the regression analysis for Agencies-offline indicate that the demographic characteristic of Nationality and the personal value of Tradition have a statistically significant influence on this factor as information sources. A change in the nationality of the guest (Non-Malaysian to Malaysian) and an increase in the value priority for Tradition influences the variation (increase) in the importance of Agencies-offline. Malaysian guests who prioritise the

value of Tradition would tend to rely more heavily on Agencies-offline as sources of information. The selection of travel destination shows no significant influence on this information source, in parallel to findings in this study which shows that this is not a category of information source prioritised by Homestay visitors.

However, this result does indicate that those who prioritise the value of Tradition (respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion provides) are more inclined to favour Agencies-offline (government agencies, travel agencies, tourism fairs and exhibitions). This may be attributable to respondents who tend to be older individuals (age has a positive relationship with this personal value as detailed in Section 5.7.1), are less familiar with technology and more reliant on traditional sources of information and appreciate the ability to speak face to face with an agent or destination marketer. The implication of this is that tourism destinations with target markets of older customers should ensure their marketing and communication strategies include tour agencies which have physical presence in the market and are able to interact with customers via offline channels such as face-to-face meetings and telephone communication.

6.7.5 Agencies-online (factor 4)

The results of the regression for Agencies-online (web pages of travel agencies, tourism social networks, official tourism webpages and web pages of suppliers) indicate that a change in the nationality of the guest (Non-Malaysian to Malaysian) and a move towards selection of Homestay influence the variation (increase) in the importance of Agencies-online as sources of information. Malaysian Homestay guests tend to prioritise the use of Agencies-online as sources of information compared to non-Malaysian guests. Malaysians are not hindered in their communication with online travel agents via common languages such as English and Bahasa Malaysia, and this mode of interaction does not significantly increase the risks (Kim et al., 2010) associated with online transactions as customers are normally able to attend physically

at the agents' premises in the country should any issues arise, while still being able to take advantage of the convenience offered by the online channel. While Homestay guests generally rely on friends and family as the main source of information, qualitative data do indicate travel agents as one of the marketing strategies employed by Homestays to attract customers, and Homestay managers deal with local agents online, via e-mails.

In view of the transformation of tourism products brought about by the development of Web 2.0, tourist behaviour has also changed towards a higher dependence on online travel service providers (Tavitiyaman et al., 2021). Hence, Homestay managers should enhance their collaboration with local travel agents who have an online presence to promote this unique tourism product, in view of the importance of this factor of Agencies-online among Malaysian tourists, as they form the majority of Homestay visitors. Further, 80% of Homestay guests tend to be younger (and familiar with digital technologies), allowing this information source to be fully exploited towards the target market.

On the other hand, for non-Malaysian respondents, most of which were Homestay visitors (85%), Agencies-online was not a preference. The interviews reveal that Homestay managers undertook some promotional visits to foreign countries and worked with agencies there in promoting Homestay destinations (P1, P2, P4 and P5), hence, overseas tourists are usually contacted via foreign agencies with face-to-face contacts. More than half of these foreign tourists surveyed also indicated that one of the key strategies to improve information access particularly for Homestays, is to have travel agencies in their home countries (allowing them to contact them via offline and online channels), presumably due to a shortage of Agencies-online marketing Homestay products in their countries. Homestay destination managers should establish and strengthen collaboration with foreign agencies with online presence so that foreign tourists can access information on Homestays in Malaysia (in their own languages) via online travel agencies in their home countries. Homestays should also work closely with

Malaysian travel agencies with partners overseas in order to facilitate this route of marketing information flow, and nurture this type of collaborative relationship with local travel agencies.

6.7.6 Tourism Specific Portals (factor 5)

In relation to Tourism Specific Portals (online portals related to tourism such as Lonelyplanet, wikitravel, portals for tourist accommodation letting, house-swapping portals), regression analysis revealed Nationality and age group have a statistically significant influence on their use. A change in the nationality of the guest (Non-Malaysian to Malaysian) and an increase in the age of the guest increases the importance of Tourism Specific Portals as sources of information.

Among Malaysian visitors who are older, there is a tendency to prefer this factor as sources of information, albeit not official tourism sources; perhaps due to their greater familiarity with these sources which are less interactive but provide comprehensive, important tourism information in one location, instead of other social media platforms. Older consumers who are more risk averse may feel that this category of sources provide more complete product knowledge for their trip (Maity et al., 2014; Hwang et al., 2011).

Choe et al. (2017) found that the basic structure of travellers information needs for pre-trip planning has not changed in the last 25 years despite the advent of the internet, mobile technology and smart systems. Functional information needs (referring to elements of knowledge, utility, efficiency and uncertainty) remain the most important, although the sources and medium of accessing these information may have changed, thus supporting the argument that these Tourism Specific Portals may still be important, especially for meeting functional information needs of some customers who are now accessing them via the online channel.

6.7.7 Influencers (factor 6)

Influencers cover online sources such as photo and video sharing apps, and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, and traditional sources such as opinion leaders and friends and family. Nationality, age group and travel party have a statistically significant influence on the use of Influencers as an information source. Younger Malaysian tourists who go on trips with smaller travel parties which include friends and family tend to consider Influencers more important as sources of information. This factor is not significantly influenced by the type of destination, but reflects the scenario of Malaysian tourists generally. This finding concurs with Jacobsen and Munar (2012), who found that more younger tourists (below 35 years old) employed electronic platforms (such as Facebook) and the internet for information search and travel booking arrangements compared to older tourists. The interactive and information rich features, and smart tourism applications which leverage advanced information technologies to enable multi-party interactive tourism experiences (Tavitiyaman et al., 2021) are popular among the digitally savvy young generation.

Influencers are sources of information with increasing importance due to the prevalence of mobile networked mediated communication, resulting in tourists' increase dependence on external memories (stored in technological clouds), as well as their increasing role as creator and seeker of user-generated content on social media platforms (Xiang and Fesenmaier, 2020). Concurrent with this development, concerns around the issue of trust puts emphasis on customised, smart and reliable information underpinned by big data and artificial intelligence.

In view of this, all DMOs in Malaysia, including those of Homestay destinations, should consider strategies that leverage the extensive social networks on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, all of which are vastly popular in Malaysia, targeting specifically those who are younger, highly educated and fluent users of technology, to strengthen their marketing and distinguish themselves from the competition. Apart from strategies which encourage visitors

to recommend these destinations to their friends and family, Homestay managers need to develop marketing programmes which engage influencers on social media by inviting them to visit these unique destinations with exciting products and experiences, and to document their trip so that information on these destinations can reach the target customers of Homestays, the majority of whom are younger, highly educated and technologically advanced.

6.8 SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the findings from the survey, complemented by data from qualitative interviews to provide a wholistic view of the antecedents affecting information search strategies for a niche product, the Homestay programme in Malaysia, and the personal value profile of visitors to these destinations. The study highlights important findings of the dominant personal values of Homestay visitors in contrast to other tourists, provides clarity as to the channels and sources of tourist information and revealed the information search strategies employed by tourists in Malaysia. By analysing the whole theoretical model, the last section of the discussion highlights various antecedents influencing different groups of information sources for Homestays, as well as those that affect tourism in Malaysia generally.

The key findings of this study are:

1. Visitors to Homestays are generally young people who are pursuing, or have obtained tertiary education and live in urban areas, in pursuit of a unique holiday experience. Although they are technologically savvy, preferring to use Search Portals, Agencies-online and Influencers as sources of information, the lack of online presence of Homestays makes friends and family the only important source of information for these tourists. They visit Homestays for the opportunity to immerse themselves in its culture, food as well as its seclusion and contrast to city life. These findings addressed RQ3.

2. Personal values have some influence on demographic characteristics of respondents which generally concur with previous studies such as Vecchione et al. (2016) and Schwartz (2005). Notably, age has the most significant influence, affecting 8 of the 10 values in Schwartz and Bilsky's (1987) circular structure of values. An important finding from this study was that while the top four values prioritised by Asian respondents in this study are identical to the top four value priorities of respondents in the European Social Survey (ESS) (Schwartz, 2007), the sequence of the ranking of these values is the exact opposite of those in the ESS survey. While ESS respondents had Benevolence at the top of the value hierarchy, Asian respondents prioritised Security. These findings addressed RQ1.
3. In terms of personal value priorities among visitors to Malaysia, there is a clear distinction between the values prioritised by Homestay tourists (Self-Direction) and Non-Homestay tourists (Security). The priority of Self-Direction corresponds to the products and services available in Homestays which encourage exploration, curiosity, innovation, in-depth engagement with local communities and independent decision-making, in contrast to traditional tourism packages where tourists can expect a pre-arranged set of experiences in a secure and predictable environment, with little engagement with local communities. The findings addressed RQ2.
4. The only important source of information for Homestay tourists is friends and family. This is mainly due to (1) skeletal or limited marketing and promotion of this niche product in local and foreign media due to resource constraints (a problem of source); and (2) a lack of online presence of Homestay destinations as a result of acute shortage of skills and manpower who are able to maintain the infrastructure and keep content updated (a problem of channel), preventing access to information even though a majority of Homestay visitors are technologically savvy and familiar with search

portals, electronic social networks and online sources of information. These findings addressed RQ4 and RQ5.

5. Six categories of information were identified in this study, providing greater clarity from the pespective of channels and sources, allowing analysis of different issues arising from these two dimensions to be done accordingly. These findings respond to RQ3.
6. Results from regression analyses on various information source categories revealed that only two categories, General Traditional Sources and Agencies-online are influenced by the selection of Homestays among respondents. It shows that among older Homestay visitors who prioritise Tradition as a personal value, General Traditional Sources are important sources of information. However, as older tourists was a minority among Homestay visitors, this finding reinforces the need for Homestay managers to focus on enhancing other sources which attract the majority of its visitors - younger, urban and highly educated tourists, who prefer Search Portals, Agencies-online and Influencers for their information search strategies. Therefore, marketers for Homestays should improve their electronic communication and online marketing channels and sources to attract these technologically savvy potential customers who form the majority of visitors to Homestays.
7. The personal values Tradition shows a positive effect on General Traditional Sources and Agencies-offline. This shows that those who prioritise respect, commitment, and acceptance of cultural and religious customs tend to consider traditional sources of information as more important, placing less trust on online sources of information. Findings in items 6 and 7 above addressed RQ5 and RQ6.

CHAPTER 7 CONTRIBUTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the contributions of this research, demonstrating how the key findings have addressed the objectives of this study. It highlights the contributions made to literature, and the implications of these findings for policy and practice. Subsequently, the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are discussed.

7.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND KEY FINDINGS

While extensive research has been done on information search strategies for tourism, personal values as a characteristic of the vacationer/tourist has been given little attention in the literature, in spite of extensive research in the field of psychology linking personal values to behavioural and psychological elements in various context. While personal value has been studied in such diverse fields as consumer behaviour (Koo et al., 2008; Swinyard, 1998; Brunsø et al., 2004), social media (Chen et al., 2014), education (Ledden et al., 2007), social and environmental studies (Sagiv and Schwartz, 2004; Bianchi and Rosova, 1995; Karp, 1996; Sagiv and Schwartz, 2000), religiosity (Schwartz and Huismans, 1995), politics (Barnea and Schwartz, 1998) and most recently, in policies to transform agriculture (Sorvali, Kaseva, Vainio et al., 2021), coastal tourism (Pereira, Anjos, Añaña et al., 2021) and choice of university majors (Wong, 2021), very limited research has been done to study the extent to which personal values impact tourist decision making (Weeden, 2011; Ahmad et al., 2020), and no significant study has been done on its impact on information search for community-based tourism, or tourism generally.

The concept of personal value is linked to key trends in tourism involving the morality of consumption and ethical concerns. Consumption of eco-tourism and other sustainable tourism

products represents a form of restraint and ethical consumption (Cooper-Martin and Holbrook, 1993). Hence, the positioning of this study is on the influence of personal values in the context of community-based tourism, a form of sustainable tourism, of which Homestays is an expression.

This research seeks to contribute to literature on information search for tourism by incorporating the variable of personal values as a dimension of the vacationer within the context of community-based tourism (CBT). This study analysed the influence of personal values on other demographic variables, destination selection and information search behaviour of tourists, developed a framework for information search strategy incorporating the perspective of sources and channels of information, and identified the types of information sought by tourists favouring CBT sites such as Homestays.

CBT provides key elements of renewable economic, social and cultural benefits (Zielinski, Kim, Botero et al., 2020; Yanes, Zielinski, Cano et al., 2019) for participating communties which can be leveraged for environmental and cultural conservation. Malaysia's Homestay programme has the potential to contribute to preservation of cultural heritage and environmental conservation (Inversini, Rega and Gan, 2020), but has seen lacklustre development and progress since its inception more than two dacades ago. This study seeks to increase the understanding of the segment of customers who prefer Homestays as a destination by investigating their personal value profile, and how it may influence information search strategies and selection of Homestay destinations. These insights will enable Homestay managers to enhance their understanding of the profile of their target customers, the types of information search strategies employed and the most effective methods of communicating with and attracting these tourists, enabling them to reach a wider market and heighten the development and growth of this niche product in Malaysia.

To reiterate, the objectives of this study are to:

1. Identify the personal value profile of tourists visiting Malaysia generally, and those who visit a Homestay specifically
2. Identify the influence of personal values and other antecedents on information search strategies for Homestays
3. Determine the information search strategies employed by Homestay tourists, from the perspective of channels and sources of information
4. Analyse the sufficiency of these sources of information in meeting the information needs of Homestay tourists and any improvements necessary to meet those needs.

The key findings of this study which have addressed the research objectives are summarised in the following sections.

7.2.1 Personal value and demographic characteristics

Generally, the profile of the majority of Homestay visitors is that of Malaysian young people who are pursuing, or have obtained tertiary education and live in urban areas, in pursuit of a unique holiday experience with friends and family. They visit Homestays for the opportunity to immerse themselves in its culture, food, as well as for its seclusion and contrast to city life.

Personal values were found to have some influence on demographic characteristics of respondents, generally concuring with previous studies such as Vecchione et al. (2016) and Schwartz (2006), that while personal values generally remain constant across circumstances, as a person matures and with changes in life circumstances, value priorities tend to change. Notably, age affects 8 of the 10 values in Schwartz and Bilsky's (1987) circular structure of values. Higher educational level was found to positively influence the values of Benevolence and Universalism (self-transcendence values); and negatively impact Power and Tradition, in

line with Schwartz's (2006) view that exposure through education increases openness to non-routine ideas and challenges the prevailing expectations and traditions.

An important finding from this study is that while the top four values prioritised by Asian respondents are identical to the top four value priorities of European respondents (European Social Survey, ESS) (Schwartz,2007), the hierarchy of the ranking of these values in this study is the exact opposite of those in the ESS survey. While ESS respondents had Benevolence at the top of the value hierarchy, it was Security that was most important for Asians.

These findings contribute to literature by providing empirical evidence of the personal value priorities of Asian respondents, particularly Malaysians, using the Portrait Value Questionaire (PVQ) developed by Schwartz et al. (2001), extending the cross-cultural validity of the structure of values using the PVQ to respondents of a different culture. It also highlights the contrast in value priorities between European, and East and Southeast Asian cultures, with Benevolence and Security as the most important value respectively.

Further, this study employed the PVQ instrument in the survey, which is cognitively less demanding, therefore suited for younger and less educated respondents, and arguably for respondents of all ages because it describes the profiles of people in the context of their goals, aspirations or wishes, with implicit reference to the importance of different values, rather than asking respondents to rank the importance of a list of value items in an abstract manner (Schwartz et al., 2001). This instrument is found to be more realistic in application and is able to extract the relevant personal values through descriptive statements rather than ranking of lists of values adopted by other instruments suc as Kahle and Kennedy's (1989) LOV, Rokeach's (1973) Value Survey or Schwartz and Bilsky's (1987) SVS.

7.2.2 Dominant personal value priorities and information search strategies of Homestay Visitors

Arguably, tourism is the sector with the greatest customer involvement in the process of information search and product selection (Decrop and Snelders, 2004). Tourism being an information based phenomenon bears higher risks to consumers due to its intangibility, with no opportunity for inspection because of the gap between purchase and experience (Xiang et al., 2015), and its multi-segmented complexity (Curras-Perez et al., 2017). This risk can be reduced by employing effective information search strategies. Hence, destination marketers must understand how customers acquire information and design effective communication of tourism information in order to meet this need (Bieger and Laesser, 2004). Product offering of destinations and the quality of communication impacts the motivation of potential tourists in their choice of destination (Bieger and Laesser, 2002), hence the importance of ensuring accurate, timely and relevant information is communicated to segments of the market targeted by destinations, and providing products and services that are attractive to them.

In recent years, the key concerns of tourism consumer behaviour relate to technology, Generation Y and ethical consumption (Cohen et al., 2014). Arguably these three converged in this study with elements of information search and younger tourists in the context of community-based tourism taking centre stage. Understanding how information search and technology are shaping tourism planning, and the motivation behind these activities, including elements influenced by personal values in the context of sustainable tourism options such as community-based tourism, is crucial for successful marketing of tourism products (Godfrey and Clarke, 2000). To be effective, marketing communication needs to take into account the values prioritised by the target market (Fall and Knutson, 2001). Messages must tap into an emotional anchor (such as moments of truth in personal experiences), which is often linked to a personal value prioritised by the tourist.

The rationale for investigating this characteristic of the vacationer is the notion that personal values are foundational to a person's cognitive structure, and influence an individual's judgment of which attributes of an object are important to their decision making and behaviour (Parsons, 2011; Kamakura and Novak, 1992). Values are activated directly or indirectly (Corfman, Lehmann and Narayanan, 1991; McCarty and Shrum, 1994) when there are value-relevant aspects in a situation, and they influence action which promotes those values that are prioritised in decision making, especially when opportunities to demonstrate the expression of those values are available (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987; Schwartz, 2006). There is a connection between the personal values we prioritise and the things we possess, and our behaviour (Friese, 2000), including vacation decisions. Although the link is not causal, it can illuminate the *motivation* for action. Hence, intention to go for a vacation or trip may trigger value activation in the selection of a destination for the trip. Therefore, understanding the value profile of customers of different types of destination will help destination owners identify and target specific groups of potential customers more precisely in their promotion and communication.

In this context, the personal values of Homestay tourists and the influence on or motivation for choosing this type of community-based toursim is investigated to provide insights into the profile of the target segment for this unique tourism product, so that destination managers can better understand the customer, provide appropriate information that will resonate with them and highlight product features that will interest this segment of the market.

This study found that Homestay visitors prioritise a different personal value compared to other tourists. There is a clear distinction between the values prioritised by Homestay tourists (Self-Direction) and Non-Homestay tourists, and other visitors to Malaysia (Security). The priority of Self-Direction corresponds with the nature of products and services available in Homestays: rugged, natural and with unique experiences for visitors, which encourage exploration, curiosity, in-depth engagement with local communities and independent decision-making,

reflecting the attainment of the value of Self-Direction, in contrast to traditional tourism packages where tourists can expect a pre-arranged set of experiences in a secure and predictable environment, without meaningful engagement with local communities.

From this study, while Search Portals is the most common and important information search strategy for tourists generally; the only important source of information for Homestay tourists currently is friends and family. As rational decision makers, consumers will employ optimal information search strategies based on the existing environment to achieve the objectives of risk aversion and reduction of perceived uncertainty (Moorthy et al., 1997). Therefore, in the absence of information online (which would be cost effective), Homestay tourists resort to friends and family as sources of information (which is also relatively low cost) to reduce uncertainty and risk for their trip.

This scenario is mainly due to (1) skeletal or limited marketing and promotion information of this niche product in local and foreign traditional media due to limited resources of Homestay enterprises; and (2) a lack of online presence of Homestay destinations as a result of acute shortage of skills and manpower to establish and maintain the infrastructure and keep content updated, preventing access to information even though a majority of Homestay visitors are technologically savvy and familiar with search portals, electronic social networks and online sources of information.

Personal value is an important element in information search strategies and destination selection for Malaysian tourists. Tradition influences information search strategies categorised as General Traditional Sources, and Agencies-offline, both of which refer to conventional information sources using the traditional (offline) channel. General Traditional Sources is facilitated via traditional channel (e.g. television, advertising, magazines) while Agencies-offline refer to agencies which communicate with customers face-to-face or via the telephone.

Their positive link to Tradition (respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs of culture and religion) indicates that tourists who prioritise this personal value (correlates with those of older age groups) tend to rely on these two categories of sources when searching for tourism information.

The majority of Homestay visitors prioritise Self-Direction (independent thought and action: choosing, creating, exploring). They are younger, highly educated urban dwellers, and would prefer to use Search Portals, Tourism Specific Portals and Influencers (correlates positively with age group, residence and education) as their information search strategies. Homestay visitors also indicate that Agencies-online is useful (particularly as a channel for negotiation and confirmation of reservations). There is currently a severe lack of most of these sources of information targeted at Homestay tourists, except Friends and Family (categorised under Influencers). Hence, a clear mis-match currently exists between Homestay information available and information sources and channels preferred by the majority of Homestay tourists. This issue requires serious consideration in order to enhance the information infrastructure and promote this niche product in Malaysia and beyond. To this end, a customised information infrastructure and electronic plaform which allows potential customers to access Homestay information and make reservations, as well as for Homestay management to manage internal and back-end co-ordination seamlessly, would be a meaningful solution.

7.3 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Models of information search strategy in the literature have incorporated a diverse range of factors, taking into account costs and benefits, stages and processes, as well as psychological and motivational factors. Recent models have clustered antecedents of information search into three main categories: (1) characteristics of the vacationer, (2) situational variables and (3) characteristics of the vacation. Focusing on the characteristics of the vacationer, despite various studies linking personal values to consumer behaviour, there is a lack of in-depth investigation

on the effect of personal values of tourists on their information search strategy and destination selection, particularly within specific tourism product categories such as community-based tourism.

From the discussion above, it is clear that personal values significantly affect the types of tourism information sources preferred based on the values prioritised by them, as well as the selection of different tourism destinations. Incorporating this demographic dimension into information search strategies provide an additional variable relevant in the study of the customer profile within the context of community-based tourism specifically, and this benefit may even extend to other types of tourism destinations. Contributing to extant literature, and responding to the call for a problem driven and socio-technical approach towards contributions to theoretical frameworks (Gretzel, Fuchs, Baggio et al., 2020), this study, building on Grønflaten's (2009b) and Fodness and Murray's (1999) work, demonstrates that frameworks of information search strategies which include the antecedent of personal values provide significant new insights into the dynamics of information search for community-based tourism specifically, and to tourism information search strategies more generally.

Findings on personal value and demographics contribute to literature by providing empirical evidence of the personal value priorities of Asian respondents, particularly Malaysians, using the Portrait Value Questionaire (PVQ) developed by Schwartz et al. (2001), thus extending the cross-cultural validity of the structure of values using the PVQ to respondents of a different culture. It also highlights the contrast in value priorities between European and East and Southeast Asian cultures, with Benevolence and Security as the most important values respectively.

Further, this study employed a cognitively less demanding instrument of the PVQ in the survey, demonstrating that it is more realistic in application, easy to use and able to elicit the relevant

personal values in different cultural contexts through descriptive statements rather than ranking of lists of values (Kahle and Kennedy, 1989; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987) dealing with more abstract concepts that respondents may find more challenging to do.

7.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Tourism as a key sector of the economy, is increasing in importance due to its impact on other areas of economic activity. This is evident especially in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic where diverse sectors of the economies of countries around the globe sufferred significant negative impact as a result of tourism grinding to a halt, as countries banned domestic and international tourism as a strategy for controlling the spread of the virus (Fotiadis, Polyzos, and Huan, 2021; Williams and Kayaoglu, 2020). The effects are especially severe for poorer economies of the world (Gössling, Scott and Hall, 2020). Community-based tourism such as Homestays were not spared, but its impact was cushioned by the diversification strategy (Novelli et al., 2017) adopted by most Homestay entrepreneurs whereby tourism is one of several livelihood strategies (Gan, Inversini and Rega, 2018) in these locations. During the pandemic, they were able to continue with farming and other economic activities which were less severely stymied. Nevertheless, the findings of this research will provide important inputs for policy decision making and help Homestay managers to work towards reviving the business post-pandemic through a better understanding of their customers, and the relevant information search and marketing strategies which should be employed.

The Malaysian Homestay Programme was introduced under the Masterplan for Rural Tourism as a rural development strategy by encouraging rural community participation in tourism to enhance the welfare of rural communities through the establishment of small and medium sized enterprises. The programme also aims to establish Malaysia as a key experiential tourism destination and to restore and dignify the heritage of the community through cultural tourism (MOCAT, 2005). Over the years, there has been demand from local and international tourists,

which has generated significant rural development (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010) and enhanced the assets of the communities involved (Gan et al., 2018). However, internal and external challenges continue to hinder its expansion (Pusiran and Xiao, 2017), especially to foreign markets. As Homestays work towards recovering from the severe shocks (Shen, Hughey and Simmons, 2008) of the pandemic, policy decisions which will support this recovery are crucial.

In terms of the digital divide and unequal access to digital technologies and broadband internet in rural areas, which is common in the tourism sector (Minghetti and Buhalis, 2010), the government can spearhead efforts to address the weaknesses in physical infrastructure to close this gap. To address deficiencies in digital technological skills among rural communities, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture should partner with the Ministry of Rural Development, the Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), The Malaysian Homestay and Kampungstay Association (MKHA) and other relevant agencies to conduct needs analysis, design training programmes, and equip communities with the requisite digital skills necessary for them to be effective knowledge workers. The strengthening of these foundations will be beneficial to rural communities and their tourism enterprises.

To truly facilitate effective information search and enhance the reservation process, there is a need for governmental intervention, working with all the stakeholders to develop a customised platform and information infrastructure which caters to the needs of Homestays; allowing potential customers to search for information, make arrangements and reservation for a Homestay holiday, and enable back-end co-ordination and operations of Homestays management. The development of such a customised information infrastructure to faciliate tourists' access to Homestay information and reservation will remove a key barrier to expansion and catalyse its growth, especially in international markets. This will require central co-ordination by government agencies to bring key stakeholders together to identify the multi-dimensional requirements in systems, information, user compentency and commercialisation.

Visitors to Homestays prioritise Self-Direction instead of Security - the most important value among tourists of eastern cultures (which represents the majority of respondents in this study). Coupled with the finding that more than two thirds of visitors to Homestays are young adults under the age of 30 who are university students or graduates in pursuit of a unique rural holiday experience, these are important findings from a managerial perspective particularly in terms of marketing communication and promotion. The majority of them are younger, highly educated urban dwellers, and would prefer to use Search Portals, Tourism Specific Portals and Influencers (correlates positively with nationality, age group, residence and education) as their information search strategies. They also prefer using Agencies-online (correlates positively to Nationality and selection of Homestay).

There is currently a severe lack of such sources of information available and targeted at Homestay tourists, except friends and family (a source using the traditional channel). In fact, there is currently a mis-match between available information sources (traditional offline sources) and the preferred information sources of Homestay tourists. Hence, focusing on electronic communication and online marketing channels and sources targeted to meet their information needs is critical to succesful marketing and promotion of Homestays. Sources must suit the target market (Fall and Knutson, 2001) and be made available on search portals, with online agents, tourism portals and on social media, as these are the information search strategies preferred by the customers. To this end, Homestays can establish and strengthen collaborative partnerships with travel agencies and their international networks so that pertinent information about Homestays is made available to potential target markets, both locally and internationally.

To increase awareness of this unique experience among foreign tourists, Homestays can collaborate with local destinations favoured by younger foreign tourists to Malaysia, such as back-packer hostels and smaller hotels in the country. Homestay destinations can be promoted among this segment of the market, enabling these destinations to be included in the evoked set

for selection (Xiang and Fesenmaier, 2020). There can be strategic partnerships to tap into the market by offering unique cultural immersion experiences that may be very attractive to this group of foreign tourists.

Product design that caters to the values associated with Self-Direction, such as adventure, exploration and unique experiences should be maintained and expanded to attract this segment of the tourism market. Messaging that communicates compliance with tourism standards such as the ASEAN Community-Based Tourism Standard (The ASEAN Secretariat, 2016) and Malaysia Homestay Experience Guidelines (MOCAT, 2005) to provide assurance of safety, order and comfort may be able to induce other Asian tourists who value Security to consider Homestays as their chosen destination.

7.5 LIMITATIONS

From the discussion presented in the previous sections, the aims and objectives of this research has been achieved and contributes to theory within information search and personal value literature. It also highlighted important implications for practice, particularly for management of Homestays, as well as community-based tourism more generally. However, there are several limitations of this study, in respect of the conceptualisation of theoretical frameworks, research design and data collection.

Firstly, a key limitation of this research is its focus on one type of community-based tourism product in a specific setting, namely, the Homestay Programme in Malaysia. While the linkage between consequences from using a product and the consumer's personal value is clear (McIntosh and Thyne, 2005), studies of other community-based tourism products in other countries, or other tourism products may produce differing insights. This is because product type is likely to be influenced by different personal values (Doran, 2009), hence, studies of different products in different contexts may yield different results in terms of its correlation

with personal values. Therefore, the findings in this study may have limited generalisability to information search for other forms of community-based tourism or tourism products generally, or in different contexts. However, it does demonstrate that personal values are likely to have an impact on destination selection and on information search strategies for community-based tourism.

Secondly, the scope of data collection is unfortunately limited to locations in West Malaysia. It would have been more beneficial if data could also have been collected from Homestay destinations in East Malaysia to provide even broader scope and variety in terms of product offering and experiences. The limitation of data collection location is mainly due to restrictions in terms of resources, and logistical challenges as many of the locations in East Malaysia are not easily accessible by road, and in any case, there would be a need to fly to East Malaysia before an enumerator could proceed to villages in the rural areas of East Malaysia, resulting in escalation of costs and difficulty in communication and co-ordination.

Further, data was not collected from foreign tourists who originate from China, even though the survey was translated to the Mandarin language in anticipation of this group of respondents. During the data collection period, there were fewer visitors from there, and those who came chose not to respond to the survey. As Chinese tourists form a significant proportion (11.5%) of foreign tourists to Malaysia before the COVID-19 Pandemic (Tourism Malaysia, 2019) (although the percentage is much less for Homestays), it would have been interesting to obtain the perspective from this category of respondents. In terms of sampling, convenience purposive sampling was employed. Random sampling may have provided more accuracy and precision in data quality, and could have improved the overall outcomes of this study. However, within the limitations of access and time-frame available, the most pragmatic approach was employed for data collection in this research.

Methodologically, data was analysed using univariate and multi-variate analysis, and multiple regression. Alternative methods of data analysis could include other techniques such as PLS-Structural Equation Modelling, which may provide more nuanced findings and the potential for further exploration.

7.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study has presented important findings relevant for theory and practice, there are avenues for future research. Firstly, the sample of the study was from select Homestay destinations in West Malaysia, and may reflect only the experiences of visitors to these destinations without providing a full and comprehensive picture of the industry. A wider sample covering other Homestay destinations, or other community-based tourism products, or even other types of tourism product, may yield more detailed results that can be generalized to the whole industry.

The current study is also limited to one country; hence, a further extension of the study to other community-based tourism in the region, and in other regions of the world can provide comparative analysis of this industry in different regions.

In terms of the measurement instruments, other studies can select different personal value measurement tools such as Kahle and Kennedy's (1989) LOV and Rokeach's (1973) Value Survey which may yield other insights into the customer profile of CBT tourists, or widen the scope of the investigation to different tourism products. Future studies can also investigate the nexus between trust and information sources for tourism, and the links between personal values, trust, and types of information sources, potentially with other research methods such as structural equation modelling (SEM). Confirmatory factor analysis of the information sources identified can provide evidence to strengthen of the results of this study.

Studies that investigate the relationship between personal values and other consumer products, or other areas of social sciences such as political systems, health, economic policy, education and learning, and religious practice will provide important insights as to the role of personal values in these disciplines, particularly from the Asian perspective.

Moving forward, in view of the findings from this study highlighting the need for a bespoke information infrastructure for Homestays to catalyse the growth of this industry, future studies can investigate the requirements of the customised information system platform proposed. Information needs analysis, user requirements, stakeholder inputs, systems requirement, information systems design, feasibility studies and commercialisation potential are several areas of investigation which would be useful for practice. This platform will be able to fill a crucial gap in the information infrastructure of Homestay tourism, and allow for robust information search strategies and improvement to Homestay reservation systems to be strenghtened substantially, leading to acceleration of growth in this industry.

7.7 CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this study has investigated the role of personal values in information search strategies for community-based tourism by focusing on the Malaysian Homestay Programme. Findings of the study indicate that the inclusion of personal values in a model that investigate the information search strategies of tourists within the context of community-based tourism provides valuable insights into the customer profile and their selection of tourism destinations. Incorporating the user-friendly instrument of the Portrait Value Questionnaire, the study also revealed the distinction between personal values priorities of Asian respondents in contrast to those from other parts of the world, contributing new empirical evidence in the study of personal values across different cultural and national backgrounds. It has met the research objectives set out in this study and provided theoretical, methodological and managerial

contributions and insights which are meaningful to stakeholders in this area of research and practice.

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Appendix 1: Survey Instrument



Research Project:
Personal values, community-based tourism and information search strategies

Participant Information Sheet

You are invited to take part in this survey. Please take time to read the following information and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the survey?
This purpose of this survey is to find out how personal values of visitors may influence their selection of holiday destinations. It focuses on visitors to Malaysia in general, and those that visit Malaysian Homestays in particular. It will also investigate how visitors search for information and arrange for their stay. Your participation in this survey will help researchers in the University of Nottingham to identify the personal values of visitors to Malaysian tourist destinations and the information search methods which will help Homestay owners improve their marketing of Homestays, making information more accessible to those who wish to go for a Homestay holiday.

Why you have been chosen?
You have been invited to participate because you have visited a destination in Malaysia. Your participation is entirely voluntary.

Your responses will be kept confidential and will be used only for the purpose of this research. If you wish to withdraw, simply stop responding to the questions. In that case, all data you have provided will not be saved.

This survey will take approximately 15 minutes of your time.

Contact for further information
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Complaints
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Participant Consent

I confirm that:

- I agree to participate in this survey voluntarily
- I am free to withdraw without giving any reason
- I understand that after I have provided my responses in this survey, the data provided will not be retractable.
- I understand that data provided can be used in research and academic reports and publications and I hereby agree that the data from this survey can be shared with members of the research team in the future.
- I understand that my identity and personal information will be kept confidential at all times

Participant signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

_____

If you wish to participate in a lucky draw provide for respondents of this survey (in the form of Tesco vouchers worth RM100 each) or wish to know the outcome of this research, please provide your email address for us to contact you in due course.

Email address: _____

Demographic information

Please indicate in the following sections which category applies to you:

Age group

- □ <18 years old
- □ 18-29 years old
- □ 30-39 years old
- □ 40-49 years old
- □ 50-59 years old
- □ 60-69 years old
- □ >70 years old

Gender

- □ Male
- □ Female
- □ I prefer to keep it unstated

Education

- □ Primary
- □ Secondary
- □ Tertiary (Degree)
- □ Postgraduate
- □ No formal education

I live in

- □ An urban area
- □ A sub-urban area
- □ A rural area

Nationality

- □ Malaysian (□ Malay □ Chinese □ Indian □ Others)
- □ Non-Malaysian, _____ (citizenship or name of country of usual residence)

Personal Values

To understand the profile of guests, we would like to find out the personal values which are unique to each visitor. For this purpose, please read each description and think about how much each person is or is not like you. Indicate which best describes you by choosing from **(1) not like me at all** to **(6) very much like me**.

No.	Statement	Not like me at all	Not like me	A little like me	Some-what like me	Like me	Very much like me
1.	Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to him. He likes to do things in his own original way.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	It is important to him to be rich. He wants to have a lot of money and expensive things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	He thinks it is important that every person in the world be treated equally. He believes everyone should have equal opportunities in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	It is very important to him to show his abilities. He wants people to admire what he does.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	It is important to him to live in secure surroundings. He avoids anything that might endanger his safety.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	He thinks it is important to do lots of different things in life. He always looks for new things to try.	1	2	3	4	5	6

No.	Statement	Not like me at all	Not like me	A little like me	Some-what like me	Like me	Very much like me
7.	He believes that people should do what they're told. He thinks people should follow rules at all times, even when no-one is watching.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	It is important to him to listen to people who are different from him. Even when he disagrees with them, he still wants to understand them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	He thinks it is important **not** to ask for more than what you have. He believes that people should be satisfied with what they have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	He seeks every chance he can to have fun. It is important to him to do things that give him pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	It is important to him to make his own decisions about what he does. He likes to be free to plan and to choose his activities for himself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	It is very important to him to help the people around him. He wants to care for their well-being.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	Being very successful is important to him. He likes to impress other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	It is very important to him that his country be safe. He thinks the state must be on watch against threats from within and without.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15.	He likes to take risks. He is always looking for adventures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16.	It is important to him always to behave properly. He wants to avoid doing anything people would say is wrong.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17.	It is important to him to be in charge and tell others what to do. He wants people to do what he says.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18.	It is important to him to be loyal to his friends. He wants to devote himself to people close to him.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19.	He strongly believes that people should care for nature. Looking after the environment is important to him.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20.	Religious belief is important to him. He tries hard to do what his religion requires.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21.	It is important to him that things be organised and clean. He really does **not** like things to be a mess.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22.	He thinks it is important to be interested in things. He likes to be curious and to try to understand all sorts of things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23.	He believes all the worlds' people should live in harmony. Promoting peace among all groups in the world is important to him.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24.	He thinks it is important to be ambitious. He wants to show how capable he is.	1	2	3	4	5	6

No.	Statement	Not like me at all	Not like me	A little like me	Some-what like me	Like me	Very much like me
25.	He thinks it is best to do things in traditional ways. It is important to him to keep up the customs he has learned.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26.	Enjoying life's pleasures is important to him. He likes to 'spoil' himself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27.	It is important to him to respond to the needs of others. He tries to support those he knows.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28.	He believes he should always show respect to his parents and to older people. It is important to him to be obedient.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29.	He wants everyone to be treated justly, even people he doesn't know. It is important to him to protect the weak in society.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30.	He likes surprises. It is important to him to have an exciting life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31.	He tries hard to avoid getting sick. Staying healthy is very important to him.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32.	Getting ahead in life is important to him. He strives to do better than others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33.	Forgiving people who might have wronged him is important to him. He tries to see what is good in them and not to hold a grudge.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34.	It is important to him to be independent. He likes to rely on himself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35.	Having a stable government is important to him. He is concerned that the social order be protected.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36.	It is important to him to be polite to other people all the time. He tries never to disturb or irritate others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37.	He really wants to enjoy life. Having a good time is very important to him.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38.	It is important to him to be humble and modest. He tries not to draw attention to myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39.	He always wants to be the one who makes the decisions. He likes to be the leader.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40.	It is important to him to adapt to nature and to fit into it. He believes that people should not change nature.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Have you ever been to a Homestay in Malaysia?

For the purpose of this research, a Homestay refers to a place where you would **interact and/or stay** with people in the community instead of in a hotel, and participate in activities common among the community as part of their daily life. For example, you could stay in a village where they have fruit orchards and you engaged in fruit picking and played traditional games etc.

Homestays where only accommodation is provided in a house or apartment/condo is NOT INCLUDED in this study. [you should select "No, I have not" below if you have only been to a house/apartment/condo homestay.]

- ☐ Yes, I have. (Please proceed to Section A on page 6 below)
- ☐ No, I have not. (Please proceed to Section B on page 11 below)

Section A: I have been to a Homestay in Malaysia

1. How many times have you been to a Homestay in Malaysia?
   - ☐ Only once
   - ☐ More than once. The first time was in _____(month, year).

2. With reference to your **trip** to the Homestay, it was for (you can select more than one item):
   - ☐ Business
   - ☐ Leisure
   - ☐ Business and leisure
   - ☐ Others: _____

3. With reference to your trip to the Homestay, you travelled (you can select more than one item):
   - ☐ Alone (as an independent traveller)
   - ☐ As a couple without children
   - ☐ As part of a group with family (including children)
   - ☐ As part of group with friends
   - ☐ As part of a group with family and friends
   - ☐ As part of an organised package tour group
   - ☐ As part of a course of your study/field trip
   - ☐ Others: _____

4. With reference to your **trip** to the homestay, were you responsible for **planning and booking** the trip (leading the travel party)?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

5. Did you have any freedom in the selection of Homestay as the destination of your trip?
   - ☐ Yes, I had the freedom to decide on a Homestay as the destination of my trip.
   - ☐ No, the selection of Homestay was done by someone else.

6. In your opinion, why did you or your travel party/leader choose a Homestay instead of hotels/other forms of accommodation or other types of attractions in Malaysia?

Please state based on the level of importance, the **reasons** why you chose a Homestay.

Reason for choosing Homestay	Importance				
	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly important	Not at all Important

I wanted a quiet place to rest and relax	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to engage in games and outdoor activities (jogging, hiking, walking, swimming, fishing, water sports)	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to view animals (birds, farm animals, wildlife) in their natural habitat	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to appreciate the natural/unique environmental features of this destination	1	2	3	4	5
I want to have a chance to interact with local people in a natural setting	1	2	3	4	5
I came for the scenery	1	2	3	4	5
It is cheaper compared to other destinations	1	2	3	4	5
I want to experience the lifestyle of rural Malaysia	1	2	3	4	5
I want to taste local traditional food	1	2	3	4	5
I want to have an authentic cultural experience	1	2	3	4	5
It is near and convenient to get to this destination/location	1	2	3	4	5
This place is recommended by my friends/acquaintances/family	1	2	3	4	5
it was the location of the business/convention/meeting	1	2	3	4	5
Others: _____ _____	1	2	3	4	5

Information Search strategies

7. Did you consult any of the following sources of information when searching for information about Homestays? Circle 'Yes' in Column "**Consult**" below for all the sources you consulted.

For all the sources **you consulted**, please rate the **importance of each of the sources you consulted** in helping you **decide** to choose a Homestay.

(NOTE: Please circle **ONLY** those **sources you consulted**, and **NOT all the sources listed** below).

Source	**Consult**	**Importance**				
Traditional Media	Did you use this source?	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly important	Not at all Important
Official sources of tourist information for promoting the destination (by government agencies,	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5

including tourist information centre)						
Suppliers (transport, accommodation, complementary offers)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Travel agencies or tour operators in my country (outside Malaysia)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Travel agencies or tour operators in Malaysia	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Media specialising in tourism (tv, radio, magazine)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Media specialising in areas of thematic interest (sports, wines, cinema, women)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Consultant at tourism Fairs & Exhibitions (MATTA, MITA)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Books	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Travel guides	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Documentaries	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Films and TV series	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Advertising	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Friends, acquaintances and family	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Opinion leaders	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Other sources: _____ _____		1	2	3	4	5
Information Sources (Web-based media)	Did you use this source?	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly important	Not at all Important
Search engines (google, Bing, yahoo)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of official tourist information	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of unofficial tourist information	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of intermediaries (lastminute, Expedia, trivago)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of travel agent in Malaysia	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5

Web pages of travel agent in my country (outside Malaysia)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of suppliers (transport, accommodation, complementary offers)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages with assessment by users (e.g., TripAdvisor)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
General social networks of friends & family (Facebook, Twitter)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Social networks specialised in tourism	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Blogs/video logs (vlogs) specialised in tourism	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for letting private houses or rooms (e.g., Airbnb)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
House swapping portals	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for tourist accommodation letting (e.g., HomeAway)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for hotel reservations (booking, Agoda etc)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for tourist activities and resources (wikitravel)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Applications for sharing photos (Instagram, Flickr, Pinterest)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Applications for sharing videos (e.g., YouTube, vimeo)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Forums (e.g., lonelyplanet)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for traveller hospitality (couchsurfing)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Maps (e.g., maps. Google)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Other sources: _____ _____		1	2	3	4	5

8. How did you ***first*** get to know about the existence/information on this Homestay? [You can select options of sources from Question 7 above]

_____

9. The booking/reservation for the Homestay was made
   - ☐ Through a travel agent
   - ☐ Directly with the Homestay operator
   - ☐ Others: _____

10. The booking/reservation was done: (*you may select more than one answer if relevant*)

    - ☐ **Face-to-face** with the agent/homestay operator
    - ☐ **through the telephone** with the agent/homestay operator
    - ☐ **through chat apps** such as WhatsApp, WeChat, Line with the agent/homestay operator
    - ☐ **through email** with the agent/homestay operator
    - ☐ **through web-chat online** with the agent/homestay operator
    - ☐ through the agent's **web booking system**
    - ☐ Others: _____

11. Based on your experience, how can the reservation of your homestay holiday/experience be improved?
    - ☐ I am a foreign visitor. It will be helpful to have **travel agencies based in my country** focusing on Malaysian Homestays.
    - ☐ By establishing **travel agencies based in Malaysia** focusing on Malaysian Homestays
    - ☐ By establishing a **central online reservation system** for Homestays in Malaysia (similar to Agoda, Booking.com used for hotel room bookings)
    - ☐ By establishing a centralised comprehensive website providing **information** on Homestays and **contact information** of each Homestay in Malaysia
    - ☐ Others: _____

Section B: I have NOT been to a Homestay in Malaysia

The following questions are based on a trip or holiday you had in Malaysia (you may choose any **ONE memorable** destination you have visited in Malaysia).

1. Please state the destination you visited in Malaysia.

_____ (city)

_____ (state)

2. What was the reason for your trip to a destination in Malaysia?

- ☐ Business
- ☐ Leisure
- ☐ Business and Leisure
- ☐ Others: _____

3. For your trip/holiday in Malaysia, you travelled:

- ☐ Alone (as an independent traveller)
- ☐ As a couple without children
- ☐ As part of a group with family (including children)
- ☐ As part of group with friends
- ☐ As part of a group with family and friends
- ☐ As part of an organised package tour group
- ☐ As part of a course of your study/field trip
- ☐ Others: _____

4. Based on your response to the question above, did you lead your travel party (i.e., responsible for planning and booking the trip)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5. This destination was chosen because: (please state the level of importance)

Reason for selecting this destination:	Importance				
	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly important	Not at all Important
I wanted a quiet place to rest and relax	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to engage in games and outdoor activities (jogging, hiking, walking, swimming, fishing, water sports)	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to view animals (birds, farm animals, wildlife) in their natural habitat	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to appreciate the natural/unique environmental features/scenery of this destination	1	2	3	4	5

I want to have a chance to interact with local people in a natural setting	1	2	3	4	5
I came for the scenery	1	2	3	4	5
It is cheaper compared to other destinations	1	2	3	4	5
I want to experience the lifestyle of rural Malaysia	1	2	3	4	5
I want to taste local/traditional food	1	2	3	4	5
I want to have an authentic cultural experience	1	2	3	4	5
It is near and convenient to get to this destination/location	1	2	3	4	5
This place is recommended by my friends/acquaintances/family	1	2	3	4	5
I came for its historical significance	1	2	3	4	5
I came for the shopping experience	1	2	3	4	5
It was the location of the business/convention/meeting	1	2	3	4	5
others: _____	1	2	3	4	5

6. To arrange for this visit to Malaysia, what are the sources of information you had consulted?
For all the sources **you consulted**, please circle "Yes" in the Column "Consult" below.
For all the sources **<u>you consulted</u>**, please **<u>rate (circle)</u>** the **<u>importance</u>** of **each of the sources** in helping you **decide** to choose this destination.
(Please mark **ONLY** those **<u>sources you consulted</u>**, and **not all the sources** listed below)

Source	**Consult**	**Importance**				
	Did you use this source?	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly important	Not at all Important
Official sources of tourist information for promoting the destination (by government agencies, including tourist information centre)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Suppliers (transport, accommodation, complementary offers)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Intermediaries in my country (travel agencies or tour operators)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Intermediaries in Malaysia (travel agencies or tour operators)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5

Media (tv, radio, magazine) specialising in tourism	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Media specialising in areas of thematic interest (sports, wines, cinema, women)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Consultant at tourism Fairs & Exhibitions (MATTA, MITA)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Books	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Travel guides	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Documentaries	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Films and TV series	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Advertising	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Friends, acquaintances and family	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Opinion leaders	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Other sources: _____ _____		1	2	3	4	5
Information Sources (Web-based media)	Did you use this source?	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not at all Important
Search engines (google, Bing, yahoo)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of official tourist information	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of unofficial tourist information	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of intermediaries (lastminute, Expedia, trivago)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of travel agent in Malaysia	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of travel agent in my country (outside Malaysia)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages of suppliers (transport, accommodation, complementary offers)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Web pages with assessment by users (e.g., TripAdvisor)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5

General social networks of friends and family (Facebook, twitter)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Social networks specialised in tourism	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Blogs/vlogs specialised in tourism	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Social networks specialised in tourism	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for letting private houses or rooms (e.g., Airbnb)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
House swapping portals	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for tourist accommodation letting (e.g., HomeAway)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for hotel reservations (booking, Agoda)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for tourist activities and resources (wikitravel)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Applications for sharing photos (Instagram, Flickr, Pinterest)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Applications for sharing videos (e.g., YouTube, vimeo)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Forums (e.g., lonelyplanet)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Portals for traveller hospitality (couchsurfing)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Maps (e.g., maps. Google)	Yes/ No	1	2	3	4	5
Other sources: _____ _____		1	2	3	4	5

7. Your booking/reservation was done:
   - Face-to-face with the agent/hotel management
   - through the telephone with the agent/hotel management
   - through chat apps such as WhatsApp, WeChat, Line
   - through email with the agent/hotel management
   - through webchat online with the agent/hotel management
   - through the agent's/hotel's web booking system
   - Others: _____

Appendix 2: Ethics Approval

FASS2017-0002/CELFE/WGSW

Wendy Gan Siew Wei
Centre for English Language and Foundation Education
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

The University of Nottingham
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28 February 2017

Dear Wendy,

FASS Research Ethics Committee Review

Thank you for submitting your proposal on ***"Personal values, community-based tourism and information search strategies: the case of Malaysian Homestays"*** This proposal has now been reviewed by the FASS Research Ethics Committee to the extent that it is described in your submission.

I am happy to tell you that the Committee has found no problems with your proposal and able to give approval.

If there are any significant changes or developments in the methods, treatment of data or debriefing of participants, then you are obliged to seek further ethical approval for these changes.

We would remind all researchers of their ethical responsibilities to research participants. If you have any concerns whatsoever during the conduct of your research then you should consult those Codes of Practice relevant to your discipline and contact the FASS Research Ethics Committee.

Independently of the Committee procedures, there are also responsibilities for staff and student safety during projects. Some information can be found in the Safety Office pages of the University web site. Particularly relevant may be:

Section 6 of the *Safety Handbook*, which deal with working away from the University,
http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/handbook/general-precautions.aspx
Specific safety guidance on:
Fieldwork http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/documents/fieldwork-policy.pdf
Lone working http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/documents/lone-working.pdf
Overseas travel/work http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/documents/overseas-travel.pdf
Risk management http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/policies-and-guidance/guides-and-support.aspx

Responsibility for compliance with the University/National Data Protection Policy and Guidance also lies with the principal investigator or project supervisor.

The FASS Research Ethics Committee approval does not alter, replace or remove those responsibilities, nor does it certify that they have been met.

Sincerely

Yeoh Ken Kyid

Dr Yeoh Ken Kyid
On behalf of the FASS Research Ethics Committee

The University of Nottingham
in Malaysia Sdn Bhd (473520-K)

MSC-Status Company

Appendix 3: Codebook

Name	Type	Label	Value	Missing	Measure
ID	Numeric		None	None	Scale
AgeGrp	Numeric	Age Grp	{2, 18-29 years old}...	None	Nominal
Gender	Numeric	Gender	{1, Male}...	None	Nominal
Education	Numeric	Education Level	{1, Primary}...	None	Nominal
Residence	Numeric	Residence	{1, urban area}...	None	Nominal
Nationality	Numeric	Nationality	{1, Malay Malaysian}...	None	Nominal
Nationality split	Numeric	Nationality split	{0, Non-Malaysian}...	None	Nominal
pv01	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv02	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv03	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv04	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv05	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv06	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv07	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv08	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv09	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv10	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv11	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv12	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv13	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv14	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv15	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv16	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv17	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv18	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv19	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale

pv20	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv21	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv22	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv23	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv24	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv25	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv26	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv27	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv28	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv29	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv30	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv31	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv32	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv33	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv34	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv35	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv36	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv37	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv38	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv39	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
pv40	Numeric	PV Portrait Scale	{6, very much like me}...	None	Scale
homestay	Numeric	Homestay Visit	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
hsfrequency	Numeric	Times at Homestay	{1, Once}...	None	Nominal
hspurpose	Numeric	Purpose of Homestay Trip	{1, business}...	None	Nominal
hstravelparty	Numeric	Homestay Travel Party	{1, alone}...	None	Nominal
homestaylead	Numeric	Booking of Homestay	{1, Yes}...	None	Nominal
homestayselect	Numeric	Selection of Homestay	{1, Yes}...	None	Nominal
hsreason01	Numeric	Homestay Reason1	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale

hsreason02	Numeric	Homestay Reason2	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason03	Numeric	Homestay Reason3	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason04	Numeric	Homestay Reason4	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason05	Numeric	Homestay Reason5	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason06	Numeric	Homestay Reason6	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason07	Numeric	Homestay Reason7	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason08	Numeric	Homestay Reason8	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason09	Numeric	Homestay Reason9	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason10	Numeric	Homestay Reason10	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason11	Numeric	Homestay Reason11	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason12	Numeric	Homestay Reason12	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason13	Numeric	Homestay Reason13	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
hsreason14	Numeric	Homestay Reason14	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM01	Numeric	Govt and TIC	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM02	Numeric	Suppliers	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM03	Numeric	Overseas travel agencies	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM04	Numeric	Malaysian travel agencies	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM05	Numeric	TV, magazine on tourism	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM06	Numeric	TV, magazine on others	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM07	Numeric	Fairs and exhibition	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM08	Numeric	Books	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM09	Numeric	Travel guides	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM10	Numeric	Documentaries	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM11	Numeric	Films and TV	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM12	Numeric	Advertising	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM13	Numeric	Friends and family	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
TM14	Numeric	Opinion Leaders	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale

TM15	Numeric	Other sources	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM01	Numeric	Search engines	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM02	Numeric	Tourism Web page (official)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM03	Numeric	Tourism Web page (unofficial)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM04	Numeric	Web page of intermediaries (lastminute, expedia, trivago)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM05	Numeric	Web page (travel agent Malaysia)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM06	Numeric	Wep page (travel agent Overseas)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM07	Numeric	Web page of suppliers	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM08	Numeric	Web page with assessment (Tripadvisor)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM09	Numeric	General social networks (FB, Twitter)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM10	Numeric	Tourism social networks	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM11	Numeric	Tourism blogs/vlogs	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM12	Numeric	House letting portals (Airbnb)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM13	Numeric	House swapping portals	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM14	Numeric	Portals for tourist accommodation letting (Homeaway)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM15	Numeric	Portals for hotel reservations (booking, agoda)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM16	Numeric	Portals for tourist activities (wikitravel)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM17	Numeric	App for photo sharing (instagram, flickr)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM18	Numeric	App for video sharing (youtube)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM19	Numeric	Forums (lonelyplanet)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM20	Numeric	Portals for traveller hospitality (couchsurfing)	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM21	Numeric	Maps	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale
OM22	Numeric	Other sources	{1, Extremely important}...	None	Scale

hsfirstencounter	Numeric		{1, Friends and family}...	None	Nominal
hsbookingsource	Numeric	Homestay booking source	{1, travel agent}...	None	Nominal
hschannel01	Numeric	face to face	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
hschannel02	Numeric	telephone	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
hschannel03	Numeric	chat apps	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
hschannel04	Numeric	email	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
hschannel05	Numeric	web-chat online	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
hschannel06	Numeric	agent's web booking system	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
hschannel07	Numeric	accomodation portals	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
hschannel08	Numeric	others	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
improvement	Numeric	Improvement	{1, foreign travel agencies}...	None	Nominal
deslocation	Numeric	destination location	{1, Perlis}...	None	Nominal
destination	String	destination visited	None	None	Nominal
destinationpurpose	Numeric	destination purpose	{1, Business}...	None	Nominal
destinationtravelparty	Numeric	destination travel party	{1, alone}...	None	Nominal
destinationlead	Numeric	Booking of destination	{1, Yes}...	None	Nominal
desreason01	Numeric	desreason01	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason02	Numeric	desreason02	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason03	Numeric	desreason03	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason04	Numeric	desreason04	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason05	Numeric	desreason05	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason06	Numeric	desreason06	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason07	Numeric	desreason07	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason08	Numeric	desreason08	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason09	Numeric	desreason09	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason10	Numeric	desreason10	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason11	Numeric	desreason11	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason12	Numeric	desreason12	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason13	Numeric	desreason13	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason14	Numeric	desreason14	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
desreason15	Numeric	desreason15	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale

desreason16	Numeric	desreason16	{1, extremely important}...	None	Scale
deschannel01	Numeric	face to face	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
deschannel02	Numeric	telephone	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
deschannel03	Numeric	chat apps	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
deschannel04	Numeric	email	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
deschannel05	Numeric	web-chat online	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
deschannel06	Numeric	hotel web booking	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
deschannel907	Numeric	agent's web booking	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
deschannel08	Numeric	online booking website	{0, No}...	None	Nominal
Ben2	Numeric	Benevolence	None	None	Scale
Univ2	Numeric	Universalism	None	None	Scale
SDir2	Numeric	Self-Direction	None	None	Scale
Sti2	Numeric	Stimulation	None	None	Scale
Hed2	Numeric	Hedonism	None	None	Scale
Ach2	Numeric	Achievement	None	None	Scale
Pow2	Numeric	Power	None	None	Scale
Sec2	Numeric	Security	None	None	Scale
Conf2	Numeric	Conformity	None	None	Scale
Trad2	Numeric	Tradition	None	None	Scale
OMTOP5	Numeric	Online Media key sources average	None	None	Scale
TMTOP5	Numeric	Traditional media key sources average	None	None	Scale
GTM	Numeric	General traditional sources	None	None	Scale
SP	Numeric	Search portals	None	None	Scale
AgenciesOff	Numeric	Agencies-offline	None	None	Scale
AgenciesOn	Numeric	Agencies-online	None	None	Scale
TSP	Numeric	tourism specific portals	None	None	Scale
Influencers	Numeric	Influencers	None	None	Scale
Others	Numeric	Other sources	None	None	Scale

Appendix 4: Analysis outputs for personal values and age groups

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of age groups for each personal value

Descriptives							
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Min	Max
Benevolence	18-29 years old	123	0.088	0.650	0.059	-1.950	1.925
	30-39 years old	32	0.413	0.423	0.075	-0.250	1.375
	40-49 years old	59	0.271	0.514	0.067	-0.700	1.375
	50-59 years old	19	0.345	0.517	0.119	-0.625	1.525
	60-69 years old	5	-0.175	0.597	0.267	-0.900	0.475
	Total	238	0.192	0.592	0.038	-1.950	1.925
Universalism	18-29 years old	123	0.137	0.511	0.046	-1.342	1.617
	30-39 years old	32	0.277	0.467	0.082	-1.408	1.100
	40-49 years old	59	0.470	0.435	0.057	-0.875	1.283
	50-59 years old	19	0.643	0.349	0.080	0.175	1.367
	60-69 years old	5	0.575	0.443	0.198	0.225	1.225
	Total	238	0.288	0.504	0.033	-1.408	1.617
Self-Direction	18-29 years old	123	0.334	0.584	0.053	-0.900	2.050
	30-39 years old	32	0.233	0.527	0.093	-0.750	1.250
	40-49 years old	59	0.322	0.638	0.083	-1.950	1.825
	50-59 years old	19	0.266	0.645	0.148	-0.900	1.300
	60-69 years old	5	0.125	0.612	0.274	-0.700	0.775
	Total	238	0.308	0.593	0.038	-1.950	2.050
Stimulation	18-29 years old	123	-0.187	0.785	0.071	-2.350	1.833
	30-39 years old	32	-0.249	0.716	0.127	-2.000	1.250
	40-49 years old	59	-0.581	0.824	0.107	-2.708	0.942
	50-59 years old	19	-0.269	0.836	0.192	-1.917	1.100
	60-69 years old	5	-0.292	0.794	0.355	-1.108	0.633
	Total	238	-0.302	0.801	0.052	-2.708	1.833
Hedonism	18-29 years old	123	0.176	0.807	0.073	-2.042	2.450
	30-39 years old	32	-0.082	0.654	0.116	-1.667	0.975
	40-49 years old	59	-0.140	0.751	0.098	-1.950	1.575
	50-59 years old	19	-0.339	1.186	0.272	-2.650	1.417
	60-69 years old	5	-0.025	0.557	0.249	-0.942	0.442
	Total	238	0.018	0.820	0.053	-2.650	2.450
Achievement	18-29 years old	123	-0.068	0.741	0.067	-1.725	2.200
	30-39 years old	32	-0.197	0.628	0.111	-2.125	0.775
	40-49 years old	59	-0.852	0.878	0.114	-2.850	1.125
	50-59 years old	19	-0.879	0.785	0.180	-2.250	0.550
	60-69 years old	5	-0.875	1.351	0.604	-2.400	0.300
	Total	238	-0.361	0.858	0.056	-2.850	2.200
Power	18-29 years old	123	-0.493	0.868	0.078	-2.717	2.200
	30-39 years old	32	-0.999	0.783	0.138	-2.958	0.258
	40-49 years old	59	-1.123	0.960	0.125	-2.733	1.158
	50-59 years old	19	-1.673	0.746	0.171	-3.233	-0.383
	60-69 years old	5	-1.492	0.539	0.241	-2.275	-0.892
	Total	238	-0.832	0.944	0.061	-3.233	2.200
Security	18-29 years old	123	0.253	0.600	0.054	-1.375	2.450
	30-39 years old	32	0.247	0.422	0.075	-0.775	1.000
	40-49 years old	59	0.565	0.421	0.055	-0.575	1.475
	50-59 years old	19	0.734	0.308	0.071	-0.100	1.200

	60-69 years old	5	0.775	0.499	0.223	0.225	1.450
	Total	238	0.379	0.544	0.035	-1.375	2.450
Conformity	18-29 years old	123	-0.011	0.669	0.060	-2.050	2.450
	30-39 years old	32	0.123	0.787	0.139	-2.250	1.925
	40-49 years old	59	0.288	0.634	0.082	-1.675	2.050
	50-59 years old	19	0.226	0.749	0.172	-1.200	1.375
	60-69 years old	5	0.525	0.559	0.250	-0.225	1.225
	Total	238	0.111	0.691	0.045	-2.250	2.450
Tradition	18-29 years old	123	-0.489	0.736	0.066	-2.825	1.225
	30-39 years old	32	-0.298	0.577	0.102	-2.000	0.425
	40-49 years old	59	-0.056	0.509	0.066	-1.200	1.050
	50-59 years old	19	-0.129	0.684	0.157	-1.250	1.250
	60-69 years old	5	-0.075	0.836	0.374	-1.475	0.725
	Total	238	-0.318	0.685	0.044	-2.825	1.250

Table 2: One-way between groups ANOVA for each personal value

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Benevolence	Between Groups	4.358	4	1.090	3.229	0.013
	Within Groups	78.628	233	0.337		
	Total	82.986	237			
Universalism	Between Groups	7.560	4	1.890	8.381	0.000
	Within Groups	52.541	233	0.225		
	Total	60.101	237			
Self-Direction	Between Groups	0.479	4	0.120	0.337	0.853
	Within Groups	82.813	233	0.355		
	Total	83.292	237			
Stimulation	Between Groups	6.338	4	1.584	2.536	0.041
	Within Groups	145.572	233	0.625		
	Total	151.910	237			
Hedonism	Between Groups	7.326	4	1.832	2.807	0.026
	Within Groups	152.048	233	0.653		
	Total	159.375	237			
Achievement	Between Groups	32.064	4	8.016	13.115	0.000
	Within Groups	142.413	233	0.611		
	Total	174.477	237			
Power	Between Groups	35.651	4	8.913	11.834	0.000
	Within Groups	175.490	233	0.753		
	Total	211.141	237			
Security	Between Groups	7.716	4	1.929	7.196	0.000
	Within Groups	62.463	233	0.268		
	Total	70.179	237			
Conformity	Between Groups	4.793	4	1.198	2.575	0.038
	Within Groups	108.407	233	0.465		
	Total	113.201	237			
Tradition	Between Groups	8.641	4	2.160	4.906	0.001
	Within Groups	102.604	233	0.440		
	Total	111.245	237			

Table 3: Post hoc tests – Tukey HSD

Multiple Comparisons							
Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable			Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Benevolence	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	-0.324*	0.115	0.042	-0.641	-0.007
		40-49 years old	-0.182	0.092	0.278	-0.435	0.071
		50-59 years old	-0.256	0.143	0.382	-0.650	0.137
		60-69 years old	0.263	0.265	0.858	-0.465	0.992
	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	.324*	0.115	0.042	0.007	0.641
		40-49 years old	0.142	0.128	0.800	-0.209	0.492
		50-59 years old	0.068	0.168	0.994	-0.395	0.530
		60-69 years old	0.588	0.279	0.222	-0.181	1.356
	40-49 years old	18-29 years old	0.182	0.092	0.278	-0.071	0.435
		30-39 years old	-0.142	0.128	0.800	-0.492	0.209
		50-59 years old	-0.074	0.153	0.989	-0.495	0.347
		60-69 years old	0.446	0.271	0.469	-0.298	1.190
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	0.256	0.143	0.382	-0.137	0.650
		30-39 years old	-0.068	0.168	0.994	-0.530	0.395
		40-49 years old	0.074	0.153	0.989	-0.347	0.495
		60-69 years old	0.520	0.292	0.388	-0.283	1.322
	60-69 years old	18-29 years old	-0.263	0.265	0.858	-0.992	0.465
		30-39 years old	-0.588	0.279	0.222	-1.356	0.181
		40-49 years old	-0.446	0.271	0.469	-1.190	0.298
		50-59 years old	-0.520	0.292	0.388	-1.322	0.283
Universalism	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	-0.140	0.094	0.574	-0.399	0.119
		40-49 years old	-.333*	0.075	0.000	-0.539	-0.126
		50-59 years old	-.506*	0.117	0.000	-0.828	-0.184
		60-69 years old	-0.438	0.217	0.259	-1.033	0.158
	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	0.140	0.094	0.574	-0.119	0.399
		40-49 years old	-0.193	0.104	0.348	-0.479	0.094
		50-59 years old	-0.366	0.138	0.063	-0.744	0.012
		60-69 years old	-0.298	0.228	0.689	-0.926	0.330
	40-49 years old	18-29 years old	.333*	0.075	0.000	0.126	0.539
		30-39 years old	0.193	0.104	0.348	-0.094	0.479
		50-59 years old	-0.173	0.125	0.640	-0.517	0.171
		60-69 years old	-0.105	0.221	0.990	-0.713	0.503
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	.506*	0.117	0.000	0.184	0.828
		30-39 years old	0.366	0.138	0.063	-0.012	0.744
		40-49 years old	0.173	0.125	0.640	-0.171	0.517
		60-69 years old	0.068	0.239	0.999	-0.588	0.724
	60-69 years old	18-29 years old	0.438	0.217	0.259	-0.158	1.033
		30-39 years old	0.298	0.228	0.689	-0.330	0.926
		40-49 years old	0.105	0.221	0.990	-0.503	0.713
		50-59 years old	-0.068	0.239	0.999	-0.724	0.588
Self-Direction	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	0.102	0.118	0.912	-0.224	0.427
		40-49 years old	0.013	0.094	1.000	-0.247	0.272
		50-59 years old	0.069	0.147	0.990	-0.335	0.473
		60-69 years old	0.209	0.272	0.939	-0.538	0.957

	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	-0.102	0.118	0.912	-0.427	0.224
		40-49 years old	-0.089	0.131	0.961	-0.449	0.271
		50-59 years old	-0.033	0.173	1.000	-0.508	0.442
		60-69 years old	0.108	0.287	0.996	-0.680	0.896
	40-49 years old	18-29 years old	-0.013	0.094	1.000	-0.272	0.247
		30-39 years old	0.089	0.131	0.961	-0.271	0.449
		50-59 years old	0.056	0.157	0.997	-0.377	0.488
		60-69 years old	0.197	0.278	0.955	-0.567	0.960
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	-0.069	0.147	0.990	-0.473	0.335
		30-39 years old	0.033	0.173	1.000	-0.442	0.508
		40-49 years old	-0.056	0.157	0.997	-0.488	0.377
		60-69 years old	0.141	0.300	0.990	-0.683	0.965
	60-69 years old	18-29 years old	-0.209	0.272	0.939	-0.957	0.538
		30-39 years old	-0.108	0.287	0.996	-0.896	0.680
		40-49 years old	-0.197	0.278	0.955	-0.960	0.567
		50-59 years old	-0.141	0.300	0.990	-0.965	0.683
Stimulation	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	0.062	0.157	0.995	-0.369	0.494
		40-49 years old	.394*	0.125	0.016	0.050	0.738
		50-59 years old	0.083	0.195	0.993	-0.453	0.618
		60-69 years old	0.105	0.361	0.998	-0.886	1.096
	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	-0.062	0.157	0.995	-0.494	0.369
		40-49 years old	0.332	0.174	0.313	-0.145	0.809
		50-59 years old	0.020	0.229	1.000	-0.609	0.650
		60-69 years old	0.043	0.380	1.000	-1.002	1.088
	40-49 years old	18-29 years old	-.394*	0.125	0.016	-0.738	-0.050
		30-39 years old	-0.332	0.174	0.313	-0.809	0.145
		50-59 years old	-0.312	0.208	0.567	-0.885	0.262
		60-69 years old	-0.289	0.368	0.935	-1.301	0.723
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	-0.083	0.195	0.993	-0.618	0.453
		30-39 years old	-0.020	0.229	1.000	-0.650	0.609
		40-49 years old	0.312	0.208	0.567	-0.262	0.885
		60-69 years old	0.022	0.397	1.000	-1.070	1.115
	60-69 years old	18-29 years old	-0.105	0.361	0.998	-1.096	0.886
		30-39 years old	-0.043	0.380	1.000	-1.088	1.002
		40-49 years old	0.289	0.368	0.935	-0.723	1.301
		50-59 years old	-0.022	0.397	1.000	-1.115	1.070
Hedonism	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	0.259	0.160	0.490	-0.182	0.700
		40-49 years old	0.317	0.128	0.100	-0.035	0.668
		50-59 years old	0.516	0.199	0.075	-0.031	1.063
		60-69 years old	0.201	0.369	0.982	-0.812	1.215
	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	-0.259	0.160	0.490	-0.700	0.182
		40-49 years old	0.058	0.177	0.998	-0.430	0.546
		50-59 years old	0.257	0.234	0.807	-0.386	0.900
		60-69 years old	-0.057	0.388	1.000	-1.125	1.011
	40-49 years old	18-29 years old	-0.317	0.128	0.100	-0.668	0.035
		30-39 years old	-0.058	0.177	0.998	-0.546	0.430
		50-59 years old	0.199	0.213	0.883	-0.387	0.785
		60-69 years old	-0.115	0.376	0.998	-1.150	0.919
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	-0.516	0.199	0.075	-1.063	0.031
		30-39 years old	-0.257	0.234	0.807	-0.900	0.386
		40-49 years old	-0.199	0.213	0.883	-0.785	0.387
		60-69 years old	-0.314	0.406	0.938	-1.431	0.802
		18-29 years old	-0.201	0.369	0.982	-1.215	0.812

	60-69 years old	30-39 years old	0.057	0.388	1.000	-1.011	1.125
		40-49 years old	0.115	0.376	0.998	-0.919	1.150
		50-59 years old	0.314	0.406	0.938	-0.802	1.431
Achievement	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	0.129	0.155	0.921	-0.298	0.555
		40-49 years old	.784*	0.124	0.000	0.444	1.124
		50-59 years old	.811*	0.193	0.000	0.281	1.341
		60-69 years old	0.807	0.357	0.161	-0.174	1.787
	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	-0.129	0.155	0.921	-0.555	0.298
		40-49 years old	.655*	0.172	0.002	0.183	1.127
		50-59 years old	.682*	0.226	0.024	0.060	1.305
		60-69 years old	0.678	0.376	0.374	-0.355	1.712
	40-49 years old	18-29 years old	-.784*	0.124	0.000	-1.124	-0.444
		30-39 years old	-.655*	0.172	0.002	-1.127	-0.183
		50-59 years old	0.027	0.206	1.000	-0.540	0.594
		60-69 years old	0.023	0.364	1.000	-0.978	1.024
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	-.811*	0.193	0.000	-1.341	-0.281
		30-39 years old	-.682*	0.226	0.024	-1.305	-0.060
		40-49 years old	-0.027	0.206	1.000	-0.594	0.540
		60-69 years old	-0.004	0.393	1.000	-1.084	1.076
	60-69 years old	18-29 years old	-0.807	0.357	0.161	-1.787	0.174
		30-39 years old	-0.678	0.376	0.374	-1.712	0.355
		40-49 years old	-0.023	0.364	1.000	-1.024	0.978
		50-59 years old	0.004	0.393	1.000	-1.076	1.084
Power	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	.506*	0.172	0.030	0.033	0.980
		40-49 years old	.630*	0.137	0.000	0.253	1.008
		50-59 years old	1.180*	0.214	0.000	0.592	1.768
		60-69 years old	0.999	0.396	0.089	-0.090	2.087
	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	-.506*	0.172	0.030	-0.980	-0.033
		40-49 years old	0.124	0.191	0.966	-0.399	0.648
		50-59 years old	0.674	0.251	0.060	-0.017	1.365
		60-69 years old	0.493	0.417	0.763	-0.655	1.640
	40-49 years old	18-29 years old	-.6306*	0.137	0.000	-1.008	-0.253
		30-39 years old	-0.124	0.191	0.966	-0.648	0.399
		50-59 years old	0.550	0.229	0.119	-0.080	1.179
		60-69 years old	0.368	0.404	0.892	-0.743	1.480
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	-1.180*	0.214	0.000	-1.768	-0.592
		30-39 years old	-0.674	0.251	0.060	-1.365	0.017
		40-49 years old	-0.550	0.229	0.119	-1.179	0.080
		60-69 years old	-0.181	0.436	0.994	-1.380	1.018
	60-69 years old	18-29 years old	-0.999	0.396	0.089	-2.087	0.090
		30-39 years old	-0.493	0.417	0.763	-1.640	0.655
		40-49 years old	-0.368	0.404	0.892	-1.480	0.743
		50-59 years old	0.181	0.436	0.994	-1.018	1.380
Security	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	0.007	0.103	1.000	-0.276	0.289
		40-49 years old	-.311*	0.082	0.002	-0.537	-0.086
		50-59 years old	-.481*	0.128	0.002	-0.832	-0.130
		60-69 years old	-0.522	0.236	0.180	-1.171	0.128
	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	-0.007	0.103	1.000	-0.289	0.276
		40-49 years old	-.318*	0.114	0.044	-0.630	-0.005
		50-59 years old	-.487*	0.150	0.011	-0.900	-0.075
		60-69 years old	-0.528	0.249	0.215	-1.213	0.156
		18-29 years old	.311*	0.082	0.002	0.086	0.537
		30-39 years old	.318*	0.114	0.044	0.005	0.630

	40-49 years old	50-59 years old	-0.169	0.137	0.728	-0.545	0.206
		60-69 years old	-0.210	0.241	0.907	-0.873	0.453
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	.481*	0.128	0.002	0.130	0.832
		30-39 years old	.487*	0.150	0.011	0.075	0.900
		40-49 years old	0.169	0.137	0.728	-0.206	0.545
		60-69 years old	-0.041	0.260	1.000	-0.756	0.675
	60-69 years old	18-29 years old	0.522	0.236	0.180	-0.128	1.171
		30-39 years old	0.528	0.249	0.215	-0.156	1.213
		40-49 years old	0.210	0.241	0.907	-0.453	0.873
		50-59 years old	0.041	0.260	1.000	-0.675	0.756
Conformity	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	-0.135	0.135	0.858	-0.507	0.238
		40-49 years old	-.299*	0.108	0.048	-0.596	-0.002
		50-59 years old	-0.237	0.168	0.620	-0.700	0.225
		60-69 years old	-0.536	0.311	0.422	-1.392	0.319
	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	0.135	0.135	0.858	-0.238	0.507
		40-49 years old	-0.164	0.150	0.808	-0.576	0.247
		50-59 years old	-0.103	0.198	0.985	-0.646	0.440
		60-69 years old	-0.402	0.328	0.737	-1.303	0.500
	40-49 years old	18-29 years old	.299*	0.108	0.048	0.002	0.596
		30-39 years old	0.164	0.150	0.808	-0.247	0.576
		50-59 years old	0.061	0.180	0.997	-0.433	0.556
		60-69 years old	-0.237	0.318	0.945	-1.111	0.636
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	0.237	0.168	0.620	-0.225	0.700
		30-39 years old	0.103	0.198	0.985	-0.440	0.646
		40-49 years old	-0.061	0.180	0.997	-0.556	0.433
		60-69 years old	-0.299	0.343	0.907	-1.241	0.644
	60-69 years old	18-29 years old	0.536	0.311	0.422	-0.319	1.392
		30-39 years old	0.402	0.328	0.737	-0.500	1.303
		40-49 years old	0.237	0.318	0.945	-0.636	1.111
		50-59 years old	0.299	0.343	0.907	-0.644	1.241
Tradition	18-29 years old	30-39 years old	-0.190	0.132	0.599	-0.552	0.172
		40-49 years old	-.433*	0.105	0.000	-0.722	-0.144
		50-59 years old	-0.360	0.164	0.183	-0.810	0.090
		60-69 years old	-0.414	0.303	0.649	-1.246	0.418
	30-39 years old	18-29 years old	0.190	0.132	0.599	-0.172	0.552
		40-49 years old	-0.243	0.146	0.456	-0.643	0.158
		50-59 years old	-0.169	0.192	0.903	-0.698	0.359
		60-69 years old	-0.223	0.319	0.956	-1.101	0.654
	40-49 years old	18-29 years old	.433*	0.105	0.000	0.144	0.722
		30-39 years old	0.243	0.146	0.456	-0.158	0.643
		50-59 years old	0.073	0.175	0.993	-0.408	0.555
		60-69 years old	0.019	0.309	1.000	-0.830	0.869
	50-59 years old	18-29 years old	0.360	0.164	0.183	-0.090	0.810
		30-39 years old	0.169	0.192	0.903	-0.359	0.698
		40-49 years old	-0.073	0.175	0.993	-0.555	0.408
		60-69 years old	-0.054	0.334	1.000	-0.971	0.863
	60-69 years old	18-29 years old	0.414	0.303	0.649	-0.418	1.246
		30-39 years old	0.223	0.319	0.956	-0.654	1.101
		40-49 years old	-0.019	0.309	1.000	-0.869	0.830
		50-59 years old	0.054	0.334	1.000	-0.863	0.971

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix 5: Analysis outputs for personal values and gender

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for gender and personal values

Group Statistics					
Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Benevolence	Male	85	0.257	0.585	0.064
	Female	154	0.152	0.594	0.048
Universalism	Male	85	0.290	0.475	0.052
	Female	154	0.284	0.520	0.042
Self-Direction	Male	85	0.454	0.572	0.062
	Female	154	0.232	0.593	0.048
Stimulation	Male	85	-0.183	0.866	0.094
	Female	154	-0.361	0.758	0.061
Hedonism	Male	85	-0.202	0.877	0.095
	Female	154	0.150	0.769	0.062
Achievement	Male	85	-0.307	0.796	0.086
	Female	154	-0.388	0.890	0.072
Power	Male	85	-0.799	0.972	0.105
	Female	154	-0.846	0.930	0.075
Security	Male	85	0.347	0.489	0.053
	Female	154	0.392	0.575	0.046
Conformity	Male	85	-0.013	0.691	0.075
	Female	154	0.177	0.683	0.055
Tradition	Male	85	-0.372	0.664	0.072
	Female	154	-0.296	0.700	0.056

Table 2: Independent sample t-tests results for personal values and gender

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.
Benevolence	Equal variances assumed	0.010	0.920	1.314	237	0.190	0.105	0.080
Universalism	Equal variances assumed	0.206	0.651	0.085	237	0.933	0.006	0.068
Self-Direction	Equal variances assumed	0.541	0.463	2.811	237	0.005	0.222	0.079
Stimulation	Equal variances assumed	1.461	0.228	1.653	237	0.100	0.178	0.108
Hedonism	Equal variances assumed	1.198	0.275	-3.221	237	0.001	-0.352	0.109
Achievement	Equal variances assumed	2.537	0.113	0.697	237	0.486	0.081	0.116
Power	Equal variances assumed	0.611	0.435	0.371	237	0.711	0.047	0.128
Security	Equal variances assumed	0.334	0.564	-0.601	237	0.548	-0.044	0.074
Conformity	Equal variances assumed	0.105	0.746	-2.051	237	0.041	-0.190	0.093
Tradition	Equal variances assumed	0.426	0.515	-0.823	237	0.411	-0.076	0.093

Appendix 6: Analysis outputs for personal values and educational level

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for personal values by educational level

Descriptives				
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Benevolence	Secondary	39	-0.057	0.685
	Tertiary	140	0.297	0.564
	Postgraduate	60	0.101	0.533
	Total	239	0.190	0.592
Universalism	Secondary	39	0.028	0.477
	Tertiary	140	0.320	0.505
	Postgraduate	60	0.374	0.470
	Total	239	0.286	0.504
Self-Direction	Secondary	39	0.283	0.602
	Tertiary	140	0.320	0.629
	Postgraduate	60	0.309	0.507
	Total	239	0.311	0.594
Stimulation	Secondary	39	-0.313	0.650
	Tertiary	140	-0.250	0.863
	Postgraduate	60	-0.398	0.739
	Total	239	-0.298	0.801
Hedonism	Secondary	39	0.080	0.879
	Tertiary	140	0.016	0.848
	Postgraduate	60	0.008	0.741
	Total	239	0.024	0.825
Achievement	Secondary	39	-0.153	0.760
	Tertiary	140	-0.361	0.901
	Postgraduate	60	-0.491	0.794
	Total	239	-0.359	0.857
Power	Secondary	39	-0.493	1.019
	Tertiary	140	-0.936	0.900
	Postgraduate	60	-0.798	0.953
	Total	239	-0.829	0.943
Security	Secondary	39	0.256	0.558
	Tertiary	140	0.378	0.571
	Postgraduate	60	0.450	0.465
	Total	239	0.376	0.545
Conformity	Secondary	39	0.135	0.725
	Tertiary	140	0.095	0.722
	Postgraduate	60	0.126	0.595
	Total	239	0.109	0.690
Tradition	Secondary	39	-0.025	0.671
	Tertiary	140	-0.425	0.703
	Postgraduate	60	-0.278	0.603
	Total	239	-0.323	0.687

Table 2: One-way ANOVA results for personal values by educational level

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Benevolence	Between Groups	4.448	2	2.224	6.657	0.002
	Within Groups	78.858	236	0.334		
	Total	83.306	238			
Universalism	Between Groups	3.217	2	1.609	6.645	0.002
	Within Groups	57.129	236	0.242		
	Total	60.346	238			
Self-Direction	Between Groups	0.042	2	0.021	0.060	0.942
	Within Groups	83.915	236	0.356		
	Total	83.957	238			
Stimulation	Between Groups	0.924	2	0.462	0.718	0.489
	Within Groups	151.841	236	0.643		
	Total	152.765	238			
Hedonism	Between Groups	0.145	2	0.073	0.106	0.900
	Within Groups	161.802	236	0.686		
	Total	161.947	238			
Achievement	Between Groups	2.695	2	1.347	1.849	0.160
	Within Groups	172.018	236	0.729		
	Total	174.713	238			
Power	Between Groups	6.070	2	3.035	3.482	0.032
	Within Groups	205.694	236	0.872		
	Total	211.764	238			
Security	Between Groups	0.893	2	0.446	1.508	0.223
	Within Groups	69.853	236	0.296		
	Total	70.745	238			
Conformity	Between Groups	0.072	2	0.036	0.075	0.928
	Within Groups	113.364	236	0.480		
	Total	113.436	238			
Tradition	Between Groups	5.035	2	2.517	5.535	0.004
	Within Groups	107.322	236	0.455		
	Total	112.357	238			

Table 3: Post hoc tests Tukey HSD results

Multiple Comparisons							
Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable			Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Benevolence	Secondary	Tertiary	-.354*	0.105	0.002	-0.601	-0.107
		Postgraduate	-0.158	0.119	0.381	-0.438	0.123
	Tertiary	Secondary	.354*	0.105	0.002	0.107	0.601
		Postgraduate	0.196	0.089	0.074	-0.015	0.406
	Postgraduate	Secondary	0.158	0.119	0.381	-0.123	0.438
		Tertiary	-0.196	0.089	0.074	-0.406	0.015
Universalism	Secondary	Tertiary	-.291*	0.089	0.004	-0.502	-0.081
		Postgraduate	-.346*	0.101	0.002	-0.585	-0.107
	Tertiary	Secondary	.291*	0.089	0.004	0.081	0.502
		Postgraduate	-0.055	0.076	0.752	-0.234	0.124
	Postgraduate	Secondary	.346*	0.101	0.002	0.107	0.585
		Tertiary	0.055	0.076	0.752	-0.124	0.234
Self-Direction	Secondary	Tertiary	-0.037	0.108	0.937	-0.292	0.218
		Postgraduate	-0.026	0.123	0.975	-0.316	0.263
	Tertiary	Secondary	0.037	0.108	0.937	-0.218	0.292
		Postgraduate	0.011	0.092	0.993	-0.206	0.228
	Postgraduate	Secondary	0.026	0.123	0.975	-0.263	0.316
		Tertiary	-0.011	0.092	0.993	-0.228	0.206
Stimulation	Secondary	Tertiary	-0.063	0.145	0.901	-0.406	0.280
		Postgraduate	0.084	0.165	0.866	-0.305	0.473
	Tertiary	Secondary	0.063	0.145	0.901	-0.280	0.406
		Postgraduate	0.147	0.124	0.460	-0.145	0.439
	Postgraduate	Secondary	-0.084	0.165	0.866	-0.473	0.305
		Tertiary	-0.147	0.124	0.460	-0.439	0.145
Hedonism	Secondary	Tertiary	0.063	0.150	0.906	-0.290	0.417
		Postgraduate	0.072	0.170	0.906	-0.330	0.474
	Tertiary	Secondary	-0.063	0.150	0.906	-0.417	0.290
		Postgraduate	0.008	0.128	0.998	-0.293	0.310
	Postgraduate	Secondary	-0.072	0.170	0.906	-0.474	0.330
		Tertiary	-0.008	0.128	0.998	-0.310	0.293
Achievement	Secondary	Tertiary	0.207	0.155	0.374	-0.157	0.572
		Postgraduate	0.338	0.176	0.135	-0.077	0.752
	Tertiary	Secondary	-0.207	0.155	0.374	-0.572	0.157
		Postgraduate	0.130	0.132	0.584	-0.180	0.441
	Postgraduate	Secondary	-0.338	0.176	0.135	-0.752	0.077
		Tertiary	-0.130	0.132	0.584	-0.441	0.180
Power	Secondary	Tertiary	.443*	0.169	0.025	0.044	0.842
		Postgraduate	0.305	0.192	0.253	-0.148	0.758
	Tertiary	Secondary	-.443*	0.169	0.025	-0.842	-0.044
		Postgraduate	-0.138	0.144	0.603	-0.478	0.201
	Postgraduate	Secondary	-0.305	0.192	0.253	-0.758	0.148
		Tertiary	0.138	0.144	0.603	-0.201	0.478
Security	Secondary	Tertiary	-0.122	0.099	0.432	-0.354	0.110
		Postgraduate	-0.194	0.112	0.194	-0.458	0.070
	Tertiary	Secondary	0.122	0.099	0.432	-0.110	0.354
		Postgraduate	-0.072	0.084	0.665	-0.270	0.126

	Postgraduate	Secondary	0.194	0.112	0.194	-0.070	0.458
		Tertiary	0.072	0.084	0.665	-0.126	0.270
Conformity	Secondary	Tertiary	0.040	0.125	0.944	-0.256	0.336
		Postgraduate	0.009	0.143	0.998	-0.327	0.346
	Tertiary	Secondary	-0.040	0.125	0.944	-0.336	0.256
		Postgraduate	-0.031	0.107	0.955	-0.283	0.221
	Postgraduate	Secondary	-0.009	0.143	0.998	-0.346	0.327
		Tertiary	0.031	0.107	0.955	-0.221	0.283
Tradition	Secondary	Tertiary	.400*	0.122	0.003	0.112	0.688
		Postgraduate	0.253	0.139	0.163	-0.074	0.580
	Tertiary	Secondary	-.400*	0.122	0.003	-0.688	-0.112
		Postgraduate	-0.146	0.104	0.339	-0.392	0.099
	Postgraduate	Secondary	-0.253	0.139	0.163	-0.580	0.074
		Tertiary	0.146	0.104	0.339	-0.099	0.392

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix 7: Analysis outputs for personal values and area of residence

Table 1: One-way ANOVA results for personal values by area of residence

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Benevolence	Between Groups	0.047	2	0.023	0.066	0.936
	Within Groups	83.260	236	0.353		
	Total	83.306	238			
Universalism	Between Groups	1.087	2	0.544	2.165	0.117
	Within Groups	59.259	236	0.251		
	Total	60.346	238			
Self-Direction	Between Groups	0.449	2	0.225	0.635	0.531
	Within Groups	83.508	236	0.354		
	Total	83.957	238			
Stimulation	Between Groups	1.916	2	0.958	1.499	0.226
	Within Groups	150.849	236	0.639		
	Total	152.765	238			
Hedonism	Between Groups	1.726	2	0.863	1.271	0.283
	Within Groups	160.222	236	0.679		
	Total	161.947	238			
Achievement	Between Groups	0.319	2	0.159	0.216	0.806
	Within Groups	174.394	236	0.739		
	Total	174.713	238			
Power	Between Groups	3.202	2	1.601	1.812	0.166
	Within Groups	208.562	236	0.884		
	Total	211.764	238			
Security	Between Groups	0.212	2	0.106	0.354	0.702
	Within Groups	70.534	236	0.299		
	Total	70.745	238			
Conformity	Between Groups	0.702	2	0.351	0.735	0.481
	Within Groups	112.734	236	0.478		
	Total	113.436	238			
Tradition	Between Groups	0.781	2	0.390	0.825	0.439
	Within Groups	111.576	236	0.473		
	Total	112.357	238			

Appendix 8: Analysis outputs for personal values and nationality

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for personal value by nationality

Personal value	Nationality	Mean	Std. Deviation
Benevolence	Malaysian	0.195	0.588
	Non-Malaysian	0.172	0.611
Universalism	Malaysian	0.307	0.495
	Non-Malaysian	0.212	0.531
Self-Direction	Malaysian	0.295	0.588
	Non-Malaysian	0.369	0.619
Stimulation	Malaysian	-0.299	0.756
	Non-Malaysian	-0.292	0.956
Hedonism	Malaysian	-0.027	0.803
	Non-Malaysian	0.208	0.883
Achievement	Malaysian	-0.434	0.876
	Non-Malaysian	-0.093	0.733
Power	Malaysian	-0.941	0.963
	Non-Malaysian	-0.426	0.749
Security	Malaysian	0.392	0.497
	Non-Malaysian	0.319	0.693
Conformity	Malaysian	0.137	0.666
	Non-Malaysian	0.008	0.771
Tradition	Malaysian	-0.193	0.639
	Non-Malaysian	-0.790	0.654

Table 2: Independent sample t-tests results

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.
Benevolence	Equal variances assumed	0.137	0.711	0.249	237	0.803	0.023	0.093
	Equal variances not assumed			0.244	79.172	0.808	0.023	0.095
Universalism	Equal variances assumed	0.811	0.369	1.204	237	0.230	0.095	0.079
	Equal variances not assumed			1.156	77.350	0.251	0.095	0.082
Self-Direction	Equal variances assumed	0.076	0.784	-0.791	237	0.430	-0.074	0.093
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.768	78.421	0.445	-0.074	0.096
Stimulation	Equal variances assumed	4.403	0.037	-0.063	237	0.950	-0.008	0.126
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.055	69.702	0.956	-0.008	0.144
Hedonism	Equal variances assumed	0.014	0.906	-1.828	237	0.069	-0.235	0.129
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.732	76.074	0.087	-0.235	0.136
Achievement	Equal variances assumed	3.147	0.077	-2.567	237	0.011	-0.341	0.133
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.837	95.428	0.006	-0.341	0.120
Power	Equal variances assumed	5.026	0.026	-3.567	237	0.000	-0.515	0.144
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.103	102.599	0.000	-0.515	0.126
Security	Equal variances assumed	7.245	0.008	0.855	237	0.394	0.073	0.086
	Equal variances not assumed			0.711	66.262	0.480	0.073	0.103
Conformity	Equal variances assumed	0.146	0.703	1.194	237	0.234	0.129	0.108
	Equal variances not assumed			1.099	73.456	0.275	0.129	0.118
Tradition	Equal variances assumed	0.646	0.423	5.926	237	0.000	0.597	0.101
	Equal variances not assumed			5.853	80.199	0.000	0.597	0.102

Appendix 9: Analysis outputs for personal values and selection of Homestay

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for personal value by destination choice

Group Statistics					
Homestay Visit		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Benevolence	Yes	163	0.155	0.617	0.048
	No	76	0.265	0.530	0.061
Universalism	Yes	163	0.229	0.489	0.038
	No	76	0.407	0.517	0.059
Self-Direction	Yes	163	0.327	0.554	0.043
	No	76	0.278	0.674	0.077
Stimulation	Yes	163	-0.221	0.785	0.061
	No	76	-0.463	0.816	0.094
Hedonism	Yes	163	0.076	0.806	0.063
	No	76	-0.086	0.860	0.099
Achievement	Yes	163	-0.219	0.786	0.062
	No	76	-0.660	0.929	0.107
Power	Yes	163	-0.701	0.898	0.070
	No	76	-1.104	0.985	0.113
Security	Yes	163	0.292	0.558	0.044
	No	76	0.557	0.472	0.054
Conformity	Yes	163	0.052	0.640	0.050
	No	76	0.232	0.778	0.089
Tradition	Yes	163	-0.388	0.688	0.054
	No	76	-0.183	0.669	0.077

Table 2: Independent sample t-tests results for personal values by destination choice

Independent Samples Test									
			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
			F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.
Benevolence	Equal variances assumed	1.725	0.190	-1.341	237		0.181	-0.110	0.082
Universalism	Equal variances assumed		0.035	0.851	-2.574	237	0.011	-0.178	0.069
Self-Direction	Equal variances assumed		3.440	0.065	0.588	237	0.557	0.049	0.083
Stimulation	Equal variances assumed		0.018	0.894	2.199	237	0.029	0.243	0.110
Hedonism	Equal variances assumed		0.703	0.403	1.418	237	0.158	0.162	0.114
Achievement	Equal variances assumed		3.518	0.062	3.801	237	0.000	0.440	0.116
Power	Equal variances assumed		0.323	0.570	3.129	237	0.002	0.403	0.129
Security	Equal variances assumed		2.093	0.149	-3.590	237	0.000	-0.265	0.074
Conformity	Equal variances assumed		4.342	0.038	-1.886	237	0.060	-0.180	0.095
Tradition	Equal variances assumed		0.416	0.520	-2.171	237	0.031	-0.206	0.095

Appendix 10: Analysis outputs for information search channels

Table 1: Mean score for guests by channel

Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TMTOP5	213	1.4	6	3.836	1.253
OMTOP5	216	1	6	3.214	1.584

Traditional Media	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Homestay	142	3.832	1.294
Non-Homestay	71	3.842	1.176

Online Media	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Homestay	146	3.604	1.630
Non-Homestay	70	2.400	1.113

Table 2: Independent samples t-test results – key traditional media sources

Independent Samples Test: Traditional Media							
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	1.004	0.317	-0.054	211	0.957	-0.00986	0.18258
Equal variances not assumed			-0.056	152.656	0.956	-0.00986	0.17683

Table 3: Independent samples t-test results – key online media sources

Independent Samples Test: Online Media							
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	18.341	0.000	5.584	214	0.000	1.20411	0.21562
Equal variances not assumed			6.355	188.809	0.000	1.20411	0.18948