Interview Transcript - Travel Planning & Behaviour Study

Participant Name	: Muhd Adam
Age	: 25
Occupation	: Junior Accountant
Date of Interview	: 5 November 2025
Location	: Face-to-Face Interview
Interviewer	: Saifuldin
Duration	: 25 minutes

The following transcript presents the face-to-face interview conducted with Adam, a 25-year-old junior accountant and solo traveller. The purpose of the session was to understand his travel planning behaviour, decision-making process, and experiences during off-peak and monsoon travel periods. The transcript has been lightly edited for readability while maintaining the natural conversational flow. Key points have been highlighted in bold.

Saifuldin: Can you tell me briefly about yourself and how often you travel this year?

Adam: *I'm **25 years old**, working as a **junior accountant** in PJ. This year I managed to travel **twice - Penang in April and Terengganu in October**. I usually travel **solo**, because it's easier to plan and I enjoy the **freedom**. It helps me **de-stress and recharge** after work.*

Saifuldin: What usually motivates you to travel - relaxation, adventure, or something else?

Adam: *Mostly **relaxation**. My job can get quite stressful, so I travel to **unwind and reflect**. I'm **budget-conscious**, but if the **experience is meaningful**, I'll spend more. I prefer **hidden gems** rather than crowded tourist areas.*

Saifuldin: How do you usually plan your holiday?

Adam: *I start by checking **leave days and budget**, then scroll **TikTok** for ideas. I use **Traveloka**, **Agoda**, and **Booking.com** to compare options. I plan **gradually**, so I can stay **flexible** if things change.*

Saifuldin: Have you faced any problems while traveling?

Adam: *Yeah, during my **Terengganu trip in October**, it was **monsoon season**. It rained almost every evening, and a **road near Batu Burok flooded**, but **Google Maps rerouted me automatically**. Luckily mornings were clear, so I still explored. For last-minute trips, I go for **cheapest flights and safe hostels**. I always choose **refundable bookings** in case I need to cancel.*

Saifuldin: What's frustrating about finding travel info online?
Adam: *A lot of **sponsored or fake reviews**. Some places look perfect online but aren't in real life. I now rely more on **TikTok local creators** for **real-time and honest reviews**.*

Saifuldin: What influences your travel destination the most?
Adam: *Mostly **budget, safety, and overall vibe**. I love destinations with **local culture** and **good food**, like **Terengganu**. It's calm, safe, and friendly.*

Saifuldin: How do you balance saving money with comfort and safety?
Adam: *I stay in **budget hostels** with **good reviews** - clean and safe. I spend more on **local food and experiences**, not hotels. I always **share my live location with family** for safety.*

Saifuldin: When do you usually travel?
Adam: *I prefer **off-peak periods**, like **weekdays or outside school holidays**. It's **cheaper and less crowded**. Even during monsoon, I enjoy the quiet vibe.*

Saifuldin: What apps or tools help with off-peak travel?
Adam: *I check **Google Trends** and **TikTok** videos to gauge crowd levels. TikTok is the easiest way to see if places are busy.*

Saifuldin: Which apps helped you the most during your last trip?
Adam: ***Google Maps** - it helped me **avoid flooded roads** and find new food spots. The **offline map** feature was a lifesaver.*

Saifuldin: What features make you confident using these apps?

Adam: *They're **simple, accurate**, and show **real user reviews and photos**. That builds trust.*

Saifuldin: Do you manage your bookings online by yourself?
Adam: *Yes, always. I prefer **self-booking** because it's **faster, cheaper**, and gives me **full control**. I just check **refund policies** first.*

Saifuldin: Who influences your travel decisions the most?
Adam: *Mostly **friends who also travel solo** and **small TikTok influencers** who share **budget-friendly tips**. I trust them more than sponsored content.*
Saifuldin: How much do reviews or locals influence you?
Adam: *A lot. I use **Google Reviews** and **TikTok videos**, and when I arrive, I ask **locals or Grab drivers** — they always know hidden gems.*

Saifuldin: What would make you trust a smart travel app using AI or real-time data?
Adam: *If it's **transparent, accurate**, and shows **live crowd, weather, and verified reviews**. That's super useful for **solo travelers**.*

Saifuldin: Are you comfortable sharing your data with AI-based travel apps?
Adam: *Yes, as long as my **data privacy** is protected under **PDPA**. I'm fine sharing **location and preferences**, but not personal info. If it helps AI learn my **solo, budget, off-peak style**, I'm okay with that.*

Saifuldin: What features would make planning easier for you?
Adam:
  [1] **AI itinerary generator** that adapts to **weather and budget**.
  [2] **Real-time crowd & weather tracker**.
  [3] **Refund tracker** for bookings.

Saifuldin: Finally, what three features would your ideal travel app have?
Adam:
  [1] **Personalized AI planner** for solo travel.
  [2] **Verified TikTok-style reviews** with videos.
  [3] **Safety tracker** to share live location with family.

Saifuldin: Thanks for sharing, Adam. I really appreciate your insights.

Adam: *No worries bro. That monsoon trip taught me a lot. Even with rain, it turned out to be a great experience.*

Key Highlights

1. **Solo travel** for personal relaxation and independence.
2. Prefers **hidden gems** and **off-peak seasons** for quiet exploration.
3. Uses **TikTok** for **real-time, authentic travel reviews**.
4. Prioritizes **budget, safety, and local experiences**.
5. Confidently using **Google Maps and online booking apps**.
6. Supports **AI-powered travel assistants** if **data privacy** is maintained.
7. Experienced traveling during **monsoon season in Terengganu**, showing flexibility and awareness.