

COMPLETION REPORT

【Research Summary】

Research title: How Travelling Promotes Understanding Toward Japanese Culture and Lifestyles: Comparisons between Different Travel Styles from Indonesia to Japan.

The research has the following objectives:

1. Compare different types of tour (full service and taylor-made budget tour) from Indonesia to Japan in relation to the opportunity to engage or look closer into the life of local people.
2. Identify from tour participants, how (in what ways) travelling can affect or promote understanding toward Japanese culture and lifestyle.

The background for doing this research is a belief that tourism can promote cultural understanding and with the growing interests of middle-upper class Indonesian to visit Japan, Japan can utilize tourism to enhance understanding toward Japanese culture and lifestyles among Indonesian tourists. The research focuses on the perspectives of people who have been to Japan with one of the two different package tours. One is the inclusive full service tour where tourists basically have to follow a tight schedule. The other one is the budget 'taylor made' tour with looser schedule, a combination of tour bus and local transportation, and an itinerary that can be partly determined by the participants.

The data collection methods included interviews, survey, and collecting secondary data. Interviews with three tour and travel companies providing full service tour to Japan and two companies offering the budget 'taylor made' tour were conducted during May – October 2011. Interviews with these companies provide information on how outbound tour packages to Japan were usually organized, general profile and activities that were most favored by the tour participants, types cultural elements that were included in the itinerary, and promotion activities conducted by the company itself or by the Japanese Government to promote Japan to tour and travel companies in Indonesia. In October 2011, interviews were conducted in Japan with Garuda Indonesia Representative in Central Japan (where the budget taylor made tour for Indonesian tourists was first initiated), Central Japan Tourism Association, and one company offering budget tour to Central Japan for Indonesian customers.

Survey and interview to returning tour participants were administered from August – November 2011. Questionnaires were distributed via online survey, direct meeting with respondents, followed by further interviews. It was found that interviews were more effective in understanding respondents' perception of Japan, activities they favored, satisfaction toward tour arrangement, and how their visit improved their understanding of Japanese culture and lifestyles. Therefore, interviews were widely used in this research and qualitative data obtained from 30 returning budget taylor made tour participants and 20 returning full service tour participants were analyzed.

Findings for the first research objective can be categorized into two categories: (1) comparison of the products and (2) comparison of the two groups of respondents. (1) The all inclusive full service tour targets high-end customers, covers more areas and tourists attractions. The itinerary is designed by 'land operator' (local tour operator) and usually follows the common 'Golden Route' (in Tokyo, out Osaka, or vice versa). Guides are Indonesian or English speaking. On the other hand, the budget package tour attracts younger participants, some of them are going on a first time trip abroad. It gives a feeling of individual tour in a small group and due to its economical nature, the budget package tour gives the participants the opportunity to experience usual day of life of ordinary people: riding the subway, choosing and ordering food in restaurants, or even staying with Japanese families (in homestay packages). The budget tour can be taylor-made to certain extent. It used 'travel partners' (Indonesians living in

Japan) instead of professional guide.

(2) Favored place or activities of Indonesian participants of both the budget and the all inclusive tour were: visiting cultural and historical monuments, visiting nature-based attractions/scenery, visiting downtown area, shopping, and eating local foods.

Findings for the second research objectives are presented in two categories: interactions with the locals and the locality, intensity of experience and the role of guides in enhancing tour participants understanding of local culture.

The majority of participants from both package tours said that apart from interactions with people involved in tourism, they had no interactions with the local people, except for homestay package. Intensity of experiencing daily life of the locals was higher in the budget tour participants, however the full service tour participants had more chances of visiting more cultural places due to wide coverage of tour. The satisfaction level was higher in the full service tour participants toward their guides compared to the satisfaction level of budget tour participants toward their travel partners.

Other important finding include an interesting suggestion that came from some budget tour participants that the itinerary should not include too much free time – a suggestion which is quite in contrary to the growing notion of the importance of flexible arrangement in a tour. In addition, it was also found that Indonesia had become a priority target market for the Japanese government in its attempt to revive tourism industry after the mega earthquake and tsunami that also affected negatively to the number of foreign visitors to Japan.

Finally, the research concludes that interactions with local people other than those involved in tourism did not really happen in both types of tour; participants of the budget tour have more opportunities in experiencing the daily life of the Japanese due to the 'economical' nature of the tour; the quality and expertise of guide plays a big role in facilitating tour participants in understanding a local culture; and allocation of free time is not so important for people who have decided to travel in a group or a package tour (whether full service or budget taylor made tour as in this study). This study further recommends the travel industry and Japanese tourism authority to work together in actively promoting Japan to the Indonesian market, especially the younger ones, through lower cost tour packages using more knowledgeable and experienced guides that can facilitate cultural understanding.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Date and Venue : December 11, 2011, Hotel ICON Hong Kong.

Name of Conference : World Research Summit for Tourism and Hospitality.

Title of Presentation : “How Traveling Promotes Understanding Toward Culture & Lifestyles: Comparisons between Different Types of Package Tours from Indonesia to Japan”

Presenter : Devi Kausar

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

I am currently writing a journal article focusing on the marketing of Central Japan, as an area less-known but possess a huge tourism potential, to the new Indonesian market segment – that is the younger generation and even the backpackers. Analyses of the preferences of this type of market, the tourism potential and marketing strategy of Central Japan could lead to recommendation on how to develop products for this special market segment.

The article will be co-authored by myself and Prof. Tsutomu Yokota (Ohka Gakuen University) and we are planning to submit it to the Journal of Destination Marketing and Management (Elsevier) or the Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing (Routledge).

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)