

# PUSH AND PULL MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS ON WHY FILIPINOS TAKE CRUISE VACATION

Arlene L. Ong\*

## Abstract

The concept of the push and pull framework is that people travel because they are pushed by their own internal needs and pulled by external forces of the destination attributes. This study was conducted to identify the correlation of the push and pull motivational factors on why Filipinos take cruise vacation. To determine the correlation, a framework integrating Whyte's Model of 2017 was utilized. A questionnaire validated by three cruise industry experts was used to gather information from 33 respondents who have experienced cruise travel. Findings showed that majority of the respondents are female between 41 to 60 years old, single and with income above P81,000.00. The five foremost reasons why Filipinos take cruise travel are as follows: to explore (21%), for relaxation and for the experience (20%), for fun and enjoyment (17.1%), and for family bonding (15.2%). The top 5 push motivational factors include: to learn and explore (1); desire to travel (2); family bonding, and to have fun and good time (3); relaxation and to relieve stress (4), and better understand other cultures (5). While the top 5 pull factors statements include: beauty and attractions of the destination (1); ship accommodation (2); friendly and courteous reception (3); ship amenities and catering (4); and domestic and foreign ports of call (5). This study is highly valuable to the cruise industry stakeholders in order to further improve the current status of cruise tourism in the Philippines.

**Keywords:** Cruise Industry, Cruise Vacation, Filipino, On-Board and Off-Shore Experience, Push and Pull Motivational Factor

## Introduction

### Background of the Study

The Philippines has been a popular cruising destination for many tourists and adventure seekers. Not only is the country rich in picturesque coastal areas, but it is also one of the cheapest places to take a cruise [1]. In order to sustain current growth and profitability in an increasingly competitive market, cruise lines and destinations need to develop a more thorough understanding of their customers' vacation experience. To achieve this, it is important to identify the specific on-board and on-shore aspects of cruise vacations that attract people to cruising [2].

The cruise industry is a fast growing sector of the travel and tourism industry and has contributed significantly to the economies of nations. Since 1980, its global growth has been 7.6% per annum, outpacing the travel industry [3]. The industry has been profitable for both cruise line and regional economies like the Philippines. In 2018, cruise ship tourist arrivals skyrocketed by 1,953 to 9,156 passengers in January from only 446 of the same month last year. The Department of Transportation and the Philippine Ports Authority recorded 4,520 passengers due to the renewed interest of Hong Kong-based Star Cruises at the Port of Currimao in Ilocos Norte as one its cruise routes. Other areas which posted positive cruise tourist arrivals include Coron, Boracay and the Manila South Harbor [4].

\* Siena College, Quezon City, Philippines. Email: [ken\\_arleneong@yahoo.com](mailto:ken_arleneong@yahoo.com)

The Philippine Department of Tourism recently completed the National Cruise Tourism Development Strategy to attract more tourists and position the Philippines as a more prominent cruise destination [5]. According to the Travel Publication *Conde' Nast Traveler* [6] in 2015, the Philippines was named as the next top cruising destination after the Mediterranean and the Caribbean.

Despite the contributions and increasing significance of the cruise industry, there are limited cruise-specific research in the academic literature [7]-[11] with cruise motivation accounting for only a small portion of published studies [12], [13]. In particular, attributes known as pull factors are under researched. The push-pull motivational framework represents the push (travel motives) and pull (destination attributes factors), is widely used in leisure and travel literature, however, there has been limited application of the framework to measure and understand push motives, pull factors, and the interrelationship between the two in the context of decision making about cruise vacation [2].

A better understanding of the attraction of cruise vacations may be an important marketing implication to cruise companies in terms of examining the motives of target markets, in designing promotional strategies and decision-making about destination development. Likewise, cruise-specific motivation studies and cruise destination attributes studies may also overcome many of the limitations generally found throughout the cruise literature. It will also facilitate continuing study of the cruise travel phenomenon on both global and regional level, thereby contributing to shaping the future of the industry [2].

### Push and Pull Factors

According to Whyte [2], in the studies conducted by Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977, 1981; Kim, Lee and Klenosky, 2003; Uysal and Jurowski, 1994; Yuan and McDonald, 1990), the push-pull framework refers to the socio-psychological motives that push individual into travelling and the characteristics that are specific to particular destinations that pull those individuals to these destinations. A number of characteristics unique to cruise travel create complexities in identifying and measuring the push and pull factors [14]. The on-board attributes of

a cruise ship are additional pull factors, and the ship itself can be considered both a means of transportation and a part of the destination.

Bashar and Ahmad [15], stated that the concept of push and pull dimensions is that people travel because they are pushed by their own internal forces and pulled by the external forces of the destination attributes. The pull factors are those that emerge as a result of the attractiveness of a destination as perceived by the travellers. They included tangible resources and travellers' perception and expectation such as novelty, benefit expectation and marketed image of the destination. Likewise, their study supported the conceptual framework of push and pull factors in the literature was generally supported. The study reconfirms that tourists' travel behaviour is driven by internal and external factors which indicate that tourists go a holiday because they want to fulfil their intrinsic desires as well as the destination attributes. Furthermore, the study claimed that the needs for prestige and social interactions are among important motives which trigger the need to travel. A successful matching of push and pull motives is essential for a marketing strategy in destination areas, and the analysis of the motives are useful in segmenting markets, designing promotional programs, and decision-making about destination development.

### Objectives of the Study

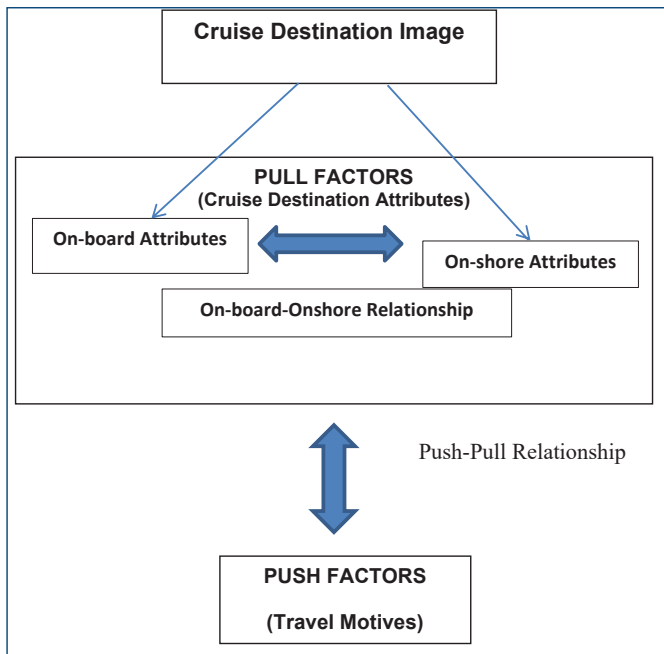
The objectives of the study is mainly to identify the reasons why Filipino travellers take cruise vacation, determine the level of push and pull motivational factors among respondents and to determine significant relationship of push and pull motivational factors.

### Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between push and pull motivational factors.

### Conceptual Framework

The study utilized Whyte's framework on the relationship between push and pull motivational factors in cruise tourism [15]. The framework, specifically, looked into the relationships of push and pull motivational factors that motivate Filipinos to take cruise travel.



**Fig. 1: Conceptual Model of the Study**

## Methodology

The quantitative research design was utilized to answer the questions stated in the objectives of the study. The random sampling technique was employed to select the respondents of the study. A survey questionnaire validated by three cruise industry experts was used to gather the needed data. Descriptive statistics were used particularly frequencies and percentage data on the socio-demographics of the respondents and the reasons on why Filipinos take cruise vacation. The level of cruise travel intent of the respondents were rated using a 3-point Likert Scale. The Pearson Correlation Test was employed to determine significant relationships between push and pull motivational factors.

## Results and Discussion

### Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents

Majority of the respondents are female (20%) between 41 to 50 years old (33%) followed by 51 to 60 years old 24%, mostly single (55%), college graduate (58%), employed, and receiving an income above P81,000 (33%).

## Reasons Filipinos Take Cruise Vacation

Using descriptive statistics, Table 1 shows the reasons why Filipinos take cruise vacation.

**Table 1: Reasons Why Filipinos Take Cruise Travel (Multiple Response)**

Reasons	<i>f</i>	%
To explore	22	21.0
For relaxation	21	20.0
For experience	21	20.0
For fun & enjoyment	18	17.1
For family bonding	16	15.2
For status symbol	7	6.7
Total	105	100

Table 1 indicates that five foremost reasons why Filipinos take cruise travel are as follows: to explore (21%), for relaxation and for the experience (20%), for fun and enjoyment (17.1%), and for family bonding (15.2%). There is perhaps no better way to unwind than taking a cruise vacation. Cruises offer great value for a vacation. Cruise ships are like floating cities with everything one could possibly want onboard. A lot of people booked cruise vacation to visit and explore new places, try new adrenaline-rush experiences like zip lining high above a rainforest canopy, parasailing or try new cuisines. Since relaxation and rejuvenation are often the ultimate goals of any cruise vacation, the pampering options onboard a cruise ship make it an easy choice for the weary traveller. Massage, sunbathing, free childcare, spa treatments, and hot tubs are just some of the pampering options that can be expected on a cruise ship. Family and friends can come together for fine food relaxation and wholesome entertainment. No matter the reason for choosing one, a cruise vacation is a great value, offering relaxation, experience, fun and enjoyment in a family-friendly atmosphere with good food and entertainment all in one unique location [17].

### Level of Push and Pull Motivational Factors Among Respondents

The concept of push and pull dimensions is that people travel because they are pushed by their own internal forces

and pulled by the external forces of the destination's attributes. The pull factors are those that emerge as a result of the attractiveness of a destination as perceived by the travellers. They included tangible resources and travellers'

perception and expectation such as novelty, benefit expectation and marketed image of the destination. Table 2 presents the level of agreement of respondents in terms of the push motivational factors to take cruise vacation.

**Table 2: Level of Push Motivational Factors**

<i>Push Motivational Factors</i>	<i>Weighted Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Description</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1. Desire to travel	2.91	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	2
2. Relaxation and to relieve stress	2.82	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	5
3. To socialize with friends	2.42	Moderately Agree	Average level of Motivation	10
4. Family bonding	2.84	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	3.5
5. Have fun and good time	2.84	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	3.5
6. To make new friends	2.55	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	9
7. To learn and explore	2.92	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	1
8. Better understand other cultures	2.81	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	6
9. Enjoy inter ports-of-call	2.74	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	8
10. For self-actualization and feeling of accomplishment	2.78	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	7
Composite Mean	2.78	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	

Legend: 1.00-1.50 Do Not Agree (Not Motivated at all); 1.51-2.50 Moderately Agree (Average Level of Motivation); 2.51-3.00 Fully Agree (High Level of Motivation)

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents Fully Agree with the ten push motivational factor statements, thereby, indicating their High Level Motivation to take cruise vacation. However, in terms of the push factor statement on "to socialize with friends", the respondents indicated an Average Level of Motivation to venture into cruise vacation just to socialize with friends. The top 5

push motivational factors include: to learn and explore (1); desire to travel (2); family bonding, and to have fun and good time (3); relaxation and to relieve stress (4), and better understand other cultures (5). Table 3 presents the level of agreement of respondents in terms of the pull motivational factors to take cruise vacation.

**Table 3: Level of Pull Motivational Factors**

<i>Pull Motivational Factors</i>	<i>Weighted Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Description</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1. Beauty and attractions of destinations	2.94	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	1
2. Ship accommodation (cleanliness and comfort of cabins)	2.85	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	2
3. On-board entertainment (shows, performances, etc.)	2.70	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	8
4. Recreational activities (games, sports, exercise, etc.)	2.60	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	9
5. Domestic and foreign ports of call	2.75	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	6
6. Culinary exploration of destinations	2.72	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	7
7. Shore excursions	2.53	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	10
8. Ship amenities (pool/gym/spa/game room/bar/restaurant, etc.)	2.78	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	4.5
9. Catering (food and beverage)	2.78	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	4.5

<i>Pull Motivational Factors</i>	<i>Weighted Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Description</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
10. Friendly and courteous reception	2.81	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	3
Total WM	2.75	Fully Agree	High Level of Motivation	

Legend: 1.00-1.50 Do Not Agree (Not Motivated at all); 1.51-2.50 Moderately Agree (Average Level of Motivation); 2.51-3.00 Fully Agree (High Level of Motivation)

Table 3 shows that all of the respondents Fully Agree with the 10 pull factor motivational statements which are indications of High Level of Motivation to take cruise vacation. The top 5 pull factors statements include: beauty and attractions of the destination (1); ship accommodation (2); friendly and courteous reception (3); ship amenities and catering (4); and domestic and foreign ports of call (5).

### Discussions

Motives are only one of the many variables that influence human travel behaviour. A more complete understanding of travel behaviour can emerge when motives are combined with other factors, such as, external factors that influence decision-making in the choice of destination and mode of travel. Several of these factors have been studied to understand how they influence the decision to cruise. Few studies found in the literature clearly distinguish cruise destination attributes as being related to the onboard or onshore aspect of cruising, with several studies mixing the two sources of attributes together, mixing pull factors together with push factors. According to Whyte [2], in the studies conducted by Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977, 1981; Kim, Lee and Klenosky, 2003; Uysal and Jurovski, 1994; ; Yuan and McDonald, 1990), the push-pull framework refers to the socio-psychological motives that push individual into travelling and the characteristics that are specific to particular destinations that pull those individuals to these destinations. A number of characteristics unique to cruise travel create complexities in identifying and measuring the push and pull factors [18]. The onboard attributes of a cruise ship are additional pull factors, and the ship itself can be considered both a means of transportation and a part of the destination.

Bashar and Ahmad [15] stated that the concept of push and pull dimensions is that people travel because they are pushed by their own internal forces and pulled by

the external forces of the destination attributes. The pull factors are those that emerge as a result of the attractiveness of a destination as perceived by the travellers. These include tangible resources and travellers' perception and expectation such as novelty, benefit expectation and marketed image of the destination. Their study supported the conceptual framework of push and pull factors. The study reconfirms that tourists' travel behaviour is driven by internal and external factors which indicate that tourists go on a holiday because they want to fulfil their intrinsic desires as well as the destination attributes. The study also claimed that the needs for prestige and social interactions are among important motives which trigger the need to travel. The study conducted by Nikjoo and Ketabi [19], showed that accessibility and entertainment were the most significant tourism factors for Iranian travellers. Escape and ego-enhancement were significant in travel motivations. Among the push factors, three significant elements were noted which included escape, prestige, and relationship enhancement. Escape and ego-enhancement provided the basis for decision-making when travelling. For the different types of pull factors, accessibility was shown to be an important factor. A cultural destination attracts tourists mainly because of its own attractions and shopping centres. The study conducted by Nikkanen [20] stated that people travel to experience something new. For many, it may be a once a lifetime experience. The study of Lu and Chen [21] indicated that cruise passengers place more emphasis on the following when cruising: reasonable cost, convenient transportation, sufficient basis facilities, and abundant cultural and historical landscapes. However, the study undertaken by Teye and Paris [18] on the motivational analysis of cruise passengers on a 10-day itinerary with 6 ports-of-call from Miami, Florida to the Caribbean showed that five underlying dimensions of cruise passengers motivations were found, which included convenience on board the ship, exploration, escape and relaxation, social, and climate.

## Test for Significant Difference

The Pearson Correlation Test was conducted to determine significant relationship between the push and

pull motivational factors, and the results are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Test for Significant Relationship Between Push and Pull**

<i>f Value Computed</i>	<i>Degree of Correlation</i>	<i>t Value Computed</i>	<i>t Value Tabular @ .05; df=8</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Decision</i>
0.2	Negligible Correlation	0.58	2.306	Not Significant	Failed to reject Ho

Table 4 shows that the computed of 0.58 is smaller than tabular value of 2.306, therefore, there is no significant relationship between push and pull motivational factors in relation to cruise vacation.

## Conclusions

Nowadays, Filipinos love to travel not only within the country but they have also conquered the best destinations in the world. Filipinos are exploring different modes of vacation, and this is including the cruise industry. As the result of this study, exploring is the main reason for the Filipinos taking cruise vacation. With the help of this study, cruise industry stakeholders could focus more on how to strengthen cruise tourism in the Philippines by directly focusing on what matters most to the passengers. The Philippines with a population of 100 million is big chunk in the market therefore their push and pull motivational factors must be widely considered for the betterment of the sector.

Due to time and financial constraints, the researcher only enjoined 33 respondents. As a suggestion for future studies, it would be better to gather data while the cruise ship is physically docked at Manila Bay or Palawan to accumulate ample data.

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