

TRAVELERS EXPERIENCES IN RAIL TOURISM AMONG SPECIAL INTEREST TOURIST IN SABAH MALAYSIA: THEORETICAL REVIEW

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Abstract:

Rail sometimes serves mainly as a transportation corridor connecting rural areas, or urban settings and green strips. However, the rise in the tourism industry in a developed country has increased the popularity of trails used in recreation. Apart from that, rail travel can be experienced as an enhancement of travel especially the onboard journey. Even though the rail tourism industry is well developed around the world, the studies related to rail travel in Malaysia are less plentiful. Therefore, this paper aims to review the idea of traveller's experiences in rail tourism and identify the factors that contribute to rail tourism in Sabah Malaysia, especially among Special Interest Tourists (SITs). SITs can be defined as a specialized style of touristy that focuses on one topic and personally conducted tour by folks that wish to develop their interests. A content analysis on rail tourism, traveller's experience, and the dimension of rail services was conducted for this paper. This is also involved an interview with the stakeholder to clarify and explain the features of rail tourism based on the content analysis and literature review. As for that, it's pointed out that the features and characteristics of the rail tourism setting as the variables of development criteria can make the touring route from the railway station is a pleasurable experience for tourists. It will give an impact on the experience and generate the intention of travellers to revisit and experience the services again. The final theoretical framework has been developed to show the concept of rail tourism among Special Interest Tourists (SITs) in Sabah Malaysia.

Keywords:

Rail Tourism, Rail Tourism Experiences, Special Interest Tourist, Trail Tourism Dimension

Introduction

Trains have been viewed as heartfelt journeys by remarkable travel essayist, Paul Theroux, that familiar with the assertion '... each familiar place flashes by the window, and disappears, and becomes part of the past.' '... I was shown each second passing as the train belted along, ticking off the buildings with a speed that made me melancholy that clearly explains the sensation of travelling by trains (Theroux, P., 1979:1). As indicated by Kozłowski et al (2019), parts that at present make railroad transport a profitable mean of transport for the tourism industry include: speed, solace, likelihood to go at various occasions and season, paying little mind to environment, and a more raised degree of safety when diverged from various techniques for transport.

With respect to that, the ascent in the travel industry in created country has expanded the popularity of trails used in recreation. On 1998, Moore and Ross have proposed that there are at least five wide covering kinds of trails exist with regards to parks and entertainment. These include: (1) conventional backcountry trails, (2) recreational scenic routes (3) various use trails (4) Water trails and (5) rail-trails. Trails from the fifth class are the focal point of this paper. In the next study, Moore and Shafer (2001) expressed that trails are the settings for activities and experience instead of a basic simple route from one place to another.

Rail trails have been characterized by as 'multi-use trails utilized for transportation and recreation, either sited on previous railroad lines or that run persistently alongside a functioning rail route for a large portion of its length' (Reis and Jellum, 2012). They fill a few needs. Many are utilized by local people for wellbeing and wellness activities, or as transport lanes (Abildso, et. al, 2012; Bichis-Lupas and Moisey, 2001; Merom, et.al 2003; Mundet and Coenders, 2010). Others, especially longer path in rustic or local areas, have become a significant recreational asset for local people, yet in addition for cycle vacationers who venture out impressive distances to ride on them (Beeton, 2009; Reis and Jellum, 2012; Willard and Beeton, 2012). Since only one out of every odd vacationer liked to travel utilizing train, rail travel industry can be considered as a possibility for Special Interest Tourists (SITs).

Special Interest Tourism (SIT) that has grown particularly during the 1980s is another idea, despite the fact that it's anything but another marvel. From the principal ages to the current day, individuals have gone for private purposes like interest, curiosity, and adventure. As a result of it, Special Interest Tourism is considered as one of oldest tourism types. Now and then inseparable from the unique interest the travel industry the two ideas of dynamic the travel industry and option are utilized. As per Küçükaslan (2007), SIT can be alluded as elective the travel industry. Taking a way that numerous researchers here have utilized the term of SIT as an equivalent word for elective the travel industry. Likewise, it is seen that utilizing the idea of dynamic the travel industry interchangeably with SIT. Surely, playing a functioning job by individuals in the social and actual climate that they visit is in the focal point SIT. One of the primary component for rail the travel industry was the rustic view and route trail. Concerning that, Sabah rail line was chosen for this study.

Rail route lines in Sabah Malaysia have existed for over a century prior since the pioneer times. Indicating an unquestionable facilitated exertion between the private area and the state government, The North Borneo Rail line is a joint undertaking project between Sutera Harbor Resort and the Sabah State Railroad Office (Jabatan Keretapi Negeri Sabah). The essential

objectives of the venture are to upgrade existing framework just as help in endeavours to advance Sabah as an objective for home grown and global the travel industry. Hence, this investigation will address the exploration hole by understanding the impression of Special Interest Tourists (SITs) in railway tourism to fulfil their expectation experiences in rail tourism tourist in Sabah Malaysia.

The North Borneo Railroad offers travellers a chance to encounter the past period of English North Borneo while moving travellers along the lifeline of Sabah. Renovated to reproduce the nostalgic sentiment of individuals going by steam train in the times of the Sanctioned Organization and the English Provincial Office, both the outside and inside give a climate that would have been average of venturing onto a train during the 1900s. The exterior uses the customary dark green and cream represent the first North Borneo Rail route, with cut metal logos exhibiting the first plan of a tiger holding a rail wheel, remaining on the imperial crown. The inside features the common woods of Sabah and except if the train is completely reserved, travellers are offered free seating on one of the five pilgrim style traveller train carriages.

Even tough rail tourism industry was emerged time by time, the study of rail trails in Malaysia are less copious. Mohamad. et al (2014) study on the rail travel as slow tourism approach in sustaining rural development. The study focusing on promoting the rail travel as slow tourism. While Bachok et al (2013) study on the perception of commuter's user on rail based public transport. The study was to investigate commuters' satisfaction levels of various trip making aspect on commuter services. As for rail trails in Malaysia, there are several trails that have been develop but few have been the subject of academic research and it is difficult to determine which of these have attributes that make rail trail as tourism attractions.)

Travelers Experiences in Rail Tourism

This study will provide an exhaustive literature review on the underpinning theory and the concept and context of values of rail trail, SITs, and tourist experience expectations. Since this study aim to review the idea of traveller's experiences in rail tourism and identify the factors that contribute to the rail tourism in Sabah Malaysia, especially among Special Interest Tourists (SITs), this study will come out with a traveller's experience in rail tourism theoretical framework.

Rail Tourism as Sustainable Tourism

As railway tourism could also be part of the slow mobility in slow tourism (Timms & Conway, 2009), the increasing use of speed rail for tourism and leisure "is a new issue of interest whose logics and the associated regional processes that generates are still understudied" (Delaplace et al, 2014). While the impact of tourism on speed rail demand is usually related to the difficulties of estimating speed rail induced demand in the generation modelling stage (Guirao & Campa, 2015) and can affect the planning process of a new speed rail network, the assessment of the inverse impacts (rail trails on tourism) is much more complex.

Not many of past study unequivocally notice the tourism or surely talk about the potential of the rail trails as tourism attractions to be considered as tourism cycle based from the traveler experience. Those that do incorporate Beeton (2009), Mundet and Coenders (2010), Reis and Jellum (2012), Willard and Beeton (2012), Ryan, et. al (2014) and Reis, Lovelock and Jellum (2014). Anyway, just Reis and Jellum (2012) and Reis, Lovelock and Jellum (2014) give a type of theoretical system for rail trails as the travel industry items. By and by, while scholarly study

is restricted, there is impressive proof to propose that rail trails are turning out to be significant tourism attractions for objections and that associations responsible for the travel industry planning and improvement are progressively quick to create them in their areas. Rail trails that draw in a critical number of non-local people have been portrayed by Tomes and Knoch (2009) as the trail of destination. These paths share attributes that make them distinctive to more modest local area rail trails. The clearest is that they have credits that pull in a considerable number of non-neighbourhood clients who are for the time being or day guests.

These attributes appear to be related to factors such as length, location, landscape, and their unique rail heritage (Reis & Jellum, 2012). Many are longer than forty kilometres and pass-through territorial scenes and unassuming communities which show ordinary, provincial and legacy attributes that furnish guests with promising circumstances for actual test, social interaction, food, and wine experiences and cultural or heritage appreciation. Interactions with local people are also important elements of the tourism experience for tourist (Blackwell, 2002) especially towards Special Interest Tourists (SITs) that choose rail travel as their main interest.

SITs in Rail Tourism

Railway tourism, as a sort of SIT, addresses a chance to be essential for a specialty market area (Blancheton and Marchi, 2013). It is a slow and sustainable form of travel which consumes less energy and has a lower environmental impact compared with other forms of transport (Givoni & Banister, 2008). Railway tourism is ordinarily alluded to as a sort of the travel industry whereby the train gives admittance to the destination (Blancheton and Marchi, 2013) but on the other hand is simply the destination (Dickinson and Lumsdon, 2010; Prideaux, 1999). There is no unmistakable splitting line between the role of the rail line as a mover of individuals over spatial distances and as an improvement of a travel experience for the individuals who see it all things considered.

Travel Motives	Criteria
Personal Benefit	Sense of achievement
	Skill improvement
	Interest / Passion / Curiosity
	Self-relaxation / adventure
	Willingness to adapt cultural
	Spiritual experiences
	Escape for routine
Rail Tourism Attractiveness	Authentic scenery
	Destination attractiveness
	Photography
	Geographical features
	Route of the railway
	In-train hospitality/services
	Sustainability of nature environment
	The slower pace of train
History & Reminiscence	Personal attachment
	Nostalgia
	Knowledge seeking
	Experience new destination & attraction
Cultural Exploration	Holiday intertwined with local community
	Try new cuisine
	Interest in local and authentic product

Figure 1: Criteria That Motivate SITs of Rail Tourism

Source: (Adapted from Hermann et. al., 2016; Akinci & Kasalak, 2017; Muzeza, Hermann & Khunou, 2018)

Without a doubt, railway tourism has been enhanced by an expanding scope of encounters, from the delights of revelation and agreeable travel to wistfulness and a "sample of history" (Blancheton and Marchi, 2013). The latter has even given birth to several railway journeys expressly marketed as tourism products (Prideaux, 1999). Figure 1 above showed the criteria that motivate SITs of rail tourism (Adapted from Hermann et. al., 2016; Akinici & Kasalak, 2017; Muzeza, Hermann & Khunou, 2018).

Travelers Experiences in Rail Tourism

Vacationers' encounters can be separated into dynamic and aloof encounters dependent on sightseers' level of association. Joseph and Gilmore (1998) proposed that the two encounters are conceivable. Dynamic encounters incorporate instructive or idealist experience, as individuals effectively partake and are associated with voyaging circumstances and can even make different experience all the while. Uninvolved experiences incorporate stylish and diversion experience. In spite of the fact that traveller contemplates have been for quite some time disregarded by sociologists, there are later studies in this field (Cohen, 2008).

Previously, vacationer contemplates zeroed in on Western travellers; notwithstanding, with the ascent of globalization, sorts of sightseers have gotten more different, with more non-Western travellers, and surprisingly post-travellers or postmodern vacationers. For postmodern sightseers, travel isn't just a nearby outing, yet might be a virtual visit on PCs or a drive through the windows of transports. They will in general relate to nearby societies and may not visit elegant social regions as they accept that they can encounter the joy of movement by encountering neighbourhood life.

With the changing creations of travellers, the substance of the travel industry encounters change. Larsen and Mossberg (2007) demonstrate that encounters are abstract and customized measures and are identified with social societies and changed frameworks. In this manner, investigations of traveller encounters ought to be founded on adaptable and different multi-discipline viewpoints, like psychology, social science, human studies, or showcasing, and could even be interdisciplinary.

Larsen (2007) demonstrated the intelligent idea of vacationer encounters, and recommended that communications among sightseers and travel frameworks incorporate three phases:

- i. before the excursion;
- ii. processes during the excursion; and
- iii. after the excursion.

In the arranging stage before the excursion, sightseers expect potential occasions through assumptions, while during the interaction's travellers will have various impression of occasions, and after the outing they will have recollections. These three components (assumptions, insights, and recollections) interface the whole cycles of the excursion, which at that point makes the traveller experience, and may even impact other sightseers' assumptions for the equivalent or various kinds of outings. Figure 2 shows that experiences from one traveller to another are different because each traveller have their own preferences on the rail tourism setting toward destination. Along these lines, partner comprehension of voyager

encounters is noteworthy for country goal work in engaging quality and encounters (Kim, 2018) and that they are significant resources for arrangement examination and social control suggestions as a result of the size of individual experience resulting in satisfying the traveller facilitate a firm to extend its fight. This figure tabulates the dimension of experience from a few authors that has been classified into five broad dimensions which are sensory, affective, or emotional, intellectual or knowledge, behavioural or personality, and social (Lin & Kuo, 2018). At the end, this variable will affect the intention of tourist to revisit and experience the same thing or not.

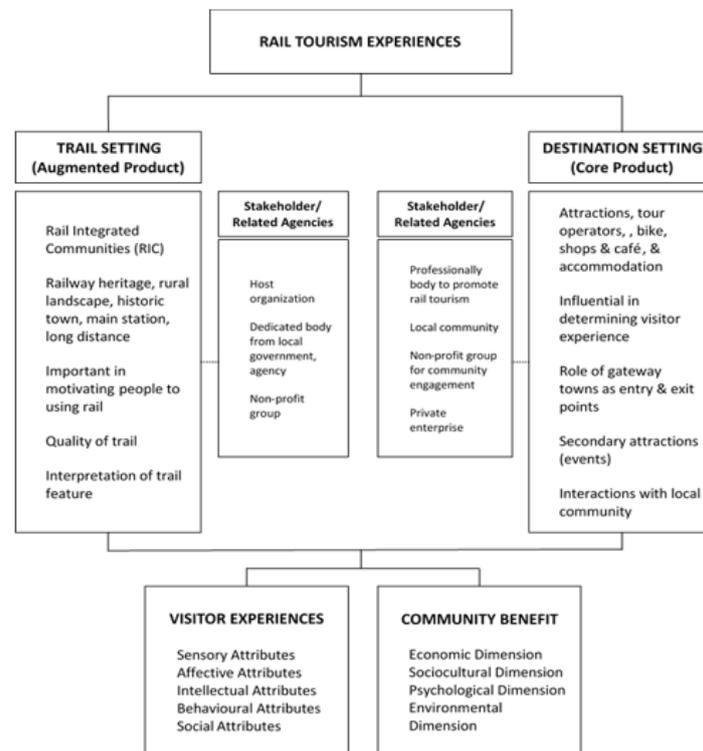


Figure 2: Rail Tourism Experience Setting

Source: (Adapted from Cohen, 2008; Kim, 2018; Lin & Kuo, 2018)

Methodology

The data for this research was collected from literature review, interviews with stakeholder and content analysis from media social. A fully quantitative design is not appropriate for this study because there was a need to conduct interviews to clarify and explain survey findings. Interviews helped explore the phenomena of this study.

In the first phase, this study dealt with quantitative procedures which consisted of collecting data, analyzing data and determining results for further explanation. The method used was Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). AHP gives a method of focusing on the different parts within the hierarchy order through near judgment of their relative significance (Cheng and Li, 2001). The AHP has been applied during a kind of regions since its improvement by Thomas Saaty within the 1970s. It's a call-production strategy that includes surveying a larger than usual assortment of choice variables, mensuration the significance of each issue impacting the decision, handling factors that change in terms of their judgment and perspicacity, and interesting giant teams of decision participants so as to optimize a choice or to gauge however subgroups of participants vary in their choice behaviour (Crouch & Ritchie, 2005).

Since the AHP relies on a magnitude relation scale, is fault tolerant, and includes a consistency check, it's the foremost promising approach compared to different prioritization strategies, albeit the foremost long one. It's a good management tool that takes under consideration 3 aspects of the decision-creating process: multi-criteria, cluster decision making, and conflict resolution (Bahurmox, 2006), and is so, thought of to be the foremost acceptable technique to attain the needs of this study.

The AHP approach involves 3 basic steps: (1) the development of the hierarchy; (2) defining and executing data collection to get pairwise comparative data on parts of the ranked structure; and (3) construction of an overall priority rating (Lee & Chen, 2016). The subsequent summarizes the steps taken during this study. Camargo, Garza & Morales (2014) stated the first step of the AHP is to develop a hierarchical data structure, mouldering an advanced downside into many integrated dimensions, factors, and attributes. Given the explorative nature of this study, the data structure was supported and with some modifications and contained 25 rail-specific destination-level attributes. The previous known the first-order barriers to rider rail use, whereas the latter highlighted the key factors that ought to be thought-about once developing railway tourism.

In the second phase, the procedures of interview approach were used in this research including data collection. This method was employed to find more details about what was on the ground regarding the variables of the research which is the element available to be audit for railway tourism. The interview was conducted to finalize the component.

Travelers Experiences in Rail Tourism Among SITs in Sabah Malaysia

Based on the interview with the stakeholder and content analysis on rail tourism, traveller's experience, and the dimension of rail services, it's pointed out that the features and characteristics of the rail tourism setting as the variables of development criteria can make the touring route from the railway station is a pleasurable experience for tourists. It will give an impact on the experience and generate the intention of travellers to revisit and experience the services again. As the goal of the study is to investigate the dimension of rail trail that contribute to the travellers' experiences in rail tourism in Malaysia, figure 3 below was constructed structural model to assess the relationship amongst those variables in the tourism industry. The measurement of each variable have been validated, and the structural of fit model will be analyzed and identified, for further research.

The determinant of rail tourism attribute will adapt a study conducted by Cheng & Kuan, (2016) using AHP based on Blainey et al. (2012) and Camargo et al. (2014) with some modifications. The phasic nature is represented using Clawson and Knetsch (1966) five phase model. The quick results of experience are contended to be identified with the general assessment of the excursion, which can be decided through satisfaction / dissatisfaction (Ryan, 2002a). These elements shape the experience, as tourists arrive at a destination with individual memories, perceptions of the place and people, knowledge about the world, and understandings of self (Ryan, 2003; Selstad, 2007).

Based on the figure 3, Tourism attractions are considered to be the primary elements that draw people to travel by rail and involve (1) the railway interest of actually experiencing riding on vintage steam engines; (2) the rural context of experiencing a journey through attractive

scenery, being able to enjoy the region’s features from a different viewpoint to that more normally experienced when in a private car; and (3) links with other attractions, or a means of traveling from one tourism attraction to another (Hall, as cited in Bhati et al., 2014). Accessibility refers to the extent of difficulties and convenience of access to and egress from rail generally and railway stations. It involves the comprehensiveness of railway networks and rail-based transit systems.

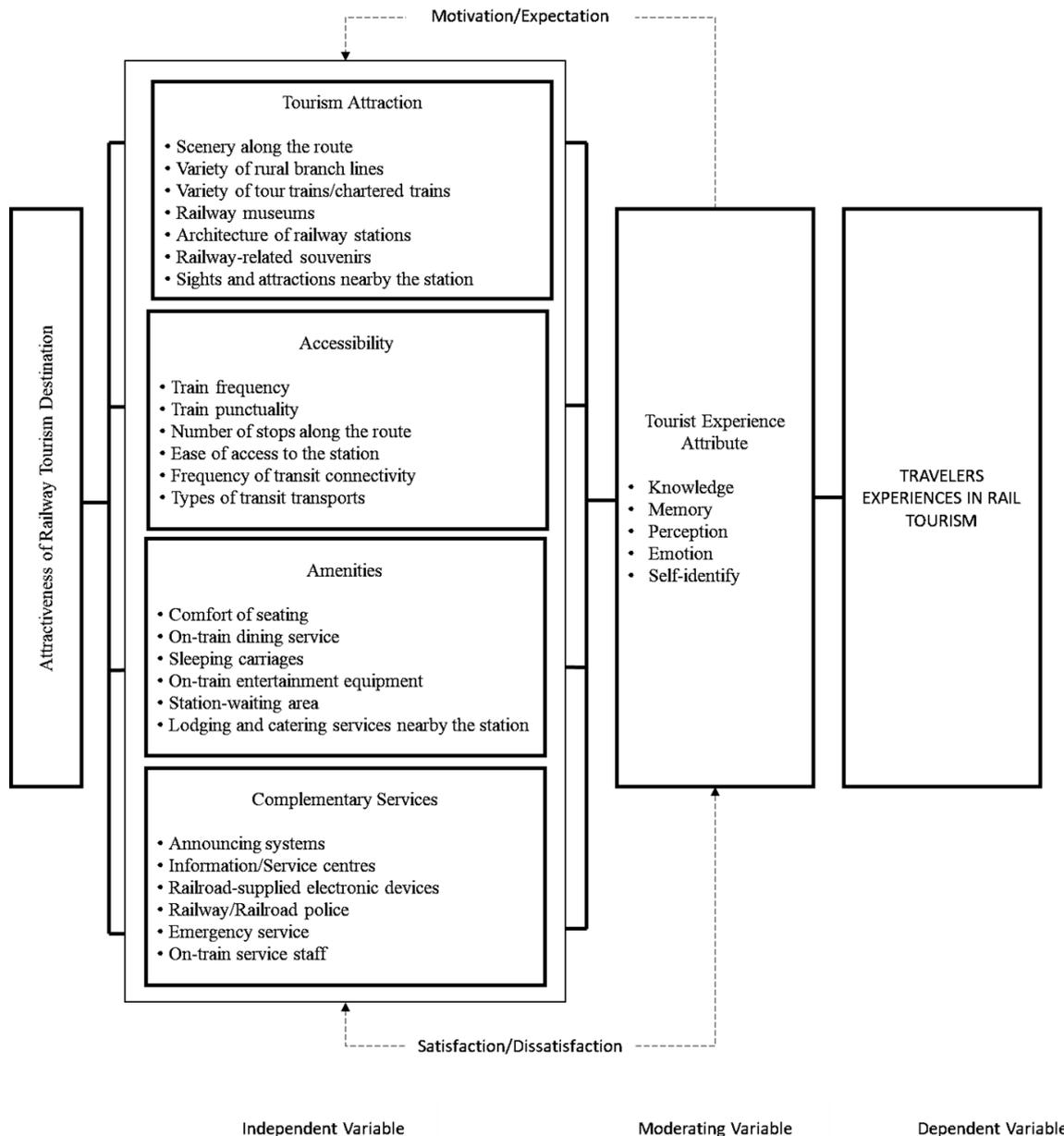


Figure 3: Travelers Experience in Rail Tourism Theoretical Framework

Source: (Adapted from Ryan, 2003; Selstad, 2007; and Cheng & Kuan, 2016)

Amenities are composed of a variety of commercial services and facilities purposely built to satisfy the basic needs of passengers, both on the train and at the station. They are provision of lodging facilities and catering facilities. Complementary services are those functions

performed by all relevant stakeholders to ensure the smooth operation of a railway journey and are involved with both information services and safety and security services.

In this framework, it shows that experiences from one traveller to another are different because each traveller have their own preferences on the rail tourism setting toward destination. This tourism expertise is personal instead of customary because of the visitors' completely different expectations (Chang, 2006), previous repository experiences (McCarthy & Ciolfi, 2008), and level of sensory activity skills, style (Tucker, 1991) and cultures. These factors vary reckoning on customers and this makes the experiences personalized for everyone. Thus, associate understanding of traveler experiences is significant for rural destination specializing in attractiveness and experiences (Bhati et. Al, 2014) as a result of the size of individual experience resulting in satisfying the traveller facilitate a firm to extend its fight.

Conclusion

As for conclusion, it is acknowledged that the importance of determinants of rail tourism dimension could vary across tourist experience and over time. The foremost necessary determinants are also the smallest amount important within the future, and the other way around. It is, therefore, suggested that a longitudinal or periodical study ought to be undertaken to look at the changes within the relative importance of every transport specific rail setting in determinant rail tourism attractiveness. To fulfil the experience of the trail user, the two setting need to be considered. This is because, it can give the experience that been looking and at the same time give the benefit towards the community. Future analysis may examine however travellers' rail typically, and rail fans specially, measure every determinant in terms of importance and performance, and compare the demand- and supply-side similarities and variations. Finally, this study has identified that the SITs in rail travel expectation are the requirement of more information about the trail and the quality of services offer as it will affect their level of experiences.

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