

PART III

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

A MULTI-RELATIONAL APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF TOURIST EXPERIENCES

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses how a multi-relational perspective can influence our conceptual understanding and empirical investigations of tourist experiences. We present an ontological foundation for the approach. The discussion is based on a Heideggerian (1927/1996) ontology which seeks to overcome traditional dualisms. We suggest that tourists ontologically are always situated (1) within relations with objects, others and self, (2) within various contexts (physical, social, cultural), (3) in time (past, present and future), and (4) as bodily beings. We explore how such multi-relational approach can be applied in tourism research by discussing and illustrating the consequences for an understanding of tourist immersion.

Key Words: relational approach, tourist experience, tourist immersion

INTRODUCTION

The tourist experience is the locus of value creation within the tourism industry. It has been a radical shift of research focus the last decade from service economy towards the experience economy. Businesses no longer only provide the consumer with products or services which are consumed, they often try to facilitate meaningful experiences. What constitutes a tourist experience, and how to understand and organize for meaningful experiences, is an ongoing debate. It can be argued that how we define a tourist experience depends on the chosen perspective (Carù & Cova, 2003). Within the tourism literature there are still discussions whether or not a modern- (e.g. MacCannel, 1999) or postmodern (or post-tourist) perspective (e.g. Urry, 1990) is most suitable for understanding tourist experiences. The multidisciplinary nature of tourism makes the picture even more complex. Influenced by the interpretive turn in social sciences there has been a growing attention on the diversity, subjectivity, context and negotiations of meanings as being part of the tourist experience (Uriely, 2005). The majority of the research has investigated how specific parts (e.g. physical context, human interaction on spot (e.g. Lin, 2010) affect the tourists' experiences, while others have been more holistic (e.g. Carù & Cova, 2003; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). Literature review shows that tourist experiences are apprehended differently when analyzed from a meta-theoretical (ontological) perspective (Vespestad & Lindberg, 2010). However, does a tourist experience differ from other types of experiences? According to Larsen (2007) the only difference in a tourism experience is that it happens in a tourist context. Others argue that tourism consumption is different because it departs from everyday life into a different experiential space and by such entails a different form than most consumption situations (Cohen, 1974; Wang, 2002). Although various tourism contexts can be distinct, we would argue that it is necessary to discuss human conditions and everyday life when understanding tourist experiences.

The purpose of this article is to propose a multi-relational framework for understanding tourist experiences. How does the ontology of Heidegger (Heidegger, 1927/1996) provide insights for understanding tourist experiences (and how then to conduct empirical investigations)? In this article we argue for a relational and holistic approach and suggest a conceptual framework which we argue contribute to increased understanding of tourist experiences. We explore how one can understand tourist immersion from a multi-relational approach. Firstly, we briefly present the Heideggerian origin of our inspiration. Secondly, we present a multi-relational framework which covers ontological structures suggested for understanding tourist experiences. Thirdly, we apply the multi-relational framework for understanding tourist immersion. Finally, some concluding remarks are made related to implications.

THE RELATIONAL ONTOLOGY OF HEIDEGGER

Many studies within consumer research have been conducted with a dualist ontology (Buhl, 1990; Lindberg, 2009). Cognitive perspectives seem to predominate where the consumer is assumed to be more or less a rational information processor without a body and a world. Information processing models (e.g. Bettmann, 1979) tend to predominate, and theories such as cognition-affect-behavior-satisfaction (the so-called CABS framework) would govern the interest for researchers (Holbrook, 1995). This would mean to separate the body from the mind (thinking first, then feelings, acting and responses, e.g. satisfaction) and man from the world (no contextual-/cultural interest, or limiting contextual interest to servicescapes (Bitner, 1992) or experiencescapes (Mossberg, 2007), etc.).

Conquering such dualist positions was one of the goals of Martin Heidegger's work in "Being and Time" (1927/1996). Some refer to it as hermeneutic phenomenology (Sass, 1988, p. 223), others as alethic- or existential hermeneutics (Alvesson & Sköldbäck, 1994, p. 132). We focus on Heidegger's view on human nature and worldview, which we refer to as ontology, and this is hermeneutics because his discussions involves how humans interprets and understands. This is how tourist experiences become a challenge because it hereafter depends on how researchers conceptualize the manner in which humans interprets and understands per se. Heidegger (1927/1996) refers to a "hermeneutical situation" (p. 287) by proposing *human beings-as-relational as the primordial horizon of interpretation*. This is where Heidegger proposes a horizon of interpretation which conditions every understanding. Thus, he is not proposing a method of interpretation. He is not interested in interpretation of phenomena per se, but in the basis for our interpretations. The phenomenological concept "intentionality" means that a human cannot be understood outside the person-world fusion. The subject, or what Heidegger (1927/1996) refers to as 'Dasein' (being-there), can hereafter be understood as directed towards something else than oneself. This is how we become aware of ourselves – as relational beings which cannot be separated from the world. One may state that tourists cannot escape the world. The important consequence is that we would always include the world when thinking, feeling, acting, and experiencing. Thus, understanding tourist experiences means understanding tourists-in-the-world. This has consequences for how and what we are thinking about, how we view ourselves and others, and how we are directed and focused during touristic activities. It means that how a tourist experience and cope in a tourist activity somehow are influenced by, and influence, their daily life. The tourist's horizon of understanding is neither an arbitrary horizon for the individual nor a set of predetermined categories that limit our field of knowing. The tourists would always find themselves situated within a certain socio-cultural horizon of understanding as worldly beings. This is how normality governs most of our life. This is how one cannot escape a certain horizon of meaning in every instance of one's existence; as a kind of (historical) *fore-understanding*. This is a frame of reference for any part-understanding and meanings throughout experiences. We would always enter a touristic context with an understanding based on our socio-cultural background (i.e. in past, in context). Often, we would experience with the gazing, focus, thoughts and meaning construction as we are supposed to. Consequently, researchers therefore need to search for socio-cultural and contextual evidences for what it means to be a tourist today first.

The relational ontology provides a focus on everyday life and lived meaning of people. Heidegger turns phenomenological. This means that theory about tourist experiences are placed in a secondary position because it cannot provide justification to the specific experiences of a person. One could argue that instead of being truthful to the theory and method, the researcher turns truthful to the relational ontology. This means that consistency is related to ontology and not to the procedures for finding *the* (objective) truth. In a way research is turned upside down as compared to the hypothetic-deductive methodology (however this is not an inductive methodology either, since also researchers are situated and work within *fore-understanding*). While many researchers hold theories and certain methods in the foreground, relational researcher consigns these aspects to the background and concentrates on what it means to be a tourist-in-the-world today as related to a certain tourist context and situation. Why would people seek certain experiences today, and what kind of understanding would their socio-cultural background signify? Although the past tense is important for understanding tourists' horizon of understanding, Heidegger means we are profoundly metaphysical beings. This means that we are able – at any time – to surpass our given conditions as belonging to the world in a particular way. We may renew our understanding of ourselves, of others and our doings when we face a contrasted belonging toward the world, such as in a breakthrough or breakdown. This may occur e.g. when the socio-cultural normality is challenged. It would be expected that many tourists are challenged because one faces a situation where the world, i.e. others, things, logics, etc. changes. Heidegger (1927/1996) refers to inauthentic, i.e. normal experience, versus more authentic experiences when one becomes aware of oneself as normality beings. This is Heidegger's main challenge in "Being and Time"; to disclose the concealed and this is where the temporal time becomes important. There is a possibility to face a different belonging to the world. As researchers we can then face hermeneutics of suspicion because one cannot rely on the immediate expressions of informants because this would often be (inauthentic) socio-cultural expressions. Consequently, the researcher faces a challenge investigating tourists and their experiences. The challenge is related to disclosure; i.e. becoming aware of oneself as absorbed by a manner of being a tourist. Through conversations the researcher has the possibility to

discover and construct novel awareness together with tourists. By being a relational partner one could look for challenges the tourist has during experiences, and ask the question “why?”

Although the relational ontology grants primacy to the lifeworld of the individual, the lived meanings cannot be separated from the realm of the context or socio-cultural frame the individuals always-already are situated. This is how we never can escape the presence of a certain language, social norms and conventions, and logics for action. Nevertheless, the concept of truth becomes different for a researcher as compared to cultural researchers who rely on cultural meanings, or individual researchers who rely on the utterances of the individual in a subjectivist fashion. The hermeneutics of suspicion turns the focus onto the individual as more or less truthful, and tries to be critical towards the understanding and interpretation of individuals and groups. Often, tourists would challenge their understanding during experiences since the touristic context and other relations signify dramatic changes from everyday life. Then, one needs to look for paradoxes and ambiguities throughout tourist experiences. Understanding the reality of tourists can then be to understand the changes, and the view about changes, that the tourists face. For when the world is changed – so is the tourist. Thus, an interesting question is then how the novel tourist conditions change the tourists and their reality. The change in being a human (Dasein) must be interpreted as a change with regards to the tourist’s changed horizon of understanding and meaning. It is in the twilight zones in-between everyday relations and tourist context relations, and between various relations throughout tourist experiences, that interesting phenomena, research claims and novel discoveries may be found. A multi-relational framework can guide out conceptual understanding and empirical investigations of tourist experiences.

A MULTI-RELATIONAL APPROACH

Based on Heidegger (1927/1986), there are at least 4 main co-existing structures human beings are situated within and across, i.e. in context, in time, in relations (with others, objects and self) and as bodily beings, as illustrated in the figure below.

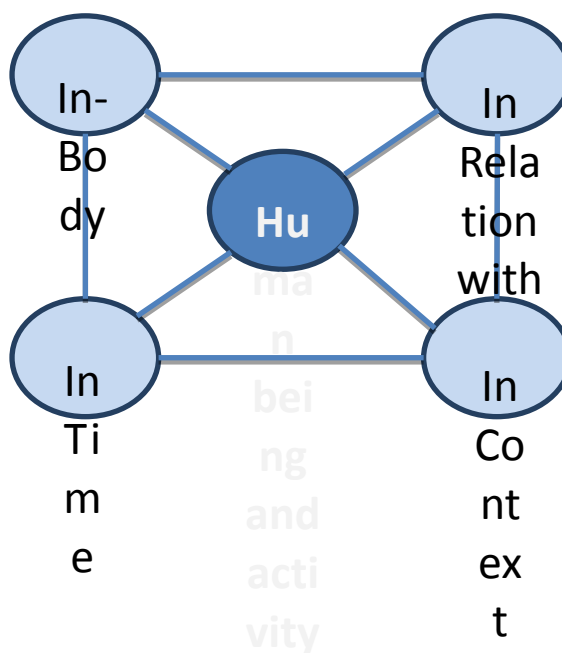


Figure 1: Fundamental structures and being-in-the-world (Eide, 2005)

The structures bring a continuous process of becoming. In the elaboration so far the focus has mainly been on the structures ‘in time’ and ‘in context’. Now we describe each of the 4 elements and relate them to immersion.

Time and immersion in the experience: Time as a 1) *dynamic element* influences the experience before, during and after the activity. Former experiences and associations as well as our expectations will affect how we perceive the present moment. We tend to compare present experiences with former experiences. Seeing a particular landscape or attraction for the first time is different than seeing it the second time due to our memories from the first visit. One can argue that even if we do things for the first time, our past experiences will still influence us because they are part of our horizon of understanding. However, we may not be aware of it. Time can also be viewed as a 2) *motivational aspect*. Tourists may seek experiences to escape a stressful everydayness and become a more balanced person, e.g. in a quiet place, or a place they can activate themselves in a very different way compared with the ordinary. When facing a destination, tourists often need to change from one

state of being to another, this are not always easy. One may argue that 3) peoples' *temporality* must change due to the change in time. When a tourist is motivated and chooses a quiet destination, there is a need to change towards a different belonging to the world; e.g. from an urban temporality towards a wilderness temporality where nature time rules. Thus, it is necessary then to separate between time as an objective notion (clock time), and temporality as belonging to humans because the tourists temporality does not necessarily correspond to the time of the world. As researchers we would also experiences time when talking to tourists. We would try to make sense of 4) tourist *narratives* when people tell stories of the past (leaving home, facing a tourist attraction and joining a guided tour) and future (joining a different activity and heading for home everyday projects) which are resumed in presence (during an interview). One could argue that focusing on the narrative is a precondition to avoid recapturing consciousness as representation of reality, because the story is a kind of activity – or ongoing process – of creating meaning for existence (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 126).

Immersion can be understood as a temporal state of being during an experience. Immersion can be described as being fully (body with mind) present in the moment and place, i.e. to exist and relate here and now, directed towards what is happening in the moment. It is an intimacy, not a distance to the experience. Ooi (2005) argues a connection between consumers' focus of attention and immersion. This implies that it is impossible to become immersed if our mind is focused on everyday life, work, planning for the future etc. during the experience. Carù and Cova (2007, p. 37) argues that this process of becoming immersed occurs "*either immediately and totally by diving into it, or else progressively and partially via appropriation*". One of tourism mediators' roles is to help their guests to focus their attention, and hence access the experiences. This can be achieved by using storytelling, dramaturgy, rites of passage, minimizing distractions etc (Arnold & Price, 1993; Mossberg, 2007). It could also depend on the intensity of the experience and the involvement in the situation. For example, hiking in a challenging terrain requires your whole attention because if not you can easily hurt yourself, subsequently forcing the tourist into presence and an immersion state (Henning, 2008) while it might be difficult to master the same level of attention and immersion during a classical concert (Carù & Cova, 2006).

Immersion in the physical, cultural and social context: The experience is created in and by the individual as a consequence of our relation to the current situation. What each tourist find significant in the landscape, experiencescape or culture are inseparable from who they are as a human beings during experiences (Lindberg, 2009). Carù and Cova (2007) argue that there are three qualities of the context that enable consumers to become immersed; the context must be enclavized, secure and thematized (Carù & Cova, 2007; Firat & Dholakia, 1998). When the context is enclavized with specific boundaries (start and stop) it enables the consumer to contrast the experience to their daily lives. The enclave also reduces the likelihood of interfering elements to appear, hence enhancing the intensity of the experience (Firat and Dholakia, 1998). The sense of security is paramount in order to focus the attention on the experience, and eliminate distractions like minding one's belongings, one's children, own behavior etc. (Carù and Cova, 2007). The theme acts as a symbolic packaging of the context, and can be an activity, era, region, population or a combination of these elements (ibid). These 3 elements constitute some of the key factors of an experiential context in which the consumers' immersion can be facilitated.

The bodily immersion: The body is fundamental for humans. Our body is engaged in different situations and function as our primary connection to the world and the major locus of our senses. The body is not an outer shell that contains the "real me", but the body, emotions and consciousness must be studied as integrated parts of one whole. It can be argued that the tourist experience includes an embodied perception of place where tourists use all their bodily senses to experience a destination (Selstad, 2007). The body is paramount in the immersion process. Pine and Gilmore (1999, p. 31) define immersion as "*becoming physically (or virtually) a part of the experience itself*". This implies a physical awareness during the experience. Immersion can be triggered by bodily senses and be expressed in bodily reactions (getting "goosebumps", feeling a "wow-sensation"). Often, active rather than passive tourist experiences trigger immersion simply because physical efforts tend to force the tourist towards absorption at presents. However, it is also possible to expect the body to strive too much during activities. For example when a tourist strives to learn canoeing, and uses all energy on the relation with the canoe (object) and the activity of paddling without succeeding. The tourist can be immersed, but with an awkward kind of immersion. However, when canoeing turns into a tacit endeavor, the tourist may change into a different kind of immersion where the bodily activity becomes secondary to an immersed focus in nature. So the bodily skills may become important for achieving a kind of immersion which the tourist provider has proposed.

In relation with self, others and objects: There are, according to Heidegger, three main kinds of relations; with others, objects and self. These will vary throughout tourist experiences. Some use holidays to strengthen social/family networks and our sense of belonging. Engaging in an experience with a group of friends, with a novel romantic relation or with a teenager son/daughter would most likely result in very different experiences. The relations to other customers can also affect the experience both positively and negatively (Mossberg, 2007). Group dynamics, the amount of time the group spends together and how actively they co-produce the experience are all elements that will affect our perception of the experience (Arnold & Price, 1993). Another vital relation is the one with the personnel of the tourism companies. The stories that are told and the dramaturgy of the

experience often help the customer to interpret their surroundings and immerse into the experience. Hence, we can view the role of the guide as a narrator (Henning, 2008). Carù and Cova (2007) argue that consumers with high level of expertise or special interest in a specific experiential context will be more likely to become immersed (for example a hobby ornithologist on an Eagle safari). Less skilled or interested consumers are expected to need assistance in order to reduce the mental and/or physical distance that can exist between the consumer and the context of the experience. Immersion can in these situations be facilitated through support systems, collective action and self-determination (ibid). Support systems can be represented by guides, staff members, or the use of referents. It can involve collective action like mutual learning and group interactions or rituals, which enhances the consumers' competencies. It can be argued that co-creation and personalized consumer experiences is key to value creation both for the consumer and the tourism industry. Hence, the interaction between the tourist mediators and the consumer is becoming the locus of value creation both before, during and after the vacation. Facing various tourist contexts and various relations would have affect on tourists. Some would argue that relations differ depending on what context a group is facing (Lindberg, 2009). A group of friends could face different roles being in nature than being in the city. The context of nature may involve different relations with objects and others that may demand different skills and endurance than the common life in the city or vice versa. This is how immersion may depend on of how a group works together, cooperates, learn from each other, and strive for common goals during experiences. A guide could also make a difference if s/he has the empathy to interpret tourists so that co-creation can take place.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This conceptual paper contributes to the debate advocating a holistic perspective for tourist experiences. Applying a multi-relational approach emphasizes understanding tourists as relational beings that cannot be separated from the world. The relational ontology provides focus onto everyday life. Hence, we argue that the tourist experience and how people become immersed must be seen in relation to the lived meaning of people, not separated from it. A multi-relational perspective will have consequence for tourism research because researchers will apply a broadened perspective that span beyond the present situation and activity. In order to answer the question of why tourists become immersed, the researcher needs to investigate relevant aspects of the informant's past and future for understanding meaning related tourist experiences at present. Thus, the researcher becomes a partner in disclosing relational and temporal aspects that affect the experience. The main focus is on how the tourists interpret and understand the tourist experience, and not on how one describes and explains the activity itself. Introducing this perspective also involves consequences for tourism enterprises. They need multi-relational understanding about their customers in order to facilitate meaningful experiences and immersion. Segmentation based on increased knowledge about the customers, combined with a better understanding of the immersion process, will strengthen the co-creational process during tourist experiences and hence increase the locus of value creation within tourism.

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TOURISTS' SOUVENIR BUYING BEHAVIOR AND RETAILERS' CONSCIOUSNESS OF EGYPT VISITORS SOUVENIR BUYING PROFILE

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ABSTRACT

The global trend highlighted the importance of tourism shopping that is widely recognized as a niche market of tourism and considered one of the primary sources of tourism income. Tourism destinations are refocusing their marketing strategies to attract a huge number of visitors seeking holidays and experience more in tune with their personal needs, preferences and lifestyles. The aim of the research is to examine the factors influencing souvenir buying behavior among foreigners visiting Egypt and to explore weakness of souvenir retailers' marketing strategies in Egypt. A field survey based on, a quantitative approach using questionnaires as a tool to investigate Egypt visitors' souvenir buying behavior, their opinions and level of satisfaction. As well as, a qualitative approach conducting semi-structured interviews to assess marketing strategies implemented by souvenirs retailers in Egypt were applied.

Key Words: Tourism Souvenirs, buying behavior, decision making, retailers, Egypt.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior is clearly a crucial issue today, in an era when marketing theory is dominated by the concept of consumer-led marketing, and where tourism destination must meet the demands of their visitors if they are to thrive. Cohen (1991) stated that to understand a consumer's buying behavior is to understand how that person interacts with the marketing mix, where each individual considers the product/ service on offer, in relation to their own culture, attitude, personal learning and personal perception. The core concept of buying behavior is the decision-making process. Decision making is said to be a psychological construct. This means that although a decision can never be seen, it can infer from observable behavior that a decision has been made. Most theorists and practitioners are talking about consumers becoming more sophisticated and demanding, and this idea is driving much new product development in tourism including souvenirs.

TOURISM AND SOUVENIRS

Since the beginning of travel, souvenirs have been central to the tourist experience (Wicks et al., 2004). Indeed souvenirs are universally associated with tourism, as a commercially produced and purchased object, to remind the buyer of the experience. Selling souvenirs has always been part of the tourism experience and contributes to the viability of the retail trade in many tourist destination areas (Jansen-Verbeke, 1998). Tourists often spend more money on shopping than on food, lodging, and other entertainment (Timothy & Butler, 1995). Also, shopping opportunities are a major attraction drawing tourists to many less developed countries where the prices of goods are generally low (Wick et al., 2004). According to Heung and Cheng (2000), tourism and marketing literature discusses the importance of tourist retail expenditures to local economies. As a result, it is essential that retailers selling to tourists recognize and respond to the preferences of tourists in regard to souvenir merchandise assortment and selection and attributes of the retail store.

Hitchcock and Teague (2002) defined souvenirs as the material counterpart of travels, events, relationships and memories of all kinds and a souvenir's "function is to store or stimulate memories". In some situations, souvenirs are distributed as unbranded products, presented in store using their generic names. In others, souvenirs are directly distributed as the result of a location or attraction. The tourists who buy a souvenir at each of these locations may have very different motivations for travel. Additionally, souvenir prices vary from an inexpensive curio to fine arts, jewelry, or clothing costing hundreds of dollars (Swanson & Horridge, 2005). From the tourist perspective, the right souvenir assortment offered by retailers must be tangible articles that evolve the intangible memories of their experiences (Littrell et al., 1994). Taken from the retailer perspective, the desired merchandise mix must satisfy preferences of the target market and be financially productive (Rupe & Kunz, 1998).

EGYPT SOUVENIRS MARKET

Egypt held a degree of fascination for its visitors because of its famous monuments as the Egyptians were one of the first major civilizations to codify design elements in art and architecture. Khan Al Khalili is considered one of the biggest bazaar areas in the Middle East. It is located east of Cairo, the capital. It is more than a market, which combines hundreds of shops. Craftsmen, retailers and wholesalers, all gathered along its narrow alleys. This area existed since the 14th century, as this part of Cairo was a spot where the caravans stopped to rest and trade before they continued their journey. Most of the souvenirs provided are exact imitations of artifacts made in ancient Egypt, thousands of years ago. They include; copper carving products , brass plates , Egyptian cotton garments , silverware (Jewelry , cartouches, artifacts), golden ornaments, papyrus papers and paintings, perfume essence sold in oriental bottles, Islamic crafts, post cards and other handmade items , in addition to the tasty Egyptian food and spices. The average expenditure of visitors in Egypt in the year 2009 showed that shopping and souvenir had second highest percentage less than accommodation (EFTC, 2009). Therefore souvenir shopping is an attractive activity for foreigners visiting Egypt. Furthermore souvenirs are one potential motivation to stimulate the spending of visitors.

METHODOLOGY

The Study included two sample groups: Tourists (n= 82) who had purchased souvenir goods and retailers (n= 10) who sold souvenir goods as a part of their respective businesses. The tourist population was tourists who were visiting Cairo. A randomly selected tourist sample was used. Respondents younger than age 15 were automatically excluded. Tourist questionnaires were distributed to tourists during their visits to souvenir shops located nearby the Pyramid Plateau attraction site and others located in Khan Al Khalili market down town the city. The tourist questionnaire included four sections. The first section was concerned with general questions such as the purpose of visitors' trip, their length of stay, with whom are they travelling, are they interested in souvenir purchasing. The second section was concerned with Souvenir merchandise, asking tourists how likely are they to buy different souvenir products. Tourists were asked how important it was to purchase (for self or others) souvenir items. The third section was focusing on the souvenir store, both sections 2 and 3 included 5-point Likert-like scales ranging from 5, *Very Important to You, or Extremely satisfied* to 1, *Not Important at all or terrible and Unhappy*. The fourth section was concerned with Egypt visitors' profile, demographic questions such as gender, age, average income and nationality. The survey was conducted over three non consecutive weeks in September 2010. A pilot study was conducted on questionnaires to ensure questions and procedures would work properly for the main study. The researchers randomly selected 20 sample tourists. This pretest highlighted that respondents do not like to fill "demographic questions" such as name and average income, so the name was removed from the form and the income level was kept optional.

The retailer population was also randomly selected. Semi structured interviews were conducted for the retailer sample. Questions were used to explore the characteristics of souvenir buying behaviors. At the same time, the interviews explored how retailers managed with the behaviors of their market. The souvenir retailers were asked to specify 1) Who are their customers? 2) What do their customers buy? 3) When do their customers buy? 4) Where do their customers buy? 5) Who participate in the buying process? 6) Why do they buy souvenirs? and 7) How retailers market their products?.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive analysis such as frequency, mean and standard deviation were conducted to examine respondents' demographic profiles, purpose of travel and shopping related characteristics, affected factors, decision-making, attitudes to and satisfaction with souvenir shopping. SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Sciences, version 18) was the statistical analysis package used to analyze findings. Qualitative data analysis focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text (Tesch, 1990). Qualitative Content Analysis goes beyond merely counting words to examining language intensely for the purpose of classifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings (Weber, 1990). Data were read word by word to derive codes by first highlighting the exact words from the text that appear to capture key thoughts or concepts. Next, the researchers approached the text by making notes of their first impressions, thoughts, and initial analysis. As this process continues, labels for codes emerge that are reflective of more than one key thought. These often come directly from the text and are then become the initial coding scheme. Codes then are sorted into categories based on how different codes are related and linked. These emergent categories are to organize and group codes into meaningful clusters (Patton, 2002). Data obtained during interviews was recorded either written or through audio recording. All conversations and interviews were conducted in Arabic language. It was found useful to begin by coding text according to the specific research questions used to frame the interview. The purpose of this step was to

facilitate subsequent analysis by identifying all of the text associated with a particular elicitation or a specific question. In contrast to basic coding, the researchers attempted to use respondents' own terms.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There were 53 females and 29 males among the respondents, representing 64.6 % and 35.3 % of the total respectively. The two domain age groups were 45-54 and above 55, accounting for 59.8 % of the respondents. Only 8.5%, or seven respondents, were 24 years of age or younger. The respondents who earned \$30,000 - \$50,000 or more than \$90,000 per year dominated the income range, representing 29.3% and 31.7 % respectively. Only 8.5% of the respondents had an annual income which fell into the income range of \$51,000-70,000 per year.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents (N=82)

<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Annual income</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Male	29	35.3	Less than \$30,000	15	18.3
Female	53	64.6	\$30,000-50,000	24	29.3
<i>Age</i>			\$51,000-70,000	7	8.5
15-24	7	8.5	\$71,000-90,000	10	12.2
25-34	10	12.2	More than \$90,000	26	31.7
35-44	15	18.3			
45-54	18	22			
55 or above	31	37.8			

The findings revealed that most of respondents buying souvenirs were travelling for leisure (63.11%), while (26.8%) were in business trips. Their average length of stay ranges from 6 to 10 days (61.13%), except those who were visiting Cairo for a one day trip (19.17%) as part of their Mediterranean cruise trip which stops in Alexandria's Port. Respondents buy souvenirs sometimes (61.75%), followed by hardly ever (20.25%), every time (12.25%) and then (5.75%) never buy souvenirs. A great percentage of tourists (72.2%) preferred souvenirs that are easily portable, relatively inexpensive and usable upon returning home. Three product attributes were most important to tourists: value (range and quality), display characteristics (color, display, and shopping process environment) and uniqueness. The other components that influence tourists' spending are price, fashion, sales personnel and service provided. Authenticity was one of the most important factors that affect tourists' buying intentions. Tourists want to identify the local character to the souvenir. They prefer symbolic and manufactured products that are made in the local area and handcrafts that have traditional and cultural meaning. Some tourists are concerned with the cultural and historical integrity or accuracy of a craft. A high percentage (52.31%) of respondents raises the issue concerning the importation of Egypt souvenirs from china, as only a few souvenirs were produced locally. The results revealed some problems or weaknesses generated by respondents such as; 1) the unattractiveness and the un-organization of souvenir stores which make it difficult for them to choose among various items especially within their restricted shopping time , 2) Low quality and poor finishing of souvenir products, 3) bargaining and over pricing as their comments focused on the inexistence of fixed prices which result lack of trust during the buying process .The findings suggest that price is a critical variable in souvenir-choice decisions, but that shoppers often are willing to accept a price range which seems subjectively reasonable instead of attempting to search for distinctively lowest prices. Also, respondents stressed the problem concerning 4) the aggressive selling, pushing them to buy especially from the souvenir stalls located near attraction sites. The objective of purchasing was examined and concluded that respondents bought souvenirs for memory (56.32%), then as gifts for family and friends (19.20%), (17.36%) for personal utility and (7.12%)for other reasons. The results proved that in each stage of the buying process, decision making was influenced by internal factors such as demographic, economic and psychological aspects, in addition to the external factors related to the marketing mix. As the highest mean was for sales personnel (mean=3.37), then product (mean=3.31), price (mean=3.07), place (mean=2.99) and promotion (mean=2.94) respectively.

As from the retailers' interviews, the study concluded that souvenir retailers are not targeting specific groups, they justified their response by their provision of various souvenir types and therefore they attract tourists from different age, gender, nationality, social and educational levels...etc. They believe that providing more choices of souvenirs equals more opportunity to attract various types of customers. Some retailers' answers came to emphasize the difference observed between males and females when buying souvenirs; as females normally take more time thinking, comparing and asking more information about each item especially in terms of quality, design and when buying gold Jewelry. On the other hand, males often purchase souvenirs according to their needs or as gift obligation. Retailers' answers concerning what does the tourist buy, revealed a high agreement upon the purchase of easily portable items such as papyrus and cotton t-shirts with tourists' names printed in pharaonic alphabet in addition to silver artifacts and jewelry such as upon request cartouche necklaces. In terms

of timing, souvenir purchasing was directly concerned with tourism seasons and holidays. During high seasons, souvenir retailers had more potential to sell their products than in low seasons. Egypt high season differs from one destination area to another; the retailers' answers came to confirm that with no doubt terrorism attacks severely affect their business. Also, there are different peak selling times throughout the day in different areas. Some retail shops are concerned with the tour programs of travel companies. Souvenir retailers fully agree that large crowds lead to good sales. The most different result was from retailers who had souvenir booths in shopping malls, as the peak selling was night time. Concerning the place, the research seeks why retailers selected these locations for their shops. Most of the retailers' shops were located near attraction sites such as the pyramid plateau, Mohamed Ali's citadel...etc The large scale shops are mostly located on main roads but not in close location to attraction sites like souvenir stalls. Retailers' answers stressed the problem that large scale shops do not provide appropriate parking lots to supply tour groups. Some of the retailers mentioned that they have selected their current locations near other tourism business sectors such as restaurants, hotels...etc. Souvenir shops located in department stores depend mainly upon tour programs that include shopping malls in their itineraries. Concerning who participate in the buying process, retailers have divided them into two groups, direct buyers who intend to buy souvenirs for their families, friends or for themselves, here the buyer must decide what product is the most suitable to buy. And indirect buyers who collect souvenirs from retailers such as tour guides. Results revealed that the sales personnel are one powerful factor that influences the souvenir purchasing decision. The sales person is also the one who can change the tourists' mind, especially for a group of tourists who are not sure what to buy. The assistance and suggestions from salesmen, affect the final decision. On the other hand, failure to sell might occur also, if the buyers ignore the salesman. Some retailers mentioned that tour guides also are considered a powerful factor helping tourists to choose among varieties of souvenirs. As people have different needs and life styles, findings showed that the purpose of souvenir purchasing varies, from one person to another. Most retailers' responses indicated that their customers buy souvenirs to fulfill their personal needs. Some souvenirs are purchased and used while they are traveling in Egypt such as cotton t-shirts with pharaonic themes. Thus, souvenirs can be necessary products or fashionable products, which can be used during their tourism visits. Another reason found was that Egypt visitors buy antique items for their own collecting purposes. These antique products are mostly high value and high price. However, those buyers are willing to pay to satisfy their needs. Gifting purpose as it was mentioned by some retailers was the main reason for buying souvenirs. When anybody travels to other places, normally they have to buy something for their families, friends, or colleagues. It was noticed, by retailers, that this group of buyers doesn't buy high price products, but they look for nice packaging and items easy to carry. Few retailers added that some of their customers purchased souvenirs for re-selling, or they visit the shops asking for business agreement. The results showed that most of souvenir retailers had a wrong understanding of the concept of marketing. Most of them run their business without focusing on specific groups of customers. They are not considering advertising as a tool to maximize their revenues and at the same time they are facing over stocking of goods.

CONCLUSION

The research revealed that tourist buying behavior was affected by the mass manipulation of commodity and standardization of products. The relationship between tourist buying intentions and attitude towards souvenirs was affected by souvenir quality, price and tourist- seller interaction and communication. Results showed that most of the souvenir providers in Egypt never study the market before starting their business. Therefore, under the intense competition among souvenir retailers, the key to their survival depends on their ability to study the points of weaknesses they are facing, seeking innovative marketing tools, analyzing and fulfilling their customers' needs and preferences. As without understanding these needs, souvenir retailers will not be able to address their marketing plan and to remain viable in today's competitive tourism souvenir marketplace.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Generally, the opportunity of souvenirs industry's growth is directly related to the growth of tourism industry, therefore retailers should first be aware of this growth as simply said if there are tourists; it means that there are souvenirs' customers also. Souvenir retailers have to study the trend of the market in order to seek their opportunity to sale suitable products. They need to focus on their potential target groups. Frey (2003) pointed out that if you say that your target customer is everybody then nobody will be your customer. They have to find their unique selling points in order to position their products, as different from competitors. This differentiation could be created in many ways, such as; product differential, shop differences, and sales promotion variety. They must also gather information about competitors and plan a differentiated appeal. Souvenir retailers can add a value to souvenir by offering a chance for interested visitors to make their own souvenirs. Therefore, visitors will perceive more value to such items, joining these activities. Retailers must design their marketing mix to make prospects aware of and knowledgeable about the features and benefits of their products or brands. They must apply a pull selling strategy that may require high spending on advertising, printed brochures and guidebooks and other tourist promotional tools to build up consumer demand for a souvenir product. The

publishing should include: the shop name (brand), list of souvenirs available (with pictures), location (with easily readable map), and contact numbers. The listing of products sold would help to inform buyers of souvenir specifications that can be purchased and can help them to find souvenirs they are looking for. Moreover, the information published can be used to create greater communication, which can aid in overcoming language barriers. The research results may help souvenir retailers to know that visitors' travelling trends are changing and that it is important to note the development of the internet, as tourists can go online and search information about different types of souvenirs and they may even buy souvenirs online. So a further suggestion is providing shops' websites that should consistently be updated. Also, retailers can partner with lodging facilities, restaurants and tourism boards to encourage positive shopping experiences for the tourist. Souvenir retailers in Egypt may start by applying a SWOT analysis as to detect (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) existing in the Egyptian souvenir market.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although there are many food products well known for visitors as souvenirs, it is important to note that 'food and drink' souvenirs were excluded from the targeted sample of the study. As Egypt's foreign visitors generally depend on food and drink served to them where they are accommodated or in specified restaurants and cafeterias included in their visit programs. The small sample size makes it unfeasible to use more complicated and comprehensive statistical techniques, which are necessary to show the causes underlying tourists' buying behavior and not just the descriptive results as reported by this study. So this study is not meant to be an end, but tentative research that offers an inside perspective of Egypt tourists' shopping behavior. Further efforts should be dedicated to increase the representative significance of the results through a wider sample size. Further research to be done concerning behavior of souvenir consumers and business practices of souvenir retailers may include; exploring the role played by Egypt's tourism authority to revive retailers' local businesses. Discussing how far souvenir selling process in Egypt may be affected by recent political instability which may appear among the threats faced if applying the SWOT analysis.

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AMERICAN CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS DIFFERENT AIRLINE COMPANIES CHANNELS: A COMPARISON OF TRANSACTION METHODS

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ABSTRACT

Consumers are increasingly challenging better performance from companies, and these demands are being met through improvements in technology and flexibility of services. As a result of recent progresses and developments in electronic marketing, the physical locations of brick and mortar businesses have become less significant since transactions can now be accomplished in cyberspace. In this paper, consumer attitudes towards on-line transactions for airline industry are examined. Despite the growing acceptance of alternative delivery channels, the travel agencies remain an essential part of the customer-airline company. It can be argued that the travel agencies not only represents an opportunity for implementing costumer relationship, but it also remains an important point of contact for sales, service, and consultative interactions. Data has been analyzed using factor analysis technique and the study presents us with a broad picture of level of preference of airline customers among the available distribution channels and sheds light on how airline companies should allocate resources among the different channels. The empirical study findings indicate that on-line transactions for airline industry will gain in importance and its use will accelerate at a faster rate in the coming years.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1995, the Internet has become the way of life for millions of people worldwide. Accordingly, number of regular internet users became 130.6 million at the end of 1999; and, the industry analysts have estimated that the number of Internet users will be increased one million every month. With this rate of increase, there are almost 2 billion Internet users in 2010, and the Internet has provided consumers more control in accessing information on products and services (Rob and Leung, 2000 and internetworldstats.com, 2010). The reasons of this worldwide acceptance of the Internet are its benefits to its users. It can be used 24/7/365 times within a year, offers lower prices and large variety of goods and services; it is effective ways of communication, used for online banking and college education, product searching and online training/seminars, and researching and buying on line (Besette, 2010). In addition, another study using multiple regression analysis showed evidence that security/privacy, word of mouth, good online experience, quality of information, and brand reputation are significant elements affecting online brand trust in the airline industry in Malaysia (Alam and Yasin, 2010).

However, the use of the Internet as an airline ticket purchase channel is not fully developed, because consumer use the Internet for research of airlines and airfare , not for purchase of tickets (Castillo Manzano and López Valpuesta, 2009), Consumers pull for online content - they decide when, where, what, and how much commercial content they wish to view. Accordingly, the Internet allows consumers to reach a large variety of products and services from companies around the world (Ko et al 2004 and Lim et al, 2010). A study (Castillo Manzano and López Valpuesta, 2009) demonstrated that the profile of passengers who are more likely to make their bookings online is that of young person of between 15-30 years of age, more likely to be female, a students with high academic level, a habitual traveler, who is booking a trip that is not very complex or is to a destination that is already known. On the other hand, male internet users are 50-65 years old, on a business or short trip and requiring the services of a travel agency. In addition, Lee and Cheng (2010) showed evidence that there is no significant difference between online and offline agencies in terms of total customer satisfaction; however, online agencies offers lower prices and faster service leading to switching from offline to online travel agencies.

Similar to all online purchases, airline ticket purchase does not immune to taking risk. Therefore, studies suggest that the most appropriate and effective way of minimizing online risk is through establishing trust (Kolsaker, Lee-kelly and choy, 2004). Accordingly, Ruz-Mafe, Sanz-Bias and Aidas-Manzona (2009) in their study identified risk dimensions as *performance risk* that consumer can fear product and services acquired may not meet their expectations. *Psychological risk* means fear of loss of self esteem due to wrong choice of

product/service. *Time risk* which is wasting time associated with online ticket purchase, *Social risk* is unacceptable choice that it is considered embarrassing, and *Privacy risk* which is personal information that may be shared with others without the person's knowledge. Another study (Kim, Qu and Kim, 2009) stated that security risk is the most important predictor to overall risk regarding online purchase of air ticket. On the other hand, non-purchasers perceived a higher risk than online purchaser in terms of performance, security, financial, psychological, and time risks.

The travel industry was strike during the recession as consumers and business travelers scaled back spending. Because of the diminishing waning revenue, airlines started to cut capacity and costs and charged customers for everything from beverages to checked luggage. With little left to slashed, the airlines have been looking at their distribution-system costs as the next big frontier in terms of cutting expenses (Tibken, 2010). In recent years, airline companies have increasingly adopted internet-based systems to conduct traveling operations with other businesses, private consumers, and government departments/agencies. The airline industry is continuously enhancing and expanding services on the internet, including flight booking, payment options, electronic check-in, tracking of ticket prices and lost items, flight schedules, monitoring transaction history, costumers' loyalty programs etc. As well, more hybrid travel arrangements will grow attractiveness across diverse population strata. The results also show significant differences in the selection criteria of airline companies' on-line customer and traditional customers. This empirical study; therefore, offers important policy suggestions to current airline company managers in the study area. The customer survey in addition showed that customer channel preferences are different from actual usage rates.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

A growing number of the consumers recognize that online functions save time, and on the other hand airline industry believes that the Internet ties their best customers more closely to their organization. On the other hand despite the efforts of airline companies institutions to get consumers to take advantage of Internet purchases the travel agencies remain an essential part of the customer-airline company. It can be argued that the travel agencies not only represents an opportunity for implementing costumer relationship, but it also remains an important point of contact for sales, service, and consultative interactions. As a result of recent progresses and developments in electronic marketing, the physical location of several companies has become less significant since transactions can now be accomplished in cyberspace. Internet has provided consumers more control in accessing information on products and services. Consumers pull for online content - they decide when, where, what, and how much commercial content they wish to view.

In this paper, consumer attitudes towards on-line purchasing for airline industry are examined. Furthermore the purpose of this study is to examine the online ticket purchase behavior by using a conceptual model, which incorporates various factors (such as price perception, convenience, security/brand, perceived risk, involvement, familiarity, variety of selection) that assumed to influence the online ticket purchase behavior. A research model based on the above literature review of different factors related with the online purchase attitude is presented in Figure 1. As you can follow in Figure 1 the consequences of consumer attitude to an online tickets site is illustrated in this model. A variety of factors that might affect a consumer's overall trust are listed under five major sources of trust. Additionally if the mentioned factors are effective on the intention, willingness and recommendation of online ticket patronage.

METHODOLOGY

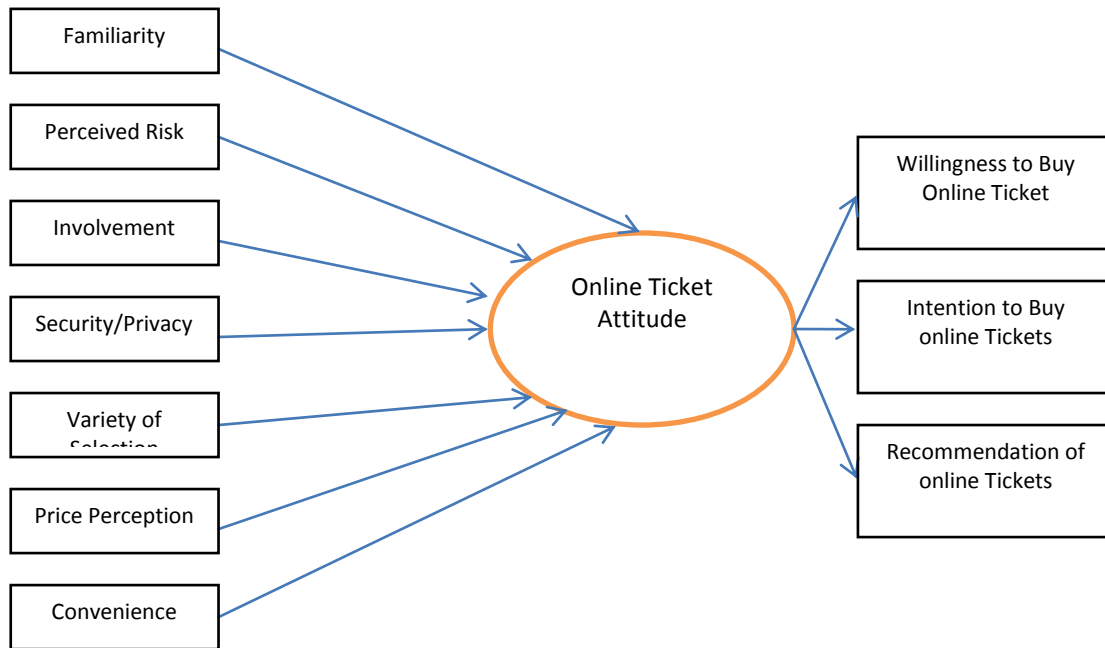
Data Collection

The data for this study was collected throughout self-administered questionnaires that were administrated in rural part of Western Pennsylvania (Beaver, Allegheny, and Butler counties). Interviews were conducted by marketing research students under the supervision of one of the researchers in each locality. Respondents were randomly contacted by telephone at their workplace or their home and asked if they wanted to participate to this study. A total of 325 questionnaires were retrieved, but, only 319 usable questionnaires were attained due to incompleteness and other survey operations problems.

Measurement Development and Questionnaire Design

A variety of dependent and independent constructs and measures have been employed to identify the drivers of online ticket attitudes. There is no recognized design that can be directly applied to the constructs of consumer

Figure 1: Online Airline Tickets Attitude Model



attitudes towards online tickets proposed in this study. The measures used in this study came from a number of different sources. Some items of constructs were developed by the researchers, while some were adopted or modified from previous researches. (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Measure Used for Online Ticket Purchase Attitudes

<u>Perceived Risk</u>		<u>Convenience</u>	
1. My monetary loss from purchasing airline ticket from the web is high	(Harcar and Yucelt 2010).	1. Airline websites stores are easy buying experiences (24/7/365 working hours/days)	(Harcar and Yucelt 2010).
2. I trust online web site more than traditional travel agent	Syed and Norjaya (2010).	2. Generally online reservation and purchasing looks easy to navigate through	
3. My expected failure of service performance if I buy service from the airline website.	Shim et. al (2009)	3. I always find online ticket purchase have more options than travel agencies	
4. I do not think it is safe to buy service from the airline website		4. I prefer travel agencies to buy tickets because of easiness to purchase (R)	
5. I felt the risk associated with buying from this airline website is high		<u>Involvement</u>	
6. I feel that online purchases are risky because they may lead to financial loss for me		1. I am somewhat of an expert when it comes to find cheapest fares	Adapted from (Kara et.al 2009)
<u>Security/Privacy</u>		2. People think of me as a good source of finding information on airline tickets	
1. I felt secure in providing personal information for purchasing airline tickets online.	Syed and Norjaya (2010).	3. I enjoy giving people tips on how to find best deals on internet	
2. Websites of airlines company has adequate security features		4. I am somewhat of an expert when it comes to find cheapest fares	
3. I feel that my privacy is protected when I'm purchasing ticket online.		5. People think of me as a good source of finding information on airline tickets	
4. I trust airlines websites with respect to my credit card information		6. I enjoy giving people tips on how to find best deals on internet	
5. Assures me that I will not be placed on mass mailing lists.		<u>Variety of Choices</u>	

Price Perception

- 1. Travel agencies charges high services fees
- 2. Airline websites have always special deals
- 3. All ticket fares online/offline are basically the same in price

Adapted from (Kara et.al 2009)

- 1. I find better selections in online travel websites
- 2. I buy tickets online because of wide selection of destination
- 3. I find many different ways to get my destination with online reservations

New items

Familiarity

- 1.I buy airline ticket always online
- 2. I am very familiar with the various online tickets websites
- 3. My experiences with purchasing online were always problematic (R).
- 4. All my previous online airline ticket purchases have gone well

Adapted from H. Y. Ha, and H. Perks, (2005)

(R) reverse coding

The questionnaires were divided into four parts. The first part deals with general usage patterns of the Internet and examines how frequent respondents use the Internet in a week and the amount of online ticket they buy on the Internet. The second part is independent variables were online ticket perceptions. Each item was formulated as a statement for which the subjects had to indicate the extent of agreement on a 7-point Likert scale going from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. The third part in order to measure online ticket attitude three questions a) willingness to buy, b) recommendation and c) probability to consider buying online in the future were used with a five point scale from (5) definitely willing to buy to (1) definitely not willing to buy in the future. Final part includes a number of demographic information of the respondents. In the questionnaire the items were randomly ordered and the 22 items are listed in Figure 2.

FINDINGS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents and Online Ticket Purchase

The data set consists of 136 online tickets purchasers (47.4 %) and 151 traditional travel agency purchasers (52.6 %). To assess the statistical significance of differences in demographics and online ticket usage cross tabulation and a Chi-square test of association were performed. A close examination of the profile depicts that while online ticket customer and travel agency customers were statistically significant differences in demographic characteristics. Online ticket users were mostly male, high income earners consisted of younger age group, held more professional, and trade related type of jobs, craftsman, students and unemployed.

The sample consisted of about 49.5 male and 50.5 female bank customers. Online ticket web service female users are 38.6 % of the total female sample while 56.3% of male respondents are online ticket users. The ratios for nonusers related to gender are 61.4% female versus 43.7% of males. About 51.7% of 25 years and younger group were online ticket users, online ticket users have the highest ratio 57.3 % of the 26-45 year group, between 45-65 years old group account (47.7%) for online ticket practices while over 65 years old group have the lowest usage rate (12.5 %). Online ticket users comprised 53.6% of university graduates, while the ratios are 60.9% for vocational schools, 44.6% for high schools, 55.6 for secondary school and %16 for primary schools. With regard to occupation, 55.4 % of professionals were using online banking.

As well as demographic time spent on the internet were also investigated. There were statistically significant differences between online ticket users and non-users on internet usage.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study presents us with a broad picture of level of preference of airline customers among the available distribution channels and sheds light on how airline companies should allocate resources among the different channels. The empirical study findings indicate that on-line transactions for airline industry will gain in importance and its use will accelerate at a faster rate in the coming years. As well, more hybrid travel arrangements will grow attractiveness across diverse population strata. The results also show significant differences in the selection criteria of airline companies' on-line customer and traditional customers. This

empirical study also offers important policy suggestions to current airline company managers in the study area. The customer survey in addition showed that customer channel preferences are different from actual usage rates.

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WINE PACKAGING ELEMENTS: DO THEY IMPACT CONSUMER'S PURCHASING BEHAVIOR?

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ABSTRACT

Packaging design of food products in general and wine specifically aims to influence consumers' sensory expectation and taste evaluation (Deliza and MacFie, 1996; Lange et al., 2002; Szolnoki, 2007). Orth and Malkewitz (2008) report five distinct holistic packaging design styles for which consumers have different product associations. Consumers' liking of a wine was found to be influenced by the label design and labeling information (Szolnoki, 2007). Also when actually choosing wine, consumers were found to react to label style, label colour and labeling information (Lockshin et al., 2009; Mueller et al., 2009; Mueller et al., 2010). Packaging wine involves the science, art and technology of bottling, enclosing or protecting products in the best medium for distribution, storage, presentation of goods for sale, and consumption. It includes as well the art of labeling, the closure treatment, the naming of the product and the choice of the shape and colour of the bottle. The wine's origin is also a valuable parameter. One approach to studying food choice comes from psychological research into attitude and behaviour relationships. Referring to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), it is assumed that most part of the influences on food choice are mediated by the beliefs and attitudes held by an individual. Beliefs about the nutritional quality and health effects of a food may be factors more important than the actual nutritional quality and health consequences in determining an individual's choice. Concerning wine, the beliefs about its health consequences play a major role. Indeed, wine can be both a good friend (in moderation, providing physical and social benefits) but a cruel enemy too (in excess, causing moral and physical declines). That is, one of the most prominent factors influencing consumer's wine choice has been found to be perceived quality (Hauck, 1991). Quality can be perceived by human senses, as sight: for food products, and especially for wine, that means packaging and labels are some of the sources consumers refer to in order to judge the quality of the product and to make a choice.

The purpose of the paper is to :

- to succeed a most recent research concerning wine consumer's buying preferences
- to develop a critical assessment among the given bibliography with the findings from the research
- to analyze the results stating a possible new consumer's behaviour

Key Words: wine packaging, wine marketing, label,

INTRODUCTION

Wine packaging has received increasing research attention in the last few years (Barber, Almanza, & Donovan, 2006; Boudreaux & Palmer, 2007; Orth & Malkewitz, 2006 and 2008; Rocchi & Stefani, 2005; Szolnoki, 2007). Appearance and packaging of food products and wine play an important role in influencing consumer perception and subsequent acceptance (Imram, 1999). The first taste is almost always with the eye. Extrinsic packaging attributes provide consumers with social and aesthetic utility and strongly influence expectations of sensory perception (Deliza & MacFie, 1996; Gianluca, Donato, & Cavicchi, 2006; Sara R. Jaeger, 2006; Lange, Martin, Chabanet, Combris, & Issanchou, 2002). Those expectations have been shown to be very robust against later disconfirmation when consumers actually taste the product (Cardello & Sawyer, 1992). Despite what we know about the underlying psychological influence packaging exerts on product evaluation, contradictory findings

were found on the relative importance of wine packaging compared to other extrinsic product cues as brand name, origin and price.

Several studies directly measuring the importance of attributes conclude that wine packaging design is rather unimportant (Goodman, Lockshin, & Cohen, 2005, 2006, 2007; Mueller, Lockshin, Louviere, & Hackman, 2007). Other studies find that strong consumer impressions are evoked by wine packaging design elements (Boudreaux & Palmer, 2007; Orth & Malkewitz, 2006) and that during in depth focus groups consumers reveal they consider packaging design features when making purchase decisions (Rocchi & Stefani, 2005; Szolnoki, 2007). A first indicative study including a relatively small subset of packaging attributes without considering product price by Szolnoki (2007) reveals that the importance of wine packaging designs differ when measured directly and indirectly.

It further can be expected that the importance of wine packaging design and preferred attribute levels differ for different wine consumers as empirically confirmed for other food products (Deliza, MacFie, & Hedderley, 2003; Silayoi & Speece, 2007). Nevertheless, the majority of previous wine packaging studies did not consider consumer preference heterogeneity, which is managerially important to target different consumer segments.

Thus, a major unresolved research question is how wine packaging preference and importance can be reliably and validly measured. To answer this question we will first discuss prior findings on different psychological processes initiated by visual and verbal information and review previous empirical studies comparing direct verbal and indirect visual attribute importance measurement. To test our two research propositions we compare wine packaging design importance and importance variance in two experimental settings – a direct verbal Best Worst Scaling study with an indirect graphical discrete choice experiment. We will discuss the validity and reliability of both methods and conclude how graphical choice experiments can provide the wine industry with extremely valuable advice for product development and consumer targeting.

PACKAGING DESIGN AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

In general, packaging design is known to communicate with the consumer (Nickels and Jolson 1976). It holds information about product attributes in written form – i.e. factual information about origin or grape variety. Beyond that it communicates impressions of brand personality (Orth and Malkewitz 2008). Holding the factual information constant different designs may result in very different perceptions of the wine's attributes. Consequently, we have to ask how different product attributes like e.g. origin may be expressed by packaging designs. Furthermore, with the already established influence of involvement on choice we also have to ask if and how high and low involved consumers differ in their perception of these packaging design differences. In the following we will summarise the existing literature on these issues and construct tentative propositions.

Dual process models of information processing establish involvement's importance in perception (Chaiken, Liberman and Eagly 1989; Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann 1983). While high involvement consumers with high ability and great motivation follow a systematic/ central route in their information processing, low involvement consumers rely on a heuristic/ peripheral route to arrive at their judgements. This is in accordance with general wine behaviour described earlier. High involvement consumers engage closely with product information whereas low involved consumers only use a fraction of the information given. Nancarrow et al. (1998) and Lammers (2000) apply these models to packaging design perception. Both studies however stay confined to displaying high involvement consumers engaging with the written information more closely while their low involvement counterparts are more easily persuaded by purely visual factors. Consequently, they do not account for subtle effect of visual display proposed here. Miniard et al. (1991) and DeRosia (2008) study different types of visual display in advertising. They identify that highly involved consumers are more attracted by congruent and relevant pictorial content as well as informative textual elements. In contrast, low involved consumers put more importance on the attractiveness of the picture and are much less interested in textual information. We aim to explore whether similar effects exist in wine packaging design perception.

In order to examine packaging design impacts on wine preferences, an understanding of basic perception processes is necessary. In the realm of perception literature we find two competing schools of thought – visual grammar/ rhetoric and Gestalt theory. Visual grammar/ rhetoric tradition posits that consumers process packaging information via sequential, atomistic processing in order to arrive at a composite view (e.g. Durgee 2003). Empirically, studies following this tradition either centre their efforts on one particular component of packaging design such as typeface (Henderson, Giese and Cote 2004), logo (Henderson and Cote 1998), or proportion and shape (Pittard, Ewing and Jevons 2007; Raghubir and Greenleaf 2006). Other studies manipulate a selected number of packaging attributes whilst holding other characteristics constant. By this they can estimate each design feature's particular impact on the composite impression. For instance, researchers have established the impact of packaging design factors on general product beliefs (Bone and France 2001), perceived quality

(Rigaux-Bricmont 1982) and intention to buy (Laboissière et al. 2007). Visual grammar/ rhetoric implicitly guides the study of wine packaging design. Boudreaux and Palmer (2007) manipulate specific parts of wine labels measuring their impact on brand personality. Using a repertory grid method Rocchi and Stefani (2006) find consumer heuristics employed to judge wine packaging design. For instance, a flat bottom will impact negatively on their quality perception as will an uncoordinated design. De Luca and Penco (2006) comparing producer and consumer focus groups find disturbances in the communication process. Producers link different messages to the same visual contents than consumers will do. This study shows that specifically low involved consumer have problems deciphering the 'packaging code' set by producers. Müller and Lockshin (2008) show first indications for different wine packaging preferences of consumer segments. In direct visual measurement, two out of five consumer groups placed the highest importance on packaging design. One preferred minimalist designs whereas the other preferred traditional design featuring chateaux images. Visual grammar / rhetoric research can reveal insights into which cues consumers rely on as well as their particular importance. As shown, some of these studies also include personal variables, relating them to various, but isolated visual packaging design elements. However, this literature fails to recognise holistic brand impressions largely imposed by individual perception and remains detached from actual purchase and consumption situations.

The second school of thought is the Gestalt approach (e.g. Katz 1950; Koffka 1922), which posits perception of visual information as an immediate holistic impression. Since human perception can differ greatly from the objective visual information (Kimchi and Navon 2000), researchers in design studies (Oxman 2002) as well as visual perception (Enns 2004) have favoured this approach. They contend it offers a more satisfying explanation of how consumers process information. With the impression forming in the mind of consumers rather than residing with the visual properties of the packaging design alone we have to ask whether any patterns of perception exist. Ampuero and Vila (2006) present tentative evidence that consumers do indeed recognise and distinguish types of whole packaging designs in a meaningful way. Their conclusions are confirmed for wine by the major study of Orth and Malkewitz (2008).

The authors show consumers' ability to distinguish five fundamental wine packaging archetypes: Massive, Contrasting, Natural, Delicate and Non-Descript (Figure 2). Of these, the first two comprise two variations of bold, modern design; Natural and Delicate comprise more traditional, old-fashioned designs; Non-Descript designs encompass clean, simple designs producing little differentiation. Beyond this basic differentiation, Orth and Malkewitz (2008) can also identify largely congruent brand personality attributes consumers link to wines based on their packaging designs. While incorporating consumer's impressions more strongly than visual grammar/ rhetoric studies do, these studies so far do not link design impressions to consumer involvement or other personal factors nor can they inform us about individual design preferences. Drawing from Miniard et al.'s (1991) as well as DeRosia's (2008) results, we aim to overcome this shortcoming and formulate a tentative proposal on how involvement will influence packaging design preferences for wine.

For this proposal we draw from the Orth and Malkewitz (2008) archetypes combining them with basic insights from dual process models of information processing theories (Chaiken, Liberman and Eagly 1989; Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann 1983) and established preferences for visual display (DeRosia 2008; Miniard, Bhatla, Lord, Dickson and Unnava 1991). Massive and Contrasting designs depict bold, striking, incongruous images with little textual information about origin, quality designation and so on. In many ways they directly oppose traditional wine packaging designs. We expect that they appeal more to low involvement consumers than to high involvement consumers. High involvement consumers will prefer relevant visual content and a high amount of textual information both are not featured by Massive and Contrasting archetypes. For low involved consumers attractiveness is more important. Thus, they would be persuaded more by these designs. Indeed, they might make the product wine more approachable for low involved consumers. In contrast, Delicate and Natural designs represent more traditional wine packaging designs, with line-drawn images of chateaux and vineyards, conventional bottle shapes and more textual information. Consequently, high involvement consumer should prefer these designs. Low involvement consumers instead would rather refrain from these less affective designs. Bottles falling in the Non-Descript category, meanwhile, could elicit similar preferences for both groups. This proposal forms the core of our study; we will discuss and justify the methods used in the next section.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

Given the shortcomings of dominating quantitative approaches in existing research into consumers' perceptions of wine packaging and the exploratory character of this research stemming from the lack of knowledge we face related to consumers' preferences for different designs, a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate. Specifically, we selected the focus group method. This method enables us to bridge the gap between depth interview and observation (Morgan and Spanish 1984; Threlfall 1999), resulting in a deeper understanding of choice processes (Wynberg and O'Brien 1993) and the drivers behind them (Morgan 1997). The focus group method has already proven to be a valuable tool for the investigation of wine consumption and the formation of

quality perceptions (Charters and Pettigrew 2006a; Charters and Pettigrew 2006b; Ritchie 2007; Veale, Quester and Karunaratna 2006). Charters and Pettigrew (2006b) specifically discuss involvement's impact on wine quality perceptions.

High involvement consumers in their study link wine quality mostly to their learned, paradigmatic categories relying on an idea of objective, measurable wine quality. Low involvement consumers instead rely more their subjective taste judgements. Beyond these two very distinct categories of consumers, Charters and Pettigrew (2006b) also introduce a 'medium involvement' group of consumers showing some characteristics of both extremes and possibly being in transit from the low to the high involvement group. While reinforcing the importance of involvement and thus our proposal, this also illustrates the potential exploratory power residing with focus groups.

In total, the study comprises seven focus group discussions, four with low involvement and three with high involvement consumers (Table 1).

Table 1: Focus Group Participants in low involvement groups

Group	Involvement	Gender	Number of Participants	Age-Group	Sample Population
1	Low	all female	7	Mature	Teachers & Students of the Cretan Technical Foundation of Tourism Management (ATEI)
2	Low	all female	5	Young	
3	Low	3 female; 2 male	5	Mature	
4	Low	all female	3	Young	
5	High	3 female; 1 male	4	Young	
6	High	1 female; 2 male	3	Mature	
7	High	All male	4	Mature	

Wine involvement level represented the main differentiator between groups, and was recorded by participants via self-completion questionnaires using well-documented and reliable scales by Lockshin et al. (1997) and Brown et al. (2006). The groups were further divided by age as this variable strongly correlates with life-stage alcohol consumption patterns, thereby enhancing group homogeneity and comfort for participants (Krueger and Casey 2000). In accordance with the aims of the study, the discussion guide was structured according to three main themes. First, to gain an understanding of the social and behavioural context of packaging perceptions as well as to explore their choice procedures, participants were asked to talk generally about their wine consumption and choice habits. Then, more particularly participants were encouraged to discuss packaging perceptions. The final part of the discussion focused more specifically on packaging perceptions and preferences, supported by the use of eleven wine bottle prompts, two examples for each of the five archetypes of (Orth and Malkewitz 2008), plus one very stereotypically wine bottle design. In order to embrace the study's focus on wine without sacrificing a somewhat realistic choice environment, we selected five wine bottles and five bottles from other countries resembling the identified archetypes. After discussing the packaging designs the wine prompts were used to initiate discussions on the participants' perceptions of wine. On average, each focus group discussion lasted about two hours, and were fully recorded and transcribed by the author. The analysis followed the basic principles of grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss 1990) with initial stages using the cognitive mapping approach described by Jones (1985). At the time of writing, only preliminary analysis on the four low involvement and two of the three high involvement groups has been conducted. The next section reports the key findings revealed so far.

WINE LABEL, CHOICE AND AUTHENTICITY

One approach to studying food choice derives from social psychological research into attitude-behaviour relationships. Referring to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), it is assumed that most part of the influences on food choice are mediated by the beliefs and attitudes held by an individual. Beliefs about the nutritional quality and health effects of a food may be factors more important than the actual nutritional quality and health consequences in determining an individual's choice. Concerning wine, the beliefs about its health consequences play a major role. Indeed, wine can be both a good friend (in moderation, providing physical and social benefits) but a cruel enemy too (in excess, causing moral and physical declines). That is, one of the most prominent factors influencing consumer's wine choice has been found to be perceived quality (Hauck, 1991). Quality can be perceived by human senses, as sight: for food products, and especially for wine, that means packaging and labels are some of the sources consumers refer to in order to judge the quality of the product and to make a choice.

With respect to Olson and Jacoby's typology (1973), the label is considered as an extrinsic cue, an attribute which is not part of the physical product. Rocchi and Stefani (2005) found out consumers seem to be affected by

extrinsic cues, such as shape, size and colour of the bottle. On the other hand they consider the dress of the bottle, represented by the set of the other packaging elements (labels, capsules). The label on the bottle signals the producers' names, the types of wines, the origin, the vintage, the level of alcohol, and the government warnings. But it is also placed on goods to make them seem more authentic, to add a quality assurance tag, and even explain their wider context. Such marking helps to make explicit the exchange value of the product (Halewood and Hannam, 2001).

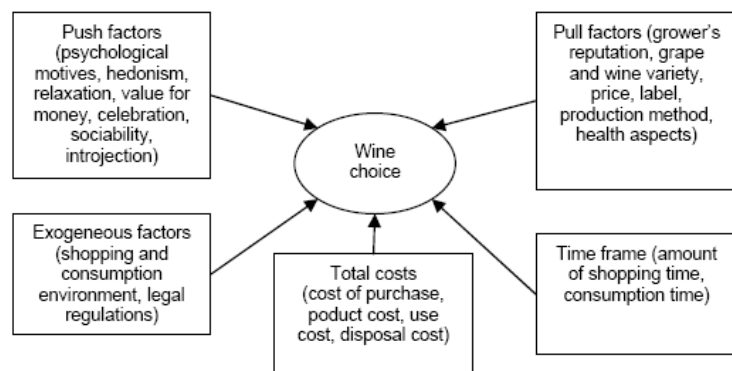
An other factor influencing consumer's wine choice is information. As Marianna (1997) suggests, consumers have become clearly discerning and are demanding more information about the products they buy. People want to know what they are buying and what the product's origins are. In case of wine, the 'where' question is complex and elicits notions of classifications, appellations and the terroir. Indeed, when a winery wants to indicate the geographic pedigree of its wine, it uses a tag on its label called an appellation of origin.

This appellation of origin must meet federal and state legal requirements. It is seen as a sign of quality for reputable production areas, and an assurance to consumers of quality standards. The origins carry significant weight for both producers and consumers, and so much effort goes into protecting and promoting it. For instance, the National Institute of Controlled Appellations created in 1935 made the label "Controlled Appellation" as a sign of authenticity and singularity.

Quality is not the only factor consumers refer to in their choice. Choice is not determined only by physiological or nutritional need (Shepherd, 1999) ; it is influenced by many interrelating factors. There are many factors in the context within which the choice is made that are likely to be very important, such as motivations for instance. In addition to the utilitarian (physical) and symbolic (social) motivation, a third motivation labeled 'experience' must be emphasized, in line with the evolution of consumer behaviour studies of wine consumption. People choose a bottle of wine not only for the taste or for social reasons, but also to live a unique experience (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). Other factors include marketing and economic variables as well as social, cultural, religious or demographic factors (Murcott, 1989). In their summarizing framework, Orth and Krska (2002) identified five factors influencing consumer's choice of bottled wine (Figure 1).

They include push factors, pull factors, exogenous factors and economic restraints (time and money) Besides these situational factors, consumer's choice can be moderated by individual ones. Wine consumption has been seen as moderated by sex: men drink more alcohol than women. It is also moderated by age. It is only between 20 and 25 years old that people begin to appreciate drinking wine (Aigrain et alii., 1996).

Figure 1 – Factors influencing consumer's choice of bottled wine (Orth and Krska, 2002)



CONCLUSIONS

Wine marketers spend billions of dollars annually seeking to enhance consumers' perceptions of value associated with their bottles. Because of the size and the negative evolution of the market, it is critical for them to have a clear understanding of the way the labels on the bottles can influence buying behavior, especially for young consumers. Indeed, although young consumers still account for only a small portion of total consumers, they represent the future consumers for wine producers.

This study was intended to provide a more complete understanding of the influence of the wine packaging for the consumer to buy the wine. As an attempt to extend the research on the influence label of bottled wine can have on consumers' decisions of buying, the current article shows some interesting results. Based on the regression results, the answer the study gives to the research questions can be summarized as follows. Our central finding is that consumers perceive from the label on bottled wine influences the performance risk they perceive while buying the product. Bottles of wine with labels perceived as authentic by young consumers are seen as less risky to buy. New kinds of labels, without any drawing of castle of vineyard for example, or with bright colours, are seen as.

This is not, however, the only one interesting result. Rather, our second major finding is that all the dimensions of authenticity do not affect the consumers' behavior. As original dimension of authenticity influences performance risk, perceived price and purchase intention, reflect of personality and uniqueness dimensions do not influence all the dependant variables. For instance, the fact that the label reflects the consumers' personality does not influence perceived price, while natural dimension.

In this context, we also show that young consumers only develop purchase intentions from two dimensions of authenticity. Natural dimension and the fact that the label reflects the consumers' personality influence purchase intentions. The fact that young people want to buy wine that reflects their personality is interesting for marketers. Wine has become a situational product, a product you consume for special times, as parties or important dinners. A young people would like to offer his guests a wine they would enjoy drinking, a wine he can be proud of, a wine he can "you like it, you like me". Wine can be seen here as an extended self product (Belk, 1988). Implications for producers are numerous. Producers could adopt a marketing strategy based on labels. For young people, they could make typologies in order to have a good knowledge of their customers and adapt the labels to their personality.

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DOES CONSUMER REALLY APPRECIATE SUSTAINABLE COFFEES?

THE STUDY OF THE CONSUMERS' COGNITION, PERSONAL VALUES, AND WILLINGNESS TO PAY TOWARD THE SUSTAINABLE COFFEES AND TAIWANESE COFFEE

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ABSTRACT

The paired-comparison method was successfully adopted in estimating WTP of the coffee products in the preliminary study. Local participants were willing to pay from USD 2.72 to USD 4.70 for the medium size café latte made from sustainable and Taiwanese coffees. The provision of budget reminder was found to significantly reduced participants' intention of purchase and WTP toward the café latte made from organic, fair-trade, and shade-grown coffees. However, results from the test of knowledge level of the four coffees indicated that participants had low awareness of sustainable and Taiwanese coffees.

Key Words: Sustainable Coffees, Fair-trade, Shade-grown, Organic, Taiwanese coffee, Willingness to pay (WTP)

INTRODUCTION

Coffee is the world's second largest trading commodity. Currently, coffee production is more than 100 million bags a year, results in a coffee consumption as much as \$ 80 billion dollars (ICO 2010). Approximately 100 million people in the world involved in coffee cultivation, processing and related industries. With increasing coffee brands and channels in the market, coffee has become popular by local consumers also made it a highly competitive business in Taiwan. The coffee consumption in Taiwan has grown 200% in last five years. One billion and ninety two million cups of coffee consumed, which consist of 450 million US dollars revenue a year (ICO 2010). It is obvious that coffee business is a popular and important industry both in Taiwan and among other countries.

However, there have been long existed problems in the coffee supply and demand system. First, many coffee producers are small farmers in developing countries while the importers are dominated by organizations in developed countries. The coffee prices have been controlled by a number of large corporations and middlemen, resulting a low coffee price in the origins and the farmers can barely make a living (FLO, 2010). Secondly, coffee farmers tend to use chemical fertilizers and pesticides to increase coffee yields. As a result, land and water in the coffee growing areas were polluted, which caused detrimental impact on the environment. In addition, in order to expand the coffee farm, farmers removed the trees already planted in the area and, sadly, even the rainforest was destroyed to meet the purpose. It brought the destruction to the ecological system in the rainforests that many species of plants, insects and animals were killed due to the disappearance of their living places (Lorueiro & Lotade, 2005). Therefore, in care of environment, social justice and the sustainability of planet Earth, more and more voices from coffee growers, coffee companies and consumers encourage the coffee industries to adopt environment and farmer-friendly practices in growing coffees (Taylor, 2005). 'Sustainable coffees', first addressed by Giovannucci in 2001, includes shade-grown, organic and fair-trade coffees which are the representatives of alternative coffee farming. Currently, sustainable coffees are marketed through certification and labeling to communicate with suppliers and consumers and consumers pay a premium price for these coffees. Recently, the growth of organic, fair trade and shade-grown has considerable impact on the coffee industry. The revenue for sustainable coffee in the retail market was approximately USD 60 to 80 billion in 2008, which was 4 times the value in 2001. However, this figure is only 4% as compared to the number of overall coffee market (Giovannucci et al., 2008). Taiwan, with its geographical and historical uniqueness, has been a coffee grown country for more than a century. However, due to high labor cost and poor marketing strategy conveyed by the growers, local consumers have been hesitated in appreciating the, rather expensive, locally-grown coffee, even though the market is waking up with the rising interests of local and sustainable tourism in Taiwan and around the world. It is believed that the development of local coffee will be beneficial to the farmers and local economy in Taiwan. Therefore, there is a need to investigate how local consumers perceive the local-grown coffee in terms of awareness and valuation.

The objective of the preliminary study was to survey participants' knowledge level of sustainable and Taiwanese coffees, and to examine the influence of information provision on the purchasing behaviors towards these coffees. We also attempted to estimate the WTP by adopting the paired-comparison method. A medium

size café latte made from sustainable and Taiwanese coffees were chosen as the target items instead of the coffees.

METHODS

Research were conducted in the Taipei and New Taipei areas, which the cities with the highest density of coffee shops and coffee consumption in this island. Eighty five respondents with coffee drinking habit, vary from students to business person, were included in the preliminary study. A set of questions generated from the definitions and purposes of sustainable and Taiwanese coffees was used as the test sheet (six questions for each coffee). Participants were asked to circle 'True', 'False', or 'No idea' when answering the questions. The percentage of the questions with correct answer over all questions was calculated for each coffee. The percentage of correctness for individual coffee collected from all participants represents the participants' knowledge level toward sustainable coffees and Taiwanese local-grown coffee.

To estimate the willingness to pay, WTP, toward the medium size café latte made from toward the fair trade, shade grown, and organic coffee, the method of forced-choice, paired comparisons was utilized. A paired comparison format more closely resembles the types of decisions people face in a retail market than a Likert scale, and also prevents respondents from scoring all items in a list identically (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005; Howard & Allen, 2006; Michaud & Llerena, 2008). In this study, participants were presented with 49 pairs of comparison, which consist of the combinations of 11 items: (1) four target items: medium size Café latte made with organic coffee, Fair trade coffee, Shade-grown coffee and Taiwanese coffee; (2) three market items: medium size Café latte from Starbucks (NTD105), 7-11(NTD40) and 85° C (NTD 60, a local coffee brand); and (3) four monetary items: 10, 50, 120 and 150 NT dollars. Market items, usually are close substitutes for the goods of primary interested. The monetary items, also called bid levels, should span the values of the target items, allowing the values of the target items to be estimated. Comparison between monetary items was not needed. To avoid that the WTP values were affected by the sequence in which the pairs were presented, the order of the pairs was altered in a random manner in different survey versions. Participants were asked to choose the item they consider more valuable within a pair (Brown and Peterson, 2009). Participants' intention of purchase toward the café lattes was measured by a Likert-type rating scale from "0: extremely low intention of purchase" to "5: extremely high intention of purchase".

To examine the influence of (1) provision of coffee information; and (2) a budget reminder on the intention of purchase and WTP toward the coffee made from sustainable and Taiwanese coffees, manipulations of the constructs were used. The participants who had low level of knowledge toward these coffees (i.e. the percentage of correctness was lower than 60% in previous test) were included to examine the influence of the information provision of the coffees. The message which stated the definition, meaning and value of organic, fair-trade, shade-grown, and Taiwanese coffees was presented in the questionnaires previous to the section of paired-comparison sets. A "control" questionnaire was created where no coffee message was provided to another group of chosen participants. The influence of the budget-reminder was studied by providing a questionnaire with a message containing a short statement which informed the participants that it was perfectly fine not to pay any premium for the café latte prepared by organic, fair-trade, shade-grown or Taiwanese coffees, and in the case of choosing the coffee products mentioned above, would imply that they had less disposable income for other goods and savings. A questionnaire with no budget reminder was also created as the "control".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Preliminary reliability check showed that the construct displayed ample reliability with Cronbach's α exceeding 0.80 for the scales of intention of purchase (0.836). The Kuder-Richardson value of 0.62 showed an acceptable reliability for the construct of the questionnaires for the test of the knowledge level regarding sustainable and Taiwanese coffees among participants. A primary measure of reliability for a set of paired comparisons is the "coefficient of consistency", which relates the number of circular triads in the participant's choices to the maximum possible number (Brown and Peterson, 2009). The value of the coefficient of consistency could vary from 0, very low reliability, to 1, very high reliability. The coefficient of consistency of the participants in the study ranged from 1 to 0.582, with an average value of 0.8.

It was found that, in the test of the knowledge level of sustainable and Taiwanese coffees among the 85 participants, organic coffee was mostly aware among these four coffees. The participants scored with 76.1% correctness rate in answering the questions regarding the knowledge of organic coffee. It was followed by Taiwanese and Fair-trade coffees with the correctness rate of 54.5% and 39.8%, respectively. Shade-grown coffee received the lowest correctness rate (31.8%) which indicated that it was very unfamiliar to the participants (Table 1). The knowledge level of organic, Fair-trade, Shade-grown and Taiwanese coffees can also be observed from the percentage of the number of the participants with the correctness rate lower than 60% for

each coffee (Table 1). It is not surprised that organic coffee was most known among these coffees since many organic products, especially vegetables and fruits, have been promoted in the local market with long history. In general, the results indicated that the participants had low knowledge level of sustainable coffees and Taiwanese coffee.

Table 1. The Knowledge Level toward Sustainable Coffees and Taiwanese Coffee among The Participants.

Type of coffee	Organic	Fair-trade	Shade-grown	Taiwanese
% of correctness	76.1%	39.8%	31.8%	54.5%
Correctness rate < 60% *	21.2%	80%	91.7%	56.5%

* Percentage of the number of participants who scored with the correctness rate lower than 60%.

Table 2 shows the preference scores of the four coffees from one participant. As compared with the other item within the pairs, the café latte made from Shade-grown coffee was considered more valuable than the other (i.e. Shade-grown coffee won 10 times out of 10 pairs), while NT\$ 10 dollars was considered less valuable to its opponent within the pair by the participant (Table 2). By interpolating the value from the participants' individual vectors of preference scores, the WTP of the café latte made from sustainable coffees and Taiwanese coffee were estimated. For the medium size café latte, this particular participant was willing to pay USD 5.8 for Shade-grown coffee, USD 3.9 for organic coffee, USD 3.38 for Fair-trade coffee, and USD 1.67 for Taiwanese coffee (Figure 1).

Table 2. Preference Scores of One Participant.

Item	Preference Score
Shade-grown coffee	10
NTD150 (USD 5)	8
Organic coffee	6
Starbucks coffee(USD 3.5)	6
NTD120 (USD 4)	5
Fair trade coffee	5
7-11 (USD 1.33)	3
Taiwanese coffee	2
85 ° C coffee (USD 2.15)	2
NTD60 (USD 2)	2
NTD10 (USD 0.3)	0

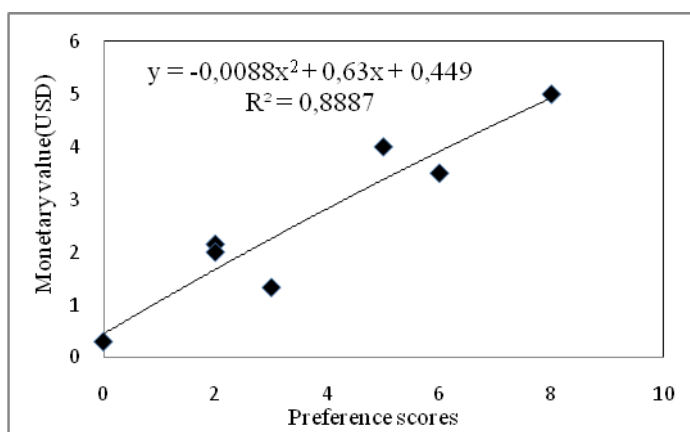


Figure 1. Regression Analysis of the Monetary Value and Preference Score from One Participant.

The WTP for each coffee can be estimated by averaging the interpolated value from participants' individual vectors of preference scores (Mean), or by plotting the empirical bid curves of the accumulative preference scores for the coffees (Median). The accumulative preference scores for individual coffee from all participants are shown in Table 3. Interestingly found that the café latte from Starbucks was most favored in term of value among all coffees, even though its actual price is lower than the monetary items of USD 4. For the target items in the study, the café latte made from organic coffee was considered most valuable, followed by the one made from organic coffee, Shade-grown coffee, Taiwanese coffee, and Fair-trade coffee (Table 3). Figure 2 shows the empirical bid curve for the cup of café latte made from organic coffee. Each dot along the curve indicates the proportion of participants who chose the item over the respective monetary amount. The straight lines connecting the dots allow estimates of the medians, which are the monetary amounts that would be rejected by 50 percent of the participants and therefore identifies the value that a majority will accept. Using this approach, the median WTP is USD 4.07 for the medium size café latte made from organic coffee. Participants were willing to pay USD 4.07, USD 3.93, USD 3.33, and USD 2.73 for the medium size café latte made from organic, shade-grown, Taiwanese, and fair-trade coffees, respectively.

In the study of the influence of the provision of coffee information on the participants' intention of purchase and WTP toward the café latte made from sustainable and Taiwanese coffees, no significant difference was observed between two groups. However, it was found that with provision of budget reminder, participants significantly reduced their intention of purchase toward the café latte made from organic and fair-trade coffees. Significant reduction of USD 0.66 in the willingness to pay for the café latte made from shade-grown coffee was also observed while budget reminded was presented (Table 4).

Table 3. Preference Scores of All Participants.

Item	Preference Score
Starbucks coffee (USD 3.5)	639
Organic coffee	636
Shade grown coffee	526
NTD 150 (USD 5)	512
Taiwanese coffee	429
NTD 120 (USD 4)	427
Fair trade coffee	409
NTD 60 (USD 2)	199
85° C coffee (USD 2.15)	197
7-11 (USD 1.33)	194
NT\$10 (USD 0.3)	3

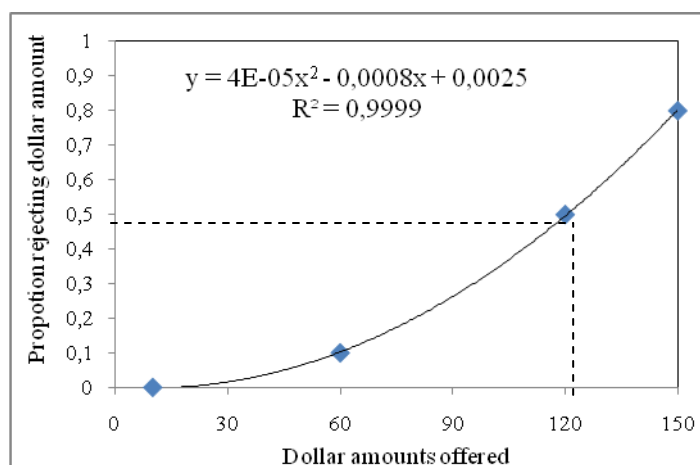


Figure 2. Empirical Bid Curve for the Café Latte Made from Organic Coffee.

CONCLUSIONS

Insights about the estimated WTP for the coffee products and the influence of provision of information on participants' purchasing behaviors are valuable for researcher and industry to design efficient policies and tools to promote sustainable and Taiwanese coffees. Further studies regarding the role of personal value, interactions among influences, and demographics of participants on the purchasing behaviors toward sustainable and Taiwanese coffees need to be investigated.

Table 4. The Influence of Provision of Budget-reminder (BR) on Intention of Purchase (IOP) and WTP.

	Organic		Fair-trade		Shade-grown		Taiwanese	
	IOP**	WTP	IOP***	WTP	IOP	WTP*	IOP	WTP
With BR	3.73	USD 3.93	3.54	USD 3.20	3.79	USD 3.30	3.90	USD 2.93
Without No BR	4.22	USD 4.26	4.05	USD 3.06	3.95	USD 3.96	4.19	USD 3.39

*p<0.05 ; **p<0.01 ; ***p<0.001

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NICE VACATION IN NICE! SENIOR TRAVELLERS' MOTIVATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The push and pull framework was applied to understand the motives of senior travellers to the city of Nice. Based on a convenience sample of 200 senior travellers, the results indicated that of the 14 push attributes measured, get rest and relaxation, spend time with family, and being together as a family were the three most important motives. Weather and climate, beaches and water sports, and beautiful scenery and attractions were the three most important pull attributes. Significant correlations were found between pull factors such as cultural attractions and push factors such as novelty and cultural experiences. The findings have important managerial implications for product development, and marketing to the senior market.

Key Words: push factors, pull factors, city destination, Nice, France

INTRODUCTION

With an aging population in developed countries, tourism researchers are becoming more attentive to the quality of life and experiences of senior travellers. The population of elders has increased steadily over the past decades from 8% in 1950 to 11% in 2001 and is expected to reach 22% by 2050 (UN, 2009). This suggests that worldwide, the senior travellers market would become a substantial and increasingly important segment. Numerous studies exist on senior travellers' behavioral patterns, health status, life transitions, preferred destinations and activities, booking and expenditure patterns, and destination choice (see Zimmer *et al.*, 1995; Reece, 2004; Boksberger & Laesser, 2009). Most of these studies are focused on descriptive issues (Jang & Wu, 2006), while some have investigated senior travellers' motivation (e.g. Shoemaker, 2000; Heung *et al.*, 2001; Huang & Tsai, 2003; Jang & Wu, 2006; Jang *et al.* 2009). Jang *et al.* (2009) argued that "limited efforts have been devoted to understanding psychological aspects of senior tourists" (p.51) and the older consumer market displays more heterogeneous preferences and motives than younger travellers (Reece, 2004). Of existing studies, none have investigated senior travellers' motives for choosing Nice as a holiday destination. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to understand senior travellers' motives by applying the push and pull framework and identifying any relationship between push and pull components. The study contributes to broaden the literature on the application of this framework to study senior travellers' motivations for a city destination that has received scant attention in the tourism literature. The results can enable destination marketers to develop and evaluate destination attributes, image, and positioning (Fodness, 1994) and understand positive or negative relationships that may exist between push and pull attributes for the senior market.

THE PUSH-PULL FRAMEWORK

Tourist motivation can be mainly classified into "push" and "pull" factors (Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979; Klenosky, 2002; Wu *et al.*, 2009; Prayag & Ryan, 2011). This classification remains the most widely accepted travel motivation theory (Jang & Cai, 2002; Jang *et al.*, 2009). The push factors originates from Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981) and are described as motivational factors or needs that arise due to a state disequilibrium or tension in the motivational system (Dann, 1977; Iso-Ahola, 1982; Kim *et al.*, 2003). Crompton (1979) classified push motives into nine factors, of which seven are socio-psychological and two are cultural. The socio psychological factors include: escape from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, and facilitation of social interaction. The two cultural factors include novelty and education. Therefore, push factors are often used to describe a visitor desire to go on a vacation.

For the senior travellers market, the most often cited motives include relaxation, socialization, learning, seeking, and escaping (Shoemaker, 2000; Huang & Tsai, 2003; Boksberger & Laesser, 2009; Jang *et al.*, 2009). Shoemaker (2000) studied the motives of Pennsylvanian senior residents and found that both in 1986 and 1996,

visiting new places was the most important motive for travel purposes followed by escaping the daily routine. Horneman *et al.* (2002) concluded that the senior travel market literature is dominated by North American and European studies. More recently, the Asian perspective on this market has emerged. For example, Huang and Tsai (2003) found that the top three motives of vacation for Taiwanese seniors included, rest and relaxation, meeting people and socialization, and spend time with immediate family. In another study, Jang *et al.* (2009) discovered that Taiwanese seniors were also motivated by novelty seeking, self-esteem and ego enhancement. Lee and Tideswell (2005) uncovered that senior Koreans were mainly motivated by the experience of visiting natural attractions and new places, rest and relaxation and occupying their free time. Studies on the Australian senior market showed that physical stimulation, status seeking, and nostalgia are important motives (Muller & O’Cass, 2001). Altogether, these studies from different countries reveal that rest and relaxation is the most important motive. While within Europe, not much is known about senior visitors to France and Nice specifically.

Pull factors on the other hand, are destination attributes influencing when, where and how people travel (Mill & Morrison, 1985). Gray (1970), for example, explained pull factor with the word “sunlust”, characterizing vacationers driven by better or different amenities from home, such as sports, sun and beaches. Williams and Zelinski (1970) suggest that when one destination offers singly or in combination contrasting or desirable climatic characteristics, scenic attractions, cultural and historical features, shopping facilities, nightlife, and so on, either missing or in short supply in another destination, the former has a better chance of selection in the tourist vacation decision. Since attributes for tourist destinations are many and differ from one destination to another (Gallarza *et al.*, 2002; Kozak 2002), destination choice emanates from tourists’ assessments of destination or image attributes that are the most important (Prayag, 2010) and their perceived utility values (Kim *et al.*, 2003). Existing studies for the senior market specifically reveal a diversity of attributes that have various levels of importance in the destination choice process (see You & O’Leary, 1999; Horneman *et al.*, 2002). A recent study from Europe reveals that favorite trip activities for seniors on holidays included shopping, visiting historical places and museums, attending cultural events or festivals, gambling, outdoor activities, visiting parks and going to the beach (Avcikurt, 2009).

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

Given the complexity of the motivation construct, some authors believe that push and pull factors should be studied separately (e.g. Dann, 1977; Fodness, 1994). For example, Dann (1977) suggests that for the potential tourist, his actual decision to visit a destination is consequent on his prior need for travel. Once the trip has been decided upon, where, what to see and do can be tackled. Therefore, push factors precede pull factors (Dann, 1977). On the other hand, many others argued that push and pull factors should be viewed as interdependent (Pyo *et al.*, 1989; Baloglu & Uysal, 1996; Klenosky, 2002; Jang & Wu, 2006). The internal factors that push people to travel and the external forces (pull factors) of the destination itself are activated simultaneously to choose a particular destination (Cha *et al.*, 1995; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994).

It is not until recently that the interrelationship between push and pull factors has been studied both qualitatively (Klenosky, 2002; Wu *et al.*, 2009; Prayag & Ryan, 2011) and quantitatively (Pyo *et al.*, 1989; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994; Baloglu & Uysal, 1996; Jang & Wu, 2006). For example, Uysal and Jurowski (1994) examined the reciprocal relationship between push and pull forces for pleasure travel and found that the attractiveness of pull attributes changes with variations in motivations and that push factors can change with modifications in destination attributes. Pyo *et al.* (1989) demonstrated the possibility of combining attraction attributes with motives on the basis of this interrelationship between the two set of factors. Klenosky (2002) showed that a single pull factor such as beaches can be driven by multiple push factors such as socialization, escape, and looking good and healthy. Wu *et al.* (2009) study of Chinese tourists’ motivation for selecting domestic destinations, revealed somewhat similar findings to Klenosky’s but confirmed that some push factors are unique and therefore have no correlation with pull factors. Existing studies on the senior travel market specifically (e.g. Horneman *et al.*, 2002) showed that significant canonical correlations exist between push and pull factors. Therefore, irrespective of the methodology, site of the study and diversity of push and pull items measured, some relationships (positive or negative) are likely to be identified between push and pull factors.

METHOD

The Study Site

Nice is the capital city of the French Riviera region. In 2008, the region attracted approximately 4.8m international visitors, staying on average 9.1 nights and spending 60 euros per day (CRT, 2009). Official statistics report that most international visitors to the area are from Italy, UK, Germany and Belgium and approximately 32% are first time visitors. The average age of international visitors to the region is 42 years old but 36% of all visitors are aged 50 years old and above (CRT, 2009), suggesting that the region is an important

travel destination for European senior travellers. The majority of these visits are primarily for leisure purposes (65%) but a notable proportion (11%) is visiting friends and relatives (VFR). The main motives of leisure visitors for choosing the region are rest and relaxation (74%) and visiting touristic sites (22%) and the main activities during their stay are dining in restaurants (90%), shopping (50%), beach related activities (40%) and visiting museums and historical attractions (41%). Data specifically on the senior travel market to Nice is unavailable, thereby informing the main purpose of this study.

Survey Instrument

A survey instrument was designed based on items identified from previous studies on the senior travel market (e.g. Muller & O’Cass, 2001; Huang & Tsai, 2003; Jang & Wu, 2006; Avcikurt, 2009; Jang *et al.*, 2009) and refined using 5 interviews with senior travellers to Nice. Interviewees were asked mainly two questions: what motivated their stay in Nice and what attributes influenced their choice of the destination. For brevity sake, the details are not included here. The first section of the survey instrument measured 14 push items on a five point rating scale (1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree). These motives reflected dimensions such as rest and relaxation, socialisation, and learning. Then, 14 pull items were measured for Nice on a five point importance scale (1=not at all important and 5=very important). The last section of the survey instrument measured various demographics and travelling characteristics. English and French versions of the questionnaire were available.

Sampling & Data Collection

The sampling frame for this study was defined as senior tourists above the age of 50 years old visiting Nice in the month of June 2010. Of the 267 surveys handed out at three locations (Promenade des Anglais (beach), Nice International Airport and Nice SNCF train station) 200 surveys were completed. These locations were selected on the basis of their popularity with tourists and availability of respondents to complete the tasks required of them. Of the completed questionnaires, 92 were collected from the train station, 39 at the airport and 69 on beaches, leading to a response rate of 74.9%. The questionnaires were self-completed in the presence of one of the researchers.

FINDINGS

Table 1
Sample profile of senior travellers

Gender	%	Average Monthly Household Income	%
Male	36.5	<€20,000	0.0
Female	63.5	€20,000-29,999	1.0
Age		€30,000-39,999	22.0
50-55yrs old	26.5	€40,000-49,999	44.5
56-60yrs old	25.5	>=€50,000	32.5
61-65yrs old	32.0	Main Purpose of Visit	
66-70yrs old	15.0	Holiday/Leisure	51.8
>70yrs old	1.0	Holiday/Business	6.6
Marital Status		VFR	41.6
Married	63.5	Packaged Tour	
Partner	34.5	Yes	15.0
Widowed	1.5	No	85.0
Divorced	0.5	Visitor Status	
Education		First-timer	75.5
Vocational/High school	4.5	Repeater	24.5
University Graduate	60.5	Health Status	
Postgraduate	13.0	Excellent	74.0
Other	22.0	Good	22.0
Occupation		Neither good nor poor	4.0
Professionals	21.0	Poor	74.0
Self-employed	10.5	Average length of stay	4.14 days
White collar workers	42.5	Nationality	
Blue collar workers	7.0	Italian	16.5
Retired	18.0	German	16.0
Other	1.0	Swiss	7.0
		British	31.5
		Taiwanese	14.0
		Other	4.5

Sample Profile of Senior Travellers

Table 1 provides a summary of the demographic profile and travel behavior of the sample. In comparison to official statistics for the French Riviera region, this sample had a higher proportion of VFR, shorter length of stay and higher proportion of first-timers. However, the nationality of visitors in this sample reflected to some extent the official statistics.

Factor analyses of push and pull items

To identify the underlying structure within the push items, a principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was undertaken. Prior to this, the KMO statistic and Bartlett's test of sphericity (KMO=0.72, $\chi^2=333.14$, $p<0.001$) were computed and these met the minimum requirements for data factorization. The 14 push items yielded six factors (Table 2) with eigenvalues greater than one, explaining 62.1% of the variance. Only factors with loading of 0.4 and above were chosen for interpretation and labeled as shown in Table 2. The internal consistency of these factors, indicated by Cronbach's alpha, was also assessed where a value of 0.7 or higher is recommended (Nunnally, 1967). In exploratory studies, this value can decrease to 0.6 (Hair *et al.*, 2005). Accordingly, only three factors (F1, F2, and F3) met these requirements. The mean scores (Table 2) indicated that get rest and relaxation, spending time with family and friends, and being together as a family were the three most important motives for choosing Nice as a holiday destination.

Table 2
Factor analysis of push items

Push Items	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	Mean
Cosmopolitan Experiences							
Go to a place that is fashionable	0.821	-0.052	0.140	0.018	0.181	0.103	3.11
Travel to a cosmopolitan city	0.799	-0.013	0.054	-0.130	0.178	0.081	2.79
Try new food	0.599	0.221	-0.058	0.232	-0.419	-0.053	4.01
Novelty							
See how other people live	0.011	0.829	-0.012	-0.006	-0.036	0.026	3.90
Experience different ways of life	0.011	0.778	0.064	-0.032	0.051	0.103	4.06
Socialization							
Spend time with family and friends	0.133	-0.079	0.819	-0.015	-0.040	-0.072	4.40
Being together as a family	0.050	0.052	0.703	0.187	0.156	0.203	4.32
Meet people and socialize	0.058	0.156	0.554	0.001	-0.087	-0.452	3.75
Escape & Relaxation							
Escape from daily routine	0.005	0.022	0.045	0.753	-0.113	0.117	4.14
Get rest and relaxation	0.011	-0.009	0.158	0.710	0.023	-0.366	4.50
Multifarious motives							
Experience a luxury holiday	0.276	0.081	0.082	-0.102	0.733	0.052	3.06
Do nothing at all	0.086	-0.137	-0.040	0.472	0.461	0.084	3.12
See things that i don't normally see	0.233	0.375	-0.092	0.047	0.460	-0.380	4.11
Cultural Experiences							
Visit new cultures and places	0.161	0.194	0.023	0.009	0.048	0.786	3.49
Eigenvalues	1.86	1.58	1.54	1.27	1.24	1.18	
% of variance explained	13.30	11.30	11.03	9.11	8.84	8.40	
Cronbach's α	0.71	0.65	0.64	0.54	0.33		

A similar factor analytical procedure was used for the 14 pull attributes and resulted in the extraction of six factors accounting for 63.5% of the explained variance. These factors were named as shown in Table 3. The Cronbach's alpha (Table 3) indicated that only two of these factors (F1& F2) met the minimum of 0.6 for internal consistency (Hair *et al.*, 2005).

Table 3
Factor analysis of pull items

Pull Items	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	Mean
Cultural Attractions & Accommodation							
Festivals & Events	0.867	0.103	0.067	-0.042	-0.023	0.081	3.40
Cultural Attractions	0.836	0.047	0.136	-0.106	-0.077	-0.039	3.67
Museums & Historical Attractions	0.787	0.103	0.004	0.096	0.098	-0.124	3.36
Variety and Quality of Accommodation	0.581	-0.112	-0.302	0.069	0.070	0.209	3.65
Transport & Value for Money							
Good Public Transport	0.067	0.866	0.041	-0.059	-0.046	-0.040	3.67
Value for Money	0.063	0.865	-0.028	0.006	0.004	-0.024	3.96
Cuisine, Restaurants & Language							
Appealing Local Cuisine	0.016	-0.074	0.721	-0.060	-0.074	-0.078	4.00
Variety & Quality of Restaurants & Bars	0.113	0.193	0.535	-0.047	0.348	0.114	4.02
To speak French	0.131	0.020	0.500	-0.302	0.181	-0.351	3.67
Weather & Beach Activities							
Weather & Climate	-0.066	0.013	-0.335	0.669	-0.120	0.196	4.46
Beaches & Water Sports	0.038	-0.137	0.239	0.654	0.082	-0.365	4.17
Shopping & Entertainment							
Shopping Facilities	-0.042	-0.089	-0.062	-0.062	0.844	-0.008	2.75
Nightlife & Entertainment	0.099	0.052	0.074	0.460	0.488	0.137	2.00
Scenery & Natural Attractions							
Beautiful Scenery & Natural Attractions	0.055	-0.066	0.039	0.003	0.088	0.821	4.31
Eigenvalues	2.47	1.61	1.35	1.21	1.16	1.08	

% of explained variance	17.62	11.52	9.66	8.69	8.30	7.69	
Cronbach's α	0.78	0.68	0.19	0.19	0.21	-	

Relationship between Push and Pull Factors

The relationship between the push and pull factors were identified using Pearson bivariate correlation analysis. The results (Table 4) indicated that only three push factors were significantly correlated with three pull factors, although in some cases these correlations were extremely low. For example, 'Cultural Attractions & Accommodation' were significantly correlated with 'Novelty' (0.174) and 'Cultural Experiences' (0.692) respectively, suggesting that senior travellers desiring novel and cultural experiences are pulled by festival and events, cultural attractions, museums and historical attractions as well as variety and quality of accommodation. Similarly, a significant correlation (0.14) existed between motives of 'Cosmopolitan Experiences' and the pull factor 'Cuisine, Restaurant & Language' suggesting that senior visitors wanting to try new food are 'pulled' by the appealing cuisine of Nice. However, these visitors were not likely to be 'pulled' by 'Scenery & Natural Attractions'.

Table 4
Relationship between push and pull attributes

Push/Pull Factors	F1: Cultural Attractions & Accommodation	F2: Transport & Value for Money	F3: Cuisine, Restaurant & Language	F4: Weather & Beach Activities	F5: Shopping & Entertainment	F6: Scenery & Natural Attractions
F1: Cosmopolitan Experiences	0.122	-0.053	0.140*	-0.138	-0.105	-0.147*
F2: Novelty	0.174*	-0.047	0.038	-0.003	-0.127	-0.020
F3: Socialisation	-0.074	0.122	-0.058	0.016	0.074	-0.024
F4: Escape & Relaxation	-0.087	0.003	0.136	-0.002	-0.038	0.022
F5: Multifarious Motives	-0.063	-0.050	-0.052	0.035	-0.049	0.061
F6: Cultural Experiences	0.692**	0.067	-0.041	-0.045	-0.018	0.041

p<0.05*, p<0.01**

IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to understand senior international tourists motives for visiting Nice using the push and pull framework. The results indicated the existence of six push and pull factors for this market and some inter-relationships between them. By understanding these, destination marketers and local tourism offices can develop products and services that meet or even exceed the expectations of the senior market to Nice. The identified relationships between push and pull factors in this study support previous studies (Cha *et al.*, 1995; Baloglu & Uysal, 1996; Klenosky, 2002; Wu *et al.*, 2009; Prayag & Ryan, 2011), suggesting that the two factors are inter-related, and needs to be studied concurrently for an enhanced understanding of tourist motivation. The study also confirms the applicability of the push and pull framework as a valid motivation theory for understanding the senior market (Jang & Wu, 2006). The framework has relevance in different contextual settings such as countries and cities. Therefore, to ensure competitiveness of a city destination, destination marketers need to keep abreast of motivational changes and trends in the senior market (Jang & Wu, 2006). Periodic surveys may enable a destination to align its differentiating and positioning attributes with expectations of senior travellers, and matching advertising messages. Subsequently, changing motivations can also be used to develop new tours/products and services as well as infrastructural facilities and tourist amenities (Cha *et al.*, 1995).

Marketing strategies designed for attracting the senior market to Nice is more likely to succeed if products and services reflect the opportunity to have a relaxing holiday and emphasizing attributes such as appealing local cuisine, beaches and watersports, weather and climate, and beautiful scenery and natural attractions. Knowing the importance of these pull attributes enable destination marketers to have a more parsimonious tool for developing advertising messages and promotional images (Muller & O'Cass, 2001). The study results also hold useful managerial implications for destinations interested in attracting the elderly. For example, the positive relationship between cultural attractions and the motive of novelty, suggest that destinations that have not yet fully developed their cultural tourism products, have an opportunity to brand themselves as offering novel cultural experiences to this market. This may be particularly useful for other less well known regions and cities of France and Europe. Interestingly, the positive relationship found between pull attributes such as local cuisine and the French language and the push factor cosmopolitan experiences, may suggest that Nice has an opportunity to market the city experience on these factors. Specifically, by drawing on the local cuisine and cosmopolitan experience, the city has an opportunity to differentiate and position itself from other competing French and European cities.

While much has been written on push and pull factors in other larger geographical regions such as North America and Europe, this study confirms the applicability of the push-pull framework to smaller geographical units such as cities. This is the main contribution of this study but it is not without limitations. First, the relatively small sample size and the convenience sampling method used do not allow the results to be generalized for neither Nice, nor the French Riviera region nor France. Further research should be undertaken to understand on a wider scale the senior market to France and other smaller regions and cities. Some of the push and pull factors measured were not sufficiently important to this sample, thereby suggesting that the items measured may be problematic. Future research can use a larger qualitative study to ascertain the push and pull orientations of visitors to the destination. The means-end chain theory (Klenosky, 2002; Wu *et al.*, 2009) is increasingly used for that matter. Another limitation of the study is that the domestic market was not included in the sample. It would be worthwhile to investigate the motivation of French senior tourists to visit Nice, as this would provide a more comprehensive data set for understanding the relationship between push and pull factors.

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TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS, BEHAVIOR, AND REQUIREMENTS OF EUROPEAN SENIOR TOURISTS TO THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this research were to examine the travel motivations and travel behavior of European senior tourists in Thailand, and to analyze the importance and satisfaction of their travel requirements regarding accommodation, accessibility, attractions, amenities and public services. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 430 European senior tourists aged over 55 years traveling in Thailand. Thirty-seven in-depth interviews were also conducted to gain the perspectives of many stakeholders from both public and private sectors. Besides quantitative and qualitative analysis, Importance-Performance Analysis was also conducted. Research findings showed that the principal travel motivations of sampled senior European tourists were rest and relaxation. The majority of respondents had traveled to Thailand for the first time and intended to stay in Thailand for 15 days or more for leisure and sightseeing activities. Three major requirements of European senior tourists were safety of the destination, location of accommodation, and presence of natural attractions. The result of this research suggests potential policies and measures for public and private sector development.

Keywords: senior European tourist, travel behavior, motivation and requirements, Thailand

INTRODUCTION

Dramatic improvements in health care and life expectancy have produced rapid growth in the world's senior population. At the end of the twentieth century, 11 percent of the world's population was aged 60 or above, and it is estimated that 20 percent will be 60 years or older by 2050 (United Nations Population Division, 1998, cited in Hall, 2006:12-13). In fewer than 20 years, fully one third of the population of Japan and Germany will be 60 or older. More than a quarter of the population of France, the United Kingdom and Republic of Korea will fall into the same pattern (Dann, 2001; UNWTO, 2005:13).

The aging population in many industrialized countries draws attention from the tourism industry mainly because of its substantial size, increasing purchasing power and more time available for travel after retirement. Seniors often have higher levels of discretionary income due to accumulation of lifetime income and pensions (You et al., 1999; Bai et al., 2001). The longer lifespan and greater numbers of seniors who are educated, healthy and self-sufficient members of society, together with larger discretionary income, may encourage them to participate in society and leisure activities such as overseas travel (Sellick and Muller, 2004). Furthermore, time flexibility after retirement makes the senior market more attractive to tourism businesses that suffer from seasonal demand fluctuations (Jang and Wu, 2006). The senior market has been thus cited as one of the most important consumer segments of the tourism industry. (Shoemaker 2000; Bai et al., 2001; Horneman et al., 2002; Jang and Wu 2006).

Thailand is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Southeast Asia because of its diverse nature, rich culture and friendly people. Thailand's tourism experienced continued growth except for a small decline in 2009 due to various internal and external disruptive factors. In 2007, international tourism arrivals reached 14.4 million, representing a growth of 2%, and international tourism receipts reached US\$ 15.5 million (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2008). The tourism industry represented 14.1 percent of the GDP and created over 3.9 million jobs, representing 10.6 % of total employment in 2008 (World Economic Forum, 2009). The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has recognized the international senior travel market as a potential growth segment; nevertheless, the number of inbound senior tourists has not expanded rapidly (TAT 2006). In 2007, international tourism arrivals aged 55 or above increased from 2,119,675 in 2006 to 2,259,161 in 2007, representing 15.3% and 15.6% of total international tourists, respectively (Immigration Office, 2008). European tourists represent the second largest group of inbound tourists, after East Asian tourists. However, their average

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length of stay in Thailand is the longest—15.26 days in 2007—and almost three times longer than those of East Asian tourists, which has a significant effect on tourist expenditure.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Understanding seniors' travel motivations and behavior is fundamental to travel businesses that compete for this potential growth market (Crompton 1979; Jang and Wu, 2006). Numerous research projects on travel motivation and behavior have been conducted in order to understand and to better satisfy the needs for senior tourists (Backman et al., 1999, Cleaver et al., 1999; Sellick, 2004; Huang and Tsai, 2003; Jang and Wu, 2006; Hsu et al., 2007). The travel motivation of Japanese senior travelers to Thailand has been examined recently (Sangpikul, 2008); nevertheless, little attention has been devoted to understanding the European senior tourist market in Thailand. Therefore, this study examines the travel motivations and travel behavior of European senior tourists in Thailand, and analyzes the importance and satisfaction of travel requirements of European senior tourists in five tourism components in Thailand, including accommodation, accessibility, attractions, amenities and public services. Understanding the travel requirements of senior tourists will be useful for travel planners and marketers to design specific market strategies and to adapt tourist products to the potential needs of senior tourists.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Seniors' Travel Motivations

Motivation is a state of need or a condition that drives an individual toward certain types of action that are seen as likely to bring satisfaction (Moutinho, 2000). Motivation has also been defined as a force within an individual that causes him or her to do something to fulfill a biological need or psychological desire (Frigen, 1996). Travel motivation relates to why people travel (Hsu and Huang 2008). Motivations for travel cover a broad range of human behaviors and human experiences. A list of travel motivations might include: relaxation, excitement, social interactions with friends, adventure, family interactions, status, physical challenges, and escape from routine or stress. Pearce (1982) applied Maslow's hierarchy to tourist motivation and behavior, and argued that tourists were attracted to destinations because of the possibility of fulfilling self-actualization, love and belongingness, and physiological needs.

There are several related studies that help understanding of seniors' travel motivations. Cleaver, Muller, Ruys and Wei (1999) stated that the senior market is not homogeneous and identified seven senior tourist segments, which they labeled according to motivation: Nostalgics, Friendlies, Learners, Escapists, Thinkers, Status-Seekers, and Physicals. Backman, Backman, and Silverberg (1999) identified differences and similarities between younger (55 to 64) and older seniors (65 or older). Their study revealed that younger senior travelers were more interested in relaxation and leisure activities while older seniors were interested in educational or natural attractions. Fleischer and Pizam (2002) reviewed previous studies and reported that seniors' most common travel motivations were rest and relaxation, social interaction, physical exercise, learning, nostalgia, and excitement. Likewise, Horneman, Carter, Wei and Ruys (2002) found that seniors' motivations were shifting toward more active pursuits with a strong focus on health and fitness and concluded that the most frequently identified motivations for Australian seniors were education/learning, rest/relaxation, physical exercise/fitness and visiting friends and relatives. More recently, Huang and Tsai (2003) reviewed previous studies and indicated that travel motivation can be classified into rest and relaxation, social interaction, health, learning, exploration, escape, value for money, nostalgia and the opportunity to visit historical sites. In addition, Jang & Wu (2006) examined the travel motivations of Taiwanese seniors and identified knowledge-seeking and cleanliness and safety as the most important push and pull motivations, respectively.

Senior Tourist Profiles and Requirements

An examination of previous literature took note of many studies on senior travelers' profiles, preferences, and requirements. To identify seniors' traveler profiles, Anderson and Langmeyer (1982) examined two senior groups and reported that both over-50 and under-50 groups are likely to take pleasure trips for rest and relaxation and for visiting family and relatives, but over-50 groups are more likely to visit historical sites. Javalgi, Thomas, and Rao (1992) revealed that non-seniors are a better-educated group than seniors and are more likely to engage in a detailed information search process before making a purchase decision. Seniors are more likely to buy trip packages covering both transportation and accommodation. Zimmer et al. (1995) focused on characteristics of older adults who travel and claimed that age, education, and mobility problems were the most critical discriminating variables between travelers and non-travelers.

Some tourism researchers examined senior travelers' preferences. Koss (1994) stated that senior travelers want hotel packages and promotions that are exciting, creative, and value-oriented. Bai et al. (2001) investigated preferences among British, German and Japanese seniors and found that the number of people in travel parties

and the length of the trip were significant when all three groups chose package tours. Hsu (2001) argued that the reputation of tour operators and seniors' health and safety concerns were most important. Baloglu and Showmaker (2001) claimed that senior travelers' decisions to take motor coach tours could be predicted from their demographic, psychological, and psychographic characteristics. In addition, Lindqvist and Bjork (2000) noted that senior tourists showed that perceived safety was an important factor in their decision making and the perceived importance of this factor increases as the tourist grows older.

Senior Tourist Behavioral Patterns

Many studies have focused on examining senior traveler's behavior patterns. Shoemaker (1989) surveyed Pennsylvania seniors on travel behavior and reasons for travel and segmented the senior market into three sub-groups that he called 'family travelers', 'active resters' and the 'older set'. Romsa and Blenman (1989) noted vacation patterns of elderly Germans, examining modes of travel, destinations, length of vacation, accommodations, popularity activities and vacation memories. Huang and Tsai (2003) discovered that Taiwanese senior travelers do not want to join typical all-inclusive package tours. They want a more elegant, less regimented itinerary and demand quality tour content and services. Littrell (2004) examined tourism activities and shopping behaviors of senior travelers. In that study, travel activities included outdoors, cultural, and sports and entertainment tourism. Tourist profiles differed based on the likelihood of shopping at retail venues, preferred shopping mall characteristics and sources of travel information about shopping.

METHODOLOGY

Samples were from 430 European senior tourists aged over 55 years traveling in Thailand. The questionnaire was developed from a review of previous studies focusing on travel motivation and behavior in order to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire consisted of five parts: profiles of respondents, travel behavior, travel motivations, and respondents' requirements regarding the five targeted tourism components, in terms of importance and satisfaction. A total of thirty-seven in-depth interviews were also conducted in order to gain insight into the perspectives of stakeholders from both public and private sectors. For quantitative data analysis, statistical tools employed for descriptive statistical analysis were frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation; and those for inferential statistical analysis were t-test, F-test, and least significant difference. Importance-Performance Analysis was conducted and content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data.

The demographic characteristics of the sampled European senior tourists were that 65.12% of the respondents were male. Nearly half of the respondents (46.05%) were between age 55 and 59; 28.14% were between 60 and 64 and 25.81% were age 65 or older. 33.26% of the respondents had earned bachelor's degrees. Over two-thirds of the respondents (67.67%) were married. 40.23% worked part-time and 62.79% their own savings as their income source. Half of the respondents identified self-perceived health status as 'good' (51.40%) and self-perceived economic status as 'enough' (47.91%). 27.67% were British while 17.21% were Dutch and 13.72% were German; the remaining 41.4% were nationals of assorted other European countries.

RESULTS

Research findings showed that the three principal travel motivations of sampled European senior tourists were rest and relaxation (mean = 4.13), visits to new places (3.97) and learning and experiencing new things (3.96). As for travel behavior, the result showed that the majority of respondents (41.40%) traveled to Thailand for the first time whereas 31.86% had visited Thailand more than 4 times. More than half of the respondents (58.37%) planned to stay in Thailand for 15 days or more. Most of them traveled with their spouse (54.42%), and arranged their trip by themselves (45.34%). They visited Bangkok (59.77%), Chiang Mai (40.93%) and Phuket (34.88%). The major reason to visit Thailand was friendly people (72.79%). The major intended activity was leisure and sightseeing (72.56%). Half of the respondents preferred to stay in a 4-star hotel (47.67%), and used a car to travel around Thailand (41.86%). The major source of information was family and friends (46.74%). Their estimated daily expenditure was below US\$ 100 (41.86%) and 23.25% estimated between US\$ 100-120. The largest number of respondents preferred to visit Thailand in January (33.49%). Almost all of the respondents (88.60%) will revisit Thailand while 52.32% will revisit in the same year. Besides Thailand, 39.53% of the respondents would most like to visit Vietnam.

Among respondents' travel requirements, safety of the destination was indicated as the most important (mean = 4.19), followed by 'location of accommodation' (4.02), and 'natural attractions' (4.01). Likewise, the three top satisfactions of their travel requirements were safety of destination (4.10), location of accommodation (4.09), and natural attractions (4.05). Moreover, F-test and t-test indicated that differences in gender, age, education, employment, and health status of the respondents were significant factors in determining travel requirements.

Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) is a practical technique used for understanding customer satisfaction and prioritizing improvements in service quality. In this study, IPA is used to analyze importance and satisfaction level of five tourism components of Thailand (17 attributes). In applying IPA to the current study, mean tourist ratings of importance and performance across 17 attributes are plotted against each other, and the resulting importance-performance (IP) space is divided into four quadrants. Figure 1 shows the results of IPA. Quadrant 1 top left (Concentration Here) represents highly important factors with low levels of service satisfaction. No factor that requires such high-priority improvements has been found. Quadrant 2 top right (Keep up the Good Work) represents important factors with a high level of satisfaction. Nine factors were found, including the location of the accommodation, the price of inclusive packages or hotels, the variety and suitability of food and beverages, easy accessibility to destinations, local transportation, natural attractions, historical attractions, cultural attractions, and safety of the destination. Thailand must thus maintain high service quality of these attributes in order to guarantee continued satisfaction. Quadrant 3 bottom left (Low Priority) represents factors that registered low levels of importance and low levels of satisfaction. Eight factors were found, including hotel accessibility and disability features, convenient immigration formalities and customs, special events and festivals, the service quality of travel agents, leisure activities, availability of medical facilities, and infrastructure. Although these factors ranked as low priority, some factors were close to the average mean. Thailand should consider giving priority to some of these areas. Finally, quadrant 4 bottom right (Possible Overkill) represents factors with low importance but high levels of satisfaction. The result showed no factors in this quadrant.

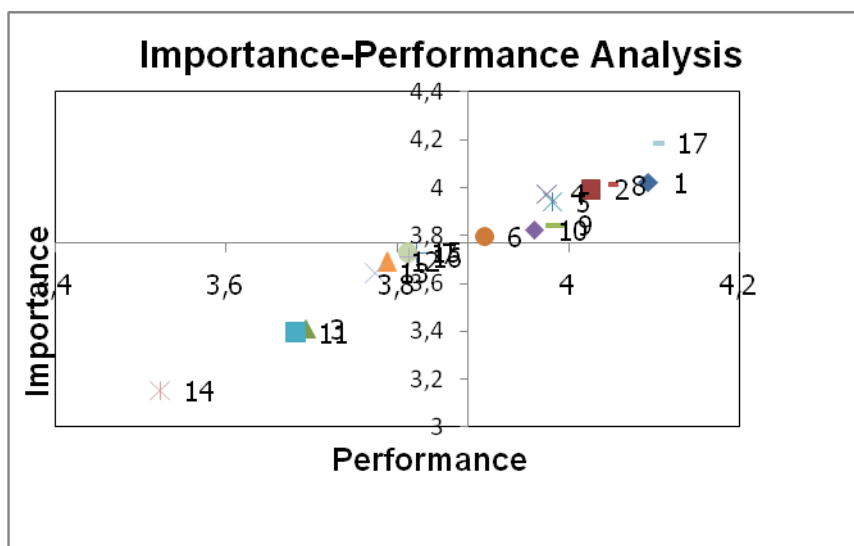


Figure 1 Importance Performance Analysis

Results from qualitative data revealed that senior European tourists can be classified into three groups. The first group consists of senior tourists between ages 55 and 65 who are still working and often visit Thailand for leisure purposes for two weeks in winter. Members of this group may also buy package tours and visit Thailand for the first time. The second group is made up of retired senior tourists age 65 and older that usually travel to Thailand and stay for one to two months. They prefer to stay in 3 to 4 star hotels—often the same hotels every time. The hotel should be in town where supermarkets, restaurants, hospitals are in proximity. Lastly, long-stay senior tourists usually stay for 2 – 3 months in self-catering accommodations. Some travel to Thailand for medical treatment. Most senior European tourists travel to Thailand because of the friendly people, sun-sea-sand attractions, local culture, warm climate, good food, value for money and high standard of medical care. The major problem of servicing senior tourists identified by key informants were communication (language) problems, lack of facilities for the disabled in public areas, lack of foreign language road signs, expensive local transport, short-term visa issues, and safety standards for transportation.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this research, it is clear that travel motivations of the respondents are rest and relaxation (4.13), visits to new places (3.97) and learning and experiencing new things (3.96). Anderson and Langmeyer's (1982), Fleischer and Pizam's (2002), Horneman et al.'s (2002) studies of senior travel motivation are similar. Safety of the destination is the most important factor for respondents which is similar to Hsu's (2001) and Lindqvist and Bjork's (2000) studies. Moreover, natural attractions were found to be one of the most important factors for senior tourists, which is similar to Norman et al.'s (2001) study.

The results of this research indicate that it is necessary to develop certain policy measures and strategies in public and private sectors in Thailand. Important policies include tourism promotion for European senior tourists, tourism promotion for long stays, tourism promotion for medical tourists, safety protection for senior tourists, physical improvement of tourist destinations, development of easy and convenient accessibility, support for accommodation and attractions, and facility improvement for senior tourists.

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CYCLING AROUND THE ISLAND: WHAT MOTIVATES TAIWAN'S CYCLING TOURISTS?

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ABSTRACT

This study employs the means-end approach to examine the value-based motivations that enable tourists to complete a tour of the island of Taiwan by bicycle, and to determine the life changes that result for the tourists themselves. By using the laddering technique, a total of 60 subjects participated in one-on-one in-depth personal interviews and the interviewing data were then analyzed. These outcomes generally referred to positive consequences or benefits, with "Achieving goals", "Experiencing natural & cultural attractions", "Self change and growth", "Camaraderie" and "Transcendence of time" receiving the most attention. The results also highlighted several key personal values (in particular, "Positive self-image", "Sense of accomplishment", "Sense of belonging to Taiwan" and "Fun and enjoyment in life") that appeared to serve as the higher level "ends" of the tour experiences.

Key Words: Cycling tourism, Means-End Chain approach, Cycling tourist behavior, Grand cycling tour in Taiwan.

INTRODUCTION

The rapidly-growing phenomenon of low-carbon tourism encompasses a diverse range of traveling forms. Traveling by bicycle on the roads in Taiwan has moved beyond its infancy, and is now entering a mature phase with increased numbers of tourists who accept such as a slow way of holiday travel. Furthermore, this activity has grown among the younger population and has been widely viewed as involving a "Grand Tour" to the extent that it has included cycling around the island of Taiwan.

Taiwan is a subtropical island off the southeastern coast of China that approximately covers an area of 36,000 square kilometers. In general, the round island trip takes between five and fourteen days. A variety of routes provide tourists (or cyclists) with access to high mountains, beautiful coastlines and peaceful country roads through farmlands. There are plenty of interesting rides within short distances or through government-built national bikeways that can be completed in just two or three days.

Previous studies have argued that bike usage and the associated tourism/recreational activities became a popular travel pattern as a consequence of the rising environmentalism and increasing awareness of its sustainable development (e.g., Ritchie, 1998; Cope et al., 1998; Lumsdon, 2000; Mason & Leberman (2000). Chang & Chang (2003) pointed out that bicycle tourism in Taiwan can enhance the personal health and well-being of participants through the exercise it provides. Krizek (2004) also argued that the cycling and bicycle facilities provide economic benefits both for the users and the destination societies. In addition, the factors motivating cycling tourism in New Zealand have been found to include competence mastery, solitude, exploration, physical challenge, stimulus seeking, social encounters and social escapism (Ritchie, 1998).

Bicycle tourism, also regarded as a slow form of travel, comprises a number of different characteristics that include attractive scenery, bicycle-friendly roads, bike-oriented services and accommodations, cultural attractions, and features unique to the area (Maine DOT, 2001). Chang & Chang (2005) indicated that bicycle

tourists revealed their preferences for the following factors: a low flow of traffic, tourism attraction, challenging terrain and scenery and greenway.

Based on Rokeach (1975), a value is a belief that transcendentally guides actions and judgments across specific objects and situations, and beyond immediate goals to more ultimate end-states of existence. In addition, a value is a standard to show the way for comparisons, evaluations and justifications of self and others. Gronth (1999) argued that values may be contrasted with motivations whereas motivations contain motives influenced by people's values and their perception of given situations. Thus, values provide a deeper understanding of motivations and are more beneficial to studying why people take cycling tours.

The Means-End Chain (MEC) theory, which has been applied to probe the values of tourists, has been widely used in marketing to identify values-based motivations behind consumption (Reynolds and Olson 2001). According to Reynolds and Gutman (1998), MEC provides an understanding of the linkages between the product/service and the personally relevant role it has in the life of the consumer. Furthermore, some researchers have advocated understanding tourist behavior by using this theory (e.g. Klenosky, 2002; McIntosh and Thyne, 2005; McDonald, Thyne and McMorland, 2008). It has indicated that tourist behavior is value-driven, whereby tourists' personal values ultimately influenced their choices. Therefore, this present study investigates what are the value-based motivations that enable tourists to complete their Grand Cycling Tour around the island of Taiwan, and what life changes result for the tourists themselves. Specifically, this exploratory research attempts to gain a better understanding the cycling tourists behavior by linking specific tour attributes with their personal values, including the attributes, consequences and values associated with the cycling tourists as well as the strength of the relationship between these three components. These can enable the effective targeting of the cycling tours and the marketing of tourists' experiences as part of a promotional campaign, thereby achieving even higher levels of tourist satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

A total of 60 subjects were selected to participate in one-on-one in-depth interviews using the ladder approach. The tailored interviews were conducted, using a series of probes, mainly 'why is that important to you', with the express goal of determining sets of linkages between the key perceptual elements. That is, laddering was used to specify the content and sequence of outcomes stemming from cycling tourist behavior that extended from attributes characterizing the tour through consequences to personal values. The data were collected from the sampling frame described as a purposive and snowball sample in that a deliberate effort was made to include a few tourists and then approach their acquaintances or companions. Most "seed" tourists were recruited through the Internet by sending an invitation message to their travel weblogs or through some private cycling groups to ask them to participate in the study. The interviews were conducted individually over a six-month period from August 2009 to January 2010 and lasted 20-30 minutes each. It should be noted that a detailed discussion referred to as laddering uncovered many consequences that were more immediately related to tourist choice than to personal values. Based on Gutman (1999), it was likely that no direct connection existed between values and tourist behavior. In other words, some intermediate consequences (or benefits) were explained how values were related to tourist choice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

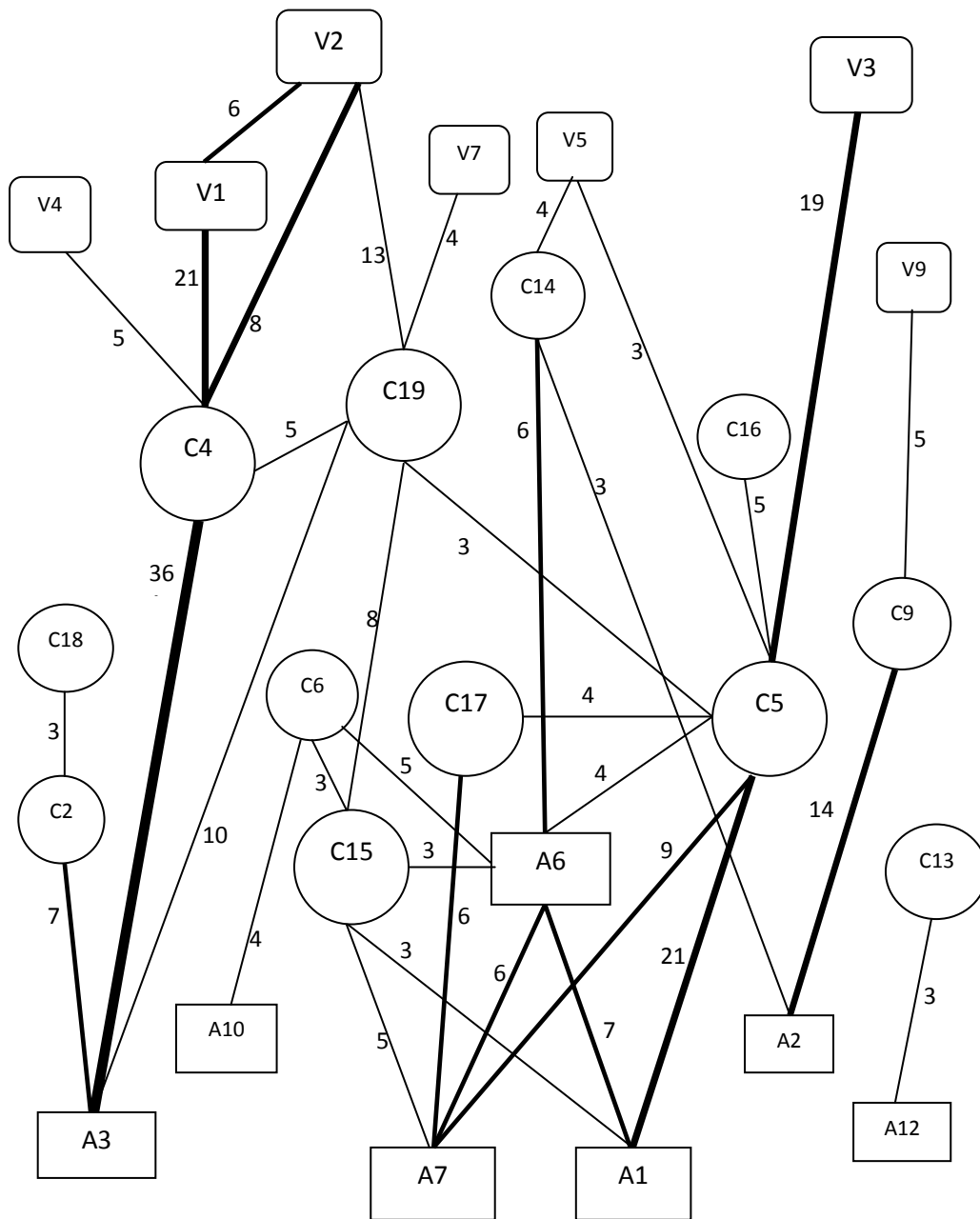
Data collected during the laddering procedures required a series of analyses. The content categories were established to aggregate the responses of the subjects. Then a quantitative analysis was performed to develop a set of synonyms (codes). Thirty-nine categories were obtained from the analysis: 12 attributes (mostly antecedent variables), 19 consequences, and 8 values. Table 1 shows the typical or most frequently encountered responses given by participants during the laddering process. The five most commonly mentioned attributes included: "Physical challenge", "An activity with great flexibility", "Controllable itinerary and schedule", "free-sized participation" and "scenic beauty". The study participants identified the outcomes that referred to positive consequences or benefits. Of the predominant consequences, those involving "Achieving goals", "Experiencing natural & cultural attractions", "Self change and growth", "Camaraderie" and "Transcendence of time" received the most attention. An analysis of means-end hierarchies in the values of cycling tourists indicated that the three most primary prevalent motivations included "Positive self-image", "Sense of accomplishment", "Sense of belonging to Taiwan" and "Fun and enjoyment in life".

Table 1 Typical Ladder by Level of Abstraction

Attributes	Consequences
A1 An activity with great flexibility	C4 Achieving goals
A2 Free-sized participation	C5 Experiencing natural and cultural attractions
A3 Physical challenge	C14 Being in a good mood
A7 Controllable itinerary and schedule	C9 Camaraderie
A12 An adventurous journey	C17 Social encounters
A10 Low skills or techniques required	C6 Escape from stress
A6 Scenic beauty	C2 Physical health
Values	C16 Being open-minded
V1 Sense of accomplishment	C13 Novelty & stimulus seeking
V2 Positive self-image	C15 Transcendence of time
V3 Sense of belonging to Taiwan	C18 High work performance
V8 Sense of belonging	C19 Self change and growth
V7 Spiritual welfare	
V4 Self-fulfillment	
V5 Fun & enjoyment in life	

A hierarchical value map (HVM) was drawn to show the relationship between the benefits and values associated with the cycling tourists' experiences. Figure 1 presents the HVM for the respondents. The values (numbers) along with the associations referred to the number of times that the outcomes were linked in the respondents' ladders, i.e., the number of respondents who mentioned a particular link in their ladders. The thickness of the lines reflects the number of respondents linking those outcomes. Strong links were found between the attribute factor "Physical challenge" and the consequence factors "Achieving goals" and "Self change and growth" respectively, with there being greater diversity spread out across the four significant value factors. The strength of linkage between "Physical challenge" and "Achieving goals" along with some core values (such as Positive self-image, Sense of achievement and Self-fulfillment) may suggest how attributes such as strenuous routes and challenging terrain along the round island trip enabled tourists' abilities to develop themselves in such a way that met their needs for competence mastery and autonomy. The linkage between "Sense of belonging to Taiwan" and "Experiencing natural and cultural attractions" was also significant one, in that a significant portion of consequences making up the "Experiencing natural and cultural attractions" factor provided cycling tourists with opportunities to travel around the island of Taiwan and experience their own homeland in such a way and give them a new sense of adventure, thereby possibly addressing the core value of "Sense of belonging to Taiwan". "Experiencing natural and cultural attractions" was also strongly linked with "An activity with great flexibility" and "Controllable itinerary and schedule", suggesting that cycling as a low-carbon travel pattern is the best way to take in the island's natural beauty and discover the wealth of local culture. In addition, the link between "Free-sized participation" and "Camaraderie" may point to a tourist's need to search for an understanding of other cyclist partners to gain group efficacy in an atmosphere that makes the round island cycling tour easy to accomplish while touching the core value of a sense of belonging.

The MEC approach adopted in this study to understand the relationships among the attributes, consequences and values associated with around the island cycling tours may have its limitations. Future research that addresses possible linkages with other subjects (e.g., foreign tourists) thus seems warranted. In addition, future studies could incorporate the results of research with the development of a specific questionnaire to assist in conducting large-scale survey research. Nevertheless, the findings of this study may serve as valuable reference for the tourism industry by helping to better illustrate the benefits of participation in cycling events and consequently better promote both low-carbon tourism and sustainable tourism.



Cut off : 3

Values

 Consequences

 Attributes

 Strong relationship

 Moderate relationship

 Weak relationship

Figure 1 Hierarchical Value Map for cycling Tourists (n=60)

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Due to the limit of the paper length, the complete reference list was omitted here. If the readers were interested in the associated information, please contact the authors for the details.

ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL TOURISM MOTIVATION: THE CASE OF TURKISH STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study is to understand the underlying dimensions of motivation for attending the cultural tourism among the students, and if motivation will show variation with respect to the socio-demographic composition of the students. Data were collected by way of a self-administered questionnaire with the study sample comprising students from bachelor degree programs. The results of this study offer an important view regarding the motivation for attending cultural tourism among Turkish students. The paper ends with both practical implications for the cultural tourism organizers and some theoretical contribution to the research of cultural tourism.

Key Words: cultural tourism, motivation, students, Turkey

INTRODUCTION

Cultural tourism became a big business which market share in the total tourism increased from 8 to 20% in the last decade, although relatively few tourists view themselves as “cultural tourists”. From the cultural tourism point of view it is important to know why tourists choose a destination, an event or a cultural asset for visiting, how the tourist feels about his/her experience. First of all, it is important to make a clear difference between two groups of tourists: one group includes tourists motivated in general by cultural attractions and the other group formed from specific cultural tourists which had an occupation linked to culture and play an important role in stimulating cultural consumption (Richards, 1996) and influence trends in cultural production. But destinations that want to develop a high market share for cultural tourism should strive to reach both groups and attract all types of tourists who have the potential to participate in cultural activities along with other travel related offerings (Lord, 1999). Thus, in order to promote cultural tourism country-wide, it is important to understand what motivates people to attend cultural tourism. Although there is extensive research on travel motivations, preferences and behaviors, until very recently research on students has been a neglected area (Grant, 2008). In this sense, this study aims to explore motives of students attending cultural events, heritage exhibits, rural places, or historical sites; collectively termed cultural tourism.

METHOD

For the objective of the study, a quantitative study was developed and used a survey research design. A structured questionnaire was designed to obtain information regarding students’ motivations and perceptions toward attending cultural tourism, including their demographic characteristics. The first section had a motivation scale. The current study adopted the motivation scales from previous travel motivation studies (Uysal, Gahan & Martin, 1993; Prentice, Davies & Beeho, 1997; Poria, Butler & Airey, 2006; Cetinel & Yolal, 2008). Based on significant literature review it can be said that these motives come into 7 dimensions: learning reasons, cultural motives, experience something new, pleasure-seeking and entertainment, physical reasons, relaxation-based motives and indirect motives. Thirty-three items were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1= *not important at all*, to 5= *very important*. The last section of the questionnaire included such demographic variables as age, gender, class, monthly budget and participants’ monthly budget spent on cultural tourism activities. This study was conducted in Anadolu University during February, 2010 and included a sample of 234 students from bachelor degree programs. Using the SPSS 14.0 program, various statistical techniques were conducted to analyze the data. First, reliability analysis (Cronbach’s alpha) was calculated to test the reliability and internal consistency of the survey instrument and found to be .818. Further, factor analysis was used to identify the underlying dimensions of motivation and to create some major factor labels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of the students is presented in Table 1. The majority of the respondents surveyed were male students (60.7%). The age categories of the students represent the class distribution of the students. Slightly over 16% of the students are under 20 years old, and the most frequently they are between 21 and 22. Almost 23% of the students are in their first year at the university, 35.9% in the second year, 18.4% in the third year, and finally 22.6% in the fourth year. The students were also asked about whether they were part-time or full-time employed, and it was found that 92.7% were not engaged to any earning activities.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	142	60.7
Female	92	39.3
Age Category		
<20	39	16.7
21-22	92	39.3
23-24	75	32.1
>25	28	12.0
Class		
1 st year	54	23.1
2 nd year	84	35.9
3 rd year	43	18.4
4 th year	53	22.6
Income		
Less than 250 Euro	118	50.4
Between 250-500	101	43.2
More than 500	15	6.4
Total	234	100

Monthly budgets of the students were also questioned in the study. The high unemployed rate of the students (92.7%) influenced their revenue availability, thus half of the sample (50.4%) indicated that their monthly budget for spending is less than 250 Euros, and 43.2% of the respondents indicated a budget between 250-500 Euros. The minority of the students have a budget of more than 500 Euros (6.4%). Consequently the monthly spending for cultural tourism activities is about the average of 25 Euros (SD= 22.8), representing 10-12% of their budget. Another important finding refers to the fact that almost 10 percent of the sample declared that they did not make any spending for these types of activities.

Table 2 depicts the descriptive statistics results for the 17 motivation items and the four composite factors. The motivation factor “*cultural*” received the highest mean score (4.11), followed by “*entertainment*” factor (3.71) and “*social interaction*” (3.59). In this vein, “*education*” factor received the lowest mean score (3.00). Among the items “*broadening the persons’ general knowledge*” has the highest mean score (4.38), followed by “*to learn about the culture*” (4.35). “*It is important to visit cultural places*” is also an important item for the students (4.12).

The level of education is an important determinant for both culture and tourism demand. The events such as festivals, exhibitions, performances were considered to be important for the development and attractiveness of cultural tourism. In this regard, cultural motivation factor composed of eight items obtained important scores which placed it in the first position. Students’ interest for these types of activities has a strong intrinsic motivation which generates a stable tourist segment for the long-term (high scores for ‘*to broaden general knowledge*’ and ‘*I want to learn about culture*’).

Unexpectedly education factor received the lowest mean scores compared to other factors (3.00), and “*telling friends*” and “*to accompany friends and teacher*” received the lowest mean scores among the variables (2.70 and 2.88 respectively). This come in accordance with the idea that young generation are more likely interested to have an exploratory vacation to give them the opportunities to discover cultural attractions unless it is not connected with formal educational process. Participating in cultural tourism is desired when it is voluntary.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics for four factors

Factors	Mean	SD
CULTURAL		
It is important to visit cultural places	4.12	.868
I want to learn about culture	4.35	.806
It is part of my culture	4.09	.908
To broaden my general knowledge	4.38	.738
Its historic background	4.00	.936
I want to feel emotionally involved	3.82	1.085
To contribute preserving the attraction for future generation	4.05	.850
The physical nature of the cultural place or event	4.09	.813
Total	4.11	
ENTERTAINMENT		
I want to have a day out	3.41	1.109
I want to have some entertainment	3.70	.962
I want to relax	4.03	.947
Total	3.71	
EDUCATION		
To attend a trip organized by school	3.44	1.100
To tell friends about it	2.70	1.228
To accompany a friend/teacher	2.88	1.130
Total	3.00	
SOCIAL INTERACTION		
To be with people who enjoy the same things I do	3.67	1.052
To be with people of similar interests	3.66	1.025
For a chance to be with people who are enjoying themselves	3.45	1.131
Total	3.59	

n=234

Table 3
Factor analysis of cultural tourism motivation

Motivations	Eigenvalues	Factor Loading	Variance explained	Cronbach's Alpha
CULTURE	4.659		27.405	.843
It is important to visit cultural places		0,782		
I want to learn about culture		0,781		
It is part of my culture		0,752		
To broaden my general knowledge		0,712		
Its historic background		0,674		
I want to feel emotionally involved		0,615		
To contribute preserving the attraction for future generation		0,587		
The physical nature of the cultural place or event		0,570		
ENTERTAINMENT	2.568		15.109	.750
I want to have a day out		0,810		
I want to have some entertainment		0,778		
I want to relax		0,734		
EDUCATION	1.601		9.420	.637
To attend a trip organized by school		0,730		
To tell friends about it		0,708		
To accompany a friend/teacher		0,676		
SOCIAL INTERACTION	1.157		6.804	.696
To be with people who enjoy the same things I do		0,851		
To be with people of similar interests		0,725		
For a chance to be with people who are enjoying themselves		0,672		
TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED			58.737	

N=234

The exploratory factor analysis of 33 items of motivation resulted in four factors: *cultural*, *entertainment*, *education* and *social interaction*, and explained almost 58.74 % of the variance in motivation. Sixteen items, which were removed from further analysis, had loading values of less than .55. The total Cronbach's alpha value indicated that the model was internally reliable ($\alpha = .818$). The appropriateness of factor analysis for cultural tourism motivations was determined by Barlett's test of sphericity=1294,879 $p < 0.001$ and the test KMO = .820, $p = .000$. The reliability coefficients for the four factors were .843 for cultural, .750 for entertainment, .696 for social interaction and .637 for education confirming that the individual items under each factor were internally consistent (Table 3).

The study used independent t test to examine whether students' motivations differ significantly by gender (Table 4). It is seen that female students placed significantly more importance on "cultural" ($t(232) = 3.04$, $p < .05$), "entertainment" ($t(232) = 2.02$, $p < .05$) and "education" ($t(232) = 2.33$, $p < .05$) compared to male students, and the difference is significant. However, both groups ranked "social interaction" as an important motivation factor, and the difference is insignificant ($t(232) = .657$, $p > .05$).

Table 4
Differences of motivations by gender

Factors		N	Mean	SD	df	t	sig
Cultural	Female	92	4.26	.604	232	3.04	.003*
	Male	142	4.02	.593			
Entertainment	Female	92	3.85	.777	232	2.02	.045*
	Male	142	3.63	.844			
Education	Female	92	3.17	.859	232	2.33	.051**
	Male	142	2.90	.877			
Social Interaction	Female	92	3.64	.854	232	.657	.512
	Male	142	3.56	.840			

*.05 sig.

** .10 sig.

The study used one-way ANOVA to examine if the delineated factor groupings of cultural tourism motivation would vary across the demographic variables of age, class and monthly budget of the students. According to the results, there is no significant difference among the groups according to age groups. Similarly no difference was recorded according to the class levels of the students. When the mean values of the four factors are compared with the students' monthly budget using one-way ANOVA, it is found that there is a significant difference in education factor ($F = 5.967$, $p = .003$). In order to determine the basic reason for the difference, post-hoc Tukey test was conducted, and it is seen that the students with less than 250 Euro monthly budget spend much on cultural activities ($p = .002 < .05$). When the relation between personal budgets of the students and their cultural spending is analyzed with chi-square it is seen that cultural spending diminishes as the budgets increases (since 4 cells have expected count less than 5 Monte Carlo Exact test was run and the sig. was found to be .000).

CONCLUSIONS

Cultural tourism brings together personal motivation with travel motivators and determines a specific behavior toward cultural resources as in the case of other forms of tourism. Also we took in consideration the link between personal motivation and travel motivators, and we concluded that strong personal or intrinsic motivations will generate a greater motivation for cultural tourism. The results of this study offer an important view regarding the motivation for attending cultural tourism among Turkish students. The evidences suggest that for cultural tourism products, young and high educated people are an important target segment. The students' foremost motivations for participating in different cultural tourism activities are cultural and entertainment reasons. Students consider cultural tourism as a way which facilitates personal development through accumulating knowledge or experience, forming opinions and ideas, understanding better the historical background and roots of different customs and traditions.

This information is important for creating a cultural tourism destination. In general, the strategic planning process should start from the idea that there are different types of consumer motivation for culture, and most people are looking for a variety of things to do when they travel. Knowing this, in order to attract the market segment of students, the marketing strategies and policies should be more oriented to the benefits of cultural tourism activities to general education and learning process. In order to enhance the attractiveness of cultural resources for the student market, it is essential to emphasize some important characteristics like novelty and cultural significance of the attraction both for national and international level. In this context it is also crucial to

develop skilled human resources in order to provide well guidance and facilitating the cultural experience. Innovative programs and information networks for providing guidance and information about cultural resources may also be beneficial for the organizers and the students alike.

Due to the fact that students' interest in cultural tourism is determined by intrinsic motivations, it may be suggested that they represent a stable segment which is not influenced by personal budget. Further, they could represent a growing market in the future for cultural products, and it is important to get students continuously involved in cultural tourism and cultural products. This may guarantee future success of cultural products and destinations.

A special interest for knowing and experiencing national cultural attractions and events is apparent. In accordance with the other evidence, it may be concluded that integration between push factors like: "I want to learn about culture" and "to broaden my general knowledge" and pull factors like: "it is a part of my culture" and "its historical background" would contribute to the promotion of such activities. In this context festivals and local events provide the opportunity for the communities to develop and share their culture and help the tourists to interact with the host community. Also these types of activities assure the social interaction which is another important issue requested by young people from cultural tourism activities.

In this study the differences in motivations of students according to their demographics characteristics such as: gender, university degree and monthly budget were also investigated. The results of this study revealed that the gender has an influence on cultural reasons; female students' motivations being more influenced by culture and entertainment factors. For the students, the experience related to have a good time and a sense of pleasure about the things they discover or learn in these cultural tourism activities are also important. In this sense, underlying the entertaining opportunities of the cultural products or combining them with the pleasure and entertainment will also contribute to the success of the destinations.

This study has some limitations. First, it is limited to the students of the School of Tourism and Hotel Management, at Anadolu University, Eskisehir, Turkey, and the results cannot be generalized unless supported by further research in differing student groups and nationalities. Second, motivational studies should also be incorporated with the perceived impacts of cultural tourism. Such information would be of great help in understanding the demand for cultural tourism.

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BUILDING THE CASE FOR GETTING SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT FROM GOVERNMENT FOR BEACH PROTECTION - ASSESSING VISITOR SPENDING, MOTIVATIONS AND CONCERN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

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ABSTRACT

Visits to beaches are considered key motivations for many leisure travelers worldwide and in many cases, the beach itself may be the primary attraction in the destination. If used responsibly and maintained in a proper manner, beach tourism can be a force for positive growth and economic success. On the other hand, environmental issues such as beach cleanliness in an area can result in a loss of appeal and visitation and ultimately a loss of economic injection into the community as the visitor seeks alternative leisure opportunities. Water quality is a key issue for such tourism as visitors want an experience that is safe with no health concerns. This study determined what influences visitors in their choice of visitation to beaches and assesses visitor attitudes about their vacation experience. Findings show that environmental issues such as water quality and clean beaches contribute to visitor satisfaction at beaches in lake destinations. Additionally, beach labeling, such as the international Blue Flag program, could be used as a means of educating the visitor about health and environmental issues and concerns.

Key Words: Beaches, Canada, Sustainability, Tourism, Coastal Destinations

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is considered a substantial and significant business sector with widespread economic influence, as well as one of the main sources of income for an increasing number of coastal destinations, especially coastal areas (Orams, 1999). As one form of coastal tourism, lake tourism can be defined as a recreational activity (or activities) that involve travel away from one's place of residence and which have as their host or focus the water environment (Miller, 1990). Wall (1998) has defined it as any activity that takes place on or near the shoreline, where the presence of water enhances the activity even if water contact is not required. Lake areas are one of the most valuable tourism attractions because of their vivid natural landscape, high quality environment and cultural features (Zhou & Lin, 2003; Bahar & Kozak, 2008). Visits to beaches are considered key motivations for many leisure travelers worldwide and in many cases, the beach itself may be the primary attraction in the destination. Water quality is a key issue for lake tourism as visitors want an experience that is safe and there are no health concerns. Popular lake destinations generally have water of high quality, without fear of health or safety concerns. Lake destinations tend to be more attractive to leisure tourists because of their natural surroundings. In terms of natural resources, studies have shown that the lake destinations that are most valued are the ones that have preserved their natural resources and are aesthetically pleasing (Tasci & Gartner, 2007). Gartner (2000) believed that image is the key underlying factor in the selection of a particular destination. Moreover, lake destinations that are more aesthetically pleasing tend to have higher economic value place by those who live in the surrounding areas (Lansford, & Jones, 1995). A study conducted about the motivations of Canadians ecotourists concluded that the majority choose lake tourism for its wilderness and undisturbed nature (Eagles, 1992). Some experts have argued that it is the combination of sun and water, which can be related to relaxation, which makes this type of tourism popular (Garcia & Servera, 2003).

Conversely, lakes with water of poor quality are not popular travel destinations because of the uncertainty surrounding the quality of the water (Puczkó & Rátz, 2000). Caulkins, Bishop, Bowes (1986), conducted a study showing that visitation to Shadow Lake in Wisconsin increased as a result of water quality improvement. The growing utilization of lake resources by tourists has led to exploitation, over usage, increased development near sensitive sites, polarization of community needs and interests, and many other pressures (Galvani, 1993; Owens, 1985; Stanton, 1992). In some lake destinations, fishing and bathing have been rendered impossible due to a lack of environmental stewardship (Wall, 1998). Channelization of fresh water often causes biological imbalances in the environment and potentially the complete disappearance of the lake (Salm, Clark, & Siirila, 2000). In addition, shoreline alteration by developers and individual property owners has caused changes in the shoreline erosion and deposition process, often to the detriment of important beach and wetland systems that

depend upon these processes (The Great Lakes: An Environmental Atlas and Resource Book, 1995). Wall (1998) has also stated that "Parts of Great Lakes coastal areas are closed periodically because of pollution" (p. 373). Some experts argue that environmental protection in lake and coastal areas would only be truly achieved through integration of economic development and management (Burak, Dogan, &, Gazioglu, 2004).

The environmental problems described above have also helped draw further attention to the need for better environmental stewardship and planning for all types of developments (Kellogg & Matheny, 2006). Morgan and Owens (2001) argue that the Clean Water Act in the United States was a response to the increase of leisure activities such as boating, fishing, and swimming activities in places like Chesapeake Bay in Maryland. In recent years, protection and management of coastal areas have evolved from a status quo to a more proactive, sustainable and integrated approach (Kay & Alder, 1999). Additionally, Williams and Morgan (1995) have stated that the primary responsibility of lake and coastal managers is to preserve the natural state of the area as well as facilitate the enjoyment of leisure activities. In the Great Lakes region, American and Canadian governmental bodies are responsible for the environmental protection of the region. In 1978, these governing bodies created the "Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement" which aims environmental policy coordination in the region (Botts and Muldoon, 2005; Thomas *et al.*, 1988). Nonetheless, there are discrepancies in the policies among these jurisdictions (Viessman and Feather, 2006). MacDonagh-Dumler (2009), suggested that such discrepancies could weaken existing protection policies and leave room for non-compliance. The author goes on to suggest some solutions for improving the state of preservation in the area by recommending a strategy that aims to integrate different state agencies responsible for the preservation of the Great Lakes. As water quality and aesthetics can all be motivators for beach tourism, this study sought to identify which elements were motivators for tourists to one of the Great Lakes in Canada – Lake Huron.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine what influences visitors in their choice of beaches and assesses visitor attitudes about their vacation experience. Successful interviews were conducted with 528 beach visitors through an 'intercept survey' in the busiest tourist season from June 5 to September 6, 2009. Two populations of beach users were surveyed – local residents and visitors. An on-site quantitative questionnaire consisted of 25 questions was conducted. Frequency analyses provided a profile of the respondents and various characteristics of their beach experiences. The study was commissioned by the Lake Huron South East Shore Working Group which is a group of federal and provincial agencies, health units, conservation authorities and non-government organizations such as the Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation and Environmental Defense. The mandate of the group is to support a joint, science-based approach to identify problems and to suggest remedial measures to improve water quality along the southeast shore of Lake Huron.

FINDINGS

The study area for this research includes the Lake Huron shoreline in the counties of Lambton, Huron and Bruce, from Sarnia in the south to Tobermory in the north. Visitors to the beaches were primarily tourists (80%) who predominantly resided in south-western Ontario (75%) or central Ontario (15%). Visitors spent an average of 4.75 days in the area and an average of 3.13 days of their visit on the beach. Most visitors (45%) were between the ages of 35-54, 20% were between the ages of 20-34 and 15% were between 55-64. Less than 20% of the visitors surveyed were between the ages of 16-19 and over 65. The majority (61%) of visitors were female. A large portion (68%) of the visitors was either married or common law and most were on a family visit (69%). The average group size of visitors was between 3-4 people. The average household income of visitors was above the average Canadian income. Twenty nine percent had an annual household income of more than Cdn \$80K, 16% had an income of between Cdn \$60K - \$79.9K and 17% had an income of Cdn \$20K - \$59.9K and only 5% had an income of less than Cdn \$20K. It is worth noting that 33% of respondents opted not to provide income information.

Average Daily Spending

There was a statistically significant different in expenditures between visitors and local respondents. Locals spent approximately \$9-12 per person per day locally (within 50 km). Visitors spent \$42-56 (within 50 km) per person per day. For distances greater than 50 km, visitors spent between \$29-\$39. The main expenditures for visitors were for accommodations (38%), food and beverage (27%) and transportation (19%). As might be expected, the vast majority of accommodation and food and beverage expenditures were local (91% and 85% respectively) whereas only a small portion of transportation expenditures were local (21%). Other expenses such as clothing, recreation and entertainment, miscellaneous costs, parking, marine/boat services (from most spent to least spent) cumulatively accounted for less than 17% of total expenditures.

Beach Behavior and Practices

The majority of respondents indicated that the main purpose of their trip to the area was either a single day trip to the beach (36%) from their destination or a multi-day beach vacation (23%), with far fewer indicating the purpose of their trip to be visiting family and friends, camping, business or cultural reasons. Local respondents indicated that they visited the beach on average 3 days per week. The surveys were collected during the summer months, which most likely affected responses, as most respondents probably indicated their summer visiting frequencies that are unlikely to be the same as winter visiting frequencies. Responses may have differed if respondents were asked to specify frequency of visits seasonally.

Visitors were asked to indicate whether they would “likely use”, “might use” or “not use” a selected amenities. Amenities that the majority of visitors indicated they would “likely use” or “might use” were garbage and recycling facilities, washrooms and change rooms, parking, boardwalks, designated swimming areas, food concession stands, picnic areas/tables and children’s play equipment (Table 1).

Table 1 *Visitor Usage of Beach Amenities*

Amenity	Likely use (%)	Might use (%)	Not use (%)	No Response (%)
Garbage/recycling containers	90.5	5.1	3.2	1.2
Washrooms/change rooms	80.7	10.4	7.6	1.3
Parking	83.4	5.5	10.2	0.9
Boardwalks	65.6	17	14	3.4
Designated swimming area	65.8	14.4	17.6	2.2
Food concession stands	51	28.5	17.8	2.7
Picnic areas/tables	42.9	29.3	25.1	2.7
Children's play equipment	38.4	12.7	45.9	3
Volleyball courts	19.5	20.2	56.9	3.4
Access for persons with disabilities	30.1	9.6	56.1	4.2
Water sport rental equipment	16.6	19.5	59.7	4.2
Dog friendly beach areas	27.4	7	60.5	5.1

n=528

Beach Health and Safety

Beach visitors were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the water clarity/cleanliness, water quality (referring to the level of algae), cleanliness of the beach, lifeguards and beach patrols on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not very satisfied and 5 = very satisfied). Kruskal-Wallis tests revealed chi-squared values that indicated that there were statistically significant differences in the level of satisfaction with all of these attributes between beaches ($p \leq 0.05$) (see Table 2). It is interesting to note that there is a difference between visitors and locals that may mean that visitors are not aware of local issues that locals may know about.

Table 2 *Differences in Ratings for Health and Safety Characteristics between Visitors and Locals*

Health & safety characteristics	Visitor	Local	Significance
Water clarity	4.12	3.58	0.000
Water quality	4.14	3.80	0.016
Beach cleanliness	4.02	3.60	0.005
Lifeguard	4.14	3.97	NS
Beach patrol	3.77	3.08	NS
Overall satisfaction	4.29	4.08	NS

Overall, visitors were quite satisfied with beaches that they were visiting, awarding them an average rating of 4.29. When looking at water clarity, beach goers were overall satisfied with a mean rating of 4.02. Visitors were similarly satisfied with water quality, which received an overall mean score of 4.07.

Beaches Unsafe for Swimming

Given that beach satisfaction is so closely linked to water quality and beach cleanliness, this study supports previous work that recognizes the importance of Blue Flag recognition to beach users. The findings of this report note that there is a statistical significance between satisfaction and water clarity, quality and cleanliness. Of particular interest for this study is that 90% of visitors did not check in advance to see if the beach was

posted as unsafe for swimming before they came even though this would affect their beach experience. Only 24% said they would move to another beach if they discovered that their destination was unsafe for swimming, however the majority of users (85%) would not swim at all. The distances they would be prepared to travel ranged from as little as 8 minutes to as much as 66 minutes (see Table 3).

Table 3 *Beach Visitors Activities if Beach Posted Unsafe for Swimming*

Response to Unsafe Posting	Percent
Drive to Another Beach	23.6
Just sit on the beach	36.7
Just walk in the water along the shoreline	23.3
Swim and put your head under water	5.1
Swim but not put your head under water	7.9
Swim only in deeper water	1.3
No Response	2.1
Total	100.0

n=528

Although the majority of visitors would remain in the event of unsafe water conditions, 61% indicated this would have no effect on future visits and 3% even indicated they would be more likely to visit in the future. Thirty-four per cent said they would be less likely to return. While there was no statistically significant difference in the reactions of locals when compared to visitors, a greater portion of visitors indicated that it would make them less likely to visit in the future, which has implications for tourism related operations.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This research found that visitors (and local beach users) felt the health of a beach was a key factor in their satisfaction. This study reconfirms that water quality is linked to visitor satisfaction, and is in line with findings by Williams and Morgan (1995). Findings are also consistent with Zhou & Lin (2003) and Bahar & Kozak (2008) who noted high environmental quality is important for beach visitors. This study revealed that the majority of beach visitors do not check to see if the beach is posted as unsafe for swimming before arriving, and that a quarter of all visitors would leave the beach if they found it unsafe for swimming. As coastal zones in many countries provide a natural environment for many species as well as offer an attractive location for tourism activities (Ertem et al., 2005), it is vital that lake areas are protected for future generations. These findings illustrate clear economic repercussions for beach areas, as Orams (1999) noted that tourism is a key economic generator for beaches, water quality and general environmental attractiveness of beaches must be protected and planned for. According to statistics from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, the tourism industry—Ontario's fifth-largest export—is worth about \$16.5-billion in revenues each year. In 2009 it was estimated that about 712,383 people were employed by the tourism industry in Ontario (Ministry of Tourism and Culture-Tourism Performance Bulletin, 2009). As tourism is so important to Ontario, factors such as destination cleanliness and aesthetics should be key considerations for government.

The Lake Huron County partnership which commissioned this study noted that the study should focus on “those beaches that have an important role in serving visitors” (CHR, 2007, p. 23). In some cases, labeling and publically posted environmental quality can also be a motivator for visitation to beaches. If this is to be the case, this study emphasizes the importance of beaches to obtain Blue Flag status that assists with monitoring and publicizing healthy conditions. In terms of rating water quality in lakes, there are various systems with various labels denoting water quality. One of the most popular labels denoting high water quality is the Blue Flag label. The Blue Flag is a well-known international eco-certification for beaches based on 27 environmental standards and lets visitors know which beaches are best for swimming (www.blueflag.ca). Blue Flag status has gained popularity internationally and there are now over 3200 beaches in 37 countries that have obtained the status.

Although having Blue Flag status would not necessarily attract more visitors, it would provide a tool that would assist in visitor awareness about beach quality and cleanliness. This would be beneficial from an economic standpoint as it may ensure longer and more satisfied beach stays by visitors and encourage repeat visits once visitors and locals were made aware of Blue Flag environmental quality criteria. In communities that have lost the Blue Flag designation, an investment in water quality programs may assist with their efforts to recapture that recognition. McKenna et al., (2010) noted that beach awards play an insignificant role in motivation to visit beaches. However, cleanliness and water quality, are revealed to be very important. The study also noted that

proximity and range of activities available are important. In another study, Nelson and Botterill (2002) noted beach users who were aware that a beach has received a beach award were also more likely to select the beach as their destination. If this is the case, then obtaining Blue Flag status may be beneficial for beaches in this region.

Examining the broader picture of sustainable tourism, multiple studies have highlighted the need for tourism to consider environmental and social elements (Butler, 1999, Mckercher, 1982). As tourism numbers increase, so too do the impacts, and this may affect the attractiveness of these coastal areas. Currently, it is estimated that two million visitors come to the beaches of Lake Huron. However, with potential water weather from climatic changes (Scott and Jones, 2006) and the growth of urban areas such as the Greater Toronto Area, visitation may rise substantially in the future and therefore impact these fragile areas. Implementing Blue Flag at Lake Huron's beaches may indeed assist with quality management.

CONCLUSIONS

Research suggests that the most pressing issue currently in lake tourism is water quality. Generally, popular lake destinations have water of high quality, without fear of health or safety concerns. Conversely, lakes with water of poor quality are not popular travel destinations because of the uncertainty surrounding the quality of the water. This research supports that environmental considerations are the overwhelming factor in beach satisfaction. It is clear that beaches are an important part of the tourism product and that in order for this resource to be protected, implementing and maintaining award or certification programs such as Blue Flag may be the optimal way to ensure quality is maintained and visitation is optimized.

Although this study outlines some useful findings, these findings are preliminary and there is a need to conduct further studies that could assist in beach protection and conservation as well as optimize visitor spending. Some areas for further study could include visitor motivations for protecting beaches, and what current resources – both public and private – are being invested on environmental protection in the area.

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