

Gendered Images of Veil: The Case of Contemporary Art Practice in Pakistan
Proposed

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Abstract

Objective: The aim of this article is to trace how the gender of an artist influences the images that he/she creates in a particular cultural context, and how those images become gendered. Does the cultural constraint or social norms effect a creation depicting the same subjects, when made by man or woman of the same culture and time? **Methodology:** The work of two contemporary Pakistani male and female artists is used for the analysis, both of these artists have created the images depicting women behind the veil. The analysis is carried out with the help of feminist theory and it goes into the questions like gender, authorship, gaze, artist's social, political, economic and cultural background of the artists. **Analysis:** The images of veil are a very popular subject in contemporary Pakistani art, however, veil is a very controversial subject in context with its representation in Islam as well as in the contemporary political scenario of the world. The artists using this sort of cultural and political imagery are promoted by the Western institutions which is another reflection of the politics behind the artistic creation. Many contemporary Pakistani artists including men and women were fascinated to draw 'women behind the veil' to represent the oppressed women in Pakistani society in their art. This article traces the politics of gender through the represented images of veil made by Pakistani male and female artists. Therefore, the images by Aisha Khalid (female artist) and Rashid Rana (male artist) are chosen for the analysis, both created the iconic images of veiled women. Khalid uses geometric pattern and only reflects the draperies in her work, on the other hand, Rana uses pornographic imagery to build the bigger picture of the veil which is the point of departure for this paper. **Conclusion:** Images of veil reflect the gender of their maker and therefore they can also be seen as gendered.

Keywords: *Contemporary Art, Pakistani art, Islamic Art, Gender difference, Social norms, feminist theory, Gendered images, Women and veil, art and sexuality.*

1. Introduction

The difference in the pictorial representation of veil in the art of two Pakistani artists is the main subject of this paper, these images are generally seen in the context of Islam in contemporary socio-political scenario of the world. This paper addresses the issues that contextualize Pakistani male and female artists' approaches towards the same subjects. I have used Rana's digital photomontage series titled as Images of Veil and Aisha Khalid's series of

miniatures titled as the Veil and Gul-e-lala, both of these artists played with an irony in their visuals about the representation of women in Islamic and Western worlds, while both societies criticize each other for oppression of women in a different manner; Islamic women are considered restricted behind the veil while Western women are seen as overtly naked.

The aim of the study is to highlight the differences of both genders in terms of creativity and its execution in pictorial form, no research has been found which highlights the ‘images of veil’ in context with gender of their maker. This analysis aims to explore the art works created by Rashid Rana and Aisha Khalid, both are the most celebrated and influential contemporary Pakistani artists. Rana is a digital artist, whereas Aisha Khalid is a miniature painter. Both of these artists have used the visuals depicting the traditional Muslim veil in their work. These images played a significant role in contemporary Pakistani art. In this analysis, the work of both artists is compared in order to discuss gender (e.g., how artist’s own gender is reflected through the work and how represented images in the work can be seen as the source to answer the question of gender in general). The focus will remain upon how Pakistani male and female artists portray their work differently, however, working with the same subjects in the visual arts. This analysis covers the variety of aspects such as class, ethnicity or culture of an artist (Perry, 1999, p. 9).

2. Research Methodology

Although, we have examples of research conducted in the West focusing the different approaches of the artists based on their own gender. The lack of similar studies in Pakistani art makes my research very relevant and productive for the field of art history, theory and criticism. The images that I have chosen for this paper were only appreciated and analysed individually by the critics like Salima Hashmi, who wrote about the paintings of Aisha Khalid. On the other hand, Kavita Singh wrote about Rashid Rana’s provocative works which associate with the Muslim society. Many other writers have also seen these images as representative of oppression of women in Pakistani Islamic society. Since I have seen these works, I observed the difference of approach and execution that reflected gender difference and sexuality. Therefore, I was inclined to theorize these art works related to both male and female Pakistani artists. For this analysis, I used a comparative study that involves a multi-layered investigation based on feminist theory.

Authorship is the most important aspect which is to be used as a tool to analyse and understand the work of art in relation to the gender of its creator. The representation of male and female figures in a work of art is the core parameter which is widely used to gather information about the gender of their creator (Perry, 1999, p. 14). The preliminary questions such as the gender of an artist and the depiction of human figures in his/her work builds the context for my analysis, as the “awareness of gender necessarily directs one’s attention not only to the act of perception but also the perceiver and her or his position within a social and political context” (Hein & Korsmeyer, 1993, p. viii). In other words, this provides a way to explore the gendered gaze. Therefore, the gender of an artist and the represented figures in the work can be readⁱ through the analysis of the artist’s social, political and cultural backgrounds. I will read the images of veil with the help of the checklist provided by Gill Perry in his book “Gender and Art History”.

3. Findings and Discussion

Rana’s three large portraits of women covered under the traditional Afghani veil which is locally known as shuttlecock Burqa. The cloak is the main object in Rana’s work and variety of design and the colour makes it interesting. The women behind the veil are shown directly in contact with the viewers, a strong gaze can be felt from behind the netted design of the veil which covered the woman’s eyes. The closer look at the images of veil makes the paradox very clear, these images are produced in the form of a collage that accumulated tiny pornographic pictures of women. The small images are fixed as a pixel in the larger picture of the veiled woman. These visuals are translatedⁱⁱ by Kavita Singh appreciating the artist’s choice of merging two extreme opposite characters of women in the Islamic and Western worlds, she also refers it as an irony reflected through these images (Singh, 2010, p. 27). She considers the contradiction of showing one woman covered and the other one completely naked in Rana’s work as a registration against the two extremes, however, Aisha Khalid also used the same paradoxical approach with an entirely different way in *Veil* and *Gul-e-lala* which was painted during 2000-2001, four years before Rana’s ‘*Images of Veil*’. Before her direct interaction with the West, Khalid always dreamed to have a life like a Western woman, she thought that the Western society provides a perfect setting for women. The Western women seemed having all freedom and all liberties which a woman in Pakistan only dreams for. In 2001, Khalid visited Rijksakademie in Amsterdam, there she was shocked to see naked women behind the glass

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windows in the famous red light streets, and they were exposing their bodies to attract the clients. Seeing all this happening in the Western society her imaginations related to the freedom of Western women vanished. She saw it as a new form of oppression (almonds, 2008). Before coming to Amsterdam, Khalid used the veil as a symbol of oppression for Pakistani women but her work took a new dimension right after her encounter with the naked women in the redlight area of the city. She depicted the Western women suffering the same way as Pakistani women but in entirely different circumstances. She played with this irony by using the dense interiors crowded by textile patterns and the draperies. In her paintings, the women covered under the traditional Burqa juxtaposed with the curtains, the symbolic fabric is used to represent the women from East and also from the West; her use of textile motives and patterns with pleats depicted the commonality of the Eastern and Western women. Khalid used the Islamic geometric patterns to create an effect of camouflage. In her later works, she used tulip flowers to depict the faces of veiled women and in some paintings she only used the textiles motives with curtain folds and intricate patterns instead of using the female figure. She used the camouflage technique in her paintings to render the female body that merges with the patterns, which is deeply rooted in her culture. Through the use of simple geometrical and floral forms, she registered her protest against the objectification of female body.

We can see Aisha Khalid using the same strategy as used by the Western feminist artists, Judy Chicago and Gergia O'Keefe used geometric and flower like forms in their works which was seen as a reaction against the objectification of the female body. They also used geometrical forms in order to reject the idea of perfect drawing refers to the genius (man) in the Western art history. Female artists rejected the idea of perfection in order to reject the male dominancy in the field of art. On the other hand, Rana used realistic imagery following the idea of perfect drawing. Rana was trained as a painter at NCA (National College of Arts Lahore), he says his photomontages are not digital works but they are his paintings, not only that, but he also refuses to be labelled as a new media artist (Hashmi, Rana, Mundrawala, & Qureshi, 2009). In Pakistan, art institutions are the main producer of art and art related activities such as exhibitions and also the production of art criticism. According to Hashmi:

“The female nude, a constant and favoured subject of male Pakistani painters, as of painters everywhere else fulfilled the accepted function of the female as an object. The sexual

positioning of the female in these works betrays the artist intention” (Hashmi, *We Sinful Women: The Story of Pakistani Women Artists*, 2002).

Therefore, we can include Rana in the same superior class of male artists, his choice of pornographic pictures of female performing oral sex reflect the male fantasy. These images are set as appealing and inviting for the male viewer and reflect artists own gender and sexual desires.

The work of another Pakistani male artist Waseem Ahmed will strengthen my argument, he represented similar kind of mockery in his Burqa series as Rana did by depicting the veil in his work. Waseem Ahmed imitated female nudes from the paintings of Botticelli, Velazquez and Ingres and covered those nudes with a see-through layer of veil in order to show them overtly ‘naked’. Similar to Singh’s interpretation of Rana’s images of veil, Hashmi also viewed Waseem’s act as the way of criticism on the representation of female nude in the Western art (Hashmi, *Pakistani Art*, 2007, p. 97). I have closely studied other works of Waseem Ahmed and Rana in order to establish a counter argument. Singh and Hashmi wrote about particular works connected to the irony. The other works of Waseem also reflect similar erotic female bodies, partially or completely naked. Rana also uses the Western paintings of nudes to do the same as Waseem did in his work. We can say that the use of nude in his works is a way to legitimized objectification of the female body. It can also be interpreted that the representation of female nude in Rana’s Images of Veil Rana’s work depicts objectification of female body in the visual representation (Perry, 1999, p. 207).

It will be interesting to look at the impact of these images on the viewer. The smaller images chosen for Rana’s photomontages are taken from pornographic sites. The women are staring directly at the viewer, this gaze is an erotic invitation that “could be seen ‘styled’ according to male fantasy” (Perry, 1999, p. 19). The use of pornographic images in Rana’s work is a masculine notion, the female bodies are represented in his work as a sexual instrument and the object of desire. Therefore, “the male spectator of the work is invited to project his own sexual fantasy on to the image, to see-and to control” (Perry, 1999, p. 27). Rana elaborates his images of veil as:

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“Westerners think all Muslim women are veiled, Muslims associate Western women with pornography. I wanted to challenge these prejudices from both sides” (Lankarani, 2010).

The above statement contains a superficial or the journalistic view towards his subject and it also lacks artist’s personal engagement. On the other hand, Aisha Khalid reflects her personal encounter with the same subject and expresses her own feelings as being a woman, not only this, but most importantly she articulates through the images of veil about freedom and what it actually means to a woman, regardless the fact where she lives. Rana says that the use of nude is acceptable in the Pakistani art circles and “the art audience in Pakistan does not object to nudity per se” (Lankarani, 2010). His statement contradicts with the artistic opposition and the critique made by many of his female artist colleagues such as Sumayya Durrani. She resisted against nudity in her works titled as Faceless Nude Series depicting both irony and humour to the exploration of these themes in the works of Pakistani male artists (Hashmi, *We Sinful Women: The Story of Pakistani Women Artists*, 2002).

The technique and material used to make artwork also suggests that the actual process of the work could be overtly or covertly gendered (Perry, 1999, p. 19), Hashmi describes in her article *We Sinful Women* that the women artists in Pakistan usually get married after the graduation from the colleges and then they juggle with career and art production in a hostile political environment. They cannot afford the large studios and cannot give full time to their art so they chose to work at a small scale. Many Pakistani women artists chose to work with miniature painting, which requires not a big studio, however, a small space with two pillows on the floor becomes a studio with water base material. Therefore, Khalid as a woman uses the water base medium, whereas Rana’s photomontages are created in his huge studio where a team of photographers and software experts are employed to help the artist. If we look at the economic conditions of the artists in Pakistan, only few can afford studios. Art involves full time effort, coordination and marketing which is very hard to handle for a female artist living in Pakistan. The use of downloaded images from the pornographic websites is purely a male act, if these works of Rana are seen in the context of Pakistani society, he had never shown these images in Pakistan and calls it “self-censorship” (Lankarani, 2010). His statement about self-censorship proves that these images would not be accepted in Pakistan as there are strict laws of censorship. Browsing through pornography on internet is considered very masculine

acts in Pakistani society, whereas Rana's work endorses the masculine act in the use of content to produce the larger images of veil.

4. Conclusion

The above comparison of the artwork was based on the images of veil used by both male and female artists. The analysis was performed in the light of the feminist theory and makes it very clear that the images produced by both artists reflect the gender; in terms of how the works were represented and how the artists themselves were represented through the analysis of their own work. Therefore, the images of veil become gendered, not only they reflect the gender of their creator but they also become the representation of gender itself.

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¹I borrow the term 'read' from Arnold Dana, who used it as an interplay between the verbal and visual. (Arnold, Dana. *Art History (A very Short Introduction)*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2004. p.90).

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ⁱⁱI have used the word translated in the same way as used by Dana Arnold while interpreting paintings in Art History (A very Short Introduction), Oxford University Press, New York, 2004. p.90 (Arnold, 2004)

Travel 2.0: A Study of Technology Usage for Travelling among Female
Students of USM, Penang

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Abstract

Young, tech savvy and gutsy are some of the criteria that make students and youths the right fit for independent travel. This group predominantly uses Travel 2.0 applications, for travel planning and process which enables them to have social connection with other travelers through sharing of experiences and information virtually. Despite being deemed as money poor but time rich, UNWTO and WYSE reported that the global youth and student travel industry represent almost 190 million international trips a year and by 2020 it will reach 300 million international youth trips per year. The data also underlines the increasingly important role of female travelers in student travel segment. Being a part of the millennial generation, the prevalence and proficiency of technology enables them to plan as well as fulfil seamless travel experiences. Research has shown that travelers use mobile communications services to maintain a ‘symbolic proximity’ with family and friends and establishing a sense of ‘presence while absent’. This article aims to explore the extent to which female students of Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang is motivated to use technology for traveling. How this mobile communications shaped their perceptions on mobility and travel? This study seeks to understand in what way this new technologies impacted their traveling experiences. By using in depth interview, data were collected from ten female students aged between 20-30 years old. The interviews that combined aspects of their backgrounds and motivations revealed female students are both motivated and influenced to use technology for traveling local or overseas. The study reinforces the increasing demand for independent travel from female students and technology has fundamentally reshaped the way travel is planned. It also reveals that there is a need for tourism stakeholders to make significant shift from contemporary marketing style tourism towards effective innovative initiatives that will be able to enhance the potential of the youth and student niche market.

Keywords: *Travel 2.0, female university students, technology, motivation*

1. Introduction

“Travel is fun. The more I see, the more I learn is out there. Can I show you the picture on my Instagram?”

— Aina, 22, USM Student on travelling

Aina is one of many millions present-day youths and a student who contributes to youth tourism. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and World Youth Student and Educational

(WYSE) Travel Confederation reported that the global youth and student travel industry represent almost 190 million international trips a year and by 2020 it will reach 300 million international youth trips per year. According to Richard et al. (2003) youth and student travel has been an important cornerstone of the international travel market for over 50 years and is increasingly being recognised as an important segment of the global travel market. Travel 2.0 refers to the new generation of travel planning and process using new technologies that enables social connection among travelers through sharing of experiences and information virtually (Conrady, 2007; Chung & Buhalis, 2008; Del Chiappa, 2011; Ráthonyi, 2013; Lewis & Ewans 2016; Tribe & Liburd, 2016). This topic has stimulated a broad range of studies in recent years where most of them have revealed the use of technology by students for various purposes including traveling. Yet, limited and fragmented studies have been done from the context of gender particularly. Gender-based differences are vital to the accurate interpretation of the motivations for women to travel (Uysal et al., 1996).

This paper aims to investigate the motivation factors capturing the use of Travel 2.0 applications by Universiti Sains Malaysia female students for traveling. According to Aziz (2009) travel motivation is one of the least researched areas of tourism empirically and conceptually in Malaysia. By drawing upon the prominent anthropological perspective, the concept of push and pull factors has been generally accepted to evaluate motivation (MacCannell, 1976; Dann 1977; Crompton, 1979). As stated by Uysal (1996) women place different importance on some push and pull factors than men. Findings of this study will contribute to what will hope to be an ever-increasing body of knowledge in the area of gender and tourism. It is important for tourism stakeholders to make significant shift from contemporary marketing style tourism towards effective innovative initiatives that will be able to enhance the potential of the youth and student niche market.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Gender and Travel

At present, tourism figures into anthropological research on gender and technology developments (Leite et al., 2015). For female travelers, being confined to their domestic roles as primary caregiver in a social construct, travel was gender restricted. Single women traveling were considered immodest and lacking propriety (Khan, 2011). Limited focus was given to how gender relations affects the way men and women shape their touristic experiences as

travelers are considered homogenous in travel needs, preferences and motivation. Travel experiences are shaped by gender identity and roles. Men and women are constructed to behave and interact in ways that perpetuate their gendered identities (Paxton and Hughes, 2016). Female travel is a form of heterotopia that offers an opportunity to transgress the gendered ideologies by reviewing the script of what it means to be a woman (Berdychevsky, 2015). Gender differences in travel experiences can be understood by comprehending the usage of technology for travel. According to McNamara and Prideaux (2010) challenging and extending the self beyond personal comfort zones, and experiencing independence and self-empowerment are some of women's motivations to travel. Proliferation of technology in traveling created openings for an array of travel experiences that enables female travelers to resist traditional gender roles, expectations, and relations. Female travel patterns, decisions and processes have been converging to those of men. With primary roles, family obligations, studies and their concerns for safety, time and finance, female travelers often use technology to address the concerns such as safety, accommodation and location (Deem, 1996; Khan, 2011; Lin et al., 2014).

2.2 Travel 2.0

The new age travel and leisure emerges with new alternative tourism activity and travel choices reinforced by the diffusion of Web 2.0 (Tanrisever et al., 2016). Digital environment has overtaken the traditional way of travel planning with more flexible and customer-centric services. The revolution of travel and technology has become one of the most reliable mean by which travelers consult when making travel decisions (Fotis et al., 2012; Leung et al., 2011; Ráthonyi, 2013; Noguti, 2016). A number of recent studies within the tourism context shows that travelers depend on internet for travel planning (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010) while Laws (2010) stressed the urgent need to understand the implications of these technologies among young people. It is reported that 61% of travelers consult online engines before planning a trip (Conradry, 2007; O'Connor, 2008). Sarkar's (2016) recent study revealed that internet is the most important and reliable tool as source of information. As majority of the studies focused on usage, acceptance and accessibility behaviour globally, research on Travel 2.0 in Malaysia is limited because it is still a new phenomenon.

2.3 The New Travel Segment: Female Student

According to Richards (2006) and Mohamed (2010), youth travel is a dynamic, booming phenomenon and fastest growing travel market segment, with significant potential for long-term growth and economic impact to travel industry. Malaysia Domestic Tourism Survey 2015 reported a total of 176.9 million domestic travelers in 2015 with 88.9 million female, 38% in the age group of 25 to 39 years and 22% were 24 years and below (Department of Statistics, 2016). University students prefer to travel independently from their family (Carr, 2003). Being a part of the millennial generation, the prevalence and proficiency of technology enables them to plan as well as fulfil seamless travel experiences. The findings of Chiu et al. (2015) shows student use scholarship and study loans to fund their travelling activities and they have high interest in travelling (Xu et al., 2009). Malaysian students are exposed to and comfortable with Web 2.0 applications (Zakaria et al., 2010).

Thanuskodi (2013) detailed that both genders have equal access to Internet; however, the differences are noticed in terms of usage pattern where female students occupy the first position with respect to their overall use of search engines. Similar to that, Petrovic et al. (2016) studied usage of internet among students from three university centres in Serbia, Macedonia and Bulgaria based on gender differences and found that there are very subtle gender differences for services of traveling and accommodation since internet and technology has reduced the gender gap. A study by Yong et al. (2016) in Malaysia shows that compared to men, female students were characterized to be more digital inherent and spent more time on digital native activities.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

In favour of the stance that female students are becoming a significant part of the travel and technology, there is a need to explore the motivation to use technology for traveling. Motivation explains the reason behind an action or decision. Study by Bartl et al. (2016) shows that travelers are making decisions regarding their choices of destination, services and products based on technology-mediated communication. Kelly et al. (2013) in her study identified access, saving time and money, independence, privacy, trust, enjoyment and ease as factors that motivates technology usage in travel industry. Chang and Chen (2014) discovered that push factors were dissatisfaction and regret while pull factors were attractive alternatives and costs when they evaluated the push and pull factors that affect the intention of social

networking system users. As recommended by Chiu (2015), the push and pull theory helps examine internal and external factors that attributes to the usage of technology for traveling by female students.

3. Research Methodology

Using in depth interview, this study aims to understand the motivation factor and experiences of female students using technology for travelling. The in-depth interviews using audio recorder with a minimum of one hour each took place at various venues around USM campus. It combined aspects of their background, interest in travel and technology and motivations factors they consider for using Travel 2.0 applications. The female students were asked some basic background questions followed by several questions such as ‘define travel’, “how often they travel” and ‘what are some of their travel stories’ Following that, to focus the students thoughts on technology usage, subsequent questions were asked such as ‘what do you understand by technology in travel’ ‘Do you use online travel applications when traveling? What kind of applications?’ ‘What were the factors they consider when using the technologies and why? They were asked ‘How” and ‘Why’ open-ended question to response freely about their views. Follow-up questions and confirmation were made to clarify and confirm the points mentioned by the respondents.

4. Findings and Discussion

The respondents in this study were ten female students aged between 20 to 30 years old from University Sains Malaysia, Penang. Five of them were postgraduates and the other five undergraduates. Among the respondents, three postgraduate students were married with kids while the rest were single ladies. In general, the respondent interviewed were tech savvy and travelled at least once using technology. Besides using travel websites, online travel applications, search engines and mobile phones they were also keen on using social media when traveling.

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Table 1: Details of the Respondents

No	Name (Pseudonym)	School	Year	Age	Marital Status	Number of travels (Jan - Oct 2016)	
						Domestic	International
UNDERGRADUATE							
1	Nadia Fariza	ISDEV	2	21	Single	2	-
2	Fatin	MassComm	2	21	Single	3	1
3	NMiza	Education	1	20	Single	3	1
4	Divya	Humanities	1	20	Single	2	-
5	Aina	SOLAT	3	22	Single	2	1
POSTGRADUATE							
6	Emily	Management	PhD	30	Married	2	1
7	Lilian	Arts	Master	25	Single	3	1
8	Amber	Management	Master	25	Single	-	1
9	Nur Syafiq	Industrial Technology	PhD	27	Married	4	1
10	Kartini	Business	Master	28	Married	1	1

When asked why they travel, all of the respondents view travel as an adventure, escapism and an interesting activity that enables them to explore new things in life. According to Miza, it is a way for her as a student to de-stress. She said “*traveling is fun and helps de-stressing*”. Lilian, Emily, Amber and Kartini Muniandy finds travel a form of gateway from their hectic lifestyle. This according to Crompton (1977) is socio-psychological motives that help explain the desire to go on travel as a form of relaxation.

Aina explains why she loves traveling while sharing her recent trip to South Korea “...*because it expands your horizon, you get to meet different culture and get learn from them*”. It substantiates the findings of Jamrozy and Uysal (1994) that travel is about experiencing a new life-style and different cultures. The values attached to travel from the perspective of female travelers is set alongside the findings of Cavagnaro and Staffieri (2015) that women is motivated to experience personal growth and profound contact with people and places using new innovations such as Travel 2.0.

The follow up questions discussed the push and pull factors for the respondents using technology which is their internal and external forces. Based on the data obtained, three main thematic categories were formed for each pull and push factors as they were discussed most by the respondents. The three categories for push include affordability, safety and time while the pull factors were accessibility, trustworthiness and influence.

4.1 Push Factors

4.1.1 Affordability

When asked why they prefer to use technology instead of the conventional process, the respondents highlighted that being a female and a student, they need to be prudent and travel applications offer them the best price and cheaper rate compared to the normal rates. Students prefer cheap, flexible and informal travel itineraries (Pearce, 1990) and most of the time they develop their own travel plan using online information or suggestion from friends. According to Carr (2005) despite low incomes, university students demonstrate a relatively high travel propensity (pg.804). In addition to getting financial support from parents or study loans, students also take up part-time jobs to finance their own travel expenses. The data analysis revealed that different kinds of websites and mobile applications are used to plan and manage the respondents' traveling such as TripAdvisor, MHMobile, Trivago and Expedia. Lilian compares ticket prices on Sky Scanner before purchasing her tickets. Syafiq, Fatin and Nadia said that travel applications such as Trivago help them to book good hotels for better rates. Technology and online travel applications offer them affordable measures of travel. This finding concurs with the study by Bai et al. (2005) and Farooqui (2010) that online applications saves cost as it enables travelers to find competitive prices, compare and get the best deal.

4.1.2 Time

Besides finance, another constraint was time. Although they plan their travel gateway during semester breaks, these female students were restrained by academic and family obligations as well as curricular activities. Travel 2.0 becomes the primary tool for students to look for information and eases their travel arrangements while saving time. For Emily, Syafiq and Kartini, being a wife, mom and student, juggling their time between family and studies, technology is a major necessity. Kartini said that *"being a mom, I used internet a lot to plan my recent trip with two of my girlfriends to India since I don't have time to go see a travel agents"*. Emily provided a different perspective *"with my busy schedule and kids, I don't like to go to the airport and wait in line. I'd rather buy my tickets online. It saves time and cheaper too"*. This is relevant to Taylor and Ampt (2003) claim that Travel 2.0 has transformed the intermediary channel between travelers and travel service providers.

4.1.3 Personal Safety

Female students regard personal safety as an important aspect when planning and traveling as discussed by Babin et al. (2001) in his study that safety is an important component of international students' travel activities. Besides ensuring that their travel destination is safe for them, the technology has enabled them safety by providing opportunity to make arrangements of travel from the comfort and safety of their hostel rooms. Lilian and Amber elaborated that they can make their travel arrangements from university instead of traveling to the travel offices. *"I sit in my class and I am able to book tickets without taking a bus to the airport. That is safer for me"* says Lilian. Amber agrees that technology builds safety for her as a female by facilitating her travel requirement by giving an example *"I use UBER to travel and the applications displays information of the driver. So, I am able to choose a lady driver if I want to"*. This is consistent with Bashar (2014) suggestion that Travel 2.0 creates a safe and trusting social environment for traveler especially female. As a female, safety concerns with taking precaution to protect and travel without fear.

4.2 Pull Factors

4.2.1 Accessibility

According to Recker et al. (2001) accessibility is described as a measure of the ability of individuals to reach activity opportunities. The accessibility of various travel information from a plethora of online travel websites provided female students numerous prospects towards traveling. According to Fatin *"I used search engines and blogs to search for the information before I plan my travel itineraries. It is so easy to access to plenty of information online."* Accessibility also enables the travelers to use Travel 2.0 applications such as social media and mobile communications services to maintain a 'symbolic proximity' with family and friends and establish a sense of 'presence while absent' while traveling. Social media and mobile applications were used by all the respondents to connect with their family and friends.

4.2.2 Trustworthiness and Reliability

Reliability and trustworthiness of the travel information online is another pull factor that motivates female students to use technology while traveling. For Aina, she trusts the brand associated with the application for instance booking a flight ticket with MAS or AirAsia. Ravald and Grönroos (1996) found that customer establish confidence in the service provider,

loyalty and trust based on their previous successful experiences. This was further substantiated by Agag and Masry (2016) when they discovered trust in online is one of the relevant antecedents to form a positive attitude toward online participation. Miza on the other hand says the information is trustworthy as it is from reliable sources and upon uncertainty, she verifies using the comments from other users. As Munoz et al. (2012) explains trust positively affects attitude and intention of travelers using user generated contents on Travel 2.0. Gretzel and Yoo (2008) revealed that 97.7% of Internet users who travel said they trust and read other travel reviews during the process of planning a trip.

4.2.3 *Influence*

Building on the findings, influence of family and friends is a prominent pull factor. Amaro and Duarte (2013) stated that communicability is related to the influence of family and friends, in the sense that people are more likely to use technology to make travel decisions or planning. Aina first travelled to Korea in 2012 with her two sisters and she was influenced to use technology to plan for their travel. Besides Aina, Emily's husband encouraged her to download various travel applications such as MH Mobile and Trivago. Nadia's sister who is a member of TripAdvisor motivated Nadia to become a member of the travel community to post reviews and photos as well. Contrary to them, Miza, Fatin, Kartini and Divya were influenced by their friends to use online travel applications. This validates the findings by Ráthonyi (2013) that friends and relatives are the most influential sources of information at travel planning process.

5. Conclusion

As student travel assumes increasingly important role of in travel segment, the prevalence and proficiency of technology has enabled them with seamless travel experiences. The findings of this paper substantiates the findings of Kelly et al. (2013) and suggest the need for tourism stakeholders to make significant shift from the contemporary marketing style Future research could attempt to further validate the findings of this study using quantitative methods.

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