

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences
Hospitality Management Imatra
Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management

The Effects of Instagram on Young Foreigners Vacation Choices in Asian Countries.

Duong Le, 1400838

Thesis 2018

Abstract

Le Thuy Duong

The Effects of Instagram on Young Foreigners Vacation Choices in Asian Countries, 44 pages, 1 appendice.

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences

Hospitality Management Imatra

Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management

Thesis 2018

Instructor: Senior Lecturer Mr. Mika Tonder, Saimaa University of Applied Sciences

The purpose of this thesis is to understand more deeply how social media, especially Instagram influences the destination choice and how young travellers react to an Instagram post. This research is profitable for marketers to know how to use Instagram for promoting their business. The aim is also to understand if travellers are satisfied with what they expected and to suggest for further research on “How trustworthy Instagram is”.

The theoretical framework consists of visual communication, Instagram in the context of tourism and travelling and consumer behaviour in tourism. The theory is based on literature review and analyzing Instagram accounts.

The research conducted was based on qualitative data analysis. Interviews were conducted in English with open questions focused on young foreigners’ use of Instagram as a travel inspiration platform. Each interview lasted 45-60 minutes. Interviewees were chosen randomly, however, they were selected from different nationalities to avoid bias. The interview was mainly about people using Instagram for their source of inspiration for travelling to Asian countries.

The result shows that social media plays an important role in today’s customer life. Instagram, specifically, has affected the decision making process of travellers when they search for inspiration for their next trip. The platform is not only the biggest, but also one of the most successful platforms for promoting the destination and tourist attractions. Moreover, the research also shows that the young travellers, generation X are the most active and they are the main target that go under the influences of social media, Instagram when it comes to travelling.

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, destination marketing, Instagram, social media, visual communication, tourism, travel.

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1 Tourism	4
1.2 Asia and the Pacific tourism.....	5
1.3 Social media	6
2 RESEARCH AIM, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	7
2.1 Research aim	7
2.2 Research questions.....	7
3 VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS AND INSTAGRAM	8
3.1 Visual communication	8
3.2 Instagram	10
3.3 Instagram and travelling	12
3.3.1 Hash tag.....	13
3.3.2 Geo-tagging.....	14
4 CUSTOMER BEHAVIORS IN TOURISM AND DECISION MAKING.....	16
4.1 Customer behavior	17
4.2 Decision-making	21
5 TARGET GROUP	22
5.1 The millennial	22
5.2 Asian countries.....	24
6 METHODOLOGY.....	25
6.1 Semi-structured method	25
6.2 Data collection.....	26
6.3 Analyzing methods	26
7 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	27
7.1 Young adults' characteristics and behavioral factors.....	27
7.2 The use of Instagram in inspiring travellers.....	30
8 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION	31
8.1 Conclusions and summary of the results.....	32
8.2 Recommendations on findings	34
8.3 Limitations of the research	34
8.4 Recommendations for future research.....	35
9 REFERENCES	38
Appendix 1	Interview Structure

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tourism

Like the economy, the tourism industry is a vital, dynamic and evolving industry, which produces 10% of the world GDP and 7% of global trade (UNWTO 2016). Based on the information on figure 1, international tourist arrivals have reached 1.2 billion, in which Europe takes the lead with 615 million, followed by Asia Pacific with 309 million tourist arrivals. This number has grown above the average of 4% per year in the last seven years. The strongest growth was recorded in Africa and Asia and the Pacific regions.



Figure 1 International tourist arrivals 2016 (UNWTO 2016)

Especially in the Asia Pacific area, 2016 proved to be another excellent year for international tourism with more than 1.2 billion international tourists and 1.8 billion predicted by 2030, despite many challenges. This number increased a remarkable 7%

in 2017 into 1,322 million and is expected to continue to grow in 2018 at the rate of 4%-5% (UNWTO 2018).

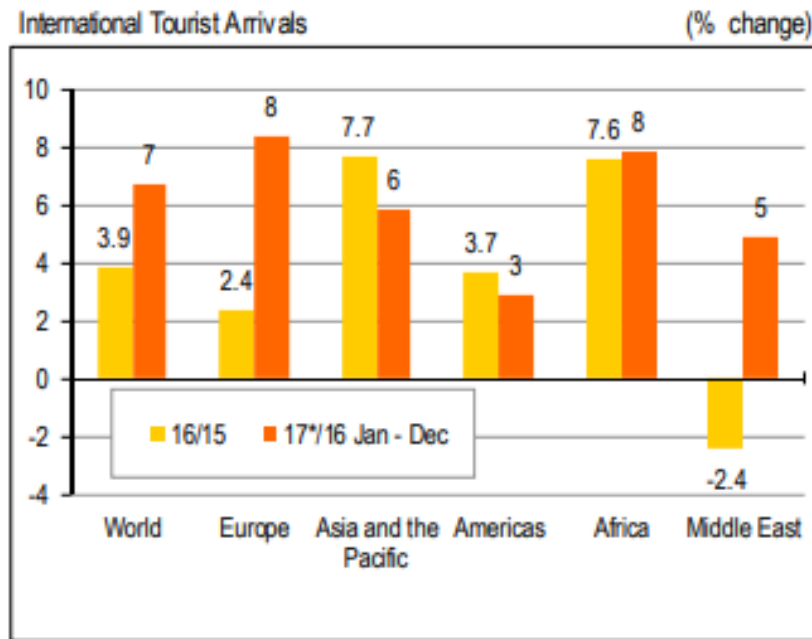


Figure 2 International Tourist Arrivals 2016-2017 (UNWTO 2016)

According to figure 2 above, Europe recorded a significant growth of international tourist arrival with 8% more than in 2016. Asia and the Pacific recorded 6% growth, America with 3%, Africa with 8% and the Middle East with 5% growth. The new trend of tourism in 2017-2018 has created a sustainable growth in visitations in many destinations allowing for the recovery of the decrease in the previous year (UNWTO 2017).

With all of the numbers, it is obvious that the tourism industry is growing and reaching a point of balance. More and more people travel and it plays an important role in the countries' economy.

1.2 Asia and the Pacific tourism

Asia and the Pacific are the second most visited regions in the world after Europe (UNWTO 2016). The region has the fastest growth not only in the economy, but also in tourism. The nation is the most populated with 4 billion habitants and some 56% of the world's population. Travel in Asia is undergoing a significant upraise in growth. In 2016,

the region received 309 million international tourists, nearly one-fourth of the world's total (figure 1). The tourist number increased by 10% in the first four months of 2018. By 2030, Asia Pacific is expected to receive 535 million international visitors, at the rate of +4.9% per year, which brought around USD 418 billion in receipts in 2015, or 33% of the world total. (UNWTO 2018.) These are amazing numbers that show unprecedented growth in tourism, far above the world average. The reason for this significant growth could be due to countries beginning to understand the importance of tourism as a contributor to socioeconomic development. Moreover, the growth has been driven by government support, improved travel facilitation by ease of visa process, infrastructure improvement and upgrading. In the end, Asia and the Pacific are potential destinations for developing the new trend of tourism and will always be one of the most busy tourist hubs in the world.

1.3 Social media

For a long time, social media and technology have always been important tools in this modern life. Pages such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or TripAdvisor's, etc. are one of the biggest influences, not only in the new generations' life, but also in the Travel and Tourism Industry. Social media is the fastest way to express and share ideas, thoughts, and opinions with others. (Osterrieder 2013.) During the past few years, a social networking website, Facebook, claims that its active users reached 2 billion active monthly users worldwide. (Constine 2017.) More than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube each month. TripAdvisor, a travel review website, serves more than 260 million unique users per month, who seek advice about their travel plans and is the most famous website for travelers to look at. There are more than 500 million travel reviews and opinions that cover more than 7 million businesses around the globe. (TripAdvisor 2017.) However, during a research in 2018, an overwhelming 80% of social media influencers are of the opinion that Instagram will be the fastest growing social media page. (Vidal 2017.) As per context of this study, the effect of Instagram on tourism will be investigated.

2 RESEARCH AIM, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

2.1 Research aim

According to the literature review above, this subject helps to understand more deeply how Instagram affects human decisions nowadays on travelling and on the purpose of tourism, especially in nature tourism in Asian countries. This specific topic and geographic area have been familiar aspects in my life. Asia has been known as one of the most beautiful, remote, exotic spots in the world where travellers, especially from foreign countries, who are seeking for great adventures. This topic is interesting for those who are seeking for an inspiration for their next trip to Asia from Instagram posts and for businesses from Asia to understand how they can use Instagram as their new tool of marketing to the world.

To achieve this aim, the study focuses on active users' interactions with Instagram before going on holiday, their travel process, and whether they search for inspiration from Instagram and how effective Instagram is for travel inspiration.

2.2 Research questions

Following the identification of the research aim, the following objectives have been formulated:

1. To explore Instagram usage and impact when choosing a destination.
2. To understand the inspirational power of Instagram on travellers' decisions.
3. To provide a deeper understanding of Instagram as a potential marketing place for travel and tourism related marketers.

To reach the above objectives, there are two research questions that will be answered during this thesis:

1. How Instagram is used as an inspiration site for the traveller?
2. How do people react to Instagram posts?

3 VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS AND INSTAGRAM

In this chapter, visual communication will be explained as it is the main point of this research. This is the factor that affects human behavior the most when it comes to social media. Visual communication is incorporated in almost all social media platforms and has grown along with the growth of the usage of smartphones. Instagram will also be explained more clearly in this part. Instagram along with Youtube, Pinteres and Snapchat, allow the user to create short multimedia messages containing photos or short videos and become the new trend of communication in the new generation.

3.1 Visual communication

To start with, we know that photography has long been one of the most powerful tools to communicate. We have all heard “A picture is worth a thousand words” and there is real value in using images to put an effect on human brains. Images help us learn, images catch attention, images create eagerness to do something similar, and inspire. Humans are very visual creatures which make the human brain capture images faster than words. However, we are in the new technological world, online photo posts have become a lot more sophisticated than old paper guidebooks. Whether you realize it or not, you are surrounded by photography almost every day of your life. Photos are the fastest way to share your life with the rest of the world without any language or geographical barrier. Most of the studies showed that information on social media is used as a guideline for future purchases or for planning future trips. (Patarawadee 2015.) In tourism, consumers’ behavior has always been influenced by the development of information.

According to a survey conducted on Instagram, 48% of users who want to choose destinations for their next getaway use Instagram as an influence. Thirty-five percent of them use the platform to get inspired and discover new places. (Cohen 2015.) Since the development of technology, your next perfect destination is now just a click away. With Instagram, you are overwhelmed with ridiculously beautiful pictures, together with personal recommendations. It is also proved that 40.1% of the thousands of social users choose their next holiday destination based on how ‘Instagrammable’ it is

(Hayhurst 2017.) This means people would think about how their pictures on social media would look like before choosing the destination. The idea of seeing a place that you have seen online with your own eyes is mind-blowing. Expedia (2013) proved that 21% of US adults posted photos on a social media website after they returned home from a holiday trip.

According to the research of Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides (2012), there are mainly three stages of a travel process: Pre-trip, during trip and post-trip. It is obvious that during all stages of travel, social media always appears (Figure 3). Among the three stages, it is after the trip that social media is predominantly used for the purpose of sharing experiences and photos with friends and/or other travellers. People tend to post on social media to provide evaluation and reviews about their trip. The topic can be about the accommodation, the destinations, beautiful landscape during the trip, etc.

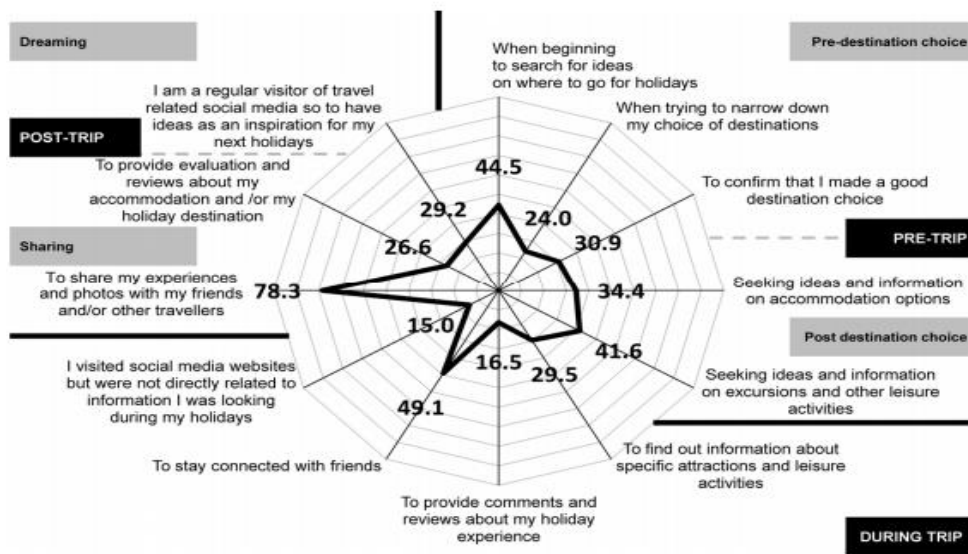


Figure 3: % of users who engaged in activity (Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides 2012.)

Forty-nine percent of respondents use social media during the trip to stay connected with friends. Before their holiday trip, 45% of the respondents searched for ideas on where to go for holidays, and 42% seek ideas and information on excursions and other leisurely activities. This is valuable information to work on further analysis.

Moreover, social media is perceived more trusted than official tourism websites, travel agents and mass media advertising. (Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides 2012.) This includes the

fact that people post on social media contents that are written by real experiences and visual effects of a good photo.

3.2 Instagram

One of the most viral social platforms is Instagram, which has had a huge success ever since it was born. Instagram is a social networking application, which allows its users to share photos and videos from a smartphone. The app is open to everybody and is available in all countries. Instagram was initially released in October 2010 as a free mobile application. As the page is now 7 years old, Instagram has become one of the world's largest social media channels with 700 million active users around the globe and has been nominated for the Top Teen Choice Award for Social Network. According to Novakova (2017), around 95 million photos are uploaded per day.

If you are an active user of Instagram, you cannot deny that this app is viral. There are some reasons why Instagram is so famous: mainly because of its simplicity and how easy it is to share your photos in just few steps. The design of the app also places focus on the photos and the conversations created around them. According to a research made by Clarke (2018) shows that 63% of 13 to 17-year-olds uses Instagram daily, 22% of all Instagram users log in at least once a day and 38% of users check Instagram multiple times a day. This figure 4 shows that beside Facebook, Instagram has become one of the most popular phone applications to users' everyday life.

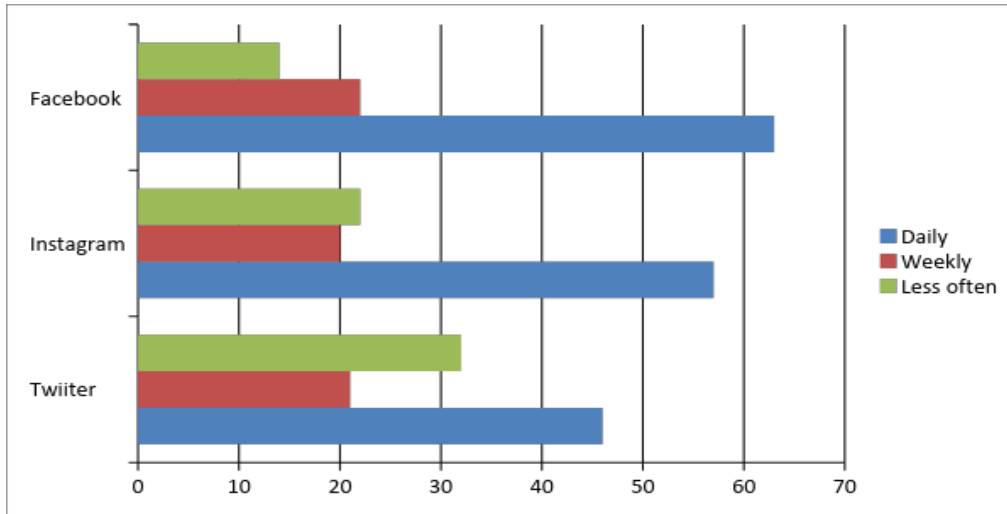


Figure 4: Internet user % (PiperJaffray 2014)

In spring 2013, Instagram was still a new page for users and therefore was the last in comparison with Twitter and Facebook in being favored by teen's users. However, in just after one year, Instagram became the most important social network; the difference is that around 13% more users in spring 2014 compared to spring 2013. Instagram is the highest preferred channel at 30% compared to Twitter at 27% and Facebook at 25%. Instagram stays the highest compare to Twitter and Facebook. (Figure 5).

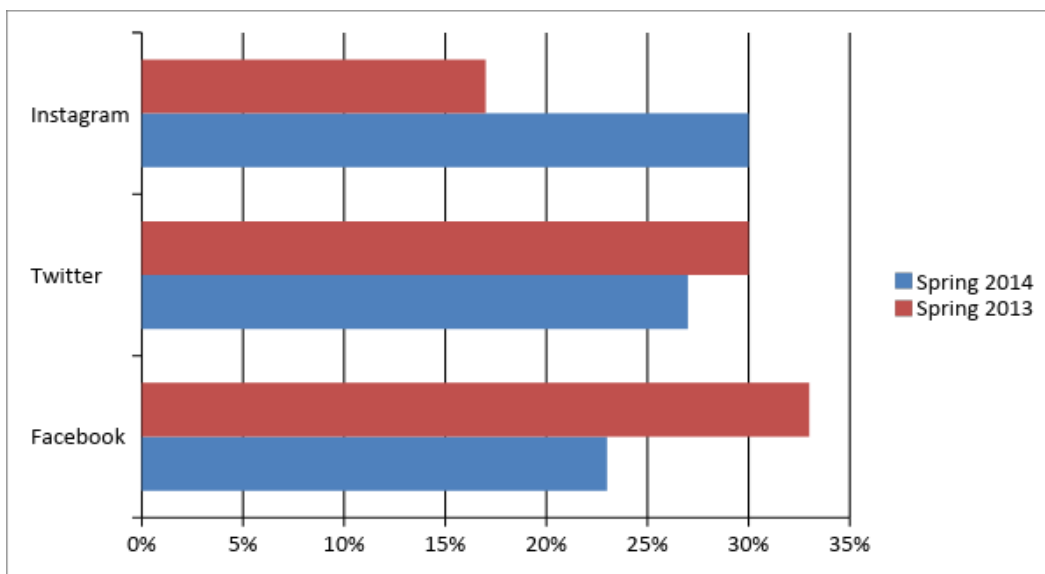


Figure 5 Teen's most important social network by 2014-2015 (PiperJaffray 2014.)

3.3 Instagram and travelling

As mention above, people use Instagram to share their photos about their experiences and most of the time, to get inspiration for their daily lives. Instagram allows the poster to set a photo's location, hash tags, filters, etc., which give the viewers two of the most important informative details: the location and a picture of the place. Through the comments, viewers can ask for more reviews, information, advice, warnings and tips on any kind of issues during their trip. Through Instagram, people get their inspiration whether they would go to visit a place. An example of how powerfully Instagram effects tourists is that in 2015, a small alpine town of Wanaka, New Zealand, began inviting and hosting "influencers" to promote the destination, the result was the fastest tourism growth in the country: a 14 percent increase. (Miller 2017.)

From the first step of getting inspiration for a location to the activities during their trips and until the last step of finishing their trip with posting reviews, feedback, etc, the process is influenced by social media. Instagram expands people's ability to share travel experiences with a wider audience than ever before. Many hotels, resorts and restaurants have also used this advantage to reach out to their customers by using Instagram as a marketing tool or by using an influencer to market their business. From that, they can get reviews, feedbacks and improve their customer services. According to research made by Joshi (2013) on indianluxurytrains.com, 91% of travellers from around the world make their bookings based on online reviews and 51% of travellers write their comments online. Travellers in the new digital world are being active on social media and online. It is the new trend for future development of tourism industry. People are browsing the Internet for travel inspiration and validation from their Instagram hash-tags, where they can find all the related pictures about their planned location to get inspiration.

In the digital world where travellers can find out their next destination faster than a travel agency, Instagram is one of the perfect tools. According to a research of Foucher (2014), based on the survey by Kindai, the France-based digital communication agency, the result shows that 45% of those who answered the survey found tourism-related Instagram posts and activity to be the most appealing, 47% of them stated they had

visited a place because of an Instagram of a 'friend' posting a photo or video of it in the past. (Murton 2014.) MMGY's Global research (2018) found out that posts from destinations or travel service providers were considered by 18% of all travellers during the inspiration stage of vacation planning; 11% for seeking advice and ratings from social media; 8% to compare prices and features; and, 5% to make reservations. The fact that Instagram is a successful platform for promoting destinations and tourist attractions is no longer a surprise. Visual marketing and tourism are just a perfect fit and Instagram is an effective tool for the desire to share the experiences with others.

Instagram is an easy platform to follow. Everything is displayed as photos or videos. Nowadays, browsing photos about a destination is easier than ever. Thanks to hash tag and geo-tagging on Instagram, users are just few clicks away from finding their dream holiday trip.

3.3.1 Hash tag

Hash tags are an important part of discovery on Instagram, allowing the seeker to see photos of specific areas, locations based on their interests. The ability to discover new things throughout a city, brought to life by a community on Instagram and searchable via a hash tag, is enabling travellers to uncover new destinations within cities. They give audiences an organic way to discover a travel destination with photos from real experiences. According to a report by Simply Measured Inc. (2014), posts with at least one hash tag gain 12.6% more engagement.

According to the figure 6, a photo of an individual with a hash tag will be listed in the hash tag group, together with all photos and videos from everyone's' posts with the same hash tag. For example, finding inspiration about Sapa in Vietnam, instead of going to Google and searching for mainstream photos or professional advertising, people tend to go to Instagram for real pictures.

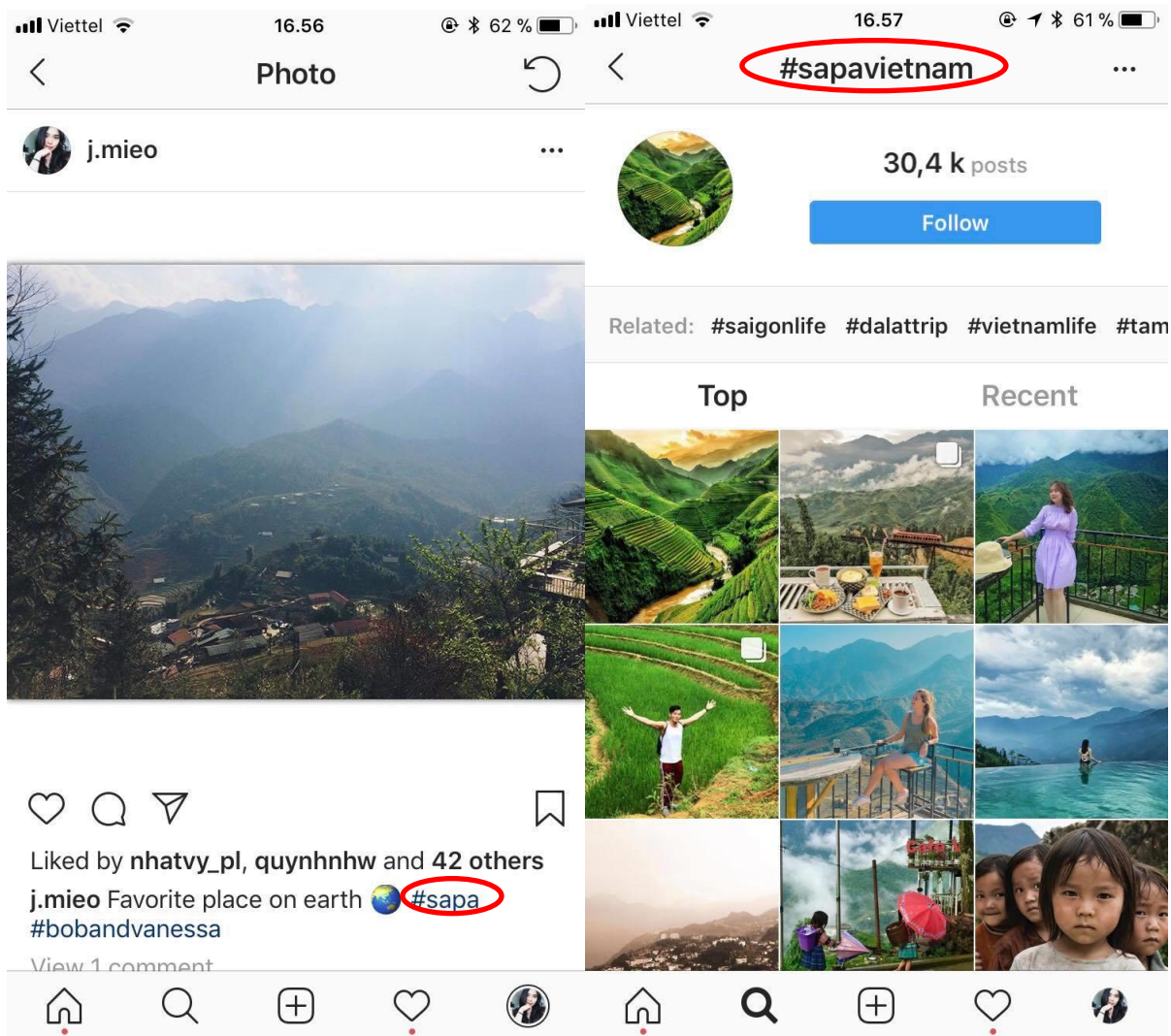


Figure 6: Screenshot of a post on the author’s Instagram account and posts under the hashtag #sapa

3.3.2 Geo-tagging

Instagram tagging is another effective way to find desired content. The same thing happens when you find a hash tag of a location: it will give you more photos of that specific place. Posts tagged with a location receive 79% higher engagement. From the figure 7, when there is a location tagged, there are more people who engage to a post. Out of 6,075 Instagram posts, 307 had a location tagged and allowing them to reach to 32,400 other users. Comparing to the non-geo-tagging posts, posts tagged with a location receive 79% higher engagement. (Simply Measured Inc)

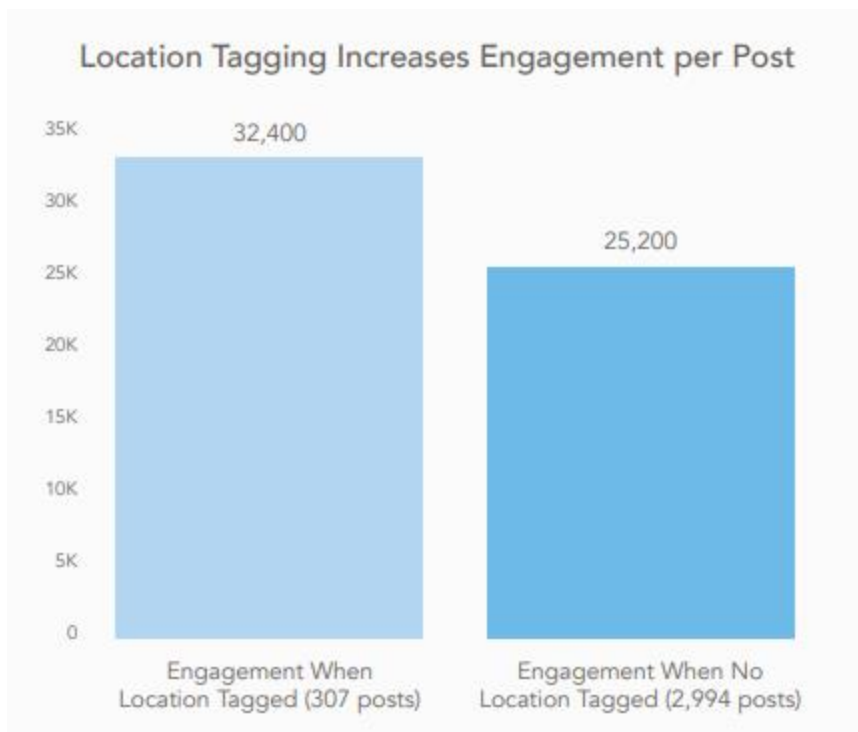


Figure 7: location tagging (Simply measured 2014)

By browsing through these photos of people on holiday, the user will get a truer representation of what the destination will be like. Real pictures from previous travellers, unique places that will not be shown on websites or magazines can be found by searching for geo-tagging. There is a lot of valuable information and tips coming from travellers or locals who have found something cool and want to share it with others. This way of finding information is consider being more authentic and insightful.

Figure 8 below showed how to use geo-tagging to search for location. Simply go to the discover page and search for a keyword. For example: Lombok, Indonesia, there will be lots of options for the location, choose the one that is most appropriate to your search. There will be tons of photos and posts related to the location. They are photos with geo-tagging.

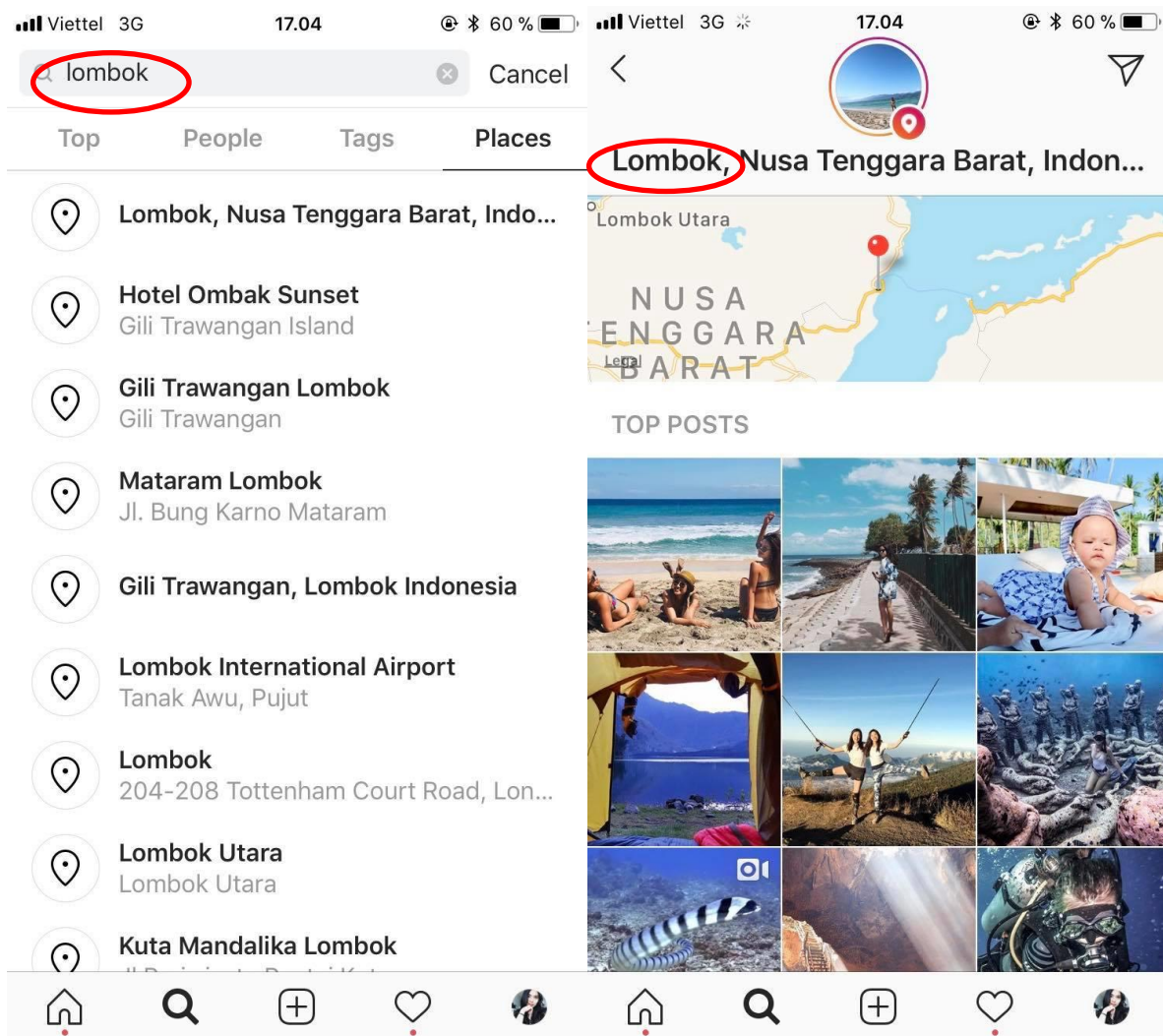


Figure 8: Screenshots from Instagram search with location search Lombok

4 CUSTOMER BEHAVIORS IN TOURISM AND DECISION MAKING

In this chapter the concept of consumer behavior will be explained in the context of travel and tourism. The main focus is to understand what factors influence their behavior and how they make their decisions. The traditional concepts will be explained but the focus is in the consumer behavior in the concept of tourism: push and pull factors.

4.1 Customer behavior

In tourism, customer behavior is one of the most researched areas in the field as it is a crucial part of understanding why people choose a certain location or product (Cohen, et al. 2013.) Customer behavior is also one of the key factors to take into account in the concept of marketing. It helps marketing managers to set their strategy effectively when they can understand better how consumers make their decisions and what factors influence them.

According to Kotler (1979), it is an extremely difficult task to uncover the reasons why people buy, as they are subject to many influences which are why various models have been developed to describe consumer behavior with the intention of trying to control the behavior patterns. Consumer behavior models are made with the intention of giving a simplified version of the relationship of the various factors that influence consumer behavior. However, it is a complex phenomenon that is hard to analyzed by a simple model. Moreover, consumer preferences change continuously and are affected by numerous internal and external factors along with decision-making processes. Therefore, there are just a few comprehensive reviews of the literature on customer behavior concepts and models. (Cohen et al. 2013.)

Walters (1974) defines consumer behavior as: "...the process whereby individuals decide whether, what, when, where, how, and from whom to purchase goods and services." Schiffman & Kanuk (1997) define customer behavior as the behavior that consumers display in searching, purchasing, using and evaluating a product, services and ideas. In tourism, booking a holiday is way different from buying a product. It involves a lot of psychological factors and requires more time, more consideration and more resources. Based on the research of Hudson (2008), the figure 9 shows the seven key factors that influence a consumer's behavior. These seven factors will be also mentioned and explained by the concept of push and pull factors, which are commonly used by many researchers in the context of motivation.



Figure 9: Factors influencing consumer behavior (Hudson 2008)

Culture is the most basic cause of a person's desires and behavior. Culture can be defined as the norms, beliefs and rituals that are unique to each person. (Hudson 2008.) The culture will be reflected on how we live, communicate or react about a certain thing. When it comes to self-image and satisfaction, most people seek to satisfy their desires in a way that fits societal norms.

Social class is still considered to be one of the most important external factors influencing consumer behavior. It is determined by factors such as income, wealth, education, occupation, family prestige, etc. People from different social classes tend to buy different products or services. (Hudson 2008.)

Lifestyle factor implies the way people allocate time, energy and money. The VALS system is a typology framework that divides the population into eight lifestyle groups: innovators, thinkers, achievers, experiencers, believers, strivers, makers, and survivors

(Hudson 2008). Members of each group have different psychological profiles and maintain different lifestyles which explain the differences of their behavior in tourism. The VALS helps for greater customer understanding and has evolved to explain the relationship between psychology and customer behavior. It is also believed that individual differences affect the purchase decision more directly than societal trends.

Many authors suggest that travel patterns and destinations vary as people move through their life cycle (Pearce 1993.) For example, single travellers will have a different trip plan and destination choice that is different from a tourist couple or family with kids.

Reference groups like to share values and expectations with others in a variety of social reference groups, for example, well-educated older travellers – people who are indeed concerned with 'doing something good for society' while young travelers' main purpose of traveling is to see the world for them. It is a new trend and an opening for tourism markets as educational tourism, ecotourism, agricultural tourism, and cultural tourism are. (Hudson 2008.)

Motivation is often seen as a major determinant of consumer behavior, but cultural, personal, and social influences will also have an important effect on consumer purchases (Hudson 2008). It is an inner drive that urges people to get what they need. Understanding customer's motivation will help predict the consuming pattern. Tourism is based on the distinction between factors which encourage individuals to move away from their home and those attributes of a different place which attract or 'pull' them towards it. This is the explanation for the Push and Pull Model. The models are accepted by many researchers such as Dann 1977; Crompton 1979; Zhang and Lam 1999 and Jang and Cai 2002.

There are a lot of different factors that motivate consumers to travel. People travel because they are pushed by internal forces to make a travel decision such as to reduce their stress and satisfy their needs (Gnoth 1997.) and they are pulled by the external forces of the destination characteristics and peculiarities. Push factors are considered to be useful when explaining the desire for travel, whereas the pull factors are useful for explaining the actual destination choice (Crompton 1979.) Push factors are socio-

psychological motives, desires of the individual such as rest and relaxation, health and fitness, adventure and social interaction and the desire to escape from everyday life. Pull factors are those that attract the traveller to a specific destination, they include tangible resources of the destination such as unique natural environment, safety, inexpensiveness, entertainment, sightseeing, historical and cultural resources, etc. (Uysal & Jurowski 1994.)

According to Tutorialspoint 2018, internal forces or so called push factors include:

- Attitude of tourism: knowledge of a person, place, or object
- Tourist's Perception: formed by observing, listening, or getting knowledge about a place, person, or an object.
- Values or Beliefs: a tourist believes or values a specific mode of conduct.
- Personality of the Tourist: the nature and physique of a tourist

On the other hand, external forces (pull factors) that can influence tourists and pull them towards a certain motivation and subsequent decision are:

- Extrinsic Motivation: such as money and the need to feel competent on the scale of expenditure and performance.
- Place of origin: such as cultural background and mindset. For example, a Pakistan woman would hardly ever think about travelling while an American woman considers travelling as one of her top desire.
- Family and Age: This factor depends on family structure and income. For example, the families with nuclear structure and double income tend to get longer trips to more expensive places. Customer behavior also depends on the age when it comes to their preferences. For example, generation Y tends to love adventure trips while older generation prefer more chilling by the beach and easier trips.
- Market: Changes in value of currency, political situations, and economic well-being of the country influence the decisions of a tourist.

4.2 Decision-making

After understanding the customer behavior, the decision-making is a core process that leads customers to buying. Customer behavior seems to be present in every step of the decision-making process. Decision-making is simply understood as the procedure of recognizing and choosing among available selections according to the demands of the circumstances (Al-Tarawneh 2012).

Commonly, decision-making is divided into five stages (Hawkins et al. 1995; Moutinho 1987; Sirakaya & Woodside 2005). The five steps include: problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, selection and purchase and post purchase behaviour (figure 10).

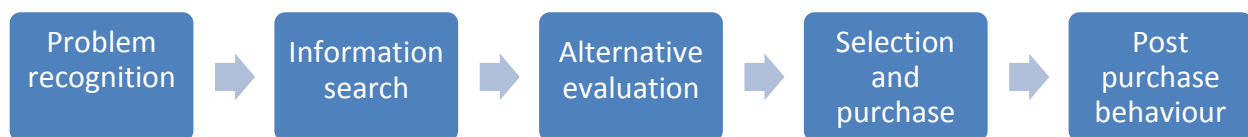


Figure 10: Five-Stage Model of the Consumer Buying Process (Hawkins et al. 1995)

Most decision-making starts with a need to find the solution for a problem. Customers feel like they are missing something and need to be satisfied. In tourism, it is the motivation of escaping and fulfilling their needs. The process followed by searching for information to help make decisions concerning the destination, time of travel, transport, accommodation and other services. To find information for the problems, Search Engines have become our primary research tool for answers. It is an instant and easy way to find out what you are looking for. Word of mouth from friends and families, real photos and reviews seem to be the new tool of information search in tourism. Once the consumer has determined what will satisfy them, the next step is to begin to seek out the best deal or the so called evaluate alternative. This can be price, quality, quantity of time, value of service/ product, etc. Customers compare prices, quality, the value of money, read reviews, ultimately choosing the one that satisfies most of their parameters. After evaluating and comparing all the options, the customers now decide on what they will purchase and where to purchase it. This will lead to the purchasing process. (Flekel 2013.) At this stage, the decisions are strongly affected by customer

behavior factors: personality, motivation, family, reference groups, social class and cultures and also the nature of the holiday. The information search and decision will be made during the trip and even after the vacation is finished, as they will evaluate the trip. This affects the next travel planning process and determines whether or not the consumer will come back or recommend the destination to others. In the end, there are many decision-making process models; however, they all use the same 5 stage process as the base like mentioned above. (Wang & Pizam 2011.)

5 TARGET GROUP

The focus of this chapter is to explain the reason why the targets had been chosen in this research by giving definition for the target group. The millennial is the main target, together with Asian countries as the target destination. These two specific groups limit down the target for this research.

5.1 The millennial

The generation that is considered to grow up with the development of technology and social media, is called the millennial, which is also known as the generation Y. Young generation (18-30 year olds) around the world who use Instagram as an inspiration for destination making and their travels in Asian countries are the main target for this research. According to Pennsylvania State University's (2015) report, teens are leveraging social media as a conversation space and an outlet for self-expression to a greater extent than adults. Ninety percent of Instagram users are younger than 35 years old. With figure 11 below, the biggest demographic group of Instagram users worldwide is males between 18 – 24 years old, while 60.4% of all users are aged between 18 and 24 years old. (The Statistics Portal 2018.)

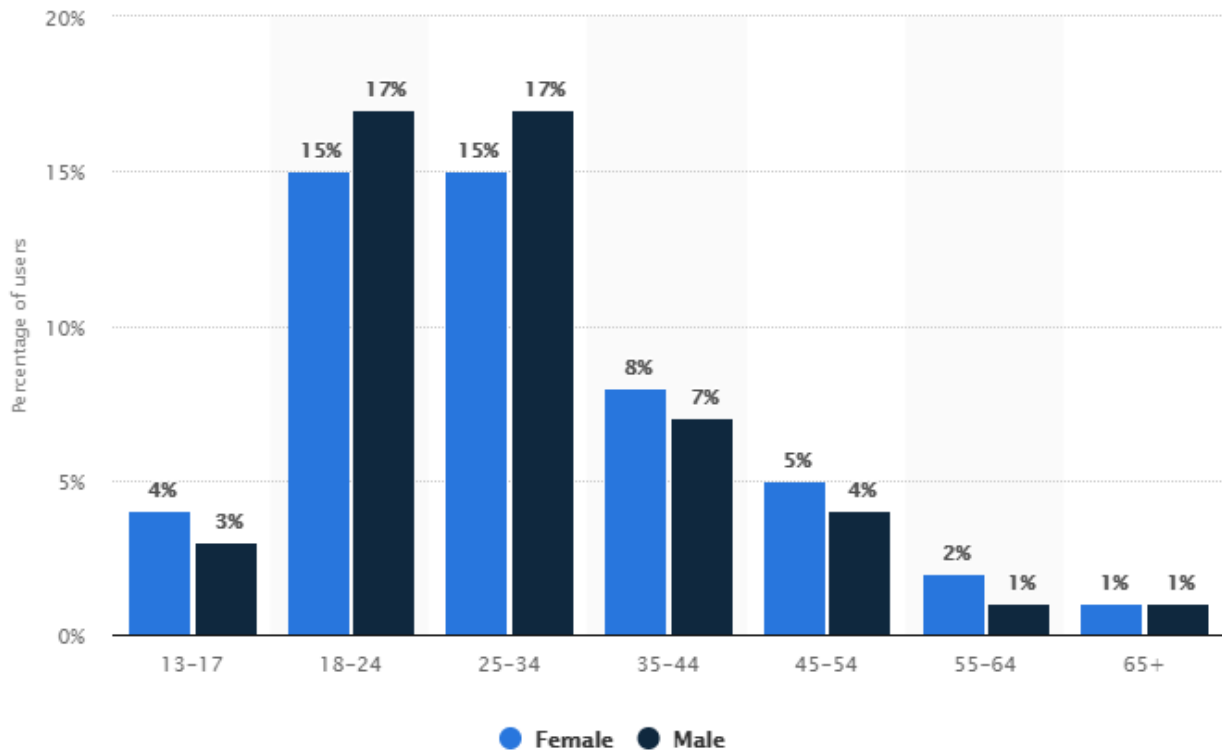


Figure 11 Distribution of Instagram users worldwide as of July 2018, by age and gender (The Statistic Portal 2018)

A survey made on Business Wire (2014) showed that while on a trip, 60% of travelers, and 97% of millennial travelers, share their travel photos. Sixty-eight percent of 18-34 year old social media users were likely to purchase after seeing a friend's post. Photos are the most shared with 48%, followed by reviews 18%, check-ins 17% and 12% share videos. People like to share photos about their activities and excursion (35%), they also share about the meals and drinks (27%), 20% will share about their hotel room.

Young people are also the fastest growing segment in travelling. UNWTO estimates that around 20% of the 940 million international tourists travelling the world in 2010 were young people. The majority of young people today are keen on seeing the world and other surroundings, more than what they are used to. They want to experience new cultures, blend experiences across different types of trips, encounter and engage with local people and have authentic experiences. (UNWTO 2011.) According to a recent research by MMGY Global's by Sweeney (2018), 83% of millennial travellers access social media at least once a day, averaging 113 minutes per day in which 46% are

active on Instagram, which is a 350% increase since 2013. Among Instagram users during their trip, 66% of millennials said the platform is important for their personal use. Those numbers are impressive and clearly showed that Instagram has been almost a must-have tool for young people while on trips. The number one thing that millennials look for when they are booking holidays is not just cheap booze, interesting activities or cultural experiences. According to travel site Expedia (2013), the biggest priority for young people travelling abroad is how 'Instagrammable' their destination is. Rather than uploading photos of beautiful beaches or ocean sunsets on social media as an outlet for virtual memories to fondly look back on, social media users are mostly posting their vacation snaps to incite envy among their friends and followers, according to the survey. Therefore, the targets of this research are the young generation and how Instagram is used by them and how it affects them.

5.2 Asian countries

Talking about Asian countries, the majority of nations in the region rely on rich natural resources, good prices to appeal to tourists and a birthplace of the most mainstream religions (Misrahi 2017). It is the world's most populated continent with the greatest diversity of culture which is colorful and immensely interesting. The variety of culture is a result of the continent's long history. Different ancient civilizations have passed down their traditions and practices to their descendants. It is undeniable that history and culture have a strong influence on travellers' choice of holiday destination, especially when it comes to traveling in Asia. This includes historic buildings and other historic attractions; archaeological sites; state, local, or national parks; art galleries or museums; concerts, plays or musicals; ethnic or ecological heritage sites; and such like attractions.

For Asian countries, despite the gap in tourism infrastructure, Southeast Asia's breathtaking scenery, varied climate and diverse and exciting cultures continue to attract record numbers of tourists. Also, as mentioned in part 1.2, Asia and the Pacific accounts for 23% of worldwide arrivals with 249 million international tourists in 2013.

The continent is the second most visited region in the world after Europe and one of the fastest growing in recent years. (UNWTO 2014.)

This is the reason why the researcher chose this specific continent. It would be more interesting to take a look into the tourism of Asia since they are always one of the famous vacation destinations for foreigners.

6 METHODOLOGY

The empirical part of the research will be carried out with a qualitative research method, specifically Purposive Sampling method which “relies on the judgment of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units “(Lund Research Ltd 2012.) As the research is focused on a specific target group, this purposive sampling method is perfectly fit to the demand of the research. To be more clear, we use Homogeneous sampling which aims to achieve a homogeneous sample (Lund Research Ltd 2012.) that shares the same group of age and interest (young generation of foreign travellers who are passionate about Asia and are affected by Instagram posts. The researcher actively selected the most productive sample to answer the research question. (Marshall 1996.)

The sampling was carried out by face-to-face interviews made by the researcher with the target group. Target interviewees were found in hostels, nature destinations in Vietnam and/or Indonesia, Thailand, Korea, etc. (This didn't limit the destination). In fact, most foreigners came to travel in Asia not to only stay in one specific country but to travel around Asia, this was exactly the target. The interviewees were being asked whether Instagram had encouraged them to travel to Asia.

6.1 Semi-structured method

The researcher utilized the semi-structured interview method which was flexible but still covered the main research questions. A semi-structured interview allows the interviewer to ask questions that were not included in the original interview guide but at the same time, more appropriate to help understanding the interviewees more deeply. The interview guide consisted of a total of three parts:

- PART I: Background information
- PART II: Young adults' characteristics and behavioral factors
- PART III: The use of Instagram in inspiring travellers

The first part of the interview helped to identify the target, whether they fit the target group. The second part was asked to understand more about the motivation of young travellers to come to Asia and the third part moved onward the main research questions, whether Instagram is an inspirational platform for young people to look for the travel destination in Asia.

6.2 Data collection

The researcher selected a few potential targets; in this case there were six people to interview. The selection was based on the researcher's network from Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam and Chiang Mai, Thailand. The targets were expats that are living in Asian countries or travellers in Asia for a short-time, and they were all acquainted with Instagram. In the end, four of the most valuable interviews were taken into account to answer the research question.

All qualitative interviews were carried out during July 2018 and each interview lasted around 45-60 minutes. Two of the interviews were conducted in Vietnam and the others were interviewed in Thailand. Nationality was chosen to be different to avoid bias due to background culture. All interviews were recorded on a phone with the permission of the interviewees. Notes were written down during all of the interviews and the researcher also did summaries in written form afterwards based on the recordings of each interview. Eventually, after that all the data collection was successfully gathered, the researcher started the analysis, which is presented in detail within the next chapters.

6.3 Analyzing methods

Since the research will be conducted with Qualitative Data Analysis, the results collected are presented verbally as thoughts and opinions rather than transferring participants' words into numbers and statistics (Hogan & al. 2011, 9). Qualitative data rely on human interpretation and evaluation which cannot be accurately measured and

counted like quantitative data. (Walliman 2011, 73). According to Löfgren (2013), there are six phrases in analyzing qualitative data which have been used in this research. First, familiarizing with the data by reading, re-reading the interviews and noting down initial ideas. The next step is coding, or labeling, the interesting features. Coding in this research was chosen as it was repeated several times; some details were similar to personal opinion or in theory literatures review of the research. Step three was to decide which codes are the most important, and create categories by bringing several codes together. There were some codes that were used in this research: frequency (how often users go to Instagram and post), references (the kind of topic they searched for), motivation (reason to travel to Asia), expectation and reality (what interviewees think about instagram). From these codes, it was easier to find a connection between them and to the research topic. The codes somehow explained the research problem. Step five was to decide if one category is more important than the other, re-fine the specifics of each code and draw a figure to summarize the results. Step 6 is producing the result, which will be explained in the next chapter.

7 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following chapters (7 & 8) will present and discuss the findings of the conducted qualitative research. The findings presented in this section will be based on the two research questions that appeared in the interview guide:

- Young adults' characteristics and behavioral factors.
- The use of Instagram in inspiring travellers.

All the interviewees were travelling in Asian countries (especially in Korea, Vietnam and Thailand). They are from 18 to 25 years old and familiar with Instagram. The four interviewees were chosen randomly from France, Australia, America and one from Finland. This choice helped to avoid bias in cultural differences.

7.1 Young adults' characteristics and behavioral factors.

One of the main characteristics of the young travellers is that they are friendly and very open to try new things. They come to Asia to experience the culture and to get out of their comfort-zone. According to the literature reviews millennials are very familiar with social media and especially Instagram. All interviewees spend around 2-3 hours per day in Instagram and used Instagram for the inspiration before their trips in Asia. They are mostly interested in topics such as travel, nature, music and fashion. These photos give them inspiration not only for their daily life but clearly motivate them to go on trips and adventures. To find inspiration for their holiday trip, besides Instagram, they of course use other search engines and also advice from friends. However, they all admitted that Instagram had encouraged their desire to visit a place so they can see and take the same kind of photos they saw on Instagram.

Posting photos on Instagram is also a common activity among the interviewees. They post photos quite often on their Instagram and when on a trip they post the most. Photos that are posted while on trips are about the destination or the food they ate. The literature review above states that 97% of millennial travellers share their travel photos. The purpose of posting is to check-in at the famous places and show people that they are in Asia doing amazing adventures. A man, 24 years old, admitted that the purpose of his posting is to tell his friends and family what he is doing and give inspirations for others about where he was travelling. A woman, 20, said that Vietnam is one of their favorite places; since they can see Ha Long Bay with their own eyes compared to what they saw on Instagram and there are beautiful beaches for Instagrammable photos. This common characteristic of this segment also clearly shows in the studies that were presented in the theoretical part of this research.

As being foreigners, all interviewees admit that Asia is one of the destinations that they come to seek for sun, beaches, culture and nature. According to one of the interviewees, 22 years old, the young adults are mostly looking for relaxation when travelling to beach destinations. Asia is one of the best places to visit when Europeans want to get out of their daily lives and seek adventure. Her previous interest of the country started from seeing pictures of Vietnam on social media and she was intrigued by the difference in landscape to that of Finland.

The length of each trip was different between each interviewee. This can be explained by their location and culture differences. A man, 24 years old, shared that he spends his holiday during summer time and usually spends up to 2 months traveling around Asia. An Australian interviewee, 27 years old, shared that their winter is the only period they have time to visit Asia (when it is summer in Asia). Since the differences in climate and distance, Asia seems to be their best option for short holiday. For a 19 year old respondent, the distance from America to Asia is quite far, so they take a gap year to travel around Asia for a long time. Their trip was not well-planned but the whole journey was followed and adjusted to fit with the current situation.

When talking about the cultural motivators, the experts pointed out that the young adults seek for entertainment in the destinations that they choose to travel to. A couple of the interviewees also highlighted that foodies, fashion and music are the reason why they came to Asia, especially for Korean music, K-pop stars and street food in Vietnam and Thailand. A 22-year-old interviewee pointed out that this is clearly a trend currently that trying local cuisine in the destination is a must-do when you visit Asia.

Furthermore, it is also mentioned that shopping is a thing that interests and is important for this group when traveling. This is one of the reasons why foreigners travel to cities such as Bangkok, Seoul, Taipei, and Singapore to do shopping as it is one of the main activities of their visit.

Additionally, all of the respondents thought that the young foreign adults also want to experience new cultures and are also interested in getting to know local people and the things that locals do. That is why Asia, one of the most exotic culture hubs, is so interesting to visit. Research showed that up to half of the millennial said that meeting locals was the most important reason for traveling (WYSE Travel Confederation 2015). All interviewees also agreed that a trip in Asia is not completed without meeting with locals and experiencing the local life and culture.

Price consciousness among the young adult was also considered a motivation when it comes to traveling to Asia. Traveling to Asian airport hubs can be expensive for a long distance flight. However, life in Asia can be seen as inexpensive. Countries such as

Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan are considered top expensive countries to live. The rest of Asian countries are affordable and relatively cheap compared to the living rates in foreign countries. The 19-year-old interviewee stated that since it is cheap in Asia, trips in Asia are somehow more relaxing and enjoyable. Travellers can experience more things at a pleasant price which helps them to enjoy the destination more. However, the price consciousness topic actually had rather mixed feelings and thoughts as some of the interviewees said that some young adults have smaller wallets for travelling when others again thought that they are happy to put money on travelling since it is considered a self-developing experience. Previous studies conducted on the travel spending by millennial show that they are actually rather gracious spenders compared to the other age groups (WYSE Travel Confederation 2015). Some interviewees admitted that the best thing in Asia for some foreigners is that they can easily find a job in the countries, which helps them to keep on their journey. Especially for Australians and Americans, for example, they can easily ask for one year visa and stay inside the country, finding jobs such as: English teacher, English tutor, translator, volunteer charity helper, etc.

7.2 The use of Instagram in inspiring travellers

All four respondents agreed that the main social media channel used for their travel inspiration is Instagram. Younger generations like to do short videos of their everyday lives and also the communication goes via photos, posts with not so much written texts (Thompson 2013.) A woman, 27 years old, said that Instagram photos are the first inspiration for choosing a destination. The searching process can involve other channels and word-of-mouth; however, photos on Instagram are actually a push for a further look into a destination. Instagram had quite a big impact on destination decisions. Interviewees also confirmed that advertising from hotels and travel agencies on Instagram also interest them. Due to the development of technology, for everything you search, you will find advertising on every social page you access. This is also the marketing strategy of tourist agents, hotels and restaurants to meet their target customers. An interviewee, 19 years old, said that nothing is better than receiving travel tips from locals and people that have already been there. People are constantly posting

their suggestions for restaurants, shopping, places to visit and more and aren't being paid to do so. Using Instagram for traveling is the perfect way to make sure you are getting the best experience possible. We cannot deny that Tripadvisor is also full of advice; however, the difference is that Instagram photos makes you fall in love with the picture before you even read the content. If you are reading about a place and want a better idea of what it looks like, simply search hash tags or location geo-tags on Instagram (which was mentioned in part 3) and thousands of user-curated photos will pop up and melt your heart away as a 24-year-old interviewee shared.

However, a 27-year-old woman mentioned that Instagram photos are a good source of inspiration, but those photos are covered with filters and were made with a lot of investment and effort to make an incredible Instagrammable photo. A 22 year old woman also added that pictures on instagram are often changed and photoshopped to expect too much in terms of exact details. It is wise to search information from other websites and channels before choosing to travel.

Once again, there is no denying that social media is one of today's greatest travel drivers, with Instagram being a primary source of inspiration (Ramani 2018). In reality, Instagrammers understand the up and down side of this social media page. A woman, 19 years old, admitted Instagram is a good inspiration to an extent, as often times the pictures are far different from reality. The reality can be better or worse. She also said that Instagram can be a good tool when planning a trip, especially if you are unsure of what to do in a certain place, checking other people's posts can help.

8 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter focuses on the conclusions that can be done from the research results and analysis. It will begin with a reflection with the objectives of the research proposal. The researcher will discuss a summary of the main findings, while identifying the limitations and making recommendations. Also recommendations will be made for tourism and hospitality businesses in the future.

8.1 Conclusions and summary of the results

Based on the explanation in chapter 2, the aim of this research is to understand more deeply how Instagram affects human decisions nowadays for traveling and tourism purposes, especially nature tourism in Asian countries. The objective of the thesis was to explore Instagram usage and the impact during the holiday process. Moreover, the purpose of the research was to understand how Instagram is used as an inspiration site for travellers when they travel especially to Asia and how people react to Instagram posts.

The first objective was somehow explained with secondary data to make up the critical literature review (chapter 3), which was used and referenced throughout.

Based on empirical data and the literature review, a number of conclusions can be drawn. The social media is the most effective way to share, connect and to express oneself. Instagram, the most viral social platform is considered the most popular phone application in users' everyday lives. The fact that Instagram is a successful platform for promoting destinations and tourist attractions is no longer a surprise. By taking the advantage of its visual effect, Instagram has not only become one of the world's largest social media channels with 700 million active users around the globe and received a nomination for the Top Teen Choice Award for Social Network. It is also one of the best Search Engines and inspiration sources when it comes to tourism. Target interviewees were all familiar with Instagram and use the platform on a daily basis.

It is evident that social media has an influence on Generation Y's overseas travel choices. According to the literature review, 47% of the respondents from a research stated that they had visited a place because of a 'friend's Instagram posting a photo or video of it in the past.

Participants within the interview group stated to have an urge to travel when they see a post from a friend or an influencer: singer, famous person, fashion/travel blogger, etc. This can be viewed as a positive impact, as social media is giving Generation Y inspiration to travel. Sharing experiences and photos is also important to the young

travellers as found in chapter 5.1 that 97% of millennial travelers share their travel photos.

All respondents have an Instagram account and they use it on a daily basis. The purpose of posting is to keep friends and family updated about where they are and what they are doing. They also found tourism-related Instagram posts and activities to be the most appealing and they themselves post photos about travelling with hash tags and geo-tags. Although searching travel related hash tags is not that common, the location search proved to be quite a popular tool. These results show that Instagram is a favorite social platform when it comes to travelling, as acknowledged in chapter 3.3, Instagram and travelling.

As mentioned in the theory part of the thesis, there are a lot of different factors that affect human behavior and it can be difficult to determine a sole reason behind people's choices. Various aspects have an effect, such as people's motives, background, culture, age and gender, to name a few. The four interviewees in this research were at different age, there are some slight differences in the way they choose the destination and activities during the trip. Youngers travellers from 19 to 24 years old tend to travel for shopping and to see their music idols. Some other young travellers they tend to see more nature, culture and attractions. However, they all love to see the authenticity of Asian countries and are ready for an adventure in Asia.

According to the interview results, a big factor affecting people's choices is visual aspect. Photos and videos, especially those taken by real travellers, play an important role in people's decision making and the majority thinks that they are more important in the information search than text and comments. However, all of the interviewees admitted Instagram is not the only page they use for information. The platform is used for the inspiration but for further understanding and findings, they also rely on various different sources. They also agreed that Instagram photos are somehow epic and vain due to the Photoshop and filters, which make them less expectant of the destination. It is easy to understand that professional photos and advertising images from organizations, influencers, government, and businesses need to be perfect at all times to attract the viewers. Travellers are ready to see the real world and understand that

there will be differences in surroundings, nature factors, and personal opinions from what they saw on Instagram and in reality.

8.2 Recommendations on findings

As mentioned on the research aim, this research will be beneficial for businesses from Asia to understand how they can use Instagram as their new tool of marketing to the world. There are many opportunities for business on this viral social media platform. Businesses on Instagram admitted that it enables them to connect with thousands of potential customers on a daily basis. With a right amount of posts per day, good quality photos and interesting descriptions, your business page will be loved by customers and even attract more customers. Marketers should recognize the importance of Instagram and its value in becoming a more and more influential platform that can impact consumer behaviour.

Tourism and hospitality businesses should also become aware of Generation Y sharing only their finest experiences on social media, and the influence it has on other users. According to the above literature findings, roughly half of internet-using young adults ages 18-29 (53%) use Instagram and the millennial are spending 30% of their media time, this being 5 hours daily, engaged with user-generated content. This is the most active target group on Instagram that most of the business pages are focused on.

There are lots of travel influencers on Instagram and there are many people that share interesting and visually beautiful content, and reposting or sharing a post is usually taken as a compliment. This gives businesses and destination marketers a big opportunity to take advantage of this content.

8.3 Limitations of the research

This section will explore and identify the limitations of this research project. There are three main limitations that are found during this research. Firstly, the amount of respondents of the research carried out was relatively small when considering the amount of foreigners traveling in Asia. There were only six respondents for the interview and four of the interviews were taking into investigation. However, the qualities of the

four interviews were good enough with very valuable information that helps to complete this research.

Second limitation is that there were some biases in answers of interviewees. Since the interviewees were selected to be different in nationality, the researcher tried her best to find the common behavior among the interviewees. However, it is noticeable that there are many differences in mindset that affect their answers due to culture differences and their travel experiences.

Last limitation occurring during the interview is that the answers sometimes had variety of new directions and mixed opinions. Since the researcher was studying human behavior and perception, the answers were not exactly yes or no, they were a mix or in between when it comes to behavior and references.

The results of the research provided answers to the research questions, therefore it can be said that the research is valid in this sense. However as stated above, the sample size in the survey was small and due to culture bias, the research cannot be very credible.

8.4 Recommendations for future research

The research was carried out with qualitative data analysis. Considering the limit in participation with this method, further research can be carried out with quantitative data analysis or even both methods for more valid information. Also, the research focused only on Instagram, a suggestion for next the researcher is that Facebook, Snapchat or even pages like Tripadvisor can be considered inspiration pages for tourists. Obviously, those platforms can be more familiar with users since they arrived first.

Results showed that Instagram is the most viral and useful platform for travel inspiration. However, there is always a downside in this technological world. The suggestion is that, the next researcher continues on finding out how trustworthy this platform is. It will be a deeper investigation on social media. Other suggestions would be researching the negative impacts Instagram and Instagram marketing may have on

the destinations and places. One negative side effect of Instagram could be overcrowding of places.

List of Figures

Figure 1 International tourist arrivals 2016 (UNWTO 2016)	5
Figure 2 International Tourist Arrivals 2016-2017 (UNWTO 2016).....	6
Figure 3: % of users who engaged in activity (Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides (2012).	10
Figure 4: Internet user % (PiperJaffray 2014)	12
Figure 5: Teens' most important social network by 2014-2015 (PiperJaffray 2014).....	13
Figure 6: Screenshot of a post on the author's Instagram account and posts under the hashtag #sapa.....	16
Figure 7: location tagging (Simply measured 2014)	16
Figure 8: Screenshots from Instagram search with location search Lombok	17
Figure 9: Factors influencing consumer behavior (Hudson 2008)	19
Figure 10: Five-Stage Model of the Consumer Buying Process (Hawkins et al. 1995) .	22
Figure 11 Distribution of Instagram users worldwide as of July 2018, by age and gender (The Statistic Portal 2018).....	24

9 REFERENCES

Al-Tarawneh, H. A. 2012. The main factors beyond decision making. *Journal of Management. Research*, Vol. 4, No 1, p. 1-23.

Business Wire. 2014. Millennials Most Likely to Indulge in Luxury Hotel Services, Chase Marriott Rewards Survey Reveals. <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20140610006008/en/Millennials-Indulge-Luxury-Hotel-Services-Chase-Marriott>. Accessed on 28/09/201

Clarke, T. 2018. 24+ Instagram Statistics That Matter to Marketers in 2019. <https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-statistics/>. Accessed on 25/09/2018.

Cohen, D. 2015. Instagram Is the Modern-Day Travel Agent. Available at. <http://www.adweek.com/digital/misstravel-instagram-travel-survey/>. Accessed on 21/01/2018.

Cohen, A., Prayag, G. & Moital, M. 2013. Consumer behaviour in tourism. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13683500.2013.850064>. Accessed on 21/01/2018.

Constine, J. 2017. Facebook now has 2 billion monthly users. <https://techcrunch.com/2017/06/27/facebook-2-billion-users/?guccounter=1>. Accessed on 08/10/2018

Crompton, J. 1979. Motivations for pleasure vacation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 6, 4, pp. 408-424.

Dann, G. 1977. Anomie, ego-enhancement and tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 4,4, pp. 184-194.

Expedia. 2013. Future of travel report. <https://viewfinder.expedia.com/features/future-of-travel-report/>. Accessed on 08/10/2018

Flekel, A. 2013. 5 Steps of Decision Making Process. <https://www.business2community.com/marketing/5-steps-of-decision-making-process-0480178>. Accessed on 25/09/2018.

Fotis, J., Buhalis, D. & Rossides, N. 2012, "Social media use and impact during the holiday travel planning process." http://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/19262/1/Fotis_et_al_2012_-_Social_media_use_and_impact_during_the_holiday_travel_planning_process.pdf. Accessed on 21/01/2018.

Foucher, J. 2014. Tourism, the most popular sector on Instagram. https://www.tourmag.com/Tourism-the-most-popular-sector-on-Instagram_a65405.html. Accessed on 18/03/2018.

Gnoth, J. 1997. Tourism motivation and expectation formation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24(2), 283-304.

Hawkins, D. I., Best, R. J., & Coney, K. A. 1995. *Consumerbehaviour: Implications for marketing strategy* (6th ed.). Home-wood: Irwin Publishing.

Hayhurst, L. 2017. Survey highlights Instagram as key factor in destination choice among millennials. <http://www.travolution.com/articles/102216/survey-highlights-instagram-as-key-factor-in-destination-choice-among-millennials>. Accessed on 25/09/2018.

Hogan, J., Dolan, P. & Donnelly, P. 2011. *Approaches to qualitative research*. Oak Tree Press. Cork.

Hudson, S. 2008. *Tourism and hospitality marketing*. SAGE Publications Ltd. London.

Jang, S. & Cai, L. 2002. Travel motivations and destination choice: A study of British outbound market. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 13(3), 111–133.

Joshi, S. 2013. Impact of Social Media on Travel Decision Making. <http://blog.indianluxurytrains.com/2013/03/impact-of-social-media-on-travel-industry.html> . Accessed on 21/01/2018.

Kotler, P. 1979. *A Critical Assessment of Marketing Theory and Practice*. American Marketing Association

Löfgren, K. 2013, Qualitative analysis of interview data: A step-by-step guide. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRL4PF2u9XA>. Accessed on 08/10/2018.

Lund Research Ltd. 2012. Purposive sampling. <http://dissertation.laerd.com/purposive-sampling.php>. Accessed on 25/09/2018.

Marshall, M. N. 1996. Sampling for qualitative research. https://47-269-203-spr2010.wiki.uml.edu/file/view/Research_I_20090916221539453.pdf/116402723/Research_I_20090916221539453.pdf. Accessed on 18/03/2018.

Miller, C. 2017. How Instagram Is Changing Travel. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/travel-interests/arts-and-culture/how-instagram-is-changing-travel/>. Accessed on 21/01/2018

Misrahi, T. 2017. South-East Asia's most tourism-friendly destinations. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/04/south-east-asia-s-most-tourism-friendly-destinations/>. Accessed on 25/09/2018.

MMGY Global's Position. 2018. MMGY Global's Expert Insights on Booking Holidays Through Social Media. <https://www.hospitalitynet.org/news/4088413.html>. Accessed on 18/03/2018.

Moutinho, L. 1987. Consumer Behaviour in Tourism. *European Journal of Marketing*, 21, 5-44.

Murton, D. 2014. Instagram and tourism: a perfect marketing match. <http://blog.marginmedia.com.au/Our-Blog/bid/102337/Instagram-and-tourism-a-perfect-marketing-match>. Accessed on 3/6/2018.

Novakova, M. 2017. 25 Instagram facts that you want to know. <http://www.pastbook.com/txt/25-instagram-facts-that-you-want-to-know/>. Accessed on 21/01/2018.

Osterrieder, A. 2013. The value and use of social media as communication tool in the plant sciences. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3716900/>. Accessed on 08/10/2018

Patarawadee, S. 2016. Does Social Media Affect Consumer Decision Making?. Available at http://scholarsarchive.jwu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1023&context=mba_student . Accessed on 21/01/2018.

Pearce, P.L. 1993, Fundamentals of tourist motivation, in D.Pearce and W. Butler, *Tourism and research: Critiques and Challenges*, pp.113-34. London: Routledge.

Piper Jaffray. 2014. Taking stock with teens - fall 2014. <http://www.piperjaffray.com/3col.aspx?id=3268>. Accessed on 25/09/2018

Ramani, S. 2018. People are planning trips around the photos they'll get for Instagram — and it's ruining travel. <https://www.businessinsider.com/instagram-influences-people-travel-not-better-2018-6>. Accessed on 25/09/2018.

Schiffman, B. & Kanuk, W. 1997. *Consumer behaviour*. 1st ed. Sydney: Prentice Hall Australia.

Simply Measured, Inc (2014). Instagram Study. http://get.simplymeasured.com/rs/simplymeasured2/images/InstagramStudy2014Q3.pdf?mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRolua%252FAZKXonjHpfsX57%252BwtX6a2IMI%252F0ER3fOvrPUfGjI4CTsvil%252BSLDwEYGJlv6SgFQrDEMaI41bgNWRM%253D. Accessed on 20/03/2018.

Sirakaya, E. & Woodside, A.G. 2005. Building and Testing Theories of Decision Making by Travellers. *Tourism Management*, 26, 815-832.

Sweeney, E. 2018. Study: Millennial travelers' Instagram use has grown 375% since 2013. <https://www.marketingdive.com/news/study-millennial-travelers-instagram-use-has-grown-375-since-2013/523622/>. Accessed on 25/09/2018

The Statistics Portal. 2018. Distribution of Instagram users worldwide as of July 2018, by age and gender. Accessed on 25/03/2018.

Thompson, C. 2013. Teenagers and social networking – it might actually be good for them. <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2013/oct/05/teens-social-networking-good-for-them>. Accessed on 25/09/2018. Accessed on 25/09/2018.

Tripadvisor. 2017. TripAdvisor Reaches Half A Billion Reviews And Opinions And Counting. <https://tripadvisor.mediaroom.com/2017-04-19-TripAdvisor-Reaches-Half-A-Billion-Reviews-And-Opinions-And-Counting>. Accessed on 25/03/2018

Tutorialspoint. 2018. Motivation Factors of the Tourists . https://www.tutorialspoint.com/tourism_management/tourism_management_motivation_factors_of_tourists.htm. Accessed on 3/6/2018.

UNWTO. United Nations World Tourism Organization. 2011. Reports Volume 2 'The Power of Youth Travel'.

UNWTO. United Nations World Tourism Organization. 2014. Annual Report on Asia Tourism Trends

UNWTO. United Nations World Tourism Organization. 2016. Tourism Highlights

UNWTO. United Nations World Tourism Organization. 2017. World Tourism Organization and Global Tourism Economy Research Centre.

UNWTO. United Nations World Tourism Organization. 2018. 2017 International Tourism Results: the highest in seven years.

Uysal, M., & Jurowski, C. 1994, Testing the push and pull factors. *Annals of Tourism Research* 21(4), 844-846.

Vidal, C. 2017. How millennials are redefining the travel industry, one Instagram at a time. Available at <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-millennials-redefining-travel-industry-one-instagram-vidal/>. Accessed on 08/10/2018.

Wang, Y. & Pizam, A. 2011. Destination marketing and management. CAB International. Oxfordshire

Walters, C. 1974. *Consumer behavior: Theory and practice*. Minnesota: R. D. Irwin.

Walliman, N. 2011. *Research methods: the basics*. USA and Canada: Routledge

WYSE Travel Confederation. 2015. *A revolution in the hostel sector: Millennial travelers and trends in youth travel accommodation*.

Zhang, Q. H, & Lam, T. 1999. An analysis of Mainland Chinese visitors' motivations to visit Hong Kong. *Journal of Tourism Management*,20(5), 587–594

Appendix 1

Interview Structure

A. Introduction

Dear students,

My name is Duong Le and I am a senior student majoring in Hospitality Management at Saimaa University of Applied Sciences in Finland. I am conducting a research study in terms of my bachelor thesis on the effects of Instagram on young foreigner's vacation choices, especially in Asian countries.

More precisely, I wish to understand your behavior in choosing a travel destination, especially by using Instagram since you all quite familiar with it. Also, I want to know your perceptions about Instagram page.

This interview may take 30 minutes of your time. It consists of 2 parts. Each part comprises fewer than 6 questions. Your name and other personal information will not be recorded from the interview/survey, only your age, sex and nationality.

B. Background questions:

1. What is your name and how old are you?
2. Where are you from?
3. Do you browse Instagram photos and what kind of topic you are most interested in?
4. Do you usually check photos when you want to get an inspiration?
5. Do you post photos on Instagram and what kind of photos do you post?

C. Main questions

6. How did you end up in Asia? Did you get the inspiration from social media, especially Instagram?
7. Why did you choose to travel to Asia? What are the main reasons and motivation?

8. Did you expect to see the same thing that you saw on Instagram?
9. Do you share your photos when you travel?
10. Are Instagram posts are one of the main reasons that brought you to Asia?
11. Do you think Instagram is a good source of inspiration?

Thank you for the interview, your answers is valuable information for this research.