EDUCATION ACROSS THE WATERS: EXPANDING THE BOUNDRIES OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

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PREFACE

The 2010 International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators (ISTTE) conference theme is: "Education Across the Waters: Expanding the Boundaries of Tourism and Hospitality." This theme highlights ISTTE's mission to improve the quality of education and research in the travel, tourism and hospitality industries by providing a forum for international educators, scholars, researchers, executives and government officials to explore current issues related to travel and tourism. Research and Academic papers presented at the 2010 Conference showcase six key themes: The experience of Heritage Museums, Farmer's Markets, and Cultural Tourism; The Learning Experience of Travel and Tourism Students and Professionals; The Destination Image Experience; The Environmental Impacts Experience; The Experience of Tourist Spending; and the Positive and Negative Experiences of Tourists.

Three types of papers are included in the 2010 Proceedings: full, poster, and working papers. This year, 61 submissions across these three categories of research and academic papers competed for the opportunity to present at the Conference. All entries were subjected to a double-blind review process. Twenty-nine were accepted in the full paper competition of 46 entries. This represents a 63% acceptance rate in the full paper category. Authors with accepted submissions were invited to submit a final paper for inclusion in the 2010 Proceedings. In total, 34 research and academic papers were presented at the 2010 Conference. All 34 of these papers were received and included in these Proceedings, including 24 refereed full papers, five refereed poster papers, and five refereed working papers. The research and academic papers accepted for presentation at the 2010 ISTTE Conference showcase the "expanding boundaries" of ISTTE with 56% coming from U.S. Colleges and Universities and 44% from Colleges and Universities across the globe.

We would like to thank all the researchers who participated in the Paper Call Process regardless of the outcome. Our sincere thanks are also extended to the 47 research and academic paper reviewers who generously contributed their time and constructive comments to the authors. We are also grateful for the support of ISTTE officers: Dr. Dominic Dillane, President; Dr. Florian Hummel, Vice President; Professor Michael Sabitoni, Chairman of the Board and 2010 Conference Chair; Ms. Joann Bruss, ISTTE Executive Director; and members of the ISTTE Board of Directors.

Ady Milman & Linda Lowry
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Editor, 2010 Annual ISTTE Conference Proceedings

GENERAL INFORMATION

The 2010 Annual International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators (ISTTE) Conference devotes several sessions to the academic and research presentations. It is the intent of these sessions to focus on a broad range of topics that are related to education, research, and management in the field of travel, tourism, and hospitality services. ISTTE is an international organization; therefore, submissions from international scholars are highly encouraged. This year's conferenc64e title is "Education across the Waters: Expanding the Boundries of Tourism and Hospitality" and provides a forum for international educators, scholars, researchers, industry executives, corporate trainers, consultants, vendors, administrators, and government officials to explore issues related to travel and tourism at all levels.

CONTRIBUTION AREAS
Contributions are invited in any of the following subject areas or their related areas:

- Bridging the gap between industry and education needs
- Cross-cultural studies in travel and tourism
- Emerging issues in travel and tourism education and training
- Innovations and designs for travel and tourism
- Innovative and creative teaching techniques
- Human resources in travel and tourism
- Impacts on the travel and tourism industry
- Information communication technology research for travel and tourism
- International travel and tourism issues and trends
- Marketing and sales in travel and tourism
- Meetings/conventions and events management
- New perspectives of the travel and tourism management
- Perspectives on articulation and/or accreditation
- Sports and entertainment management
- Strategic management of travel and tourism services
- Studies of gaming and entertainment industries
- Sustainable tourism planning and development
- Technological applications in travel and tourism education
- Travel and tourism education and curriculum
- Travel and tourism research issues or cases

TYPES OF SUBMISSIONS
The ISTTE provides researchers with a choice of four types of research papers that are all reviewed in a double-blind review process:

- Refereed full paper
- Full paper based on refereed extended abstract
- Poster paper based on refereed extended abstract
- Working paper based on refereed abstract

TYPES OF PROCEEDINGS PAPERS
In this Proceedings, three types of papers are presented in their individual sections:

- SECTION I: FULL RESEARCH PAPERS
- SECTION II. POSTER PAPERS
- SECTION III. WORKING PAPERS

RECOGNITION OF REVIEWERS

We express our sincere gratitude for the strong support and timely assistance of the 47 reviewers who reviewed the 61 research and academic papers that were competing for a presentation opportunity at the 2010 International Society of Travel and Tourism Annual Conference. Their careful consideration of these papers as well as their thoughtful and informative comments for the authors helped us to identify the best possible papers for presentation at the conference and for these Proceedings. Without their significant contribution to ISTTE as well as to the profession and the disciplines of Tourism and Hospitality we could not have produced a quality conference program at San Antonio. *Thank you for your help and hard work…*

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DIMENSIONS OF TOURIST LOYALTY
— CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The present study examines different relationships between attitudinal and behavioral loyalty by diverse contexts in tourism. Suggested factors that differentiate those two relationships include travel types—long-haul and short-haul travel—as well as personal factors such as novelty-seeking and risk-aversion traits. After identifying the factors, the effects of each on behavioral and attitudinal loyalty are illustrated. Based on the proposed variables which potentially deconstruct loyalty, the idiosyncrasies of this concept are reexamined in different situations in tourism. Four propositions result from the analysis, which start from the notion that the dimensions of loyalty in tourism appear differently from those of generic products.

KEYWORDS: Attitudinal loyalty; Behavioral loyalty; Market segment; Tourist loyalty.

INTRODUCTION

Maximizing loyalty has been regarded as an important way for consumer retention and profitable business (Kozak, Huan, & Beaman, 2002; Oliver, 1999; Sirdeshmukh, Singh, & Sabol, 2002). To capture this aspect of consumer behavior, previous studies have examined its structure (Dick & Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1999). Adopting the methodologies for generic products, studies on hospitality and tourism have measured loyalty by combining different dimensions such as behavioral intentions and emotional attachment. However, idiosyncrasies of loyalty in tourism have not been fully considered. Consumers have different temporal cycles of repurchasing tourism services. The amount of money and time that people spend on tourism experience varies. Different purposes of visit affect loyalty differently. Therefore, the gaps between the different dimensions of loyalty would vary by the types of travel, travelers' lifestyles and travel styles such as their novelty-seeking traits.

Overlooking the diverse contexts in tourism, many studies regard behavioral and attitudinal dimensions of loyalty as one construct. This viewpoint has made it hard for marketers to have a clear picture of the future intentions of the potential tourists. First, study has been done on identifying groups which show unique combinations of behavioral intentions and attitudinal loyalty (Baloglu, 2002). However, the characteristics of the market segments that determine their position in the spectrum of behavior and attitudinal loyalty have not been clearly found. Second, although the dimensions of loyalty need to be considered differently by the distance and time spent on tourism, these conditions and its effects on loyalty have not been fully examined. For example, honeymoon, which is almost a once-in-a-lifetime tourism experience, is not likely to attract the same tourists in a short period of time because it usually costs much money and time to revisit. Instead, satisfied honeymooners would have high attitudinal loyalty and spread influential words-of-mouth. On the other hand, individuals would feel lower barriers in visiting the same destination again in a short-haul travel. Satisfied short-haul tourists show high attitudinal loyalty at the same time. Thus, different relationships between behavioral and attitudinal loyalty need to be verified by the types of travel with different amount of time and money being spent. In addition, further consideration of personal factors would clarify the anatomy of loyalty.

The purpose of this study was to identify the different structure of loyalty and its predictors. The dynamics of the relationship between attitudinal and the sub-dimensions of behavioral loyalty were proposed. This study also identified travel styles, novelty-seeking traits, money, and time as major factors underlining the differences. In so doing, the study attempts to reveal some unique aspects of loyalty in tourism. Four propositions result from the study.

BEHAVIORAL AND ATTITUDINAL LOYALTY

Brand loyalty involves a deep commitment of repurchase and favor towards the brand without oscillation (Oliver, 1999). For the accurate measurement of this concept, studies have suggested diverse components of loyalty. There are two most popular categorizations of loyalty components. First, Dick and Basu (1994) classified loyalty into attitudinal and behavioral components. Later on, Oliver (1999) indicated that the consumers' mental development of loyalty follows a cognitive-affective-conative pattern. Recent studies suggest that there are four loyalty phases, and consumers can become loyal at each stage. In tourism, Li and Petrick (2008) tested cognitive, affective, and conative loyalty as three dimensions of attitudinal loyalty, which leads to behavioral loyalty. In sum, loyalty concept in tourism can be examined as a dichotomized structure of attitudinal and behavioral components.

Attitudinal loyalty is generally regarded as high favorability, trust, and other dimensions of emotional attachment. But discordance exists in demarcating attitudinal loyalty. For example, Yoon and Uysal (2005) included commitment and expression of visiting again as an attitudinal aspect of loyalty. But these are often regarded as behavioral intentions or conative loyalty in other studies. Li et al. (2008) reconfigured its dimensions based on the trichotomous structure of cognitive, affective, and conative loyalty. In their study, cognitive loyalty is conceptualized and operationalized similarly

with perceived quality suggested by Swanson and Davis (2003). Affective loyalty is understood in the similar way that Fock and Koh (2006) explain commitment and trust. Similarly, in other studies, parts of cognitive and affective loyalty are grouped with other non-loyalty-related constructs such as trust (e.g., Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2001). This flow of studies separate attitudinal part of loyalty from the loyalty construct in general: only behavioral intentions are asked to measure the loyalty dimension. These studies overlook the fact that there are many cases that tourists still have emotional attachment and patronage intentions such as words-of-mouth but have little revisit intentions. This implies that attitudinal loyalty, such as commitment, needs to be considered importantly in understanding and measuring loyalty in tourism.

Similar confusion exists in defining behavioral loyalty. Generally, postulating that behavioral loyalty involves real actions of consumers, behavioral consequences are widely detected by behavioral intentions (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996) as well as the real behavior. Noticeably, it is technically hard to track people's repeat visitation in tourism. It is not possible to predict the accurate time that revisitation occurs and detect loyalty at the time that people visit again. With traditional data collection methods including surveys and interviews, measurement of actual visit has not been an ideal approach. Therefore, measuring behavioral intentions has been justified to capture the tourists' real action.

However, there are still contesting opinions if behavioral intentions are the antecedents of the real purchase. Difference in opinions of measuring behavioral loyalty confuses distinguishing conative loyalty from action loyalty. Oliver (1999) argued that loyalty is shown only by repeated purchase. According to him, cognitive, affective, and even conative loyalty are merely transferred into the behavioral intentions while action loyalty involves the real behavior. In accordance with his opinion, behavioral loyalty of generic products has been measured as follows (Riley, Niininen, Szivas, & Willis, 2001): 1) volume and frequency of purchase; 2) purchase of a particular product within a specified category of the product or within the designated area; 3) probability of purchasing again; and 4) the time when consumers start to use other products. Some tourism studies follow this logic and separate the real purchase from behavioral intentions. For example, Li et al. (2008) set behavioral intentions and behavioral loyalty in the different constructs and measured the proportion of real purchase to capture the latter construct.

Still, behavioral intentions are understood as important detectors of loyalty in tourism. Oppermann (2000) acknowledged that there is a gap between behavioral intention and the actual visit in tourism. But he still interpreted that behavioral loyalty involves actual purchase and used behavioral components as measurement scales for destination loyalty. He argued that behavioral loyalty is an irrefutable scale and can capture actual profitability although there are arguments that the effect of attitudinal loyalty to capture profitability is questionable. Similarly, Wulf, Odekerken-Schroder, and Iacobucci (2001) disregarded attitudinal aspects and detected behavioral loyalty only by measuring the frequency and the amount of purchase.

However, attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty are not differentiated from each other in many tourism studies: they are often included in the same construct. Little attempt has been made to consider different types of travel and the spectrum of loyalty. For example, Chen and Gursoy (2001) used a single item ("it is a recommendable place") to measure loyalty. Yoon and Uysal (2005) included two items in the same construct: revisitation and recommendation to friends and relatives. Their study postulated that positive feeling is likely to be directly related to revisitation. Grouping the attitudinal and behavioral components of loyalty into the same construct, its reliability was shown merely with statistics. Similarly, Chi and Qu (2008) measured destination loyalty by their revisit intention and willingness to recommend. In their study, high correlation between positive words-of-mouth and behavioral intentions was assumed based on Oh's (2000) and Oh and Park's (1997) research. However, they also acknowledged that loyalty was measured with limitation and suggested that behavioral intention should be detected considering time span. Huang and Chiu (2006) also suggested an integrated conceptualization of destination loyalty. They explained it as repeat patronage, switching behavior, and positive words-of-mouth based on Wulf et al. (2001) and Lin and Ding's (2005, 2006) definition.

Furthermore, there has been a lack of scrutiny in defining the components of loyalty which are indirectly associated with revisitation, such as words-of-mouth. Due to the variety-seeking nature of tourists, this component of loyalty is, in fact, important. Even if many tourists have loyalty towards the destination, they do not often visit the same destination while still having loyalty (Chen & Gursoy, 2001). Furthermore, from the markets' perspectives, words-of-mouth positively affect their profit significantly. In this aspect, people who spread words-of-mouth can be regarded as visible patrons with high levels of loyalty in tourism. Although its importance can be addressed as such, there has been confusion in identifying its dimension. For example, Baloglu (2002) included word-of-mouth recommendation to measure behavioral intention. On the other hand, Li (2006) considered the same component as a part of attitudinal loyalty measurement items.

Considering other factors, the nature of tourism is not homogeneous and the relationships between attitudinal loyalty, behavioral loyalty, and its sub-dimensions appear differently. For example, especially in long-haul travel, it is much harder to have high levels of revisit intentions than to show commitment, favor, and words-of-mouth. That is, emotional attachment and oral referral are likely to be necessary conditions but not sufficient conditions for repeated visitations.

In addition, varied dimensions of loyalty by different travel contexts and market segments need to be identified. It helps to understand more accurately how the structure of loyalty change by different time and money people spend for travel. Segmentation characteristics such as personality, lifestyle, and novelty-seeking traits can be additionally used as antecedents of differentiated categorization of loyalty.

DECONSTRUCTING LOYALTY

Based on the literature review, this study includes all the forms of loyalty that do not directly involve the tourist's own revisitation as attitudinal loyalty. Behavioral loyalty

includes revisit intentions and actual visit in this study. Based on this conceptualization, four propositions, which address the idiosyncrasies of tourism, are derived from the critical review of literature.

First, the correlation between behavioral and attitudinal loyalty in tourism is likely to be lower than that in the generic product purchase situation. Kozak and Rimington (2000) pointed out that revisit intention is not prominently observed in tourism because of tourists' variety-seeking tendency. In addition, loyal consumers still have emotional commitment and spread words-of-mouth about the tourism experience although they are not likely to visit the same destination in the near future. This implies that attitudinal loyalty is observed without behavioral loyalty in tourism.

Proposition 1: The correlation between behavioral and attitudinal loyalty in tourism is lower than that in the generic product purchase situation.

Second, tourism experiences which require more time and money are likely to involve more passive forms of loyalty and less active behavioral loyalty than other forms of tourism. In long-haul travel, it is likely that individuals have relatively low levels of behavioral loyalty while attitudinal loyalty is remarkably observed among them. For example, honeymooners tend to spread positive words-of-mouth although they are not likely to repurchase the product in the near future. In short-haul travel, on the other hand, individuals show high levels of behavioral loyalty as well as attitudinal loyalty because financial and temporal barrier of revisitation is low. For example, people who purchased short-term tourism packages for the weekends can revisit the destinations relatively easily, while they would not feel any constraints in spreading words-of-mouth and have emotional attachment.

Proposition 2: In long-haul travel, the correlation between behavioral and attitudinal loyalty is lower than that in short-haul travel.

Riley et al. (2001) suggested people's informational processing to detect loyalty, which is based on the complexity of information search process. Based on the environmental stimulation model, they introduced "optimal stimulation level" and suggested that arousal and novelty are important factors. This suggests that tourists with high levels of novelty-seeking traits are likely not to visit the destination again. Instead they still spread words-of-mouth and have high levels of attitudinal loyalty. In addition to travel styles such as novelty-seeking traits, Oppermann (1998) suggested that risk-aversion segments show higher revisit intentions to the same destination. His proposition is tied well to personal factors that affect behavioral loyalty. For example, senior tourists who tend to exhibit high behavioral loyalty due to the tendency to reduce risks (Ryan, 1995) show high correlation between the two components of loyalty.

Proposition 3: The correlation between behavioral and attitudinal loyalty in tourism is lower among the people with high levels of novelty-seeking traits.

Proposition 4: The correlation between behavioral and attitudinal loyalty in tourism is higher among the risk-aversion segments.

CONCLUSION

The study examined different relationships between attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. Major underlining factors of the differences--time and money, and personal factors such as travel styles--were identified, and used to categorize these relationships. The effects of the each factor on behavioral and attitudinal loyalty were illustrated. Based on the potential intervening variables, the idiosyncrasies of loyalty were reconsidered in different contexts of travel. Four propositions were offered from the analysis, including the different relations of the two types of loyalty between tourism products and generic products. Empirical investigations are warranted to validate as well as to further develop these conceptual understandings. The study contributes to the extant loyalty literature by broadening the scope and delineating the dimensions of loyalty, albeit conceptually. The study provides more insights for tourism marketers to pursue profitable market segments and the behind-the-scenes markets that spread influential words-of-mouth but purchase less.

Tourism has a complex nature and there are more factors which need to be examined further: tourism experience is a set of complicated service encounters and loyalty should be detected after confining to a certain part of tourism experience. In the similar context, additional market segmentation bases need to be considered to better capture the relationship between attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. Not only demographic and geographic factors but also behavioral factors such as the frequency of purchase and initial loyalty levels need to be considered further to better understand people's attitudinal loyalty and revisit behaviors in tourism.

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SHOULD CRUISE LINES TAKE A PROACTIVE STAND
AGAINST CHILD SEX TOURISM?

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ABSTRACT

Today, the impacts and growth in numbers of child sex tourists in developing countries are too big to ignore. Growth in child sex tourism has been fueled by a combination of factors including poverty, increasing consumerism, expanding travel opportunities, resentment, and envy. Researchers believe that sex tourism has grown dramatically due in part to the carefree attitude of tourists, their wealth, and the increase in the number of potential victims. The good news is that the problem of child sex tourism has not gone unnoticed; governments, non-government organizations, and much of the tourism industry is working to curb the problem. However, cruise lines are sadly missing from the list of those who are taking proactive stances. Fortunately, what cruise lines can and should do to curtail the problem of child sex tourism would create a win-win situation both for their bottom lines and for the children of the world. These actions can be conveniently categorized into two general classifications. The first classification contains actions related to creating general awareness of the problem; the second classification contains recommendations for curtailment.

KEYWORDS: child sex tourism, cruise lines, sex tourism

INTRODUCTION

In developing countries, the problems of child sex tourism are too big to ignore. "The lives of child prostitutes are almost too appalling to confront. Studies indicate that child prostitutes serve between two and thirty clients per week, leading to a shocking estimated base of anywhere between 100 to 1500 clients per year, per child. Younger children, many below the age of 10, have been increasingly drawn into serving tourists" (Sex Tourism, 7/9/2010). Now there are an "estimated two million prostituted children in Asia, Latin America, and Africa" (Jewell, 2007, p. 32). And, "[i]ncreasingly tourists have been drawn to Mexico and Central America for their sexual exploits as well." (Sex Tourism, 7/9/2010) While reliable statistics may be elusive in this clandestine "industry" the results can be observed by the impacts on the victims, the children. To put a face on the problem, consider the case of Maria, a fifth grader in Costa Rica. "Maria is obliged to sell her body exclusively to foreign tourists. She only works mornings as she has to

attend school in the afternoon." (Sex Tourism, 7/9/2010, p. 1)   Why are Maria and millions of other children being sexually exploited by tourists?

The answers are complex and intertwined. Impoverished developing countries seeking economic development often turn to tourism as an opportunistic means of meeting their financial needs. A subset of those countries, especially in tropical climes, often rely on their natural and cultural resources, to vie for increased tourism revenues, including a place on port-of-call cruise ship itineraries (Macpherson, 2008). And though no doubt unintentionally, tourism has become a primary facilitator of the child exploitation problem.

Growth in child sex tourism has been fueled by a combination of factors including poverty, increasing consumerism, expanding travel opportunities, resentment, and envy. The solutions are just as complex and interdependent; effective constraints require joint efforts by governments, non-government organization (NGOs), and all members of the tourism industry. As shown later in the paper, some have become aggressive in taking steps to curtail child sex tourism while others appear to turn a blind eye to the problem.

To date, within the tourism industry, airlines and to a lesser extent, lodging and tour operators, and travel agencies have led the industry in both educational and curtailment efforts. Regrettably, cruise lines have been noticeably absent from both of these efforts.

Why should cruise lines get involved?   There are at least two major reasons. First, it's the right (moral) thing to do. Second, it's the smart thing to do; not only will doing so help maintain the industry's image, but it will also help sustain its long run profitability.

SHORT TERM ECONOMIC BENEFITS AT THE COST OF HUMAN LIVES

Unfortunately, as history has shown, focusing only on increased economic benefits can result in significant, unintended societal costs (Cook, Yale, & Marqua; 2010). These often manifest themselves in greed, envy, and increased crime rates that are often accompanied by the setting aside or lack of enforcement of both legal and moral standards. Nowhere is this more apparent than in poor countries whose citizens have especially low standards of living, where just getting enough to eat can be a real and recurring problem. These problems can be found in cruise line ports-of-call of a number of Caribbean, Central and South American countries.

An example that highlighted the disparity between the economic benefits of tourism and the plight of locals was recently highlighted by the cruise line segment of the tourism industry. Attention was brought to the good and bad sides of tourism activities when thousands of passengers disembarked from a Royal Caribbean cruise ship on the company's private beach at Labadee, Haiti for some fun-in-the-sun. What made this stop significant was that Labadee is just 80 miles from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and the scheduled stop took place only days after the historic, devastating earthquake that left

hundreds of thousands of people dead or homeless. Passengers and cruise line executives alike said that the economic benefits brought to the locals was an important boost during this time of distress and that failing to stop only would only have added to the devastation being suffered by the Haitians (Giovis, 2010).

Social problems in impoverished communities go beyond the need for basic subsistence as they are exacerbated by the "demonstration effect" where locals observe what others have and then desire many of the same things. Locals can become both envious and resentful as they compare their lifestyles to those of tourists and tourism workers who have jobs of privilege. Consider how cruise line passengers who exude wealth and a carefree attitude toward life must appear to impoverished locals living at or below subsistence levels.

The problems are aggravated when you realize that compared to those who continue in traditional occupations, from agricultural laborers to medical professionals, it is not uncommon for tourism workers to earn more and then flaunt the income disparity by purchasing goods and services not affordable to other non-tourism family and community members. This creates both envy and pressure to set aside traditional societal norms to cater to tourist behaviors, both good and disgusting. It can cause deep resentment, split both families and communities, and, in the extreme, irreparably damage lives. As noted by Karsseboom (2003), while sex tourism

> brings shame to husbands, fathers, and brothers, it is often a substantial part of many families' incomes. . . as men leave their families in search of work and better lives . . . women are left with the burden of providing for themselves and their families in a society that pushes them into a way of life that it shuns (p. 32).

This problem is especially prevalent in economically depressed or politically unstable countries where the lure of money and a better life draw women and children into commercial sex.

THE PROBLEM OF SEX TOURISM

Sex tourism becomes a serious societal problem when "under regulated" sex tourism, as prostitution tourism was once called, is introduced into a destination. Once it takes root, too many (often very poor) people, including some local law enforcement personnel, derive too much income from the tourism industry to shut down its ugly side.

Researchers believe that sex tourism has grown dramatically in recent decades due in part to the carefree attitude of tourists, their wealth, and the increase in the number of potential victims. In addition, the age of victims has continued to decrease with "some as young as five years old" (Song, p. 2). Milman and Pizam (1988) found a relationship between tourist season and crime season with crime increasing during the height of the tourist season and then decreasing during the off season.

Social impacts of sex tourism are compounded by three interrelated factors. First, there are increasing numbers of individuals traveling, especially to new and distant destinations. Second, there is a rise in situational abusers; these are individuals who did not intend to engage in sexual acts, but who get caught up in an atmosphere of freedom in their travels (Fraley, 2005). Third, as mentioned previously, too many (often very poor) people, sometimes including local law enforcement, derive too much income from the tourism industry to shut down its ugly side, sex tourism.

One of the most hideous problems encountered within the overall problem of sex tourism is child sex tourism. "Although it is legal for people over the age of 18 to engage in prostitution in many developing countries, that does not extend to individuals under 18" (Patterson, 2007; p. 16-21). The United Nations, in the "Convention on the Rights of a Child", agrees that anyone under the age of 18 is a child; it was further agreed that:

> State Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:
> (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
> (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
> (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

A report by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation on child sex tourism reveals that child sex offenders who traveled to another country to engage in this illegal activity did so out of fear of being arrested in the United States, thought it was legal in the country they traveled to, did not believe anyone would report the offense, did not believe they were victimizing a child, and believed that the person selling the child was the one doing harm (Patterson, 2007). Fortunately, as pointed out by Hall (2009), they have no basis for such thoughts as the PROTECT Act of 2003 made attempts by U.S. citizens to have sex with children abroad a crime without a statute of limitations. Further, as pointed out by the U.S. Department of Justice's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section in its Trafficking and Sex Tourism FAQs, "it is a criminal activity to knowingly… facilitate for profit the travel of a person when you know that the person is traveling for the purpose of engaging in illicit sexual conduct with minors."

Still, in spite of the PROTECT Act and other legislation, almost twenty-five percent of individuals traveling for the purpose of engaging in child sex tourism originate in the United States (Hogan, 2007). In addition, the majority of child sex perpetrators reside in North American and Western European nations (Sex Tourism, 7/9/2010). Finally, because U.S. and Canadian residents account for 76.5 percent of cruise passengers (Confident and Offering New Ships, Innovation and Exceptional Value, 7/9/2010), cruise lines run the risk of being enablers by transporting those seeking to engage in these illegal activities.

But, the problem is not limited to United States' travelers. A reporter noted the problem is also especially prevalent in Australia and that is based on numbers derived

from known offenders (Williams, 2004). No one knows for sure how many people travel for the specific purpose of child sex tourism or engage in this practice while they are traveling. The bottom line is that child sex tourism must be stopped. "The global community cannot stand back and watch innocent and vulnerable children be abused in order to increase a developing state's economy" (Fraley, 2005: 482). And, it hasn't.

SOVEREIGN NATIONS HAVE RESPONDED TO THE PROBLEM

The good news is that the problem of child sex tourism has not gone unnoticed; in a unified front governments worldwide are beginning to increase awareness of the problem and to fight the problem. "According to the United Nations, as of Jan. 5, 2009, 130 countries have signed an international treaty agreeing to the creation of extraterritorial laws against child-sex offenses . . ." (Bains, 2009).

Tables 1 and 2 provide a brief overview of modern legislation and criminal penalties that have been passed in an effort to curb child sex tourism. One of the common themes is that perpetrators can be prosecuted for their crimes regardless of where they occur.

Table 1. A Sampling of Legislation Aimed at Curbing Child Sex Tourism

Year	Country	Legislation
1993	Germany	Penal Code Art. 180-181a
1994	United States	U.S. Child Prevention Act
1994	Australia	Child Sex Tourism Act
1997	Canada	Criminal Code Provision (Bills C-27 and C-15A)
1997	Sweden	Swedish Penal Code 2:2 § 1 paragraph 7
1999	Japan	Law for Punishing Acts Related to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and for Protecting Children
2000	United States	U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act
2002	United States	Sex Tourism Prohibition Improvement Act
2003	United States	Prosecuting Remedies and Tools Against the Exploitation of Children Today Act (PROTECT Act)
2003	United States	Operation Predator – a joint initiative between the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Department of Homeland Security
2007	Malaysia	Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act

Sources: St. John's Law Review and Mind the Gaps, A Comparative Analysis of ASEAN Legal Responses to Child-Sex Tourism June 2009, retrieved 2/14/10, http://www.childwise.net/downloads/Mind_the_Gaps_CST_Report_June2009.pdf, retrieved 2/14/10
http://www.ageofconsent.com/germany.htm, retrieved 2/14/10
http://www.stjohns.edu/media/3/12ecf9fbc928453aab9730d4a278d697.pdf, retrieved 2/14/10

Table 2. Maximum Penalties for Child Sex Tourism Crimes

Country	Maximum Sentence in Years
Australia	12
Canada	14
Germany	10
Japan	3
Malaysia	15
Sweden	10
Thailand	20
United States	30
Norway	3

Sources: FRALEY, AMY. (2005, SPRING). *St. John's Law Review*; 79(2), 445-483; Sex trade blights the lives of 2 million children; Canada is not doing enough to fight the international scourge of sex tourism, *The Gazette* (Montreal), October 24, 2007 Wednesday, Editorial A Comparative Analysis of ASEAN Legal Responses to / Op-Ed; Janet Bagnall; Pg. A19, and http://www.childwise.net/downloads/Mind_the_Gaps_CST_Report_June2009.pdf, retrieved 2/14/10

One example of a prevention program that works can be seen in Australia where the government took away the passport of a convicted child-sex tourist to prevent him from traveling back to Thailand to molest young boys (Cowan, 2007). In addition to governments passing laws with teeth to reach beyond national boundaries to snag perpetrators, NGOs and tourism industry members need to become part of the solution.

LOOKING FOR COOPERATION AND SOLUTIONS

Cooperation between both groups is needed as part of the solution because "child-sex tourism usually involves the use of accommodation, transportation and other tourism related services, allowing perpetrators to remain fairly inconspicuous when making contact with children" (Creating a United Front against the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism, 2009). Child Wise Tourism is an innovative Australian program designed around a workshop format for

. . . a range of tourism-related occupations – taxi drivers, housekeeping staff, tour guides, karaoke employees, security staff, diving instructors, boat operators and similar [occupations] plus government, and NGO employees . . . to provide participants with the knowledge, confidence and motivation to act when they fear children are at risk of sexual exploitation. (http://www.childwise.net/downloads/Child_Wise_Tourism_Information_S.pdf).

In addition, the Australian government in cooperation with the tourism industry developed a "Travel with Care" leaflet that "is distributed in airports, travel agencies, travel medical centers, passport offices, embassies, and visa offices . . .and tour operators must complete the mandatory child sex tourism component before finishing their studies" (Fraley, 2005: 468-469).

The extant literature shows that tourism industry members have been slow to respond to this problem. "In the business sector, willingness to act has been muted, but some airlines and hotel groups have a clear policy of taking a stand against child sex tourism by educating their customers. Some even have a reporting mechanism in place to assist law enforcement" (Lim, et al, 2005). Sadly, the cruise line industry has been conspicuously absent from both educational and curtailment efforts.

In 2006, Air France began showing a video on long-haul flights targeted at male passengers traveling to developing countries for the purpose of sex tourism. The video produced by ECPACT (End CHILD Prostitution, CHILD PORNOGRAPHY and Trafficking of CHILDREN for Sexual Purposes) warns perpetrators that they will go to jail (Wentz, 2006). Similar efforts have also been taken by German airlines to target passengers on all long distance flights (Fraley, 2005). In Sweden, tour operators have adopted the "Code of Conduct Against Child Sex Tourism." "Adoption of the code obligates travel agencies, tour operators, and hotels to adopt an ethical policy concerning child sex tourism. . . . The code also requires that information be provided to travelers 'through catalogs, brochures, in-flight spots, ticket-slips, and web-sites'" (Fraley, 2005, p. 473).

CRUISE LINES SHOULD ACT NOW!

Governments, NGOs, and others are working to curb child sex tourism; however, cruise lines are missing from the list of those taking proactive stances. Fortunately, what cruise lines can and should do would create a win-win situation both for their bottom lines and for the world's children. As recently evidenced by the scandal involving one of the world's most esteemed golfers, sex scandals can have devastating moral and financial effects. Before it becomes a more serious problem than it already is, and a potential public relations disaster with serious financial implications, cruise lines should take quick, decisive actions.

These actions can be conveniently categorized into two general classifications. The first classification contains actions related to creating general awareness and the second classification contains recommendations for curtailment.

One action that cruise lines can take immediately to raise general awareness of the problem is to copy programs that have been implemented by many governments, NGOs, and airlines such as Air France. This can be easily accomplished at the beginning of a cruise by showing a sex tourism awareness and curtailment video during the required safety muster drill. The video could be replayed over the ships' video systems prior to port calls. Brochures that highlight the fact that child sex tourism is illegal and the penalties related to these acts can be included in cruise literature, company and industry websites, and distributed to travel agents and passengers. This information can also be prominently displayed on ships' information kiosks. Industry groups such as Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) and the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) can also take a stand by creating and disseminating training materials and programs as well as literature targeting the curtailment of child sex tourism.

In addition, in an effort to prevent the transport of child sex tourists, cruise lines can work cooperatively with governments to pass legislation to make it illegal for convicted sex offenders, especially pedophiles, to obtain passports. Since cruise lines must obtain copies of passenger passports, they can compare passenger names to electronic lists of pedophiles and deny passage for anyone whose name is found on these lists to truncate any inadvertent support of child sex tourism through the transportation of known pedophiles. Although some very minor short-term revenues might be lost from these actions, the long-term benefits of taking socially responsible action should be rewarding.

In cooperation with law enforcement, cruise lines can train on-board, internal security personnel to search out and identify sex tourism recruiters, and turn them over for prosecution to appropriate authorities. Finally, industry members can work cooperatively to refuse reservations originating from travel agencies and websites that advertise "child sex tours".

Governments, NGOs, airlines, hotels, tour companies, and travel agencies are taking proactive steps to curb the hideous problems associated with the trafficking of the world's children. Isn't it time that cruise lines "get on board"?

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BUILDING DESTINATION BRANDS: EXAMINING THE ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS OF DESTINATION TEAM MEMBERS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of destination image and Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO's) branding activities on the marketing activities of two stakeholder groups, products in the destination and tour wholesalers marketing the destination. The study considered the destination image of Australia in the United States and examined the perceived value of the Australian Tourist Commission's destination branding in the United States. The study examined tour wholesalers selling Australian travel products and Australian tourism products including hotels, attractions, tour operators and others, promoting their products to markets in the United States. The study found that both tour operators and wholesalers leverage the destination image of Australia to promote their products. The study results suggest that destination branding frees marketing resources that allow tour operators and wholesalers to focus on sales conversion activities. The researchers conclude that destination branding creates equity beyond the firm-consumer construct of traditional brand equity.

Keywords: Destination branding, Destination marketing, Destination image, DMO, tourism product.

INTRODUCTION

Destination image and destination branding are topics that have received considerable attention by both academics and practitioners in recent years. Studies in destination image and branding regularly cite the competitive advantage generated by a favorable destination image or a strong destination brand but few studies have examined how that competitive advantage leads to increased visitation. The present exploratory study will examine the impact of destination image and National Tourist Office (NTO) branding activities on marketing activities of two stakeholder groups working to encourage Americans to visit their long-haul destination, Australia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination branding is a topic that has received considerable attention in recent years from both academics and practitioners. The topic has been addressed in over 40 academic articles and featured in special editions of the Journal of Vacation Marketing (1999) and the Journal of Brand Management. In addition, several books have been published including two editions *"Destination Branding: Creating the Unique Destination Proposition"* (Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2002, 2004), *"Destination Branding for Small Cities"* (Baker, 2007) and *"Tourism Branding: Communities In Action"* (Cai, Gartner, & Munar, 2009). Destination branding was the focus of Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) initiative resulting in the publication of "Destination Brandscience" (Knapp & Sherwin, 2005). In addition, several conferences have focused on destination branding including the 1998 Travel and Tourism Research Association conference and three bi-annual conferences hosted by Instituto de Formacao Turistica (IFT) and Purdue University have focused on the topic. Throughout these reviews there is a general consensus that destinations can be branded and there have been several explorations of how successful destinations have accrued benefits from the branding process.

Despite such attention, destination branding has been somewhat overshadowed by studies of destination image. In addressing the development of "destination brand," one needs to differentiate "destination branding" from the related field of "destination image". As Cai (2002) notes, "…image formation is not branding, albeit the former constitutes the core of the latter". Several authors (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gallarza, Saura, & Garcia, 2002; Gartner, 1993) have noted that definitions of destination image are often vague and incomplete. A number of authors have adapted general definitions of image from marketing literature in describing destination or place image. Kotler et al. (1993), for instance describe that "image is the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have of a place". As such, destination image includes perceptions of the destination deliberately created through marketing activity as well as other perceptions and images formed through exposure to other image formation factors.

While destination image is the result of multiple factors, many of which are beyond the direct control of the destination marketer, destination branding is the deliberate creation of consumer associations about the destination based on a predetermined plan. Destination marketers, in determining how to best position the destination brand, use elements of Gartner's image formation model in their positioning activity. The basic model of brand development integrates with our understanding of destination image and destination branding. Aaker (1996) identifies three aspects of the branding process; the first factor begins with an understanding of the current image of product/service in the mind of the target consumer. This understanding of the current image is particularly important in destination branding because changing consumer perception is particularly challenging given the uncontrollable image formation activities. A second factor is the establishment of a set of associations, described as the brand identity, that the brand strategists want the product/service to be known for in the mind of the consumer over the long term. In the case of destination branding the establishment of this brand identity can be a complex process involving a variety of stakeholders. This process, tied closely to the

strategic planning for the destination, Cai (2002) describes as the "…critical missing link. To advance destination image studies to the level of branding, this link needs to be established." The third factor in this framework, destination positioning, is the identification of those aspects of the brand identity and value proposition that will be actively communicated to the target audience in the short term to meet the long term brand identity objectives. Destination positioning can be described in terms of the marketing activities, including brand advertising campaigns, undertaken by actors in the destination that contribute the achievement of destination identity goals and reinforce aspects of the consumer brand image consistent with the strategic intent of the brand identity. The complex nature of destinations, in which many organizations simultaneously collaborate and compete to attract the visitor and deliver the tourist experience, provides significant challenges to both the creation of the brand identity and the positioning of the destination.

Tourism System and Destination System

In discussing destination branding, one must recall the nature of destinations. One important aspect of the nature of destinations is that they may be considered as both single holistic entities and composite entities. Buhalis (2000) described destinations as "… amalgams of tourism products, offering an integrated experience to consumers", while Hu and Ritchie (1993) define tourism destination as "…a package of tourism facilities and services, which, like any other consumer product or service, is composed of multidimensional attributes that determine its attractiveness to a particular individual in a given choice situation." The composite nature of the destination leads to some complex brand relationships. For instance, destinations can act "corporate" or "master" brands for component products and services and channel members and they can be "endorser" brands for those entities. Aaker (2004) notes "… an endorser brand serves to give credibility and substance to the offering" as products within destinations receive the benefits of the endorsement of the destination brand. On the other hand, in some cases the product acts as a "branded ingredient" to the destination. According to Aaker (2004), a "…branded ingredient is built into an offering and implies a benefit and/or feeling of confidence" and, as such, the presence of a Hilton in a newly emerging city supports the brand development of the city with certain target markets. Interestingly to date there has been relatively little examination of the brand architecture of destinations and its impact on consumer behavior.

The destination brand also has a relationship with channel member brands. While some wholesalers and travel agents have established their own brand equity, there is evidence that wholesalers "trade" on the brand equity of the destinations they sell. These wholesalers also use the destination brand as an endorser. Indeed, on cursory examination these destination brands have a "driver role" which Aaker (2004) describes as "… the degree to which the brand drives the purchase decision and defines the experience."

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Destination Branding and Value Creation

The creation of strong brands generates benefits for a number of stakeholders, including the consumer and the company undertaking the branding activities. As well documented, brands create value for consumers. Keller (1993) defines customer based brand equity as "… the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand". The benefits of effective branding from a consumer perspective, according to Keller (1998), include "… identification of source of product, risk reducer, search cost reducer, signal of quality." The concept of Customer Based Brand Equity has been applied to tourism destinations by Pike (2007) who explored the concepts of brand salience, brand associations and brand resonance with potential consumers of a short-haul destination in Queensland, Australia.

In traditional models of brand equity, the branding process also generates benefits for the company undertaking the branding activity. Keller (1998) identifies brand equity benefits as "… greater loyalty, less vulnerability to competitors' marketing actions, less vulnerability to marketing crises, larger margins, more inelastic consumer responses to price increases and competitor price decreases, greater trade support, increased marketing communications effectiveness, possible brand extension opportunities and possible licensing opportunities". Aaker (1991) identifies the benefits to the corporation of brand equity as increased efficiency and effectiveness of marketing expenditures, brand loyalty, the ability to maintain higher prices and/or margins, trade (distribution network) leverage, the ability to add brand extensions and competitive advantage. He describes the assets of Brand Equity as brand loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality, other brand associations and other proprietary brand assets such as trademarks. An examination of destination branding literature reveals that most authors have identified the benefits of destination branding in terms of either the destination as a whole or the destination marketing organization. The most frequently recurring theme identified as the benefits of branding is "greater competitive advantage". No examples in the literature attempts to quantify the value of the destination brand. Table 1 provides an overview of benefits identified by researchers and practitioners in destination branding.

Table 1: Benefits of Destination Branding

Benefit of Destination Branding	Reference
• Differentiate Destinations • Reduce substitutability	(Morgan & Pritchard, 2002)
• Coordination of investment • Increased marketing effectiveness • Marketing best practice	(Gilmore, 2002a)
• Increased local pride	(Ryan, 2002)
• Predispose consumers to purchase	(Crockett & Wood, 2002)
• Perceptions of quality • Brand loyalty	(Slater, 2002)
• Preventative "injection" against negative publicity	(Gilmore, 2002b)

• Differentiate products • Represent a promise of value • Incite beliefs, evoke emotions and prompt behavior	(Morgan, Pritchard, & Piggott, 2003)
• Brand loyalty and customer retention • Life-cycle extension • Increased foreign exchange expenditure	(Parkinson, Martin, & Parkinson, 1994)

As noted, destinations are composite systems and destination branding accrues benefits beyond the traditional modes of consumer and corporation. Other beneficiaries of the branding process include products and services that are components for the tourism destination, residents, and distribution channel members to name a few. The following exploratory study recognizes the complex relationships between destinations, their component products and other members of the tourism system. That research will address the following questions:

- What is the level of importance stakeholders place on identification with Australia and component destinations?
- What is the disposition of stakeholders to engage in activities designed to build Australia's brand in the marketplace?
- It will examine tourism system members relationship to the Australian Tourism Commission's (ATC's) brand activity

METHODOLOGY

An online survey was developed for two key stakeholder groups, wholesalers of Australian travel product and Australian tourism product managers who actively market their products themselves in the United States. These groups were chosen because they are directly involved in the marketing of Australian tourism product in the United States. They also have the most vested interests in the destination branding process as both groups spend relatively large amounts of their budgets on marketing for the primary purpose of converting consumer interest in Australia to sales for Australia. The first group, called "travel wholesalers" or "wholesalers", included travel companies operating in a source market that aggregate travel product and sells it to consumers either directly or through travel agents. A list of qualified wholesalers was developed through consultation with the Australian Tourist Commission and North American based Australian State Tourist Offices. The list was compiled based on participation at major Australian travel tradeshows, on evidence of Australian travel product in catalogues, and on other marketing and sales activity. Individuals within these travel wholesalers were chosen on the basis of responsibility for the marketing of the Australian product sales. Depending on the size and scope of the wholesaler, these individuals hold titles including President, Vice President of Marketing, Marketing Manager or South Pacific manager or other similar positions. A similar process was undertaken to identify the second group - Australian tourist product (i.e. hotels, attractions, tour operators) that was actively marketing directly to consumers and the travel trade in the United States. The individuals at these companies were identified who had responsibility for American sales and

marketing. Depending on the size and scope of their organizations, individuals in the target group have titles that include Owner, General Manager/CEO, Director of Sales, Business Development Manager, International Sales Manager or other similar positions.

Two online questionnaires were developed, one for the product and one for the wholesalers. The majority of questions in each instrument was the same to allow for comparative analysis between the two groups. Questionnaires were placed on specially developed websites; respondents completed the questionnaire online and response data was collected on the website and transferred to Excel files for analysis in SPSS. There were 24 wholesale company respondents and 76 Australian-based companies representing local tour operators, hotels, attractions and products. The overall response rate to these questionnaires was 35%.

The present research is an exploratory study of the relationship between the stakeholders, the destination image and the destination branding activities undertaken by the Australian Tourism Commission. The results discussed in the present research are primarily descriptive in nature. The study compares the means of the two stakeholder groups and t-tests were undertaken to ascertain the significance of differences in the means.

FINDINGS

Stakeholders Association with Australia's Destination Image

The present research indicates that stakeholders find association with Australia very important in a number of ways. As shown in Table 2, when marketing their Australian product in the United States these organizations, both product and wholesalers, consider identification with Australia "very important", with the median recording the highest level of importance on a 7-point scale and a mean of 6.32 on a 7 point Likert scale. Using the same scale in which 1 was "strongly disagree", 4 was "neutral" and 7 was "strongly agree", respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement" it is important to emphasize the "Australian-ness" of my product to consumers in the United States". The mean response was 5.8, indicating a strong agreement level of agreement with the statement. Of those who responded, 81% agreed that emphasizing "Australian-ness" was important. A t-test of the two means showed no significant difference in the means of the two types of respondents. Similarly, respondents were asked to rank their level of agreement with the following statement: "being associated with Australia assists my marketing efforts in the United States". On a 7-point Likert scale on which 1 was "strongly disagree", 4 was "neutral" and 7 was "strongly agree", the combined group's mean response was 6.15. Again, the Australian based product responded with a significantly stronger level of agreement (t= -2.931, p= .007) to the statement (mean 6.37) compared to the American-based wholesalers (mean 5.43). With interest, one notes the stronger value that Australian-based products places on being associated with Australia. One possible reason for this difference is that the products "proximity", both literally and figuratively, may lead them to overvalue their destination brand's equity in the minds of international consumers.

Table 2: Marketing Impacts of Association with Australia and Brand Australia

	Combined	Product	Wholesalers	Significance
Being associated with Australia assists my marketing efforts	6.15	6.37	5.43	t=-2.931, p =.007
Importance of identifying your product with Australia or aspects of Australia	6.3	6.45	5.92	t = -1.508 p = .143
The importance of emphasizing "Australian-ness" of my product.	5.8	5.95	5.33	t=-1.664 p=.106
How important is Brand Australia advertising to your business in the United States	4.4	4.68	3.5	t=-3.456 p =.002
Success of my sales and marketing in the United States is closely tied to the success of Brand Australia	4.9	4.87	5.13	t=.742 p =.463

Scale:1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree)   Sample size "combined" (n-Combined) = 100
Sample size "product" (n-product) = 76   Sample size "wholesalers" (n- wholesalers) = 24

Importance of Brand Australia Positioning Activities to Stakeholders

A number of items used to provide insight into the value products and wholesalers place on Brand Australia positioning activities (Table 2). When asked their level of agreement to "Success of my sales and marketing in the United States is closely tied to the success of the promotion of Australia as a vacation destination," both groups reported a positive response with an average response of 4.9 on a 7-point scale. There was no significant difference between Australian operators and American-based wholesalers. Nevertheless, the wholesalers are less likely to value the ATC's Brand Australia activity. When asked "How important is ATC Brand Australia advertising to your business from North America", with 1 as "not important" and 7 as "very important", wholesalers provided only a 3.5 average (mean) score whereas the Australian product's mean response was 4.68. (t value = 3.456, p = .002).

The ATC provides information to operators about its branding work, as well brand consistent images for product and wholesaler use. A series of questions were asked to determine levels of familiarity with Brand Australia (Table 3). Respondents were asked to provide their level of agreement with several statements using a 7-point Likert scale in which 1 represented "strongly disagree", 4 was "neutral" and 7 was "strongly agree". Respondents agreed (mean 5.89) that they were aware that the Australian Tourist Commission had developed a branding strategy for Australian tourism. Respondents also agreed that they were aware of the key design components of Brand Australia and its goals (5.46) and the key copy points of Brand Australia (5.43). Awareness of these

specific aspects of the brand were reported with lower levels than awareness of the general strategy. Sixty three percent of respondents reported having read the Brand Australia pages on the ATC's Australia.com in the last 12 months. This online resource is one of the chief sources of information about Brand Australia for the travel industry. Respondents were least likely to agree that they were aware of the effectiveness of brand activity in the American market. This statement had the lowest mean responses in this series of questions. There was no significant difference in the responses to these items between the Australian Operators and the Wholesalers.

Table 3: Stakeholders' understanding of Brand Australia

	Combined Response *
I am aware that the Australian Tourist Commission has developed a branding strategy for Australian tourism.	5.99
I am aware of the key design components of Brand Australia	5.46
I am aware of the goals of Brand Australia.	5.43
I am aware of the key copy points of Brand Australia.	5.22
I am aware of the effectiveness of brand activity in the US market.	4.54

Scale: 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree)   Sample size "combined" (n-Combined) = 100
Sample size "product" (n-product) = 76   Sample size "wholesalers" (n- wholesalers) = 24
*No significant difference in responses between the two stakeholder groups.

Only 21% of respondents reported using Brand Australia elements, such as images, suggested copy or other items provided by the ATC, in developing their promotional materials, brochures or catalogs. In this respect, the American-based wholesalers were far more likely to have used the resources than were Australian-based products. Over 45% of wholesalers reported using these Brand Australia elements compared to 13% of the tourist products (chi sq =11.739, p=.001).

Table 4: Importance of Brand Australia to Marketing Activity

	Combined	Product	Wholesalers	Significance
Ability to focus on product sales knowing "destination message" has been covered	67%	75%	41.7	Chi sq = 9.166 p = .002
Increased business as an indirect result of campaigns	61%	50%	64.5%	Chi sq = 1.606 p = .205
Easier introduction of product to the US market because of brand Australia marketing	49%	51.3	41.7	Chi sq = .680 p = .410
Increased business as a direct result of	44%	46.7	37.5	Chi sq =

participation in ATC sponsored campaigns.				.541 p = .462
Brand Australia marketing makes it easier to convert "sales" to Australia	39%	39.5	37.5	Chi sq = .030 p = .863
Brand Australia allows Australian tourism product to charge a "price" premium.	10%	11.9	5.2	Chi sq = 1.194 p = .275

Scale: 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)   Sample size "combined" (n-Combined) = 100
Sample size "product" (n-product) = 76   Sample size "wholesalers" (n- wholesalers) = 24

There was general consensus between the Australian travel product and the wholesalers regarding the benefits they received from the ATC's Brand Australia activities. The benefits of destination branding identified by both wholesalers and Australian-based product were that 61% of respondents expected sales as an indirect result of the brand advertising, and 44% expected sales as a direct result of the brand activity. Less than half (49%), expected easier introduction of their product to the American market because of the Brand Australia marketing. Almost 4 in 10 (39%) believed that brand Australian marketing made it easier to convert sales to Australia. Just 10% of Australian products believed that Brand Australia allowed Australian tourism products to charge a "price" premium". Other benefits for Australian tourism marketers in order of frequency were increased destination awareness (4 cases), creation of desire for the destination (2 cases), and providing a foundation for conversion (2 cases). Destination branding activity added legitimacy and validity to product marketing efforts, generates demand in the distribution channels and created marketing synergies. The one benefit for which product and wholesalers differed in their expectations came when they were asked "what benefits they expected to receive from the Brand Australia activity" was their expectations of how Brand Australia influences the priorities of their communication. Australian product (75%) perceived a significantly greater (Chi sq =9.166; p = .002) likelihood to be able to focus their effort on product sales knowing "destination image" had been "covered" as compared to their wholesaler (42%) counterparts.

The Impact of Brand Australia to stakeholders marketing

Table 5: Impact of Brand Australia on marketing expenditures

		Wholesalers	Product
	Response Option	Response (percent)	Response (percent)
Do you spend more or less in the United States because ATC has a branding campaign in the United States?	more	12.5	6.6
	Not a factor	87.5	89.5

	Less	0	3.9

Chi sq = 1.755, p=.416
Sample size "combined" (n-Combined) = 100
Sample size "product" (n-product) = 76   Sample size "wholesalers" (n- wholesalers) = 24

There has been some suggestion that destination branding by DMOs may reduce the need for marketing by small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) such as the tourism product or the wholesalers. In the present study that assumption proved invalid. When asked whether Australian tourism marketers would spend more or less in United States because ATC has a branding campaign in America, the overwhelming majority said "not a factor". Only 8% of respondents spend more on marketing because the ATC runs a brand campaign in the United States. Results indicate that there is no significant difference between wholesalers and product as to whether they would spend more or less in the United States because the ATC has a brand campaign.

If destination brand has little impact on the overall expenditure of the stakeholder organizations, then what, if any impact does it have? In order to further examine the notion that branding activity undertaken by National Tourist Organizations (NTOs) does not increase or decrease marketing expenditure by the private sector but shifts the emphasis of different messages, two questions regarding the relative importance of different types of messages were asked. One question assumed brand activity and the other assumed no brand activity. The result confirms anecdotal feedback from NTO managers that destination branding frees product to focus on product messages. As noted in Table 6, in the absence of Brand Australia marketing, Australian Tourism marketers anticipate spending an average of 7% more of their available resources to promote the destination. The consequence of removing Australian branding would be that marketing efforts dedicated to specific product features and corporate messages would need to be reduced to allow space for these "destination messages".

Table 6: Types of messages

	Australian Tourism Marketers			
Type of Message	Now	No Brand Australia	T value	Significance
Company /corporate message	29%	27%	2.838	.006
Individual product features	36%	30%	4.428	.000
Destination messages	30%	37%	-4.960	.000

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

With the exploratory examination of the relationship of two key stakeholder groups to Australia's destination image and the branding activity of Australia's National Tourism Office, the Australian Tourist Commission provided new insights into the complex relationships within the tourism system and their impact on the destination branding process. The study confirmed that stakeholders place importance on identification with the destination in their marketing efforts. Results show that stakeholders perceive the destination image of Australia to be critical to their success. Using the terminology of Aaker's (2004) stakeholders used the destination image as a "driver brand" designed to stimulate sales. Such a level of importance to the success of their business provides valuable insight into discussions of politics in destination branding. The stakeholders were not only interested bystanders but participants in a process they viewed as critical to their livelihood.

Another notable result revealed by the study was that although wholesalers considered Brand Australia advertising significantly less important to their overall success than the product, they were far more likely to use brand elements in their marketing. Paradoxically, the travel product was more likely to support notions of unified messaging for Australia in the market and consider Brand Australia important to their success in market are significantly less likely to use the materials supplied by the ATC. One possible reason may be that the Australian-based products, located in the destination, have greater access to marketing materials other than those available through the DMO. As a consequence, Australian-based products are less likely to be brand consistent with the ATC when they do not use the resources provided by the brand strategists. Such results show that DMOs must interpret feedback from stakeholders carefully as their cognitive responses and the behavioral responses may be inconsistent.

Examination of the impact of destination branding on the allocation of marketing resources and the prioritization of marketing communications provided insight into the perceived value of the DMO branding activity. The presence of destination branding by the DMO allowed stakeholders to focus greater proportions of their marketing resources on specific product sales-related messages. One could be argued that destination branding increases the efficiency of stakeholders marketing in that it frees stakeholders to undertake tactical messaging designed to secure the sale. If the DMOs primary goal is to secure passengers for the destination, then destination brand strategies must focus more attention on stakeholder roles to lead to greater marketing efficiency.

The present study provides important insights into the role of destination image and destination branding for managers of DMOs. First, that destination image is an important asset for stakeholders in the tourism system and there is value in enhancing the image through brand related marketing. Second, the perceived value of destination branding is different for various stakeholder groups. Indeed, while stakeholders may be aware of branding activities, and even utilize brand elements, they do not necessarily know the effectiveness of the brand campaigns. DMOs must recognize that their brand

campaigns can be used by stakeholders in a variety of ways and ensure that communication with the system addressed the needs of each stakeholder group. Third, from the stakeholder's perspective DMO branding both supports marketing efforts and frees resources that can be directed to sales conversion activities. DMOs should recognize these roles in developing marketing materials. DMOs should not expect brand activities to stimulate greater spending by stakeholders. The current study shows that stakeholders have a relatively finite budget and the branding efforts of DMOs allow resources to be reallocated.

Finally the present study shows that destination brand image creates value beyond the traditional construct of consumer-based brand equity(Keller, 1993). A more thorough appreciation of the value of destination brand equity requires understanding of value created throughout the destination's tourism system. The study has identified value that is created for both tourism product and members of the tourism distribution network.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study was developed as an exploratory study and provides some important insights into the role destination image and destination branding activities play in the destination marketing by key stakeholders. The study is limited in that it only addresses a single destination, Australia, a limited set of stakeholders working in a single marketplace – the United States. The Australian Tourism Commission has been extremely proactive in destination branding and so the Australian tourism stakeholders may be more familiar with the issues addressed in the present study than similar groups from other destinations. Another limitation is the respondent group may be biased.

Destination image remains a rich topic for future study. For instance, future research should address the role of destination image in the consumer buying process and the relative importance of destination image creation factors in creating destination image. As image formation agents' change and new technologies, such as social media, change the way we receive information about destinations, our understanding of the image formation process must accommodate these new factors. The management process of creating destination brands also requires greater examination. Extant research has addressed destination branding almost exclusively from the perspective of the DMO future studies should examine in greater detail the value of these activities to the stakeholders at the destination and in the tourism system. Finally, there is a need to greater understand the relationships within the destination system, and the tourism system as a whole. Such research would provide greater insight into the value that is created by activities undertaken by the DMO for the destination.

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CRUISE SHIP MAKEOVERS -
THE LATEST MARKETING FAD!

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ABSTRACT

The highly competitive cruise ship industry has recently lead to some operators using scheduled dry-dock periods as a new tool in their marketing arsenal, posting selected aspects of the dry-dock period on their websites in an attempt to gain and/or retain passengers. Required approximately every two years, the dry-dock process is an expensive, time-consuming and dirty activity, and until new has been carried out far away from tourist gaze. The paper looks at the background to the dry-dock process and the varied ways in which it has been employed as a marketing tool.

KEYWORDS: Cruise ships; Dry-docks; Refurbishment; Website marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Society today seems to be in the grip of 'makeover madness' – home improvements, re-landscaping the garden, personal enhancement, and even our daily diet via a plethora of celebrity chefs. The tourism industry has a long history of makeovers in the lodging and aviation industry, usually described as refurbishment or routine maintenance. Hotels close entire floors in order to carry out refurbishment during the off season and/or during periods of low demand, and even refurbish entire properties as part of a rebranding process. Similarly, airlines schedule large maintenance tasks during periods of low consumer demand, often carried out offshore because of lower overheads. For over seven millennia marine vessels of all shapes and sizes have likewise needed routine maintenance, specifically to have their hulls cleaned. However, today the highly competitive cruise ship industry – controlled by the two major players of Carnival Corporation & plc ('Carnival') and Royal Caribbean Cruise Limited ('RCCL') who together control 70% of the industry globally – have taken vessel maintenance to another level when ships are refurbished and/or are completely reconfigured.

Starting with a quick overview of the recent metamorphosis of the global cruise ship industry, this paper details the history of dry-docks and their importance in the cruise ship industry. Referring to recent examples, the paper then looks at how these once-spurned activities are being marketed to gain and/or retain cruise ship passengers.

GLOBAL CRUISE SHIP INDUSTRY

The renaissance of the cruise ship industry from the 1970s to date has been well documented but in summary the industry went from being seen as a small, quasi-seasonal regional operation based upon a premium/upmarket target market to today's large, year-round operations to all four corners of the globe and a democratization/gentrification of the cruise product catering to the mass tourist palate. This change in product user was recently reinforced in a statement by Carnival Cruise Lines' President and CEO Gerry Cahill:

'(Carnival Cruise Lines is) … truly defined: we offer a memorable vacation experience and a great value, targeting middle-America. Our target guy is 40 some odd years old and may have a family, but he is not making $1 million a year – he just wants to have a great vacation experience' [Cruise Industry News, 2010 (A)].

Despite the dire predictions of industry pundits and academics alike in the 1990s (for example, Hobson 1993), the industry has managed to survive the setbacks of September 11, 2001 and the global financial crisis of 2008/2009, and is entering another expansionist phase with 26 new ships either under construction or on order from 2010-2012 [Cruise Industry News, 2010 (B)]. It is against this background that we investigate the newest avenue for marketing cruise ships in today's highly competitive global industry, namely marketing dry-dock makeovers. This is an exploratory paper based upon primary (Internet) and secondary (literature review) sources, and discusses how cruise companies have used dry-docks as a vehicle for marketing the cruise ship product.

DRY DOCKS AND THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY

Ships and maritime operations predate the advent of written records, with the first written record of the cleaning of ship's hulls (technically known as 'fouling') going back to the 5th century BCE (Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute 1952). This was achieved by 'careening' or 'heaving down' the vessel (beaching the vessel at high tide thereby exposing the hull). Fouling entails removing barnacles and other marine organisms that attach themselves to the hull; build-up of these organisms will decrease the speed of the vessel (hence increasing fuel consumption) as it moves through the water, as well as creating the possibility of damage to the vessel's hull. One of the earliest records dating back to 412 BCE mentions the use of a mixture 'of arsenic and sulphur being applied to a ship's sides so that she would sail through the water 'freely and without impediment' (Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute 1952: 216). For millennia, ship owners have experimented with different materials used for hull construction as well as anti-fouling materials, and today the latest advances in anti-fouling procedures involve the use of silicon-based paints. Cleaning the hulls of ships is thus an expensive, time-consuming and dirty activity, with accompanying environmental issues. The International Maritime Organisation's Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems of 2001

(which entered into force on 17/9/2008) prohibits and/or restricts the use of environmentally harmful biocides such as organotin tributylin (TBT).

Because the fouling process has historically proved to be both very time consuming, as well as putting the vessel at risk of physical damage (Hansen, 2007), dry-docks as we know them today were developed, with the first reference dating back to the 2nd century BCE in Ptolemaic Egypt (retrieved January 22, 2010 from en/wikipedia.org/wiki/Drydock). Today there are both land-based dry-docks (also referred to as graving docks) and floating dry-docks. In land-based dry-docks, vessels are carefully placed on hundreds of blocks and once the water is pumped out, the vessel can be inspected and serviced, such as by fouling and/or re-painting the hull. Once this is completed, the water re-enters the dock and the vessel is carefully refloated. The dry-dock process is also used for new vessel construction whereby the keel is laid on the blocks, and once the hull and superstructure are completed, the dry-dock is flooded and ship moved to a nearby wharf so that work can begin on fit-out of the ship's interior. Not all ports have dry-dock facilities, and also not all dry-docks are large enough to cater to large vessels. Because of their very nature, dry-dock facilities usually are not located in premium dockside areas but rather tend to be at the periphery. Constantinis and Mortlock (2001: 84) describe the dry-dock process as being a:

> 'prescriptive treatment … (which is) now embedded in international regulations and class society rules. Over the years the period between dry-dockings has extended as coating technology and propulsion machinery reliability has improved. The time taken to renew anti-foul coatings and fulfil the class requirements for dry-dock inspection of the hull is probably on the order of 10-15 days. However, while dry-docking is driven by prescriptive regulations, the occasion is normally used as an opportunity to carry out other inspection, maintenance, repair and update tasks.'

A skeleton crew from the shipping company stays onboard during this period, with minimal onboard facilities, with power and water being supplied by land-linked lines. Depending on the work required, hundreds of shore-based contract workers will come onboard to undertake a wide range of maintenance activities. For any shipowner, the dry-dock period is seen with dread as it represents downtime when their asset is not be utilised to earn money for its owners and/or shareholders. The frequency of dry-docking required varies, but tends to be about every two to three years (Minchin and Minchin, 1997). Dry-dock periods can be divided into two sections: scheduled and unscheduled maintenance activities.

Scheduled dry-docks

Scheduled dry-dock periods by ships already in active service are usually slotted in between different cruising programs or seasons, and besides carrying out fouling work on the hull, other contemporaneous work is undertaken which can be divided into three broad categories. A fourth category - new ship construction – cannot technically be considered downtime as such because the vessel has as yet to enter active service. But

with the uptake of Internet marketing capabilities by cruise ship companies, particularly in the past twelve months, the Internet has been used to stimulate consumer demand for new ships specifically highlighting product innovation: recent examples include the launch of RCCL's *Oasis of the Seas* and Celebrity's *Eclipse.*

The first category is refurbishment, variously described in industry press or on websites as 'renovations', 'extreme makeovers', 'an exclusive behind-the-scenes look' or 'enhancements' where a wide range of work is carried out: for example, installing new carpets, public area lounges, adding balconies or repainting parts and/or almost all of the vessel. The propensity of the cruise industry to embrace scheduled dry-dock downtime is illustrated by the statement found on the Princess Cruise website relating to the 2009 *Dawn Princess* dry-dock:

> 'Come behind the scenes and watch as *Dawn Princess* undergoes a refurbishment in Brisbane, Australia. From 7-20 June, you can follow along as we share a daily photo update of the work in progress, which includes adding two signature Princess features – our innovative Movies Under the Stars giant poolside screen and the relaxing adults-only Sanctuary. Through the two-week dry-dock, you'll see what it takes to keep our vessels ship-shape, and no doubt you'll be amazed at what's accomplished in such a short time period. We hope you enjoy coming behind the scenes with us!' (*Dawn Princess* dry-dock 2009).

Secondly, vessel capacity may be increased via two main ways. 'Jumboisation' involves major engineering works whereby the ship is lengthened by splitting the vessel in half and then inserting a new middle section: for example, RCCL's *Song of Norway* (Garin, 2005) and Costa Cruise's *Costa Classica* (El-Kilani and Ramadan 2003). Other ways of increasing capacity involve moving bulkheads (internal ship walls): for example, Holland America Line's *Prinsendam* increased its passenger capacity from 793 to 835 berths in early 2010 in this manner (Seatrade Insider 2010). Finally, a vessel may be renamed and/or change its external appearance (this occurs when a ship has either been bought from another company, or rebranded by the same company so that it can be redeployed in a different market segment). Recent examples of the latter occurring in Carnival's fleet are P&O's *Pacific Jewel* (formerly *Ocean Village 2:* Travel Today 2009) and Princess Cruise's *Ocean Princess* (formerly *Tahitian Princess*: Seatrade Insider 2009 [A]).

Unscheduled dry-docks

Whilst scheduled dry-dock periods are seen as positives by the cruise ship companies and correspondingly marketed as such, what companies do not welcome are unscheduled emergency maintenance activities. This involves the sudden cancellation of scheduled cruise schedules with attendant cost implications: refunding passenger fares, costs for crew repatriation and/or accommodation while the ship is laid-up, and the unbudgeted costs of a forced dry-dock including the cost of maintenance activities. Examples of unscheduled dry-dock periods can be caused by onboard equipment failure (two cruises on Cunard's *Queen Mary 2* being cancelled in February 2006 due to a

propulsion unit being damaged when she left Florida in the previous month: Travel Trade Gazette 2006); striking an underwater object (a seven-day cruise on Holland America Line's *Noordam* was cancelled after a soft grounding at Playa del Carmen, Mexico: Lloyd's Information Casualty Report 1997) and decontamination after *legionella* infections (the 16 July, 1994 cruise on the *Horizon* was aborted in Bermuda so the vessel could return for further decontamination in a US dry-dock: Rowbotham 1998). These all have a calculable dollar value to the shipowner concerned, but what cannot be precisely calculated is the effect that negative publicity has for the cruise line's reputation in terms of lost business and/or effect of such publicity on its loyalty club members. Any postings on the company website are limited to announcements relating to cancelled cruises, refunds and rebooking. However, cruise passengers do display their displeasure via blogs in a variety of outlets, such as cruise-only websites and the particular cruise company website, which are no doubt carefully scrutinized by company executives so as to minimise fallout from these incidents.

MARKETING CRUISE SHIP MAKEOVERS

Arguably the cruise ship experience can be supplied by any number of different cruise ships owned by any one of a number of different cruise ship operators, hence marketing unique product features has become very important in the industry over the last decade. As well, the demographics of both Carnival and RCCL passengers are very similar (Dickinson & Vladimir 1997) and, according to Kwortnik (2008), a convergence across the brands in the various cruise industry sectors has recently taken place. The larger cruise ship companies encourage repeat visitation via their loyalty programs, the first cruise ship loyalty program (the Skald Club operated by the then Royal Viking Line) started in 1973 which was ten years before the airlines followed suit (Dickinson & Vladimir 1997). Both Carnival and RCCL have loyalty programs, with Princess Cruises Senior Vice President Commercial, Tony Kaufman, stating that "Princess' goal is to ensure that our passengers 'escape completely', during their cruise, and return to Princess again and again" (Seatrade Insider 2009 [B]).

Both Carnival and RCCL have turned to new technology to market their cruise ship makeovers, specifically the Internet and/or social media. Safko and Brake (2009: 6) define social media as the 'activities, practices and behaviours among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge and opinions using conversational media'. They state that, from a business perspective, social media enables conversation and the ways it can be prompted, promoted and monetized. Social networks or communities are built up around the similar interests of their members so that, over time, a common bond and trust (most important for business and service providers) develops. A user-friendly, up-to-date cyberspace presence is a prerequisite for all cruise ship companies in this highly competitive industry. Potential and/or existing cruise ship consumers are both educated and informed as they enter MacCannell's (1999) 'back stage' via the still photographs and vlogs posted on the cruise company website during scheduled dry dock periods and/or new vessel construction.

Carnival was an early adopter of Web 2.0 functionalities (such as vlogs, blogs, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and/or Facebook), being innovative in posting information on the scheduled dry dock periods of some of its fleet (see *Dawn Princess* 2009 post cited earlier, however the web posting contained only 'stills' with no social media capability). In contrast, P&O Cruises Australia's web coverage of *Pacific Jewel*'s (http://pacificjewel.pocruises.com.au/) November 2009 Singapore dry dock was of info-tainment quality. The dry dock involved not only usual maintenance activities, but also vessel renaming and changes to several public areas as the vessel was transferred from Carnival's UK-based Ocean Village operation (*Ocean Village 2*) to P&O Cruises Australia-based operation (*Pacific Jewel*). Viewers of the vlogs were also treated to occasional interviews with UK passengers disembarking in Singapore from the former Ocean Village 2, onshore contract workers outfitting the vessel and even crew as they tried on their new uniforms.

DISCUSSION

In order to protect their investment in building and operating cruise ships, ship companies need to undertake essential routine maintenance of the vessel's hull. Barnacle build-up can slow down vessel speed and is has corresponding impacts in terms of both sea-time and money (fuel). Cruise ship companies have always carried out routine upgrades of public areas concomitant with the dry dock defouling procedures, but today the public area upgrades are being used as a marketing tool. Turning to recent examples from the lodging and conference sector, we can see where refurbishment is being used to leverage rebranding and/or repositioning. For example, the former IHEI (International Hotels Environment Initiative) established in 1993 (which has now evolved into the International Tourism Partnership) was predicated on responsible and sustainable business practices, but nonetheless being mindful of the fact that in so doing 'it is an essential part of remaining competitive and staying ahead of the game' (ITP 2008: xii). The boutique Hotel Indigo brand launched by the InterContinental Hotels Group in 2004 focuses on change as a key element of its retail service model, Sheehan (2004: 52) concluding by stating that 'a hotel is simply another retail environment'. Like the jumboisation process noted earlier, hotel refurbishment can involve major engineering works such as current refurbishment of the English Heritage-protected south façade of London's landmark Savoy Hotel where one of the engineering brief's was to restore the hotel's former five-star rating (Bieker 2010). Finally, Whitfield's work (drawing upon Butler's tourism area life cycle) on the UK conference sector argues that 'the net effect of any refurbishment program will be to initiate a new life cycle' (2009: 564).

All of the above reinforce the importance of refurbishment for cruise operators which is probably why these are being actively used as marketing tools on company websites. Rebranding by incorporating suites of changes bound: for example, Holland America Line's '*Signature of Excellence*' or Princess Cruises/Carnival's '*Serenity*' enhancements. The fly-on-the-wall approach whereby vessel interiors are subjected to a 'before' and 'after' transformative process find their way onto company websites, inviting comments via blogs from past or new passengers. These posts have no doubt

borrowed from the offerings to be found on makeover and/or reality television, the 'format (having become) an international phenomenon and can be found on primetime television everywhere from Melbourne to Madrid'(Lewis 2008: 447). But in reality, the view offered on their websites contrasts with the reality of the dry dock experience for the ship's crew and/or onshore contractors who undertake dirty and often dangerous work constrained by almost impossible turn-around times. Any posts on fouling work being carried out on the hull are conspicuous in their absence, and even the refurbishment work posted has an air of surreal artificiality that no doubt makes it suitable for mass market audience consumption.

CONCLUSION

In 1972, the *Mardi Gras (*Carnival's first vessel) commenced service out of Miami, and her owners 'had neither the time nor the money for major dry-dock overhaul ... as the ship sailed, teams of carpenters worked in sealed-off areas, converting unused public areas into cabins and upgrading what had been the emigrant and third-class facilities into something Carnival could sell' (Garin 2005: 82). Today, Carnival has gone in the opposite direction by baring all on its website(s) in its current rounds of refurbishment work. Whilst new vessel launch has always generated much media hype and publicity that is needed to generate consumer demand for the new product, using company websites with Web 2.0 social media applications to market scheduled dry dock periods is the latest way major cruise ship players are seeking to woo customers. However the emphasis is not on the routine maintenance function but on the makeovers of guest amenities where the companies generate most of their income in carefully contrived retail environments (Weaver 2005). It is open to debate whether or not this is being driven by the two major players seeking to outdo each other in the marketing stakes, or feeding the general populace's infatuation with the makeover process found on reality television, but nonetheless the once hidden dry-dock processes has moved to MacCannell's 'front stage' in cyber-space. It is suggested that there are two dangers in posting makeovers for all the world to see: people may not like the end result and thus change their travel plans, or conversely, former passengers may be upset to see their beloved ship's interior destroyed in the makeover process. The question also remains to be answered is whether or not the fouling process that takes place every two to three years is now happening more frequently as companies engage in more frequent makeovers so as to keep their product (like Hotel Indigo) continually 'fresh'. The final word on cruise ship makeovers belongs to Peter Knego (2006), ocean liner historian and journalist. In February 2004 he travelled to India to rescue many fittings from various vessels as they lay waiting their final rites on the tidal sands of Alang, the shipping scrap yard capital of the world. Several months and two containers later, salvaged items finally arrived in Southern Californian ready to be incorporated into home and building makeovers. Later that year he founded Midship Century (www.midshipcentury.com) which trades as a sales outlet for these salvaged items available for purchase by interior designers, cruise ship aficionados or home renovators. One can only but surmise if items from recent cruise ship makeovers will also find a similar outlet in the future!

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CHINESE CRUISE TOURISTS' MOTIVATIONS
-A CULTURAL-HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the motivations of Chinese tourists for cruise tourism. A travel motivation model is developed from a cultural-historical perspective. The model analyzes classical literature and travelogues by Chinese literati and scholars, and integrates the analysis with the synthesis of contemporary tourism literature to interpret the meanings that the Chinese tourists attach to water and associate with leisure travel. Five dimensions of water associations are identified. They are *Life, Flow and Energy, Purity, Freshness,* and *Natural State of Being*. Expanding on these dimensions and drawing on the push-pull typology, the model proposes seven push and five pull factors of Chinese tourist motivations for cruise. The push factors are *Spiritual Purification, Moral Enlightenment, Relaxation and Refreshment, Escaping, Social Gathering, Family Happiness,* and *Cultural Discovery*. The pull factors are *Openness, Freedom, Beautiful Scenery, Cultural Attributes,* and *Entertainment*. The model contributes to the understanding of Chinese tourists as a unique and fast-growing market for cruise tourism, with both conceptual and practical implications for advancing the research about and providing services to the Chinese tourists.

KEYWORDS: cruise tourism, motivation, Chinese literati, classical literature, water

INTRODUCTION

Water is viewed as an important element in Chinese culture. The appreciation of water has permeated more than 5,000 years of Chinese history. Perceived as one of the five basic elements (Fire, Earth, Water, Metal and Wood) that constitute the nature, water is commonly associated with many virtues. According to Confucian principles, water is endowed with human traits and posed as sources of moral enlightenment (Yang, 2000). Confucius said, 知者乐水，仁者乐山。知者动，仁者静；知者乐，仁者寿 (*Zhi Zhe Le Shui, Ren Zhe Le Shan. Zhi Zhe Dong, Ren Zhe Jing; Zhi Zhe Le, Ren Zhe Shou* ["The wise love water; the benevolent love mountains. The wise move; the benevolent are

static. The wise are happy; the benevolent longevity."]) (Analects, VI.XXI). Water is a metaphor for wisdom and virtue of people. Water is also considered the supreme virtue in Taoism, another school of philosophy in Chinese culture. Taoism advocates the virtue of 水善利万物而不争，处众人之所恶，故几于道 (*Shui Shan Li Wan Wu Er Bu Zheng, Chu Zhong Ren Zhi Suo E, Gu Ji Yu Dao* ["benefit others while not compete with them. It gathers in unpopular places. In this it is like the Tao."]) (Tao Te Ching, VIII). In other words, water is helpful yet noncompetitive. It does not mind staying in unpopular places that others disfavor. Because of the virtues it holds, water can be compared to the Tao, the ideal state of human and universe in Taoism. In light of this, it is believed among Chinese people in their daily life that to be natural is to live like water and "the state of life" is a state of peacefulness, harmony, and insightfulness (Moore, 1967).

Going beyond its physical substance, water interacts with generations of Chinese people in their spiritual pursuit of self-consciousness, purification of the mind, and inspiration. Playing with water has been a preferable way of Chinese people to satisfy such psychological needs. The Chinese demonstrate a great desire and liking for water in leisure travel. In fact, a well-known Chinese idiom equates leisure travel to "touring mountains and playing water" (Cai, 2005). The value of water is highlighted for Chinese tourists; thus presents a great opportunity for cruise industry, which promotes water as the primary selling point. The phenomenal economic growth of China has led to the booming Chinese travel market both domestically and internationally. It has been forecasted by World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) that China will generate 100 million international arrivals by 2020, making it the fourth largest market in the world. Given the sheer size of market and high value that the Chinese attach to water in leisure travel, Chinese tourists are becoming increasingly important to cruise industry. It has been reported that more than 200,000 Chinese tourists traveled abroad by cruise in 2009, particularly to Japan and South Korea, with an increase of 82 percent comparing to 2008 (What's on Xiamen, 2010).

Recognizing the emerging potential from the Chinese market, cruise operators are looking to tap into China market. According to China Hospitality News (2009), many well-known world cruise operators have shown interests in promoting cruise tourism in China. Royal Caribbean International and Costa Cruises have opened up new routes taking Shanghai as the base of operations and started to seek for more cruise passengers from among Chinese outbound market. Recently reported by BBC (2010), soaring fuel prices have driven European and American cruise operators to the East. David Dingle, CEO of Carnival UK, stated that the company has initiated a new cruise operation base in China to explore the new market. To access and attract this market, the cruise industry must start with one basic question: why Chinese tourists choose cruise tourism for their leisure? This study is conducted to answer this question from a cultural-historical perspective. It aims at developing a conceptual model of Chinese tourists' motivation for cruise tourism.

TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS AND CRUISE TOURISM

Extant literature is abundant on travel motivations. Numerous theories of travel motivation have been proposed, such as the push-pull model by Dann (1977), travel career ladder by Pearce (1982), escaping-seeking model by Iso-Ahola (1982), and so forth. In addition, large numbers of travel motivation models/frameworks have been conceptually proposed and empirically examined in terms of various market segments by travel purposes, activities, demographic information and alike. For example, Crompton (1979) proposed a conceptual framework for pleasant vacationers' motivation, including escaping from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and self evaluation, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, facilitation of social interaction, novelty and education. Among existing studies on travel motivation, many take a cross-cultural perspective to examine travel motivation of different cultural groups, for example, overseas German tourists (Jamrozy and Uysal, 1994), British outbound tourists (Jang and Cai, 2002), Japanese oversea tourists (Cha *et al.*, 1995) among others. Different market segments by travel purpose, activities, demographic information, and cultural background have distinct travel motivations.

Cruise industry has enjoyed its growth in developed countries in recent years. It is estimated that 7.4 million people in North America take cruise vacations every year (Teye and Leclerc, 2003). Understanding motivation factors that affect the purchase decision is crucial for cruise companies to map out strategies. Previous literature explored cruise travel motivation of tourists from North America, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Motivation factors have been identified to include social gathering, discovery, entertainment, escaping, and family time. Major motivation factors have been found to vary due to different market segments. Teye and Leclerc (2003) examined cruise travel motivation of white Caucasians and ethnic minorities and found that for white Caucasians, social dimension, cultural discovery, and family/kinship attributes are major motivational factors. For ethnic minorities, uninhibited pursuits, cultural discovery and entertainment opportunities represent most cruise tourists' motivations.

As one of the few existing empirical research that has examined cruise motivation of Chinese-speaking tourists, Qu and Ping (1998) found that escape from normal life, social gathering, and beautiful environment and scenery were the major traveling motivation factors for Hong Kong cruise tourists. Another empirical research that studied ethnic Chinese tourists' motivations on cruise (Josiam, Huang, Spears, Kennon, Bahulkar, 2009) identified that discovery, enjoyment, social/esteem needs, escape, and family time to be the push motivational factors. However, these studies are unable to provide insights on the major Chinese population "the mainlanders", a market that bears unique characteristics. Additionally, no existing study has investigated, from cultural and historical perspectives, the underlying reasons for Chinese tourists to choose a cruise experience.

Drawn from the previous literature on travel motivation in general and cruise tourism motivation in particular, this study adopted the push- pull typology at the starting point to develop the model. The push-pull model proposed by Dann (1977) has been generally accepted and applied in tourism literature. Push factors are internal to individuals, instill a desire for travel, and aim at satisfying various psychological needs. Pull factors, on the other hand, are external to the individual, stress benefits of particular destinations, and determine where, when, and how that person vacations.

The push-pull model has found wide applications in the field of tourism studies. Using data from four countries: Japan, France, West Germany, and the United Kingdom, Yuan and McDonald (1990) examined the motivations for international tourists. The research identified five push factors: escape, novelty, prestige, enhancement of kinship relationships, and relaxation/hobbies; as well as seven pull factors: budget, culture and history, wilderness, ease of travel, cosmopolitan environment, facilities, and hunting. It was also found that tourists from different countries placed different levels of importance on these factors.

Focused on the travel motivations of British outbound market, Jang and Cai (2002) identified six push and five pull factors. The top three factors that motivated British tourists are knowledge seeking, escape, and family & friend togetherness. Cleanliness & safety, easy-to-access & economical deal and sunny & exotic are perceived to be the leading pull factors that drove the British overseas. As a study that specifically dealt with push motivation factors, Cha *et al.* (1995) identified six core factors that influence Japanese tourists' decision to visit overseas. These motivating factors are relax, knowledge, adventure, travel bragging, family, and sports. Also adopting the push-pull framework, Zhang and Lam (1999) investigated the motivations of mainland Chinese tourists to visit Hong Kong. The study revealed three distinct push factors for Chinese tourists: knowledge, prestige and enhancement of human relationship. Among all pull factors, Hi-tech image was the most important, followed by expenditure and accessibility. Uniqueness of Hong Kong, which lies in its hybrid culture and prestigious image, was pointed out for its relevance to the leading push factors perceived by the mainland Chinese.

Significance of Water in Leisure Travel

To identify the push and pull factors of cruise tourists from the Mainland China, a cultural and historical understanding of the meanings that the Chinese attach to water in leisure travel is essential. The interaction between the Chinese and water-based leisure travel dates back to the beginning of the Chinese civilization. Two largest rivers, Yellow River (referred to the Mother River in China) and Yangtze River and their numerous tributaries, have crossed through vast terrains, nurturing its evolution and progress. Many riverside villages later became big cities due to business activities facilitated by water transportation. In ancient China, traveling by water was very popular among scholars,

monks and pilgrims, and merchants and administrators (Arlt and Feng, 2009). Among these travelers, famous figures include poets Li Bai, Su Shi, and travel writer Xu Xiake. The best known traveler is Li Bai, the Chinese poet with Taoist ideal and fantastic imagination. Most of his poems were composed while he was taking the cruise and many of them were about water. It is noted that Three Gorges, scenic spots of the Yangtze River, inspired the poet in many of his poems (Fearnside, 1988). The water-inspired poems by Li Bai have influenced generations of the Chinese and are continually taught today in China (Sofield and Li, 1997). Many places mentioned in his work have become tourist attractions.

It has been observed (Arlt and Feng, 2009) that Chinese tourists are particularly fond of attractions portrayed by notable travelers in history, such as Three Gorges in Li Bai's poems. The familiarity, when felt, creates a connection between the river and the tourists. The Chinese perception of nature, which largely depends on its cultural background, is of particular importance in this context. When examining the major features of Chinese tourism, Sofield and Li (1998) argued that internal forces dominate Chinese tourists' interests in destinations. To illustrate the forces, the authors employed an interesting comparison: "When Western tourists look at the Yangtze, they see a river; the Chinese see a poem replete with philosophical ideals." Therefore, quite different from their Western counterparts, Chinese tourists view the river highly relevant to their spiritual pursuits and sense of being.

The long history of the Chinese civilization has accumulated a rich reservoir of literature and travelogues by scholars and literati. Those related to leisure travel symbolize water as the source of life, flowing and energy, purity, freshness, and natural state of being. These symbolisms of water serve as the dimensions underlying the unique push and pull factors that motivate Chinese tourists to cruise. Figures 1 illustrates these dimensions and the push and pull factors derived from them that form a motivation model of Chinese cruise tourists.
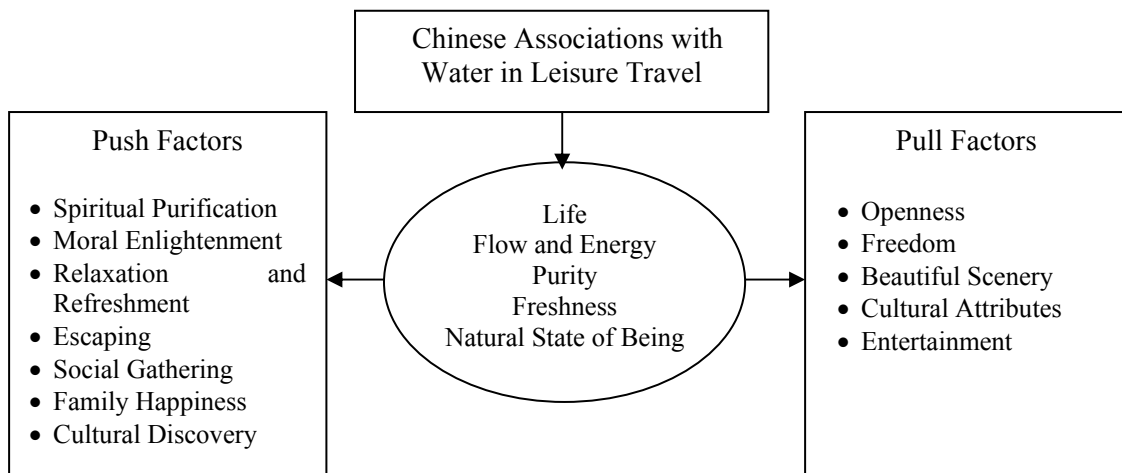
Figure 1: A Motivation Model of Chinese Cruise Tourists

Five Dimensions of Chinese Associations with Water

Life- As one of the most essential elements in the nature, water is vital to human life. As long as there is water, there is possibility for life. As an old saying goes, 缘水而居，不耕不稼 (*Yuan Shui Er Ju, Bu Geng Bu Jia* ["Those who live near water are blessed."]), Chinese people recognized the importance of water to their living. As an agrarian society, China was largely dependent on precipitation and irrigation to maintain the harvest. In Chinese, the idiom 风调雨顺 (*Feng Tiao Yu Shun* ["Timely wind, beneficial rain"]) speaks of the wish for good yield. In addition, water bases the social development. Throughout human history, numerous cultures and civilizations were established, sustained, and prospered along water. As one of the earliest-known cultural center, Babylonian society was fertilized by two rivers, Tigris and Euphrates. In ancient Egypt, life was made possible by the Nile. Two main rivers in China, Yellow River and Yangtze River, have cultivated Chinese people in the last few thousand years, and Yellow River is regarded as the Mother River of China. It is believed that the "cultural center" was first settled along the Yellow River and later spread to the Yangtze River area (Tu, 2005).

Flow and Energy- Water never cease to run its course. In forms of rain, river, and ocean, it flows in the cycle to supply the world. In Chinese, the idiom 川流不息 (*Chuan Liu Bu Xi* ["Water always flows and never stops"]) suggests water's persistence while 流水不腐 (*Shui Liu Bu Fu* ["Flowing water never gets spoiled"]) praises its liveliness. The flow of water also brings itself energy, as exemplified by Chinese idiom 滴水穿石 (*Di Shui Chuan Shi* ["Over time, water dripping will pierce a stone"]). The Chinese, for generations, have been awed and amazed by water and the energy it carries. Taoism maintains that water, as the softest of all substances, conquers the hardest and toughest. In ancient time, Chinese people believed that human beings could never conquer big water. When plagued by incessant flooding, people who lived along the water had to suffer. Before long they learnt how to build up irrigation systems to put water's energy in proper use. The history of human interaction with water has become an integral part of Chinese civilization.

Purity- Water cleanses and purifies. Water is clean itself and is used to clean almost everything. In Chinese culture, it's also a symbol of pure mind of people. Taoism advocates 上善若水 (*Shang Shan Ruo Shui* ["The sagely person is like water"]) (Tao Te Ching, VIII) for that water benefits all beings in the universe but does not compete with any. Because of its physical features of cleanliness, transparency, and colorlessness, water is also used as a metaphor in human relationships. As a saying illustrates, 君子之交淡若水 (*Jun Zi Zhi Jiao Dan Ruo Shui* [True friendship is pure as water]).

Freshness- Chinese people like to be associated with water, for it evokes the feelings of staying refreshed. The feelings broaden one's mind and relieve it from stress and unhappiness. It also helps one to maintain a positive outlook on life. By observing water's endlessness, people are likely to become tolerant to others and worry less. In the

idiom 海纳百川，有容乃大 (*Hai Na Bai Chuan, You Rong Nai Da* [Ocean accepts all rivers to reach its profundity]), water serves as inspiration for open-mindedness. Another idiom that the Chinese favor is 海阔天空 (*Hai Kuo Tian Kong* [Boundless sea and sky]). Again, the immensity of water provokes the feeling of freshness in mind.

Natural State of Being- Ancient Chinese philosophers advocated that water presents an ideal state of life, which is natural and unaffected (Moore, 1967). Because water flows and stretches with no set shapes, it is considered the genuine attitude of being. The Chinese idiom 行云流水 (*Xing Yun Liu Shui* ["Drifting clouds and flowing water"]), vividly bringing out the image of natural flow, is a well-known expression of the ideal state.

Push and Pull Factors

Push factors in the model include *Spiritual Purification, Moral Enlightenment, Relaxation and Refreshment, Escaping, Social Gathering, Family Happiness,* and *Cultural Discovery*. Sharing a few common motivation factors with pleasure tourists in general and cruise tourists in particular, such as escaping, social gathering, family happiness and cultural discovery, this study addresses the importance of Chinese associations to water in shaping their travel motivation for pursuing cruise tourism. Water is more than a natural element to Chinese, for the cultural representations it holds. The eagerness to be close to and connect with water was firmly established by Chinese cultural and historical roots. Assumedly associated with virtues that include life, flow and energy, purity, freshness and natural state of being, water is believed to be the highest good possible. As a result, Chinese tourists are compelled to look to water for solutions. They expect to fulfill their spiritual needs for mind purification, moral enlightenment, mental relaxation and refreshment through interaction with water.

Pull factors in this model include *Openness, Freedom, Beautiful Scenery, Cultural Attributes,* and *Entertainment*. Chinese unique associations to water create corresponding expectations of cruise tourism attributes, for example, the open space and freedom. One dominating idea in Chinese mind is the integrity of the nature and the human (Chen, 2002), which is known to the Chinese as an idiom 天人合一 (*Tian Ren He Yi* [The nature and the human in a unity]). The idea maintains that to unit with the nature is to elicit wisdom from it; this is believed to be a harmonious state. Because of water's many virtues, the unity with it would be favorable to one's development. In an open, spacious and picturesque water vista, Chinese tourists would feel the water close enough to them that the expected unity is eventually made or reinforced.

CONCLUSIONS

This study proposes a travel motivation model of Chinese cruise tourists from a cultural-historical perspective. Chinese culture attaches a variety of associations to water in leisure travel. In this study, they are identified to include the five dimensions of *Life*,

Flow and Energy, *Purity*, *Freshness*, and *Natural State of Being*. Water is important for life. It flows endlessly and delivers energy. It is clean and purifies everything. It is broad and tends to fresh people's mindset. Water also symbolizes a natural state of being in one's life. These associations underlie the motivation factors for unique to the Chinese cruise tourists. They include *Spiritual Purification*, *Moral Enlightenment*, and *Relaxation and Refreshment* as push factors, as well as *openness* and *freedom* as pull factors. In addition, Chinese cruise tourists share a few motivation factors with cruise tourists in general, for example, *Escaping*, *Social Gathering*, *Family Happiness*, and *Cultural Discovery* as push factors; and *Beautiful Scenery*, *Cultural Attributes*, and *Entertainment* as pull factors.

This study extends the body of knowledge on travel motivation. It is among the first attempts to investigate Chinese tourists' motivation for cruise tourism from the cultural-historical perspective. Differentiated with other studies on travel motivation for cruise tourism, this study makes the theoretical contribution by using associations to water in Chinese culture to identify unique Chinese tourists' motivation for cruise tourism. Culture could foster, sustain, and shape people's values, ideas, feelings, and orientations. Chinese culture has created a variety of values and liking that the Chinese attach to water. According to cognitive theory, motivations could be produced by perceptions, expectations, and acquired values within people's everyday lives (Gnoth, 1997). Therefore, it is valuable to investigate Chinese tourists' motivation for cruise tourism based on the understanding of Chinese associations and meanings attached to water.

The current study also has practical implications. The model informs the global cruise industry that the travel motivation of Chinese cruise tourists are uniquely attributable to their cultural roots. As an increasing number of Chinese tourists are interested in taking cruise, this market deserves more attentions from the cruise industry both in China and abroad. By understanding what Chinese tourists want, need and desire from cruise vacations, cruise marketers and operators would be able to implement more effective marketing and service strategies. The five pull factors and seven push factors should facilitate them to gain a better appreciation for specific external attributes and internal desires that stimulate Chinese cruise tourists. Accordingly, cruise companies are able to design customized product and service offerings, and deliver quality cruise experiences. Future studies are warranted to empirically examine the conceptual model and investigate Chinese cruise tourists' motivations for different types of cruise experiences by different segments of this fast-growing market.

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THE CHALLENGES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN HOSPITALITY EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Universities in the United States are experiencing an influx in international students' enrollment. This study is focused on why students from all over the world are streaming to the United States for higher education, the benefits studying in an American university, as well as the challenges international students must cope with. Some challenges that will be discussed in the study are language barriers, cultural differences, program requirements, and learning styles. Using a mixed mode methodology, participants shared challenges and benefits through surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Coping strategies were incorporated in the study, with recommendations for future research discussed.

KEYWORDS: Hospitality education; International students; Student challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Previous research has addressed the cultural differences international students face; yet, there is a paucity of literature concerning the growing trend of international students in hospitality management programs in the United States (Lashley & Barron, 2006). The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges that international students in colleges, specifically those who are majoring or minoring in hospitality management, are facing today.

With nearly 540,000 of international students entering the Unites States for higher education (Moon, 2008), America consists of a far more diverse student population than other countries. The various push and pull factors encourage students all over the world, with a growing population in the Asian countries, to come to America for education (Trice, 2003). Once arriving, the students deal with several barriers such as language, cultural differences, and incongruent learning styles. These potential challenges, as well as some of the benefits, will be identified through focus groups, online surveys, and one-on-one interviews.

A mixed mode methodology was employed, starting with qualitative interviews and focus groups with students in a private university in upstate New York, followed by

online survey collection. Results of the study indicated international students face unique challenges that differ of domestic students in the United States. While benefits were difficult to vocalize, the increase in independence and cultural experience appeared to outweigh the costs associated with named challenges. Further longitudinal studies involving international students could reveal the outcome of coping with the challenges and any benefits attained.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The number of international students studying in the United States has significantly risen over the past few years. International students are characterized as students from foreign countries studying in the United States. The Korea Herald reported that as of 2006, the number of Korean students in United States reached approximately 100,000 (Moon, 2008) and more than 540,000 international students study abroad in America each year (Trice, 2003). The U.S. alone hosts more than 22% of international students from the world, with the total number of enrolled international students in the United States reaching 623,805 as of the 2007/08 school year (Lu &Adler, 2010). Combined with the push from developing countries promoting hospitality and tourism economies, international students are encouraged to go to western universities to further their studies in hospitality and tourism programs (Lashley & Barron, 2006). Once arriving in America, international students are forced to cope with various challenges both inside and outside classrooms. While there are many challenges, there are great benefits as well.

Many students migrated from their home country for a sole purpose: higher education. By attending highly recognized and respected schools, students can be elevated to a higher status in their home country (Moon, 2008). International students expect education abroad to be better than what they would receive from their home country (Lu & Adler, 2010). Some arrive to the United States after being rejected from colleges in their home country; however, most international students believe that western college education will open more options for future careers (Hsieh, 2007).

Despite various difficulties adapting to a new environment, students from abroad insist on attending American universities if they are able to afford the costs. Some even claim that staying in their native country is considered "the easy way out" (Moon, 2008). Students themselves want to be considered as international, which can indicate their skills such as flexibility within various cultures and the ability to be comfortable in broad array of settings (Lu & Adler, 2010).

Corporations today consider diversity a crucial factor in marketing in order to outreach to foreign countries. The goal of higher education is now viewed to achieve the skills to effectively work with people that are from different cultures (Zhao, Kuh, & Carini, 2005). By intentionally working alongside those with dissimilar backgrounds, students are then able to broaden their perspectives, but this experience comes with unique challenges.

Challenges

With great aspirations come great difficulties for many international students. Foreign students deal with barriers including language, educational, and cultural differences (Moon, 2008). These obstacles are usually the difference in cognitive and linguistic patterns that build barriers between cultures (Lashley & Barron, 2006). For instance, the American education system encourages students to speak their opinions and share ideas diversely with fellow students. However, many of the foreign countries do not forward this kind of learning system. Often, students from foreign countries are accustomed to being modest by not speaking and interrupting (Zhou, 2004). The frequent exams and oral presentations are not common in various Asian countries; hence students express the difficulty in adjusting to the informally structured American classrooms (Lu & Adler, 2010).

One of the largest barriers that international students deal with is language. Some students are troubled inside and outside the classrooms, struggling to adapt in the unfamiliar social and learning situations (Moon, 2008). Students struggling with language difference replied that it is as if they are starting a whole new life as a baby to learn a new language (Moon). One commented that his actual age and his linguistic ability levels do not match; hence he feels a wave of shame (Moon). Students discussed that they have great desire to interact freely with American students and learn to adapt to the new culture, but the lack of linguistic skills hinders them from such freedom (Moon).

Other students claim the difficulty in understanding the western culture and begin to question their identity (Hsieh, 2007) among the unfamiliar atmosphere between their native standards and cultures versus the new and foreign standards. Most Asian descent international students are taught early on to be conservative. When dealing with liberal and direct expressions from fellow domestic students, international students are often left confused (Moon, 2008). International students many times may feel disconnected to the rest of the student community and reminisce about the relationships and society left behind in their home country (Zhou, 2004).

Although diversity is common in America, there seems to be an unconscious homogeneity that is implied, especially within classrooms (Hsieh, 2007). According to the *Challenges for International Students in Higher Education: One student's narrated story of invisibility and struggle*, an international student felt that Americans have the unconscious mindset that America, as a nation, is more dominant than other cultures, hence those cultures that are inferior should comply to the *correct* way (Hsieh). International students inside classrooms need to conform to the dominant learning system by joining in group discussions, which in many cases are difficult for foreign students who lack the skills in a second language (Hsieh).

Coping

When freshmen international students arrive on campus, many are faced with various troubles such as homesickness and language barriers. Many fall victim to the disempowering environment of American higher education (Hsieh, 2007). In order to cope with the detachment and unfamiliarity, international students reach out to each other that courageously came to a foreign country. When together, international students admit being more relaxed and comfortable because they understand the situation and hardships they each go through (Hsieh).

Some campuses provide meetings or programs for international students to have a chance to meet fellow international students. However, several international students prefer to join a group that is not so exclusive to foreign students in order to meet other students with the same political ideas or interests (Zhou, 2004). This is understandable considering students must worry about the difference in education system, language variation, and being so far away from home and family.

Of course, not just international students that need adjustments once arriving at campus, domestic students, too, must settle into a new environment. One difference is that international students must deal with a little more change in their lives, but this can mean a growth in independence (Zhou, 2004). Numerous domestic students perceive international students as being brave, given that living in a separate country away from friends and family is not easy (Hsieh, 2007).

The current study adds to the current literature by providing in depth information into the perceptions international students face, pattern-matching qualitative results to published information. The addition of quantitative data could support previous literature, possibly uncovering differences between different groups of international students based on their major, country of origin, the existence of other family members currently residing in the United States, or their year of study.

METHODOLOGY

This project has been designed as a mixed methodology research project, consisting of focus groups, interviews, and surveys. The purpose of using multiple data collection methods was to measure any differences that might result from peer pressure in the focus group setting and to quantify qualitative results. Qualitative data was collected from a sample of international students studying at a private university in upstate New York.

Total sample size for this study was 70 students, which consisted of eight focus group participants, four individual interviews, and 58 survey participants. Recruitment for the focus groups and interviews was performed in Hospitality classrooms being held at an upstate New York university, with survey participants electronically recruited through 15 U.S. institutions.

Focus groups consisted of 2-4 students each and interviews were conducted individually. The same list of questions was asked of focus groups and interview participants. All of the questions, except for demographic information, were directly related to challenges of academic success international students perceive, with follow-up questions if necessary to qualify their responses. The focus groups were moderated by a faculty member and a student researcher, asking structured questions, allowing students to lead the discussion into areas they felt pertained to their unique challenges as an international student. Students were allowed to continue answering the questions with each other until the conversation lagged, at which time a moderator asked another structured question. All interviews and focus groups were audio recorded for transcription accuracy, utilizing two recording devices.

Data from the focus groups and interviews were transcribed verbatim, and initial reading of the transcript was performed without data analysis, purely for familiarization. The second review was performed for coding purposes. Coding was performed with Atlas TI 5.2 qualitative analysis software. Both researchers coded and analyzed the data separately, comparing once analysis was completed. Open coding broke down the data for interpretation. The data was organized into conceptual categories, exploring semantic relationships. Finally revealed themes of individual responses were compared to themes recurring throughout the sample. Axial coding brought the data back together and identified themes, which then compared among individuals within the sample and again compared with supporting literature.

Through snowball sampling, surveys were distributed through email links and online forum postings. Sixty-nine students responded to the call and began the survey; however, only 58 students initialized the digital survey, and 38participants (55.1 %) completed the survey in its entirety. Survey results were analyzed using SPSS 17.0 statistical analysis software, performing analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine differences in perceptions of experience among groups of international students.

RESULTS

Sample size for the qualitative portion of the study was 12 participants, consisting of four interview participants and eight focus group participants. The population of international students in Hospitality education at the institution was 25, resulting in 48% of the population participating in the study. The country of origin for participants consisted of eight students from Korea (66.6%), two students from Taiwan (16.6%), and two students from Hong Kong (16.6%). Gender of participants consisted of 3 male (25%) and 9 female (75%) participants. Six participants matriculated as Hospitality Majors (50%), 0 Hospitality Minors (0%), and 6 not yet matriculated (50%).

Seven participants (58.3%) mentioned language as the primary challenge they face while studying in the United States. The five students who claimed to not have any language barriers (41.6%) had prior high school education in the United States or attendance in international schools in their home countries. Four participants (33.3%) claimed cultural differences to be the biggest challenge, and one participant (8.3%) stated

being away from family to be the most difficult challenge. Specific comments of qualitative participants are examined in the *Discussions* section.

Utilizing a 5-point Likert scale, participants ranked their agreement with statements derived from the challenges discovered during qualitative data analysis (Table 1), with 5= *Strongly agree* and 1=*Strongly disagree*. Analysis of variance was performed to examine the difference in mean scores based on the following groupings: student's major, student's country of origin, student's year of study, and student's institution. In addition, the existence of family in the United States and the frequency of visits to their home country were also used as independent variables. While there were no statistically significant differences in mean response based on the students' majors (Hospitality vs. non-Hospitality) and country of origin, there were differences based on the student's year of study and the existence of other family members in the United States.

TABLE 1: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE [A]

	Mean [b]	S.D.
I have faced cultural challenges being an international student here on campus.	3.11	1.35
I have faced language barriers being an international student.	3.32	1.49
I am faced with stereotypes from my professors for being an international student.	2.84	1.26
I am faced with stereotypes from my peers for being an international student.	2.97	1.17
I tend to group with other international students.	3.50	1.45
I have trouble being accepted as an international student.	2.37	1.10
When I return to my home country for visits, I feel like I belong to the community.	3.49	1.56
When at school, I feel like I belong to the community.	3.24	1.19
There are benefits being an international student here on campus.	3.21	1.02
I have gained independence being an international student.	3.71	1.49
Faculty and staff give international students special accommodations.	2.58	1.06
I am concerned about the work experience requirements of my program.	3.24	1.57
I plan to stay in the U.S. after graduation.	2.97	1.61

[a] 5- point Likert scale; 1= Strongly disagree, 5= Strongly agree
[b] n=38

Data was further analyzed between groups, first using the student's year of study as an independent variable. Results indicated a statistically significant difference [$F(3, 37)$=4.32, p=.01] in the participants' perceptions of stereotyping by their professors. Post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD indicated the difference was between the freshmen

($\underline{M}$ = 2.55, $\underline{SD}$ = 1.30) and Sophomores ($\underline{M}$ = 4.00, $\underline{SD}$ = 0.71), as well as Sophomores and Juniors ($\underline{M}$ = 2.20, $\underline{SD}$ = 0.84).

The existence of family in the United States as an independent variable resulted in a significantly significant difference in the student's perceptions of a feeling of belonging to the community when they return to visit their home country [$F(1, 36)=5.103, p=.03$]. Those with relatives in the United States ($\underline{M}$ = 3.08, $\underline{SD}$ = 1.72) expressed a lower sense of belonging when returning to their home country than those without family in the U.S ($\underline{M}$ = 4.23, $\underline{SD}$ = 0.83).

DISCUSSION

Language Barriers

Twenty-three of the survey participants (59.0%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I have faced language barriers being an international student." One interview participant stated, "Language is the most challenging part because obviously we don't know the language very much." It is not because the foreign students are not as hardworking, but merely due to the impasse of understanding a completely new culture. "We try to study everything we possibly could, but since we are not born here and grow up in here, we don't know any kinds of like what Americans think are basic common sense." A student that came to the States not knowing English shares, "Language was a big problem for me. I basically only knew the emergency words, like bathroom."

Since international students and domestic students have variance in reading and writing levels—usually domestic students having a higher level—international students require greater efforts. "I started reading English around 7th or 8th grade and then all these other kids read the books I was reading when they were in first grade, which makes a lot of difference in the level of reading." Knowing they are coming into a college program where they are expected to read, write, and speak English fluently, international students "have (additional) stress and pressure."

Speaking a different language from peers often builds a blockade within classrooms. Some are even frightened to make mistakes while talking, "I was very intimidated that I couldn't pronounce some of the words that my friends can." Even if international students want to participate in a class discussion or in a group project, they often choose not to due to the lack of confidence in language. "Sometimes I have to express my opinions and my ideas but I have in my head, I can't explain in English completely." The student further explains her frustration, "I want to talk something but it's not completely come out. It's difficult."

Cultural Differences

Nineteen survey participants (48.7%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I have faced cultural challenges being an international student here on campus." International students dealt with their loneliness from being away from their home country by grouping together. One of the participants mentioned the desire to be with

friends that "have the same background and similarities growing up." Another participant remarks that in these groups, "nobody comes in and nobody goes out … They're bonded so tightly, nobody can intrude." Even if many international students desired to reach out to American peers, it seemed to be difficult to do so. "There's already the group that you're included in. The way Americans see it, we're already a group so they don't come and intrude. It's like an unspoken rule." Another participant added,

I think I tend to lean towards Asian people. Especially Koreans…I think a lot of people feel that way. It's easier to find people that are like you. It's just the picture looks better that way. I think it's a psychological thing.

In class, international students deal with a various school work related challenges. Within hospitality and tourism education, there is often required group work, which is where the international students face hardships. When asked to form groups, international students state that they are hesitant to join American students. Twenty-one survey participants (53.8%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I tend to group with other international students." One student mentioned the discomfort of being with students with a different ethnicity. "I find it more of a challenge sometimes because I feel like I am constantly being judged," he goes on saying, "like I'm constantly a representative of my country or Asians in general because sometimes people in America don't differentiate between different Asians."

If there aren't any familiar ethnic students, international student reach out to other international students. One participant noted,

There is a commonality even though you're different, you're all international which put you in one big grouping….I'm friends with other people of other races, but the people of other races are usually other international students, like from Israel or Australia because I feel like I can still get along.

Part of the college experience comes with dormitories and roommates. International students revealed the cultural contrasts they experienced with their roommates. "After I came here, I had problems with my roommate. It was related to whether bringing a guy to our room or not." The liberal mindset of Americans surprised several foreign students. "One thing I was a little freaked out, was about how liberal everybody is in America. How [they're] open to everything." Due to different backgrounds, international students found it difficult to have commonality with their American roommates. "Customs are different too. Maybe some people grow up with memories like history and we don't have that in common." Language is a big barrier when trying to understand another culture; the participant adds that, "I'm not enjoying talking to [my roommate] sometimes because of English." In order to fully interact with Americans, international students believe they need to understand each other, "Because it's really hard if you don't understand the background. Because there are like many conversations you can't catch up if you're not within that culture."

For participants that arrived to the U.S. at an early age, they had to deal with several challenges within their families. A participant shares,

Growing up I faced a lot of problems because I was growing up in an American culture, whereas my mom and dad had the mindset of an Asian, Korean culture… We clashed a lot a lot until I got into high school.

This particular participant tried to follow the mainstream western culture, but had trouble making her parents understand. "Because that's what everyone else is doing, and I'm trying to follow that, I was influenced by that, but my parents didn't understand that part. It was hard." The problem was mainly the liberal western views versus the rather conservative eastern views.

Fulfilling Program Requirements

In most hospitality management programs, students must fulfill mandatory work experience hours or internships. For international students, this requires complicated paper work which encourages most employers to simply hire domestic students. Hence, this hinders the education pace as well as professional growth for many international students. Eighteen survey participants (47.4%) expressed concern regarding the work requirements of their program, with ten of the eighteen declared Hospitality majors (71.4%) agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement "I am concerned about the work experience requirements of my program."

In some Asian countries, the working age is older than that of America's. An international student shares his concerns on finding an internship, "I have never had a job in my life, and try to find jobs here it's difficult. I have nothing to fill up my resume so finding a job is difficult." The students with only a student visa also face complications, "This country I cannot work here on student visa."

Even if international students do succeed in finding jobs, they encountered unfair wages. "Because I'm not allowed to work here, a lot of international students that want to work in the U.S. have to resort to working for free or under minimum wage illegally." Despite universities offering students work-study job positions, foreign students are still in an impasse on finding internships, "I couldn't even apply for my I-9 because I don't have a job to sign the form." Due to these difficulties, many of the participants in the study desired to go back to their home country to find internships, then return to finish their education in the United States.

Belonging and Acceptance

Perhaps most taxing on the emotions of students is the lack of belonging and feelings of isolation. Even with their rudiments in their home country, international students proclaim that they are treated differently when they visit. "Even though I have that basis of a Korean culture, I know that when I go back, I'm not going to know anything. Everything's changed." Since many students only visit their home countries once or twice a year, many things differ including things such as fashion. "They can tell that you're not from [there]," her friends accuse, "You don't act like [a] Korea[n]" or "The clothes you're wearing right now, it's obviously from America."

One student recognized herself to have identity issues, "I don't know where I belong. I feel like I'm Korea, but I'm not the majority people in Korea." It is as if the

student is struggling to find a fit between the two cultures she knows: the one where she once belonged, and the one she is currently living in. "[I'm] trying to keep my culture and accept another one at the same time." When asked how she feels about the identity issue, she shares, "I'm like 99% Korean there and 80% in American. I feel like something is missing." A student from Taiwan identifies himself as to having the Third Culture Kid Syndrome, "I suffer from Third Culture Kid Syndrome. I'm from Taiwan, but when I go back to Taiwan, I feel like a foreigner and when I'm in American [I] am not American." Hence he feels that he does not belong anywhere, which attracts him to find other international students that share similar feelings.

Many students attempt to go out of their comfort zone and reach out to make new acquaintances. "I try to get the most experience out of being in America so I try not to stay just around the Asians. I like getting along with all kind of races." A participant expresses his opinion about the need to change for international students that are closed minded, "I feel like as an international student, we should be more open to society. Because we are visiting the country of America … we should be the ones who open our hands first because if we actually do that, [Americans] open their hands back to us."

Benefits of Studying Internationally

When asked about the benefits of being an international student, there was a significant hesitation amongst the participants. Compared to the quick-response the students gave about the challenges they faced, they had trouble coming up with examples of benefits that they experienced as international students.

International students do see a variety of benefits in coming to study in the United States that can override the significant challenges. Back in their home countries, abroad education is highly accepted. Hence, international students are more able to achieve better jobs post-graduation. Corporations prefer students that are exposed to diverse cultures in order to achieve a wide spectrum in ideas and strategies. A student shared her experience of learning multiple cultures, "I can adapt to other culture right away even if it's from other countries with the same backgrounds or somewhat of an ethic."

Beyond the benefits involving their future career, international students value their experience in America that lead to their personal growths. "I have accomplished a lot. The reason why is because this year, when I came to the university, I actually trusted myself more." By relying on themselves, international students develop independence that will aid them further in the hospitality field. One participant recalls that the challenges strengthened her, "I still have to say that there are much more challenges, but …we are more prepared to the future than other people because we are out here on our own."

Coping Strategies

Students displayed various techniques in handling the challenges of being away from their family. "The biggest [challenge] I think was being homesick and being in a

country that's different from my family." Most students found calling home to be the most helpful strategy, "I call my parents almost every day," or "my parents call me, everyday." One participant realized the value of his family through the distance, "I just call them a lot and I always think of them and when we are together, makes that time more valuable."

Emailing and using Skype were other common methods to cope with being away from family and friends. Especially the software programs involving webcams helped students and their families to forget the distance between them. Speaking about Skype, one student said "We do like once a week. So I don't feel like my family is so far away." Some even preferred to use the online programs instead of using the phone, "[It] is really annoying to have to press all the buttons. Now I Skype to talk online." Other students cited the difficulty, "Anytime I need to talk to my parents I need to go by messenger. I don't see my parents that much, actually [not] at all, obviously. The only way I can talk to them is messenger or mail."

Since coming to America, international students expressed how they have felt when they were faced with cultural differences. "When I got here it actually wasn't so bad. It just seemed like American kids just get along with people." Because many international students come to the United States to learn the western culture, they portrayed their interest in mingling with American students. "There are a lot of open Americans, they're open to people for like every conversation with the best attitude." One participant purposely liked to associate with American students to fully experience the culture. "Sometimes I like mixed groups more because I can hear more from the other side thinking and I can learn more from them." Another student preferred American students to strengthen her language skills. "I think it will be more helpful to be in groups with other countries that would try to talk in English and improve my English."

CONCLUSIONS

Challenges for international students in Hospitality education include language barriers, cultural differences, learning styles, fulfillment of program requirements, and feelings of belonging and acceptance. While some of these challenges were expected by the students prior to beginning their studies in the United States, unexpected issues and emotions surfaced during the course of their academic careers.

The challenges are more plentiful than the named benefits of studying as an international student, but the benefits derived from the experience are stronger because of the challenges. A sense of growth and independence was common among participants. This self-actualization was due to separation from the familiar, such as family support and common culture. Openness to new cultures and experiences was discussed and many participants recognized the benefits to their personal selves rather than educational goals. By challenging themselves now, many participants feel they are investing in their future success, whether they return to their home countries, remain in the United States, or pursue other adventures after graduation.

LIMITATIONS

There are numerous threats to validity in a study of this design. The focus groups were moderated by the both researchers, one of which was a faculty member and the other a student researcher. During transcription and analysis of the data, the researchers were cognizant of potential biases, possibly leading to the distortion of quotes and perceptions. The positionality of the researchers could create a bias in the results. To minimize validity threats, numerous verification strategies were employed. Both the student and faculty researcher analyzed the data, ensuring the positionality of a single researcher does not influence the project. Triangulation of data collection ensures the dominance of focus group members do not lead to false results.

Limitations with the sample also exist. The call for focus groups amongst international students met with minimal response, as many students hesitated in participating since they found the setting nervous. This led to the result of having a small sample for the qualitative portion of the study. In the quantitative portion of the study, access to the appropriate sample was hindered due to underrepresentation of international population in university records. For example, in one university's Hospitality department consisting of 200 students, records listed only two students as having an international background, yet faculty members anecdotally reported a much larger number.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The retention and graduation rates of international students in hospitality management programs could be dependent on student perceptions of the challenges they face. A longitudinal study of international student success is warranted. In addition, mediating some of the challenges could ensure higher success rates, and experimental research concerning the effect of varying levels of resource and support would assist universities with the allocation of resources to serve these students.

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CAN GOD'S OWN COUNTRY SUSTAIN ITSELF? ECO FRIENDLY PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT IN KERALA

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ABSTRACT

Introduction of international tourism as a development stimulus is relatively recent in most countries, even though it acts as a driving force for employment generation, poverty alleviation and social harmony, and brings about regional development. However, recent trends within tourism development in India in general and the South Indian state of Kerala in particular, have raised several concerns about the adverse impacts of tourism. Uncontrolled and unregulated tourism growth, often based on short-term economic priorities, invariably results in unacceptable impacts that harm society and the environment. This has led to the emergence of a more sensitive form of tourism based on the principles of sustainability. Carrying capacity studies are required to assess the healthiness and viability of the destination. Eco- friendly practices are required for each sub sector of the tourism industry to become sustainable. This case study is an attempt to bring about the various alternative tourism development strategies and eco practices followed by Maldives, Goa and Kerala to root out the problems associated with rapid mass tourism development.

KEY WORDS: *Sustainable Tourism, Carrying Capacity, Eco Practices*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the world's most rapidly growing industries and tourism related businesses, the leading producers of new jobs worldwide. It is a unique industry in which floating and migratory populations play a central role in the successful conduct of various projects. Many countries are keen to garner a percentage of the huge 922 million-tourist traffic (WTO, 2008). According to the UN World Tourism Organization, international travelers are projected to nearly double in size by 2020, led by China, India and destinations in South-East Asia. In India the improvement of tourist infrastructure, enhancement of transport connectivity, and focused work on marketing and promotion campaigns by the tourism departments and the industry has led to the country experiencing a boom in tourist arrivals. In 2008, foreign tourist arrivals rose to 5.37 million while domestic tourists went up to 562.92 million registering a growth rate of

6.9%. The foreign exchange earnings generated in 2009 were USD 11.75 billion. The industry contributed 4.9% to the country's GDP and has emerged as a major source of employment. Tourism supports 48.26 million jobs (directly and indirectly) accounting for 8.78% of the total jobs within the country.

What is sustainable tourism?

The Manila declaration of World Tourism Organization (WTO) held in 1980, emphasized the importance of both natural and cultural resources in tourism and the need for conservation of these resources for the benefit of local residents and the tourism industry. It states, "The protection, enhancement and improvement of the various components of man's environment are among the fundamental conditions for the harmonious development of tourism. Similarly rational management of tourism may contribute to a large extent to protecting and developing the physical environment and the cultural heritage, as well as improving the quality of life". The term sustainable development became popular after the release of the Brundtland report in 1987.

The term sustainability is derived from the Latin root – Sustenere which means 'to hold up' ie, to maintain or prolong the productive use of resources and the integrity of the environment. Sustainable tourism was defined by the Globe'90 conference on sustainable development as "the management of tourism resources in such a way that fulfill economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems". The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Many underdeveloped countries started promoting international tourism without developing sufficient infrastructure and taking suitable precautions. Several transformed into service-oriented tourist economies from rural based economies without passing through the intermediate phase of industrialization.

What is the need for sustainable tourism?

Economic diversification and technological improvement have created a conducive environment for tourism development in the current age of globalization. The Tourism industry acts as a backbone for many economies. It serves as a driving force for employment generation, poverty alleviation and social harmony and brings about regional development. It also cultivates tolerance and encourages knowledge of different cultures, while aiding in the preservation of heritage and the environment. Tourism has become one of the world's important sources of employment. It stimulates enormous investment in infrastructure, most of which also helps to improve the living conditions of local people. It provides governments with substantial tax revenues. Most new tourism jobs are created in developing countries, helping to equalize economic opportunities, and keep rural residents from moving to overcrowded cities (UNWTO 2007).

Tourism growth and other developmental activities have always been accompanied by problems. They include deterioration of destinations, environmental degradation; increasing hostility of residents in certain destinations, change in local cultures etc. Tourism occurs in environments, which have limits. Violation of these limits has led to serious and irreversible damage in various destinations, which ultimately affects tourism development and efficient management. Cherrapunji in India is an example for environmental degradation. This small city situated in the Indian state of Meghalaya holds two Guinness world records for receiving the maximum amount of rainfall in a single year: 22,987 mm from August1860 to July 1861 and also for receiving the maximum amount of rainfall in a single month: 9299.96 mm (366.14 inches) in July 1861. The average rainfall between the years 1973–2006 has been 39.14 feet. The wettest places in the world are starving for water each winter when no rain falls for months at a time. Due to below-average rainfall in 2006, it had to forgo its title of the wettest place to its neighbour Mawsynrem. The type of phenomenon that brings so much rain to this part of the world is called the monsoons. Because of widespread destruction of conifer forests that protected the soil, the ground does not absorb the rain that falls so heavily during the monsoon season. People who live there frequently have to travel on foot for several kilometers to bathe and get drinking water.

The tourism industry is vulnerable to changes in the natural and cultural environment. Many destinations are popular due to local cultural traditions of the hosts. Tourist arrivals in big numbers may result in violation of local traditions and community standards. Mass tourism can entirely change the character of a community. Government policies never acknowledge the negative fallouts of tourism development and continue to offer an open invitation to tourists and investment opportunities. Tourism depends heavily on natural and human resources and its in-roads into protected areas and untouched zones have often been at high costs. The present tourism structure has privileged industry and tourists' needs over the interests of the local population. This often leads to privatization of common resources for exclusive use by the tourism industry and displacement of local communities from their place of domicile to make way for tourism establishments. Low levels of participation in the profitable tourism activity and reduced access to resources have resulted in nominal benefits to local communities. Uncontrolled and unregulated tourism growth, often based on short-term economic priorities, often results in unacceptable impacts that harm society and the environment. Tourism development has raised serious questions about its real beneficiaries. This has led to the emergence of a more sensitive form of tourism, which aims at minimizing these costs and maximizing benefits.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

The concept of sustainable development and management emerged as a result of increasing concern on environmental problems, depleting natural resources and increasing poverty. The term 'sustainable' means permanence. This conveys the sense of maximum use of resources without creating any harm to the natural and socio-cultural environments. It deals with development that has been carefully planned and managed. In

India, tourism is viewed and promoted as a major force for economic growth. The principles and values of sustainability can be assessed using the following sustainable development categories: economic, environmental, social, cultural and political.

Political

We often undermine the importance of political motivation in achieving developmental goals. Participation in decision-making in issues related to new projects, plans, policies, procedures, legislations and agreements that are directly or indirectly related to tourism development must be disseminated by the tourism industry and government to all local stakeholders. Sustainable tourism activity should involve meaningful and informed participation of the local population and local political institutions. Local administrative bodies should engage in dialogue with all stakeholders and evolve destination management strategies and practical responsible tourism guidelines. Unfortunately participation of all stake holders does not exist in evolving destination development and management matters.

Economic

Usually, economic benefits are measured on the basis of tourist arrivals. But a prerequisite for sustainable tourism development is to minimize negative economic impacts on local communities and to present a development model where the main beneficiaries are the local people. This can be realized by ensuring that hotels and related tourism services are encouraged to strengthen the local economy, employ local people and source raw materials from the local market. This can be done by promoting linkages between tourism and the other economic sectors like agriculture, fisheries etc. A chain of small and medium sized local entrepreneurs can multiply the economic benefits of tourism by extending the number of available small-scale services, and actively and beneficially integrate the local population. Excessive reliance on tourism as a mono crop industry may prove destructive to the economy in the long run. Some economies have transformed into full scale tourism service economies without passing through the intermediate phases of agricultural development and industrialization. A balance with all other economic activities and natural resources in the area taking into account all costs and benefits is the need of the hour.

Social and Cultural

There is a significant positive socio-cultural impact which includes the preservation of ancient monuments, historic building and sites, traditional arts, crafts and customs. Some view tourism as a bridge between people, fostering communication, mutual understanding and a desirable redistribution of wealth.

Tourism development has huge social dimensions and when unregulated its social costs are high. Tourism sometimes acts as a threat to traditional values, customs, beliefs and identity of host culture. Increased cost of living, congestion, greater pollution and crime can create social tension. High crime rates, gambling, drinking and prostitution are

also some ill-effects of tourism development. An important point to note is the denial of its adverse social impacts by government and industry alike. Tourism often commercializes and standardizes original forms of music, dance and ceremonies, adapting them to accommodate tourist demands leading to a loss of authenticity of these cultures and a quasi culture. Uncontrolled tourism development can create social change resulting in culture clashes between local communities and the tourists.

Environmental

For sustainable development, conservation and management of natural resources are necessary. There is global realization about the urgent need to conserve biological diversity. Sustainable tourism development and management incorporates principles of conservation of natural resources and biodiversity; rational utilization of land, water and conventional and non-conventional energy sources. This is required for creation and maintenance of tourism infrastructure and facilities that go hand in hand with local environment and culture. Sustainable tourism management ensures conservation of biodiversity through low resource utilization and substantial contribution of benefits to all stakeholders and beneficiaries. Sustainable tourism needs to ensure responsible actions on the part of the tourists as well as the tourism industry in working towards the conservation and enhancement of resources. This can be achieved through information dissemination. Use of common property resources to local community is not to be restricted to benefit the tourists or the industry. Conserving natural resource base in the country through effective environmental governance at the local level is one of the last chances of protecting integrity of various ecosystems.

The 73rd and 74th amendment to the Constitution of India accords rights to local governing bodies, the Panchayats, bringing into their jurisdiction matters related to land, water, socioeconomic development, infrastructure development, social welfare, social and urban forestry, waste management and maintenance of community assets. Tourism development and management fall under these categories and therefore participation from the Panchayats is important. The Panchayats must be involved at all levels of sustainable tourism development and management from approval of the tourism project, to planning, implementing, development, marketing, evaluating, monitoring, and research. The Panchayats have the right to formulate regulations and the responsibility of ensuring this and its compliance from the tourism industry would rest on the State government.

CARRYING CAPACITY

A concept which is fundamental to the management of sustainable tourism is *'carrying capacity'*. Carrying capacity analysis is the most reliable and effective method for sustainable tourism development and management. Carrying capacity refers to the level of visitor use an area can accommodate, with high levels of satisfaction for visitors and minimal impact on resources. Carrying capacity represents the point beyond which the tourism industry in any destination becomes unsustainable. Carrying capacity is defined as the level of tourist presence, which creates an impact on the host community,

environment and economy, acceptable to both hosts and tourists and sustainable over future time periods.

In tourism, assessing carrying capacity is really a complex task as a variety of products and services come from the same environment. Carrying capacity involves several elements like the physical, ecological and cultural levels. The fundamental question is the number of tourists that can be allowed in a destination without threatening the long-term viability of the system. When dealing with assessing the above factors, we have to consider the following factors:

♦The impact of human activity on a system may be gradual and may affect different parts of the system at different rates.

 ♦Tourism depends on many aspects of an environment-wildlife, aesthetics, access to shoreline etc. Each has its own response to different levels of use.

♦All tourism environments are multipurpose environments. These other areas must also be considered in determining the correct level of tourism use. In one site, it may not matter if a river is diverted or a dam is constructed. But it may have a critical impact on other places, where people downstream depend on it for water or food.

♦Different local cultures have different levels of sensitivity to change.
The impact of tourism on many destinations will be based on a wide variety of factors like
> The volume of tourist arrivals.
> The types of tourist activity.
> The fragility of local environment.
> The difference in socio-cultural characteristics between the hosts and the tourists.
> The nature of the host economy.

ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CARRYING CAPACITIES

The World Tourism Organization's [WTO] sustainable tourism initiative focuses on greater understanding of the carrying capacity of tourist destination and tools called environmental indicators that can provide information on the healthiness and viability of destinations. It is to devise simple measures of environmental sensibility and stresses on the results of tourism activity on the environment and the human and biological consequences of tourism activity.

Table I Core indicators of sustainable tourism:

Indicator	Specific Measures
Site protection	Category of protection according to IUCN index
Stress	Number of tourists visiting site [per annum/peak month]
Intensity of use	[peak persons/hectares]
Social Impact	Ratio of tourists to locals [peak period]
Developing Control	Existence of environmental review procedure or formal control over development of site and use densities
Waste Management	Percentage of sewage from site receiving treatment [additional indicators may include structural limits of other infrastructural Capacity on site eg: water supply, garbage]
Planning process	Existence of organized regional plan for Tourist destination region [including tourism component]
Critical Ecosystems	[Number of rare/endangered species]
Consumer Satisfaction	Level of satisfaction of visitors [Questionnaire based]
Local Satisfaction	Level of satisfaction by locals [Questionnaire based]

*IUCN- International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural resources
Source: WTO [1995], Madrid

HOW TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABILITY

The central tourism ministry, certain state governments, local self governments, the tourism industry as well as non-governmental organizations have taken the initiative to draft for themselves their own sets of guidelines to promote sustainability in tourism. Every sub sector of the travel and tourism industry has to follow such guidelines or eco practices to ensure long term viability of the destinations. Carrying capacity analysis of destinations is vital for ensuring sustainable development. Following are a few of the initiatives taken up by the various stakeholders associated with the tourism and travel sector nationally and internationally.

CARRYING CAPACITY STUDIES

WTO conducted a carrying capacity study of Goa, a tourist beach destination in India, in 1989. It included an assessment of the social and environmental impacts of tourism and guidelines for the planning, development and control of tourism. For assessing the carrying capacity, the beaches and their adjacent lands along with labour supply capabilities, infrastructure capacities and social impacts were considered. The study assessed that an average density of 40 square meters of beach area per tourist bed would be appropriate for calculating beach carrying capacity. Assuming an average width of sandy beach of 40 meters, application of this density standard means that not more than one tourist bed per one meter of beach frontage should be developed. Also it was decided that not more than 70 percent of the beach or 46 out of the 65 km of total beach length should be developed. Application of the standard of one meter of beach

frontage per tourist bed to 46 km results in an overall regional maximum development level of 46,000 tourist beds. As 30 percent of beds of lower rate levels are expected to be constructed in places directly facing the beach and sea, not more than 35kms of beach frontage are expected to be actually utilized for development. Based on the 46,000-tourist bed figure, the study projects that about 4.1 million annual tourist arrivals could be received at optimum development level.

Based on the assumptions of direct employee requirements of one employee per bed in the higher quality hotels and 0.4 employees per bed in the lower quality units, there would be an accommodation employment demand for 28,000 persons. With the addition of employment required in other tourist facilities and services, 60,000 persons would be needed in direct tourism employment while a greater number in jobs indirectly related to tourism. The study also evaluated the social impact of the projected level of tourism development.

ALTERNATIVE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The private sector has developed some environmentally sustainable tourism ventures especially in the south Indian states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The Thenmala ecotourism project in the Kollam district of Kerala is the first planned eco tourism project in Asia. The process of sustainable tourism has already started in Andamans and Lakshadweep islands where it is planned to have high value low volume tourist traffic to certain selected islands. More studies are needed to assess the impact and carrying capacity of the emerging destinations.

Maldives situated in the Indian Ocean favours the development of a selective luxury tourism activity on segregated islands close to international airports. Maldives consists of almost 1200 coral islands and a total area of about 300 sq. km. They receive around 200,000 tourists per year. Maldives has about 70 resort islands with more than 7000 beds. There is one hotel each on most of the resort islands. As a result of the growing number of tourists, the government has to deal with the waste disposal problem and destruction of reefs. Huge consumption of drinking water resulted in the need for seawater desalination. Visitors were asked to take back the plastic litter with them on their flight back. Use of eco bags were made common. A ceiling on construction of new guesthouses is another step. To minimize the embarrassing cultural impact of visitors on the island population and tradition, tourist resorts are constructed on uninhabited islands. The contact between tourists and local population is limited to male service staff and organized excursions to some villages. Although the measures taken conform to the principles of sustainable tourism, they are expensive to a certain extent.

ECO PRACTICES IN TOURISM- THE KERALA MODEL

Kerala, a southern coastal state in India, and called God's own country, was named by National Geographic as one of the top ten paradises in the world. An example for serious sustainable tourism activity in the state of Kerala is the adventurous trekking program named *'the Periyar tiger trail',* which is conducted in the Periyar tiger reserve

of Kerala. This project has been conceived and developed by Kerala Forest Department ex-vayana bark collector's Eco Development Committee as a participatory eco-tourism project. These ex-vayana bark collectors were former inhabitants of forests and were involved in illegal trading of bark produced from vayana tree and other forest goods. Constant interaction of forest officials with the poachers transformed them to conservationists. Their intimate knowledge about the plants and the movement of animals makes them successful guides. Conservation efforts had a double effect when the habitual offenders were earnestly involved in the participatory eco tourism strategy. To reduce human impact on the eco system, only a maximum number of 20 trekkers are allowed to participate in the program every week as the trekking trail passes through the heart of the sanctuary. Guides, who are reformed poachers lead trekking groups. Armed forest guards with state of the art communication facilities, geared to face any emergency situation escort the entire group through the trek. The achievements are so remarkable that during the last two years 23 individuals were caught attempting to poach wildlife and another 18 have been penalized for cutting sandalwood trees and other plants from the reserve. The hard-core eco offenders, who were a constant threat to the Periyar tiger reserve, were brought into the mainstream of society. It helped them in finding out a good alternative source of income. The social ostracism to the former poachers was absolutely removed. Their role reversal is preventing other habitual offenders from destroying the forest who are now associating with conservation efforts.

ECO PRACTICES FOR HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN KERALA:

Tourism industry consists of many sub sectors like hospitality industry, tour operation business, travel agency business etc. Eco friendly practices are required for each sub sector of the industry to become sustainable. Kerala Tourism has launched a unique Eco certification scheme, which is a set of practices for each sub sector to become eco-friendly, and is named as Eco –Kerala. Its objectives are
    To convert the entire tourism industry in Kerala to an eco-friendly one.
    To strengthen Eco tourism development initiatives in the state.
    To ensure local community involvement in tourism initiatives leading to employment generation and income augmentation.
    To create public awareness and involvement in responsible tourism development.

This programme has already been initiated for the hospitality industry, which provides different certificates like Ordinary member, Club member and Diamond member on the basis of the fulfilment of certain conditions specified. Hotels/ Resorts that fulfil the essential, necessary and desirable conditions listed below will enjoy the unique status of being the *diamond member* of Eco- Kerala. Those complying with the essential and necessary conditions will be considered as a *Club member* while those complying with only the essential conditions will be a *member*.

Essential Conditions

Type of carry bags used
• Use of eco- friendly cloth, jute, paper bags of biodegradable material in place of plastic bags
Local plants/ herbal/ medicinal garden in hotel premises
• Maintenance of local plants, medicinal or herbal garden in the hotel premises and its proper documentation with provision for providing information to guests
Efforts for water conservation
• Display of water conservation messages in rooms and other important places.
Purchase of local farm products
• Purchase of local farm products like vegetables, poultry, and fish etc. produced through ecologically sound practices like use of organic manure.
Employing energy saving methods and equipment
• Controlling 50% of street, walkway, garden and external lights by timed devices
• Ensuring that 50% of the total lamps are CFL

Necessary Conditions

Celebration of important environment days
• Celebration of the World Environment Day, World Earth Day and other important environment related days regularly, providing adequate publicity among guests, locals and employees.

Designated official for Environment management
• Appointing an officer for environment protection and Management.
Environmental Audits
• The environment audit reports should form a part of the hotel's annual report.
Adoption of wastewater treatment
• Implementation of wastewater treatment plan - short term and long term.
Adoption of solid waste management system
• Use of new and eco-friendly technologies such as earthworm composting.
Employing energy saving methods
• Controlling entire street, walkway, external and garden lights by timers.
Use of energy saving equipment
• Use of more than 90% CFL lamps.
Efforts for water conservation
• Adoption of rainwater harvesting techniques.

Desirable Conditions

Use of traditional designs and local building materials
• Use of traditional designs and local building materials in construction to make it conform to the local environment
Use of organic fertilizers

- Use of compost and bio-organic materials as fertilizers

Use of renewable sources of energy

- Use of renewable sources of energy such as solar power or non-polluting sources of energy

Steps to sensitize guests on energy saving

- Deploying energy saving measures in all guest rooms.

Use of non-polluting internal transport system

- Internal transport mechanism using non-polluting sources of energy.

Environment focus in marketing

- Stress on environment focus in advertising and marketing campaign.

Type of tourism products encouraged

- Promotion of eco-tourism products among the guests.

Encouraging group travel

- Promotion of public transport and group travel among guests and staff.

Initiatives for promotion of unique eco- systems

- Contributing to the protection of unique natural resources that are nearby. (The percentage of profit spent on this to be specified)

Environment education initiatives

- Providing education and interpretation opportunity to guests on the natural and cultural values of the locality.

Training given to local community on environment conservation

- Undertaking programme to educate local community, especially children on environment conservation (Number of such programme to be specified)

Support to local self-groups

- Technical support provided to local self-groups on use of eco-friendly technology in farming and management of small business etc. (The number of initiatives in a year to be specified)

Procedure for Membership

- Every person owning or operating a hotel in the state, desirous of becoming a member of Eco-Kerala should apply in the prescribed application form, which can be had from the Directorate of Tourism, free of cost. The application should be submitted to the Director of the Department of Tourism, in Thiruvananthapuram, with a fee of Rs. 2000 (around US $40)
- A committee consisting of the following members will conduct inspection, based on which the Director, Kerala Tourism, will issue a certificate.

Secretary, Kerala Tourism	Chairman
Director, Ecotourism	Convenor
Director, Kerala Tourism	Member
Representative of FHRAI	Member
Representative of HAI	Member

Representative of IATO   Member
Principal, IHMCT   Member

• The period of membership will be for a period of two years, after which the members need to apply again.

• Members of Eco- Kerala will also abide by the conditions prescribed by the Department of Tourism for promoting eco- friendly practices from time to time.

• The member hotels will get 15% subsidy to a ceiling of Rs. 5 lakhs (or about USD $10000) on investment in pollution control facilities and equipments such as solid/liquid waste management, equipment for recycling of waste water, sanitation facilities, and / or captive power generation facilities.

GUIDELINES FOR CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION OF KUMARAKOM :

Kumarakom is a recently developed backwater tourism destination in Kerala. In the initial days, people welcomed tourism in this small village with the hope that the local people would gain benefits in the form of employment opportunities. At that juncture, local people remained unaware of the impacts of tourism but when they became aware they began to get involved in the process. To democratize tourism planning, Kumarakom adopted the formation of a Functional committee for tourism at the local level. They also used the existing neighboring groups - a group for every 50 households; (making it a total of 98 neighboring groups covering the 5000 households of the village) to involve local people in tourism planning. To ensure wider participation from all groups and strata of society, Kumarakom has also established Self Help Groups (SHGs) of women, with the total membership exceeding 3000 women actively involved in the local planning process. Ward Committees of the local government and the General Assembly of the people (the Grama Sabha) have discussed issues confronting them in the framework of tourism.

Issues such as pollution of the backwaters caused by the houseboats, obstruction of the natural flow of wind due to the clustering of resorts and high buildings along the banks of the Vembanad Lake were discussed and vehemently opposed. At this stage, the people decided to take concerted action against uncontrolled tourism and developed a draft People's Charter for Sustainable Tourism. The People's Charter, after discussion and debate at the Panchayat was consequently adopted. Sourcing from the People's Charter, the Panchayat decided to ban all forms of plastic inside the village, set up provisions to save the mangrove forests in the region and to decline from permitting projects to be set up near the lake. The Panchayat distributed copies of it to hotel owners and is taking steps to implement the Charter in totality. Even with these efforts of the Panchayat, local people continue to be plagued with problems concerning tourism such as depletion of the mangroves and rare species of fish, poor wastewater management by houseboats and poor infrastructure support to local people. Financial support from the state government and networking support from NGOs have been recognized as important steps to aid this process of People-to-People Tourism.

Later, the Kerala tourism department came up with the Conservation and Preservation of Areas Ordinance 2005. The department in association with the local Panchayat has formulated a set of guidelines for Kumarakom to regulate and control all

developmental activities within this Special Tourism Zone. This will be carried out by the Tourism Conservation and Preservation Committee, local bodies, community and proponents, aimed at conserving and preserving the environment.

CONCLUSION:

In the context of India, tourism development in terms of volume and value exemplifies a success story. Despite the remarkable progress made in these respects in recent years, the tourism industry in this country has been constrained by, many factors requiring planning reorientations. Through sustainable tourism development, the natural, cultural and other resources can be conserved for the future. Tourism destinations developed on the basis of the principle of sustainability can conserve the area's natural and cultural resources. Thus it can act as a tool for the conservation of the environment. Community based tourism giving importance to generation of benefits to local communities is another important facet of sustainable development and management. The quality tourism approach related to sustainable development, which protects tourism resources and attracts the kind of tourists that will respect the local culture and traditions, is the need of the hour. The concept of sustainable development should be included in the tourism planning, development and management process everywhere.

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MOTIVATIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL PROFILE OF ECOTOURISTS IN SOUTH KOREA

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ABSTRACT

This study develops a motivational and behavioral profile of ecotourists in Korea and determines what motivates them to visit natural resource attractions. This study takes into account different cultural factors that deviate from the conventional Western-centric parameters currently used in the ecotourism literature. Factor analysis and cluster analysis were used for data analysis. The results show that Korean ecotourists can be divided into three segments: General Ecotourists, Social Tourists, and Educational Naturalists. Consequently, a model with somewhat different motivational factors was created for Korean ecotourists. This motivational model includes such factors as the desire to educate children and a strong sense of collectivism. Practical recommendations for Korean ecotourism destinations include the consideration of natural conservation and the provision of environmental education to children and group tours.

KEYWORDS: Ecotourism; Ecotourists' motivation; Profiling; Culture

INTRODUCTION

Culture is an antecedent to thought and behavior. Hofstede (1994) defined culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from those of another" (p. 4). Human intentions are determined by sociocultural norms (Triandis, 1994). Consequently, culture has a profound effect on how people buy and consume products and services. According to Blackwell, Miniard, and Engel (2006), "culture affects the specific products people buy as well as the structure of consumption, individual decision making, and communication in a society" (p. 432).

In the tourism industry, national cultural characteristics noticeably affect tourists' behavior (Pizam & Sussmann, 1995). Tourists from Asia, Europe, and North America have different behavioral patterns and expectations (Lew, 2001). Cultural elements are particularly influential when there is a high degree of interaction between customers and personnel, as in the hospitality and tourism environment (Furrer, Liu, & Sudharshan, 2000). The latter trend is also true for ecotourism. Kerstetter, Hou, and Lin (2004) reported that the motives of ecotourists vary from West to East and, therefore, cultural contexts deserve more discussion and attention on the part of ecotourism researchers.

Asia ecotourism markets made a rapid appearance in the last decade. The number of annual visitations to protected areas reached the hundreds of millions in that region (Weaver & Lawton, 2007). Though ecotourism continues to expand in Asia, little empirical research has been undertaken on ecotourists from Asia, despite its enormous implications (Kerstetter, Hou, & Lin, 2004; Tao, Eagles, & Smith, 2004; Weaver & Lawton, 2007). As Weaver (2002) points out, the stereotypical western model of the 'nature-based', 'learning' and 'sustainability' (criteria that currently define western ecotourism) is likely to require adaptation to the Asian context.

Furthermore, most studies of Asia ecotourism were completed in Southeast Asian countries, such as Indonesia, Taiwan, and Thailand. Other Asian countries have not been as extensively examined. Little is known about the characteristics and travel motives of East Asian ecotourists, particularly the rapidly growing sector of domestic ecotourists. Korea is a good example of an East Asian country that has not been studied from such a perspective. This study therefore focuses on Korea, which has a great potential for ecotourism. Korea is culturally heterogeneous (Lew, 2001) and densely populated. At the same time, it is dominated by forest-covered mountains, much of which has been designated as protected area (Weaver, 2002).

The purpose of this study is to explore Korean ecotourism. For that reason it deviates from the conventional western-centric approach by incorporating a cultural component into the proposed behavioral model. This study develops a motivational and behavioral profile of ecotourists in Korea and identifies the reasons why they visit natural resource attractions. The profiles of Korean ecotourists will then be compared with the profiles of ecotourists from other countries.

Understanding ecotourists should be a primary step in comprehending eco-tourism, not only for theoretical purposes, but also, and more importantly, for practical applications. Thus, this study helps to understand Korean ecotourists better and builds a customized model of ecotourism for Korea.

LITERATURE REIVEW
Ecotourism

Numerous definitions of ecotourism have been offered. Blamey (2001) identifies three dimensions of ecotourism: (1) nature-based, (2) environmentally educated, and (3) sustainably managed. Wallace and Pierce (1996) summarize the key variables of the ecotourism: (1) minimizing negative impacts to the environment and to local people, (2) increasing the awareness and understanding of an area's natural and cultural systems, (3) contributing to conservation, (4) allowing the participation of local people in the decision-making process, (5) providing economic and other benefits to local people, and (6) extending special opportunities for local people to use natural areas. Weaver (2001) states that:

> *Ecotourism is a form of nature-based tourism that strives to be ecologically, socio-culturally, and economically sustainable while providing opportunities for appreciating and learning about the natural environment or specific elements thereof.*

Finally, Western ecotourism, or traditional ecotourism, has usually been defined by nature-based, learning, and sustainability criteria (Weaver, 2002).

Western vs. Asian ecotourists

Attempts to appreciate ecotourism tend to rely on examinations and descriptions of ecotourists. Western ecotourists are generally interested in learning about nature (Ballantine & Eagles, 1994; Eagles, 1992; Wight, 1996). In addition, ecotourism is often viewed as a powerful force for community development (Fennell & Eagles, 1990; Wight, 1993).

Weaver and Lawton (2002) consider ecotourism as a continuum, ranging from hard to soft, rather than as a dichotomy between ecotourists and non-ecotourists. The literature distinguishes "hard," "soft," and "intermediate" modes of ecotourism (Blamey & Braithwaite, 1997; Palacio & McCool, 1997; Weaver, 2005; Weaver & Lawton, 2002). According to Singh, Slotkin, and Vamosi (2007), hard ecotourists are more likely to travel in small groups, take longer trips, and strive for enhancive sustainability through means such as volunteer work to support environmental causes. In contrast, soft ecotourists tended to make shorter trips, require considerable levels of service, and support steady-state sustainability. In a survey of ecolodge guests at Australia's Lamington National Park, Weaver and Lawton (2002) identified harder, structured, and soft ecotourists. However, regardless of the degree of determination, ecotourists generally exhibit such behavioral patterns as nature-based learning, sustainable conduct of an enhancive nature, self-reliance, preference for undisturbed and obscure destinations, and enjoyment of risk and challenge.

In Asia, Kerstetter, Hou, and Lin (2004) found that local ecotourists' motivations include such factors as pursuit of physical health. In addition, the results of their study indicate that ecotourists in Taiwan may not view sustainability of local resources, including local businesses, as their responsibility. Tao, Eagles, and Smith (2004) propose that Taiwanese ecotourists differ significantly from European and North American ecotourists. Hvenegaard and Dearden (1998) while studying Thai National Park visitors identified that the ecotourists were primarily motivated to watch birds and secondarily, to experience the natural environment.

Weaver (2002) describes the distinctively East Asian type of ecotourist as an individual who is attracted to vegetation and geology more than to charismatic megafauna, who has a strongly aesthetic and philosophical relation to visited attractions, and is comfortable within a disciplined group dynamic. However, even within Asia, regional differences in ecotourists' behavioral motivations exist.

Table 1. Profiles of Ecotourists.

Socio demographic variable	North American experienced ecotourists [a]	USA birding ecotourists [b]	UK occasional ecotourists [c]	Australian ecotourists [d]	Taiwanese ecotourists [e]
Age	2% 18-24 20% 25-34 28% 35-44 28% 45-54 23% >55	65% 46-65	28% 17-24 28% 25-34 16% 35-44 17% 45-54 11% >55	Average is 50	5% <19 32% 19-24 39% 25-34 20% 35-50 4% >51
Gender	Males and females, varies by activity	43% male 57% female	43% male 57% female	37% male 63% female	54% male 46% female
Education	1% some high school 4% high school 14% some college 82% college graduates	70% at least bachelor's degree	22% secondary education 11% high school 46% first degree 21% post graduate degree	15% year 10 or 11 9% secondary school 21% technical/trade 30% bachelor's degree 25% postgraduate degree	2% grad school 5% secondary school 20% high school 62% bachelor's degree 11% master's or doctorate degree
Household income	No information	77% >US$50,000	33% <£10,000 12% £10-15,000 14% £15-20,000 14% £20-25,000 9% £25-30,000 18% >£30,000	18% <AUS$16,000 15% AUS$16-25,000 14% AUS$25-35,000 20% AUS$35-50,000 17% AUS$50-70,000 16% >AUS$70,000	55% <US$30,000 32% US$30-50,000 11% US$50-100,000 2% >US$100,000
Party composition	13% alone 15% family 61% couples	No information	63% one 15% two 9% three 14% four or more	No information	No information

Note: [a] Wight (1996), [b] Singh, Slotkin, and Vamosi (2007), [c] Diamantis (1999), [d] Weaver and Lawton (2002), [e] Kerstetter, Hou, and Lin (2004)

The ecotourist profiles of USA, UK, Australia, and Taiwan are summarized in Table 1. However, there is no such profile for East Asian tourists. Profiling East Asian ecotourists is necessary because East Asia is an emerging ecotourism destination that lacks a pure ecotourism construct. Particularly, ecotourism in Korea is still at an introductory stage, and there is no established definition of ecotourism.

METHODS

A 54-item questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: respondents' travel motivations, environmental behaviors, and personal characteristics. Multiple choice and open-ended questions were used. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the proposed statements using a 7- point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (stronly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Questions in the first section described respondents' travel characteristics: frequency of visits, length of the trip, and group composition. The second section contained questions about respondents' motives for visiting the sites and their behavior intentions. This section included 30 items adopted from the most prominent works on the subject (Blamey & Bralthwalte, 1997; Kerstetter, Hou, & Lin, 2004; Laroche, Tomiuk, Bergeron, & Barbaro-Forleo, 2002; Lee & Moscardo, 2005; Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007; Murphy & Williams, 1999; Tao, Eagles, & Smith, 2004; Weaver & Lawton, 2002). Several contextual items related specifically to Korean ecotourists were added. The last section elicited respondents' demographic information: gender, age, education level, and household income.

The questionnaire was originally written in English and then translated into Korean by one of the researchers. The validity of the content and wording was examined by a bilingual panel of experts and then pilot tested. Corrections and revisions were made based on the suggestions and testing.

In July 2009, an on-site survey was conducted in Shihwa, one of the major eco-destinations in Korea. Three interviewers were trained by the prime investigator prior to the fieldwork. Later, the interviewers approached visitors passing through several sampling points (e.g., rest places along trails). First, the interviewers asked visitors to participate in the study and, if positive response was obtained, handed them questionnaires. Finally, the questionnaires were collected from the participants upon completion.

RESULTS

One hundred seventy-four valid responses out of 205 total responses were obtained. Later, the data was coded and analyzed. Gender-wise respondents were almost equally distributed: 48.3% of respondents were males and 51.7% were females. Overall, the respondents represented a broad cross-section of age, education, and income groups.

Factor analysis was used to identify major motivational dimensions. The results revealed five motivation dimensions accounting for 64% of the variance. The dimensions

were "Observation and Learning," "Education and Fitness," "Relaxation," "Research/Adventure," and "Togetherness" (Table 2).

Table 2. Major Motivational Dimensions.

Travel motivations	Factor 1 Observation Learning	Factor 2 & Education & Fitness	Factor 3 Relaxation	Factor 4 Research /Adventure	Factor 5 Togetherness
To observe the ecological landscape	.815				
To see wildlife in its natural habitat	.811				
To learn about the natural environment	.620				
To learn historical aspects of the area	.535				
To educate the children		.674			
To improve my physical health		.643			
To be in a natural setting		.624			
To see, listen, and feel new things		.537			
To get away from other people for the solitude			.736		
To experience the tranquility			.730		
To kill the time			.643		
To conduct a survey or research				.819	
To have an adventurous experience				.561	
To be with family or friends					.705
To take photographs					.702
To be with others who enjoy the same					.588

Hierarchical cluster analysis on the basis of the Ward's method was used to identify groups of respondents with similar trip motivations. A cluster analysis was performed on the factor scores of the motivation dimensions and a three-cluster solution was accepted (Figure 1).

Cluster 1 represented 35.1% of the cases, and was labeled "General Ecotourists." These respondents prefer observing ecological landscape and wildlife and pursue nature-based learning and education. Cluster 2 represented 48.9% of the cases and was labeled "Social Tourists." Members of this group like being with other travelers who share their

interests. Their main goal was to be with friends and relatives. In addition, these respondents enjoyed physical activities and relaxation. Cluster 3 included 16.1% of the respondents and was labeled "Educational Naturalists" because of the importance that these members placed on education.
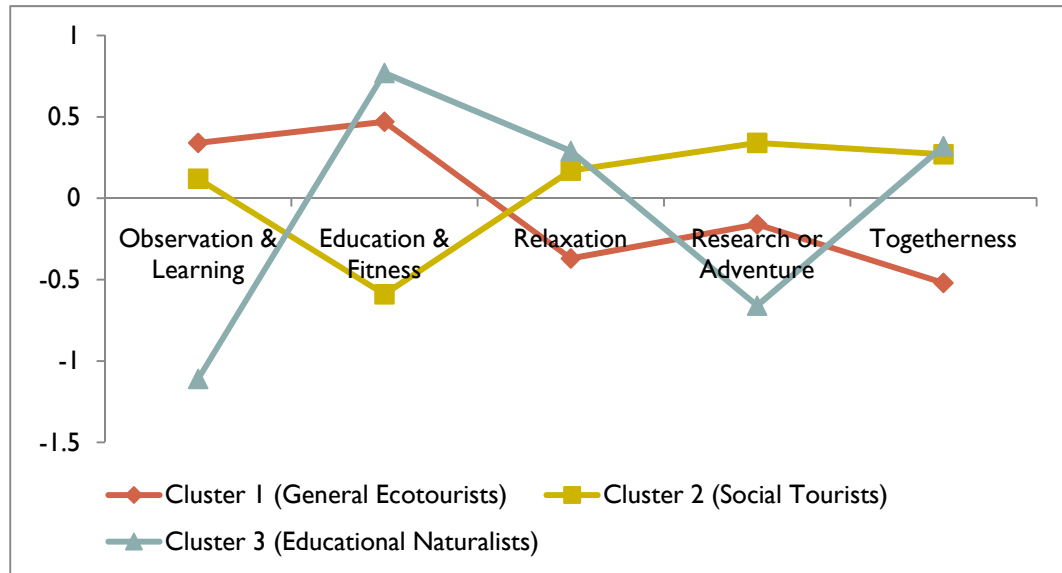
Figure 1. A Comparison of the Segment Means across Each Motivation Dimension.

Analysis of variance with a Tukey post-hoc procedure was conducted to determine whether the three types of tourists were different in their responses to the 12 intended behaviors (Table 3).

The results indicate that General Ecotourists were significantly more likely to accept the regulations to protect the site than Social Tourists. Moreover, General Ecotourists were more likely to purchase local souvenirs and products of environmental origin.

Table 3. ANOVA Results Comparing Behavioral Intentions Between the Three Clusters.

	Cluster 1: General Ecotourists	Cluster 2: Social Tourists	Cluster 3: Educational Naturalists	F	Sig.
I am willing to accept the regulations to protect the site	6.36[a]	5.94[b]	6.39[ab]	4.107	.018*
I will leave the site in better condition than when I arrived	5.89	5.49	5.68	2.010	.137
I will express my opinion to local administration if I find evidence of environmental pollution or destruction	4.97	4.99	4.93	.020	.981
I will spend my money in the local area	4.38	4.22	3.75	1.987	.140
I will actively help tourists to learn about the site	4.80	4.44	4.36	1.725	.181
I will purchase local souvenirs	4.41[a]	3.79[b]	4.18[ab]	3.561	.031*

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I will purchase products consisting of attributes from the ecological environment	5.07 [a]	4.31 [b]	4.93 [ab]	5.004	.008**
I will join the conservation association and actively play a volunteer role	3.82	3.81	3.21	2.529	.083
I will enjoy the fauna or flora in order to have fun	5.30	4.93	6.46	2.348	.099
I will have local food	4.79	4.62	4.54	.446	.641
I will participate in nature-education program with guider	4.84	4.40	4.21	2.444	.090
I will select an environmentally sensitive accommodation rather than another	4.97	4.55	4.75	1.249	.289

Note: Superscript indicates that this value is not significantly different from the value in the corresponding column for that statement. *Significant at 0.05 level. **Significant at 0.01 level.

A set of Chi-square tests was conducted to determine whether the three segments could be differentiated in terms of demographic characteristics and trip features. Table 4 summarizes key demographic features of the three clusters. Age and frequency of visits were major points of difference. General Ecotourists were older than Social Tourists and Educational Naturalists. Further, General Ecotourists were more likely to visit frequently.

Table 4. Demographic Characteristics of Each Cluster.

Variables	Cluster 1: General Ecotourists	Cluster 2: Social Tourists	Cluster 3: Educational Naturalists	Test Value	P
Gender				X^2	
Female	30	46	14		
Male	31	39	14	0.386	.824
Age				X^2	
19-25	2	8	3		
26-35	9	29	8	17.991	.021*
36-45	23	13	10		
46-55	20	29	6		
>55	7	6	1		
Education				X^2	.786
Less than high school	6	11	3		
High school degree	22	27	9	4.732	
Some college, no degree	10	13	4		
Bachelor's degree	22	26	9		
Master's or Doctorate degree	1	8	3		
Frequency of visits				X^2	.000**
1	19	46	14	29.741	
2	8	20	5		
3	9	11	1		
4	10	3	0		
>4	15	5	8		

Length of trip				X^2	.295
1	58	83	26	7.287	
2	2	2	1		
3	0	0	1		
>3	1	0	0		
Group composition of trip				X^2	.633
Alone	2	0	1	6.125	
Family	44	52	18		
Friend	11	28	8		
Tour guider	0	1	0		
Others	4	4	1		
Group size of trip				X^2	.323
1	2	0	1	4.673	
2-4	35	53	20		
>4	24	32	7		

Note:*Significant at 0.05 level. **Significant at 0.01 level.

DISCUSSION

This study explored the profiles and behavioral motivations of Korean tourists visiting eco-destinations by incorporating a cultural component into the analysis. The results show that most Koreans consider high levels of educating children as desirable and crowds as acceptable factors. Consequently, a somewhat different motivational model may apply for Korean ecotourists for cultural reasons. This motivational model includes a strong desire to educate children and a high sense of collectivism, which differentiates it from the conventional Western-centric models. Hence, while Korean ecotourism should incorporate natural settings and apply conservation, it should also provide environmental education to children. Lastly, it should emphasize group tours.

The results of the factor analysis showed five dimensions among Korean ecotourists: Observation and Learning, Education and Fitness, Relaxation, Research/Adventure, and Togetherness. "Observation and Learning" was the strongest motivator, which serves as the main distinguishing force for most ecotour visits. Theoretically, this factor is essential to ecotourism. Interestingly, the second most prominent motivator was "Education and Fitness." Another empirical study conducted in rural Korea showed that Korean tourists generally consider rural tourism as a means to educate their children (Park & Yoon, 2009). This finding might be related to such cultural trends as Korea's high education syndrome. Therefore, ecotourism practitioners should be active in offering educational ecotourism packages and services. In addition, Korean tourists also pursue physical health in a natural setting. This finding is similar to those reported in previous research by Kerstetter et al. (2004) who found that visitors to wetlands in Taiwan were interested in enhancing their physical health. Therefore, ecotour practitioners should offer programs helping tourists to improve their physical health. For example, hiking could be developed.

The results of the cluster analysis indicated that the Korean ecotourism market can be divided into three segments based on tourists' motivations: "General Ecotourists,"

"Social Tourists," and "Educational Naturalists." The General Ecotourists can be somewhat similar to Lawton's Harder Ecotourists (2002) and Palacio and McCool's Ecotourists (1997) in their motivations and behavioral patterns. For example, General Ecotourists rated willingness to accept the regulations to protect the site and intention to purchase eco-friendly products higher than Social Tourists. Hence, this group could be targeted for environmental advocacy. However, Social Tourists and Educational Naturalists expressed interesting motivations that were specific to the Korean cultural context.

The largest cluster, Social Tourists, was comprised of people who enjoy social interactions with friends and family. This result challenges the traditional view that ecotourists are more likely to travel in small groups (Singh, Slotkin, & Vamosi 2007). Social Tourists seem to prefer being with family or friends in nature settings. That can be attributed to the influence of national culture in Korean ecotourism. As Pizam and Jeong (1996) suggested, tourists of different nationalities behave in different ways: Koreans are more collective and family-oriented, thus prefer to travel in groups more than Americans do. Thus, we suggest the development of marketing programs that use itineries that incorporate group activities for Social Tourists.

Korea ecotourists also include Educational Naturalists. The results of this study suggested that some Korean tourists consider ecotourism more as a means to educate their children than as a means to enjoy nature. Therefore, tourism practitioners can offer ecotourism activities that have educational components such as interactive and interpretive programs for children and adults.

These three categories of tourists in the cluster analysis were demographically similar. Consequently, the role of demographic characteristics and trip characteristics was weak in discriminating among the different types of tourists. Only age and frequency of visits turned out to be differentiation points among the clusters. Eighty-two percent of Korean ecotourists are aged over 36. This finding is similar to an ecotourist study in North America, where 79% of North American ecotourists were aged over 35 (Wight, 1996). Meanwhile, Korean ecotourists were likely to visit the destination frequently and stay one day. This was partly because tours in Korea have traditionally very intense itineraries and tour destinations tend to be close to urban areas. Therefore, ecotourism business might benefit significantly by developing half or full day trips to eco destinations.

On the other hand, most respondents tend to travel with their family. The results differentiate ecotourists from western ecotourists in terms of group composition and size. In the UK, 63% of ecotourists travelled alone (Diamantis 1999). In North America, only 15% of ecotourists travelled with family (Wight, 1996). From a cultural perspective, most Koreans prefer family tours and educational trips for their children. Hence, ecotourism practitioners should offer one-day excursions for family groups. They can also sponsor a children's festival dedicated to natural conservation.

The results of this study support the notion that the criteria that define the Western model of ecotourism may not be applicable to the Korean context. For example, not all

respondents were willing to spend money in the destination area. However, traditional ecotourism places great emphasis on community-focused sustainability that is alleged to economic impacts in certain kinds of destinations. This requirement may not be relevant in Korea because the Korean economy is based on well-developed industries. Ecotourism destinations do not depend on self-financing, nor do local communities have to look at ecotourism as a form of economic development.

This study has several limitations. First, only one Korean ecotour destination was examined. Thus, the results of the study should be generalized with caution. Second, non-respondent bias and refusal bias were evident in this study due to the method of data collection, an on-site survey. Further studies should examine other Korean eco–destinations and apply other survey methods.

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INVESTIGATING POSTGRADUATE STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: AN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

The Master of Tourism is a new postgraduate coursework degree that was offered by the new School of Management at La Trobe University, Australia for the first time in 2009. This degree is quite innovative in that it is the only one year tourism course work Masters program in Australia that also offers the opportunity of an extra semester (or six months of study) to obtain an honours degree, in addition to the masters' qualification. This research will seek to analyse students' expectations and experiences of this course. It utilised a qualitative methodology via focus groups and quantitative data collection via short surveys to capture students expectations, experiences and satisfaction levels associated with the program. The results of this research, quantifying the gap between expectations and evaluation of experiences of the new Masters' course, will provide a better understanding of students' transition from undergraduate to postgraduate studies. It will also provide an insight into their learning styles and expectations and experiences of teaching and learning resources including teaching staff, language and skills support, and online learning content. The outcomes of this research will provide insight into not only what the problem areas are but also importantly, why the students perceive them to as problems and what recommendations they provide as solutions.

KEYWORDS: Expectations; Experiences; Learning; Perceptions; Student; Teaching.

INTRODUCTION

The School of Management at La Trobe University (LTU) in Melbourne, Australia has developed a new postgraduate coursework degree entitled 'The Master of Tourism' that was offered for the first time in 2009. The degree offers the opportunity for students to receive a Masters qualification by course work in one year with an option to complete an extra semester (or six months of study) to obtain an honours degree, in addition to the masters' qualification.

This research will seek to analyse students' expectations and evaluate their experiences of this course. More specifically the research questions include;

1. What are the student's short and long term expectations?
2. Do the student's initial expectations reflect Herzberg's hygiene or motivation factors?
3. Are the students identified expectations matched with reality?
4. What role does marketing activities play in matching student expectations with reality?

The results of this research will provide an insight into student learning styles and expectations and experiences of teaching and learning resources including teaching staff, language and skills support, and online learning content. The outcomes of this research will also provide insight into not only what the problem areas are but also importantly why the students perceive them to be problems and what recommendations they provide as solutions.

BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH:

The School of Management was formed in 2009 as a result of merging a number of previously established disciplines; Tourism and Hospitality, Sport, Marketing and Human Resource Management. Those lecturers involved in teaching the Master of Tourism program met on a regular basis in the twelve month lead up period to the course commencement to plan and develop the course structure and subjects to be offered, both core and electives. The need for challenging subjects and those requiring critical thinking were identified by all staff members involved in this process.

Admission requirements for entry into the course were graduates from the previously established School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management, the School of Business and the Graduate School of Management who have qualified for the award of Bachelor, Graduate Diploma or Postgraduate Diploma. Domestic Australian applicant requirements included being a graduate who have qualified for the award of Bachelor, Graduate Diploma or Postgraduate Diploma from a recognised Australian University with a minimum C average in the student's final year of study. The graduate should also be able to demonstrate 3-5 years relevant work experience in a tourism related industry.

International applicants needed to have qualified for the award of Bachelor, Graduate Diploma or Postgraduate Diploma from a recognised Australian University or an International University recognised as equivalent with a minimum C average in the student's final year of study. The graduate should also be able to demonstrate 3-5 years relevant work experience in a tourism related industry. Those applicants from a non English speaking background must meet specified standards for English language communication. Student applications for the Honours program were required to achieve a weighted average mark (WAM) of C+.

Expectations of Postgraduate University Students

Expectations of postgraduate students will vary between students depending upon factors such as their own roles, responsibilities and commitments (James, 2002). Students may develop unrealistically high expectations of their postgraduate experience as well as very low expectations. These unrealistically high or low expectations may be in relation to their own abilities to achieve or those of the university to deliver a quality education service. Students typically expect the essentials of effective teaching including well defined objectives, feedback, transparent assessment requirements and grading processes, personal interaction with teaching staff and to be treated as individuals with respect (Ramsden, 1992; James, 2002). The literature identifies a change in student expectations over recent years with many students seeking greater choice and flexibility

in subjects offered, delivery modes, assessment and actual time spent physically on campus (McInnis, 2001). Students also more often now contribute to the cost of their education, whether it is paying the tuition fees or supporting themselves during University study or both, and subsequently expect to play a more passive role in the learning process (James, 2002).

Herzberg et al's (1993) work motivation theory, or sometimes referred to as the hygiene factor theory, may be used to analyse student expectations in relation to motivation and satisfaction. Herzberg's theory suggests that the two environmental factors, labelled hygiene factors and motivation factors, affects motivation and satisfaction levels in the workplace. Hygiene factors are associated with the personal comfort level of the workplace environment such as the quality of the working spaces, air conditioning and being underpaid. Herzberg et al (1993) considers the absence of these factors may cause dissatisfaction but their presence themselves doesn't generate a strong commitment. Motivation factors on the other hand are those factors which may inspire a high level of employee participation and include opportunities for achievement and growth and inspiring leadership. The absence of these factors do not lead to dissatisfaction in itself, however it does mean that personal participation will not be raised above ordinary levels.

Transferring Herzberg's motivation theory from workplace expectations to higher education student expectations, James (2002) recognises that a perceived absence of reasonable hygiene factors such as classroom facilities is likely to lead to dissatisfaction. The presence of these factors on their own however will not lead to satisfaction, additional factors such as challenging subjects are necessary for students to be completely satisfied. It must also be recognised that often it is the hygiene factors which are only considered by students when developing their initial expectations as it is these factors that are readily observable (James et al, 1999). Often students have limited access to the more intangible features that are likely to provoke motivation such as an innovative teaching program and a committed learning community (James, 2002). Matching expectations must also be considered from both a short and long term perspective. Short term expectations are those associated with the daily course experiences (classrooms, services, access to wifi), while long term expectations are those concerned with the course completion and career outcomes (James, 2002).

Ellerington and Bayliss' (2004) consider the difference between the expectations of different stakeholders in the first component of the Master of English (at Melbourne University Private) and the actual reality they experienced. Areas investigated included pre-conceived ideas and expectations of international students, administration and teaching staff. Both short and long term expectations of students were sought in initial questionnaires but these researchers (Ellerington and Bayliss, 2004) found that the "student expectations were not clearly voiced until they encountered the reality of the course and found that it was, for some, neither what they anticipated nor, more importantly, what they wanted" (p. 12). Students appeared to be seeking more of Herzberg et al's (1993) motivational factors rather than hygiene factors as the lecturers had expected at their language level. "Adopting a lecture format, content based approach was inappropriate for the students and would not enable the linguistic advancement

required for commencement of subjects at graduate diploma or master's level" (Ellerington and Bayliss, 2004, p.13). Conversely the students did not want their classes to be similar to those associated with English language schools and subsequently, an adjustment needed to be made to meet the student's expectations without damaging the integrity of the course.

As James (2002) refers to in his research, mismatched expectations may not always be a negative thing and in fact may be even considered desirable, as it may encourage students to expose their minds to challenging and different elements that they weren't expecting. Students may not always recognise or welcome those experiences that may lead to being educationally valuable or are beyond staff control due to unit curriculum policies that must be included in the program (Sander et al, 2000).

Marketing Postgraduate University Student Experiences

Considerable research exists relating to the marketing of experiences and the consequences of mismatching expectations with the reality (James, 2002; Davies, 2002; Ellerington and Bayliss, 2004; Graham 1998). James (2002) specifically looks at the changing expectations of higher education, however within an undergraduate course level. Ellerington and Bayliss' (2004) research results indicated that marketing was considered very influential on student expectations and required feedback from lecturers and administrators throughout the delivery of the course to alter marketing practices to better match student expectations. Davies (2002) investigates the role that marketing plays in creating and then managing the expectations and perceptions of students. Conclusions drawn for her research includes a balance needing to be achieved between the needs of the marketplace and also understanding and managing the student expectations. Graham (1998) summarises customer expectations in his research which Davies (2002) argues may be transferable to potential students in a university environment.

Additionally, a number of issues are raised in the literature relating university education and services marketing (Davies, 2002; Scott, 1999; Walshe 2001). Service characteristics may be more appropriately applied to the delivery of education although the courses, programs and qualifications may be deemed as products (Davis, 2002). A number of typical challenges exist in marketing a service, including inseparability of the student and the teacher, perishability referring to an empty class as a lost opportunity, heterogeneity associated with the difficulties of delivering a consistent class and intangibility where a performance is often purchased before its delivery.

The increased use of non-traditional service delivery methods in Universities make some of these challenges of service delivery less relevant particularly in relation to inseparability (virtual campuses and electronic communication), perishability (lecture notes, email, study guides being able to be preserved for later use or referral to) and heterogeneity (use of online teaching makes it easier to standardise classes and ensure quality control) (Davies, 2002). The intangibility element remains a great challenge and impacts on the role of marketing when it comes to matching expectations with actual

experiences. "How many other organisations can you think of that ask their customers for thousands of dollars in advance, coupled with thousands of hours of significant personal effort, all with no sure knowledge of how they are going to benefit at some unknown stage in the future?" (Walshe, 2001).

Intangible elements are often not mentioned by students when considering their initial expectations as they find them difficult to access (James et al, 1999). Universities need to better direct their marketing activities to increase information of these intangible elements. By doing this the prospective student's ability to access these elements may be increased and subsequently may assist them in developing realistic expectations. Ultimately this may result in achieving a better match of expectations with reality and thus overall student satisfaction as "customer satisfaction comes from the match between expectation and reality" (Davies, 2002, p.109).

Although considerable research into higher education, students' expectations and experiences and associated marketing practices is apparent, very little research appears to focus on these areas at a postgraduate level and also within the tourism education field in Australia. As a result, this research will provide a contribution to knowledge within these areas.

METHODOLOGY

The 'Master of Tourism' 2009 student cohort was selected as a case study and used as the basis for investigation into students' expectations and experiences of this postgraduate course. This research utilised a qualitative methodology via focus groups and quantitative data collection via short surveys to capture students expectations, experiences and satisfaction levels associated with the program.

Focus groups and surveys were conducted during orientation week to ascertain expectations of the course, then the students actual experiences of the course were captured via more focus groups and surveys at the conclusion of first semester and a final survey after the completion of the students' degree. The focus groups were run by a professional focus group facilitator, digitally recorded and transcribed by a professional independent organisation following the data collection process. A short two page survey was also distributed to students prior to each focus group to collect demographic data and to ascertain base line expectations using a 5 point likert scale. These surveys were self administered, with students encouraged to complete them in private to lessen the chances of group think infiltrating their responses.

Quantitative data collected from the questionnaire surveys was entered into the SPSS program and was subjected to non-parametric analysis procedures to test for differences between the multiple groups. Non-parametric tests make no assumptions about the parameters (such as the mean and variance) of a distribution, nor do they assume that any particular distribution is being used. Focus group protocols were based on themes of the questionnaire survey, along with key factors identified in the literature relating to student expectations. The relevant data was also analysed qualitatively in accordance with the reviewed literature themes.

RESULTS

Student Group Profile

The initial data collection involved participation of 18 students of the total 23 enrolled. 13 were female and 5 were male with all participants being domestic students, except the one international student. An equal amount of participants were 2008 graduates of the BBus – Tourism and BBus – Tourism and Hospitality with just one a 2007 graduate of BBus – Tourism and Hospitality and one a Bachelor of Arts. Just under half of participants (44.4%) were recipients of partial scholarships and the majority (66.7%) were graduates of the Bundoora campus.

As the course progressed in first semester there were 3 students who chose to discontinue and subsequently the second and third data collection consisted of less participants. Informal reasons for this discontinuation included an issue with distance for the student travelling each week from the Albury Wodonga campus and the remaining two students felt they wanted to explore employment options rather than continue on studying. This may be considered a limitation of the research as these student's initial expectations were used to measure against the reality of the remaining student experiences. In addition, it must also be acknowledged that these research results may only be recognised within a similar context to the performed study.

Student Motivations for Enrolling in the Course

Students were asked via a short survey to identify their key motivations for enrolling in the Master of Tourism by coursework. Amongst responses were to obtain a higher degree (66.7%), increase employment options (77.8%), the fact it was of only one year duration (66.7%), the subjects looked interesting (44.4%), received a partial scholarship (38.9) and received a letter of offer (50%). To a lesser degree, motivations for enrolling in the program also included wanting to do the additional six months honours component (22.2%) and wanting to pursue a career as an academic (5.6%). None of the respondent's key motivations were due to being unable to secure full time work after graduation.

Additional motivating factors identified in the focus group included pressure from parents to continue on studying, to increase a further understanding of the tourism industry, to have a postgraduate qualification as many participants felt that in the future this will be a requirement and didn't want to have to return to study in the future to update their qualifications as a result. Some respondents also felt it was easier to study the additional year when they were younger without family commitments such as children and a mortgage. The economic and job climate at the time also had some bearing on some of the students decision to continue studying the Master of Tourism course.

Identifying Student Expectations

Statements used to measure the initial student expectations of the Master of Tourism course, and the degree to which these were met, are displayed in Table 1 with the corresponding mean and standard deviation provided.

SURVEY STATEMENTS RELATING TO STUDENT EXPECTATIONS	PRE	POST	FINAL
Requirements of the course will be/were clear to me	3.3 (1.1)	4.0 (0.7)	4.3 (0.5)
This course will/did provide a more detailed analysis of the tourism industry	4.0 (0.8)	4.3 (0.6)	4.5 (0.9)
This course will/did provide more specialised tourism content	4.1 (0.9)	4.4 (0.7)	4.9 (0.3)
A good range of electives will be/were offered in second semester	3.8 (0.9)	3.7 (0.9)	3.8 (0.9)
All assessments will be/were graded and returned within two weeks with extensive comments	3.7 (0.8)	2.6 (1.2)	2.9 (1.1)
All of the subjects will be/are integrated to enhance my understanding of tourism	4.3 (0.5)	3.8 (0.7)	4.2 (0.4)
This course will/did provide a higher level of academic content than the undergraduate degree	4.6 (0.5)	4.6 (0.5)	4.9 (0.3)
This course will/did provide lots of experiential learning opportunities via fieldwork	3.8 (0.7)	3.3 (1.0)	2.6 (1.0)
Completing this course will enhance my employability	4.1 (0.7)	4.0 (0.8)	3.7 (0.9)
This course will be/was engaging, interesting & enjoyable	4.1 (0.7)	4.3 (0.8)	4.0 (1.0)
Class sizes will be/were small and interactive	4.1 (0.6)	4.9 (0.3)	4.8 (0.4)
This course will/did assist in further developing my research and analytical skills	4.3 (0.7)	4.6 (0.5)	4.7 (0.5)
The structure of this course will/did allow me time to engage informally with my class peers and teaching staff	4.2 (0.6)	4.3 (0.6)	4.7 (0.5)
This course will/did provide advance training in presenting and writing for the tourism industry	4.3 (0.7)	3.8 (0.8)	4.4 (0.5)
All administration issues related to this course will be/were dealt with efficiently	3.8 (0.9)	3.3 (1.2)	3.8 (0.9)
The course timetable will/did suit my needs	4.3 (0.6)	4.4 (0.5)	4.3 (1.4)
Electives will be/were scheduled appropriately during the course	3.5 (0.5)	3.8 (0.9)	4.1 (0.9)
The delivery of content will be/was flexible	3.6 (0.8)	4.2 (0.6)	4.5 (0.5)
I will be/was required to attend every class	4.2 (0.7)	3.8 (1.0)	4.1 (0.9)
This course will/did provide the opportunity to undertake special topics of my choice	4.1 (0.7)	3.9 (0.9)	4.3 (0.5)
Staff will/did expect a high level of quality on presentations and written work	4.6 (0.5)	4.8 (0.4)	4.5 (0.6)
I will be/was happy to engage in teamwork throughout the course	4.0 (1.1)	4.3 (0.8)	4.0 (0.6)
I will be/was able to access important resources on LMS in a timely fashion	4.2 (0.7)	4.1 (1.0)	4.2 (0.6)
Assessment items will be/were creative	4.0 (0.8)	4.0 (0.6)	4.2 (0.6)
The fulltime workload of 40hrs will be/was appropriate for this course	4.1 (0.6)	3.9 (0.8)	4.3 (0.5)

Table 1: Comparison of Student Expectations – Pre, Post and Final Survey [Mean, Standard Deviation]

Initial short term expectations identified by the students were that a good range of electives would be offered in second semester (3.8) and that all assessments would be graded and returned within two weeks with extensive comments made by the lecturer (3.7). Students expected the course to be engaging, interesting and enjoyable (4.1), they expected the classes to be small and interactive (4.1) and that the structure of the course would enable them to interact informally with both their class peers and teaching staff (4.2). Students indicated an average response of 4.6 on the likert scale that staff would be expecting a high level of quality on presentation and written work. The delivery of content was also expected to be flexible (3.6). Class attendance expectations were also recorded with the students identifying an average of 4.2 when considering if they would be required to attend every class.

General course expectations highlighted in the pre commencement focus group discussion included the ideas that the course would be a lot harder than the undergraduate courses and the level of work quality and standard expected by the lecturers would also increase. Students indicated also that they expected to do a lot more work at home than at the undergraduate level and also any group work would require them to be more organised in their interactions with their group members. They also expected the assessments outlined in each subject guide to be appropriately scheduled in terms of due dates and marks to be allocated for each assessment. Consistent grading of the assessments was also expected unlike at the undergraduate level where often a number of different staff members were involved in the marking process due to larger class sizes.

The students felt there would also be more emphasis placed on the use of journal articles and more up to date research would be required. Students recognised that the workload at a Masters level is often perceived to be greater than that of an undergraduate level however, they weren't too sure what to expect in reality, especially as the program is based on course work rather than pure research. Similar comments were made of the amount of preparation and reading that would be required prior to classes with students feeling they needed to be more informed about this. Smaller class sizes would be better and provide more of an opportunity to interact with their class mates as well as develop closer ties with their lecturers. Students were most looking forward to the elective subjects on offer in the course and many were undecided about the additional six months honours component, they appreciated the fact they didn't have to make that decision at the beginning of the course.

Students overall were happy with the first semester timetable schedule that had already been released to them and appreciated the condensed classes into three days and as a result they felt class attendance would be reasonably high. The students recognised their own desire to be at University and the effort of staff to schedule the program to make it easier for them to attend. Some students expressed concern regarding the course workload balanced with outside employment (many would have to work more hours to compensate for the unexpected lack of Centrelink government funding) and hoped it wouldn't impact on their quality of work produced.

Long term expectations were identified by the students with students considering the completion of the course enhancing their employability (4.1) and the course providing students with a more detailed analysis of the tourism industry (4.0). In terms of academic skills, the student group expected the course to provide advanced training in presenting and writing for the tourism industry (4.3) along with assisting in further developing their research and analytical skills (4.3). The opportunity to study special topics to increase knowledge area was also a reasonably high expectation of the overall group (4.1).

Overall, student expectations identified relating to assessments and grading processes, smaller class sizes and opportunities to engage informally with class peers and teaching staff, seeking greater choice and flexibility particularly in areas of elective choice, timetabling and course structure and optional honours component support those commonly identified in the reviewed literature (Ramsden, 1991; 1992; James, 2002).

Evaluation of Student Experiences

Student expectations were either met or exceeded in areas including the requirements being clear to the students, the course providing a more detailed analysis of the tourism industry and providing more specialised tourism content, class sizes being small and interactive, the course assisting in further development of research and analytical skills, the opportunity to undertake special topics of their choice, the structure allowing time to engage informally with class peers and teaching staff, the course timetable suited the students needs, the course has provided advanced training in presenting and writing for the tourism industry, electives being scheduled appropriately during the course, the students being happy to engage in teamwork throughout the course and access to important resources on the learning management system (LMS).

The post semester one and semester two focus group discussion identified in more detail some of the topics outlined above from the survey results. Participants really liked the small group size and the opportunity to get to know their lecturers much better, they felt they were separate to the rest of the University which was great and the provision of their own lecture room, wifi internet access and tea/coffee with biscuits contributed to this feeling. The students thought the electives fieldtrip to North East Victoria was excellent, it gave them a chance to bond with one another and also their lecturers, it was scheduled at a great time in the semester and many felt it really should be compulsory for all Master students and not just those enrolled in the specific electives. The extended Easter break was appreciated by all students however it was difficult to co-ordinate group work at this time for assignments.

Students really liked beginning classes at 9.30am and felt it was good to have the optional Monday morning for extra study or to meet with their classmates or lecturers. They appreciated the flexibility in the timetable and that of the lecturers and found it extremely useful to receive an updated weekly timetable in advance. Comparisons between semester one and two were made with students considering both very different. First semester was very structured overall, while semester two with the electives was less structured, provided more opportunity for deeper thinking and depending upon those electives chosen, a lighter course load.

Variations existed however relating to the variety of electives actually being offered in semester two, the return of assessments in the two week timeframe, whether the course was engaging, interesting and enjoyable, the opportunity to engage in experiential learning opportunities via fieldwork, whether the course would enhance employability and some administration areas. Slight variations existed with expectations relating to all the subjects being integrated and the requirement to attend every class. A range of subject electives were provided for the students to consider in semester one, however as a result of staff leaving and limited student interest in some subject areas, the electives list was reduced somewhat to what was actually offered for semester two. Students indicated a mean response of 3.7, in comparison to their initial expectation of 3.8, when referring to whether a wide range of electives were offered in semester two.

The third data collection survey however indicated an increase in mean response to 3.8, the same as the initial expectation response. Many students expressed disappointment with the variety of electives offered initially for semester two as opposed to those outlined at the beginning of the year but found they really enjoyed those electives studied when surveyed after semester two. In addition, the students felt those electives offered were almost 'paired' with one another, for example advertising and media and then wine tourism and strategic resort management really complemented one another. Although this was useful, some students thought there was some overlap of subject material and almost seemed a waste of electives when they could combine these four subjects into two. The opportunity to undertake special topics of their choice was really dependent upon the electives in which the students chose in second semester. The tourism project subject enabled independent student learning which was greatly appreciated by those students enrolled in the subject. Students were given a chance to explore areas of their own interest with great flexibility in the topic areas.

Core subjects received mixed reviews from those students participating in the research. Subjects considered most challenging were the Research Methods and Tourism Experience. These subjects challenged the students and they found the topics provoked a new line of thinking. It forced them to think outside the box and for some, it was really the only subject that made them feel like they were at a Masters level. Students enjoyed the Wine Tourism industry presentation component especially as it showed the practical application of their assessment and challenged them to think deeply and critically. Some students felt for the remaining subjects that they had learned some of the content before and it was just presented at a more advanced level.

Students identified a number of areas of skill development over the course of both semester one and two. Analytical and research skills were highlighted as a main skill development area, students were forced to ask questions and critique their own work and were encouraged to contribute their own opinions and ideas to the discussions and not just take the lecturers point of view. Also time management skills were developed along with personal skills such as communication and increased confidence.

In terms of job prospects, students felt by having a Masters qualification it looked good on their resume but a few students also felt they may be considered overqualified for some jobs they were likely to apply for in relation to their areas of experience. Although they would have the piece of paper, they felt they lacked industry experience and perhaps that this could be somehow incorporated into the course structure, even compulsory volunteering opportunities would be useful. Another student recognised that the qualification is more likely to assist them later on down the track with their careers, this realisation may have contributed to the reduced mean score of 3.7 in table 1. The employment seminar organised towards the end of the semester was also useful to the students, they found it valuable to receive application and interview tips from industry speakers and felt a sense of reassurance and confidence in entering the workforce.

Both short and long term expectations were addressed by the students. Short term expectations relating to facilities, timetabling, weekly classes were recognised along with consideration of those long term expectations such as career and job prospects, value of a Master's qualification and industry experience. Recognition of both short and long term expectations are necessary in order to match expectations with reality (James, 2002).

Hygiene vs Motivation Factors

The majority of the initial expectations outlined by the students may be considered examples of Herzberg's (1993) hygiene factors, those factors associated with the students personal comfort level of the university experience. Both hygiene and motivation factors (Hertzberg et al, 1993) were identified by the postgraduate students in their discussion of the degree to which their initial expectations were met. Motivation factors such as the opportunity to undertake special topics within their elective subjects, the support for independent learning, skill development, encouragement by lecturers to contribute their own opinions and ideas and challenging aspects of some subjects which forced them to adopt a new line of thinking they had not experienced before in an undergraduate environment were highlighted by the students. Long term employability issues were also considered in more detail along with the value of their new Masters qualification. None of these factors were raised in any detail in the first focus group relating to initial student expectations of the course which supports James et al (1999) theory that often it is only hygiene factors which are considered by students when developing their initial expectations as it is these factors are inclined to be more appa1rent. Similar hygiene factors were discussed as those mentioned in the initial focus group, timetabling, classroom facilities, small class size, elective variety, fieldtrip option and electronic access to notes and additional readings all contributed to increasing the students' satisfaction levels (or their absence may have caused dissatisfaction) but as Herzberg et al (1993) mentions in their research, the presence of these factors are unlikely to be adequate on their own without the presence of motivation type factors as those outlined above.

Role of Marketing Activities in Meeting Expectations

The School of Management embarked on various internal and external marketing and promotional techniques for the Master of Tourism by coursework program. Internal promotion included the creation of a surrogate homepage from the School website where current information and application details could be lodged, a double sided information flyer outlining basic course information (structure, application, fees) and information sessions were provided to final year students in the School. External activities included website development, preparation of additional information, including staff profiles and subject outlines, application form development and market presentations, in conjunction with the publicity material, made at a career expo in the Melbourne Town Hall.

Participants were asked to identify where they had learnt about the Master of Tourism course at La Trobe University. Information on the course provided by the staff accounted for just under half of the responses (44.4%) with formal information sessions conducted by those involved in teaching the course accounted for almost one third (27.8%) of responses. 22.2% of respondents indicated that it was through their letter of offer to participate in the course that they learnt of the course and what it offered.

The initial focus group provided mixed viewpoints on the amount and quality of the information provided to the students. Some indicated that very little information was provided to them, an A4 information sheet was being passed around outlining the basic outline of the course but they felt this wasn't enough. Some also felt that for a new degree they expected a lot more correspondence and information to be provided. Students transferring from other campuses felt the course co-ordinators should not automatically assume all students are progressing from the Bundoora campus and need to provide assistance in this area. Follow up focus groups indicated that much of the information they were seeking was provided in the information session following the initial focus group at the beginning of semester one. Students recommended that on enrolment day the staff communicate to students that many of their questions will be answered in this information session.

Specific areas in which student expectations were not met, therefore not matching expectations with reality, were in relation to the course providing lots of experiential learning opportunities via fieldwork (3.8; 3.3; 2.6), completion of the course enhancing employability (4.1; 4.0; 3.7) and to a lesser extent the course being engaging, interesting and enjoyable (4.1; 4.3; 4.0), staff expecting high levels of quality on presentations and written work (4.6; 4.8; 4.5) and requirements to attend class (4.2; 3.8; 4.1). Marketing activities lacked concentration on potential employment opportunities and benefits of the Masters qualification. On the final day of semester two a career seminar was organised which comprised of managers from a range of tourism related organisations (Qantas, Tourism Victoria) who provided the students with a realistic industry perspective of employment opportunities and value of qualifications. Students felt this seminar provided them with more confidence in entering the workforce following completion of

the course. Promoting past student profiles may also be a means of communicating this information in the future.

Students assumed there would be some form of fieldwork within the course without having actually being told this. Some electives that students chose during the course do provide industry interactions and fieldtrips, however a formal internship or work experience program is not offered in the course. More detailed promotion of each elective and its content may contribute to a better match with expectations.

Those areas in which students initial expectations were exceeded substantially may also be considered as a mismatch of expectations with reality. The University could use this ability to exceed expectations as a marketing opportunity and place greater emphasis on these intangible elements of small class sizes, the opportunity to engage informally with class peers and teaching staff as well as to assist in developing research and analytical skills.   Focusing on such intangible elements may increase the likelihood of better meeting expectations and ultimately increase overall student satisfaction (Walshe, 2001; Davies 2002).

Recommendations and Future Directions

Major problem areas associated with the course delivery were identified by the students as being primarily relating to a lack of fieldwork opportunities and recognition of the value of the qualification in enhancing employability upon completion of the course.   Specific recommendations made for improvement to these areas include emphasising the industry involvement in the Wine Tourism elective and consider offering an elective with an internship, a formal workplace component or even provide opportunities for volunteering in the industry. Also the students felt that staff needed to ensure the employment seminar was provided in the future and marketed to prospective students as it was considered very useful and provided the students with confidence in entering the tourism workforce.

Additional recommendations provided that may encourage effective future learning were to cap the number of students able to enrol in the course to maximise ratio of staff to students (25 or less), combine a couple of similar and/or complimentary electives to provide the students with more choice and organise a final lunch or gathering towards the end of the course year to provide an opportunity to gather before final completion. Finally, the students enjoyed their learning experiences with their various lecturers and recommended if possible that this not to be changed in future delivery of the course. Future direction of this research will be to develop a longitudinal study of the expectations and evaluation of student experiences in the Master of Tourism program to determine whether differences exist over time where previous recommendations have been implemented.

CONCLUSIONS

Preliminary research analysis indicates that student expectations of the Master of Tourism course were often exceeded however in some areas including a wide range of elective subjects being offered, provision of fieldwork opportunities, the return of assessments in the two week timeframe, class attendance requirements and completion of the course enhancing employability, a gap exists between the student expectations at the beginning of the course to those evaluated experiences of the students. The majority of initial expectations were identified as short rather than long term expectations however consideration of future employability and the value of the course qualifications was mentioned. James et al (2002) theory that often it is hygiene factors that are inclined to be more apparent when developing initial expectations was also supported. The various elements where initial expectations were well exceeded may be emphasised further in marketing activities of the course. Marketing practices associated with the course need to promote and communicate to prospective students with more of a focus on the intangible, long term and motivational elements of the student study experience so the students are in a better position to develop realistic expectations and subsequently, be more satisfied when these are met effectively by the University.

Problem areas were highlighted by students with both specific and general recommendations made for future improvement of the course delivery. Consideration of these results has provided insight into the course delivery and recommendations may be incorporated into future postgraduate course planning. Future direction includes further developing this research project into a longitudinal study of future Master of Tourism student groups at La Trobe University. The results subsequently may be used to provide guidance to other Universities looking to develop similar postgraduate programs and within a broader context, contribute to knowledge in the areas of teaching and learning at a postgraduate level. Limitations of the research must be also recognised when considering these research results.

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BRAND REVITALIZATION FOR HOTELS
-THE CASE OF HOLIDAY INN

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ABSTRACT

Brand revitalization is an important consideration for parent companies seeking to maintain competitive within the hotel industry. The intangible nature of the hotel industry emphasizes the importance of brand meanings to reduce perceived risk and decrease search costs for consumers. Therefore, establishing a strong brand identity provides the opportunity for a hotel brand to add value beyond the core product provided to customers. Establishing this value extends beyond differentiation of the physical assets, as amenities introduced for niche markets can rapidly become expected by a wider audience. Instead, brands must engage in ongoing brand management in order to maintain brand equity over time.

Holiday Inn provides an illustration of comprehensive brand revitalization in the hotel industry. This brand epitomizes a legacy brand due to its history of growth and franchising in the latter half of the previous century. Additionally, the revitalization efforts demonstrate concepts that are discussed in branding literature for the hotel industry. Aspects of updating activities are more pervasive than replacement of guest room case goods. Holiday Inn has required property units for both the Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express brands to add elements of sensory branding, as well as an employee training program for the provision of personalized service delivery. These strategies are consistent with empirical studies in hospitality academic literature that promote atmospherics and service delivery as influential factors in brand loyalty. This study examines brand revitalization efforts in the hotel industry through analysis of Holiday Inn's current efforts to implement specific brand elements.

KEYWORDS: Brand revitalization, Holiday Inn, Legacy brands, Sensory branding

INTRODUCTION

Brand equity refers to the value of specific brands in the competitive marketplace. Boone and Kurtz (1995) define the term as the "added value that a certain brand name gives to a product" (p. 411).   According to Keller (1993), brand equity is a function of brand awareness and brand image. The renowned branding author cites brand recognition and brand recall as the contributing elements of brand awareness. Strategic brand management signifies a company's efforts to grow and maintain brand equity, which requires constant re-evaluation of a brand's positioning in the marketplace. This may lead a company to consider how they must adjust their products and services in order to maintain market share or growth within their industry. Broad strategies that may be used by companies include identifying new markets or new uses for the brand, as well as efforts to improve brand image and reputation. One strategy for improving brand image involves changing brand elements and communicating those updates to customers.

Brand image and its parent concept of brand equity are especially important in the hotel industry. As the basic core product is interchangeable, brand differentiation is largely intangible (Vallen & Vallen, 2009). Hotel companies in the United States create differentiated products for various market segments, leaving mature markets proliferated with increasingly blurred segments (Dube & Renaghan, 1990). Strong brand equity gives hotel guests the ability to recognize and attach positive associations with specific brand names in the industry (Berry, 2000). That aspect is critical as customers are typically making purchase decisions away from the hotels that are being booked. However, when the customer arrives, the hotel is unable to separate the product with the employees who are expected to deliver superior and consistent service (Kandampully, 2007). The expectations prior to their visit will be affected by the intangible value of the brand, while their interactions with service personnel will affect their ongoing perceptions and behavioral loyalty to the brand (Cai & Hobson, 2004).

The purpose of this study is to provide an illustration of brand revitalization in the hotel industry. As a brand currently engaged in revitalization strategies, Holiday Inn is chosen for this study as a legacy brand that recognizes the need for ongoing brand management. Further, the strategies utilized in their revitalization efforts reflect current themes in academic literature. These themes include sensory branding and service authenticity in order to build customer loyalty and strong brand equity. The discussion shows how the company seeks to improve total brand equity by not only enhancing the physical product, but also through efforts to elicit an emotional connection with customers. Implications exist for lodging executives to consider the role of revitalization strategies for competitive brand management.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study sets two research objectives:
1) To explore aspects of brand revitalization in the hotel industry through examination of Holiday Inn's efforts to update brand elements

2) To discuss these components in the context of academic literature discussing strategic brand management

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study examines brand revitalization through the example of the Holiday Inn. First, the concept of the brand and current brand management themes in hospitality literature are reviewed. Discussion of the hotel brand and its management provides the setting for the case approach that examines brand revitalization in the hotel industry. Next, corporate branding strategies are discussed. Corporate branding strategies impact brand revitalization, as approaches by the parent company may leverage the core brand and brand extensions in different ways. In some cases, brands may be divested or consolidated to preserve brand equity in the core brand. In addition to trade publication and newspaper articles, communication by the parent company and by customers illuminates aspects of the brand's promoted renewal.

A brand refers to the "name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a combination of these elements that is intended to identify the goods and services of a seller and differentiate from those of a competitor" (Kotler, Bowens, & Makens, 1999, p. 284). The earlier part of the description refers to brand elements, which in totality provide a brand identity (Boone & Kurtz, 1995). The latter portion of the earlier statement refers to the function of those brand elements to offer consumers the ability to distinguish between different product offerings. According to Arnold (1992) and de Cheratony and Dall'Olmo (1999), a brand provides a form of "shorthand" for consumers, as brand elements are intended to convey value beyond the core product that is offered. Academic literature discusses this consumer benefit in the context of approach / avoidance behavior, where a brand can reduce perceived risk and decrease search costs for consumers engaged in a purchasing decision (Berry, 2000; Capon, Berthon, Hulbert, & Pitt, 2001; Keller, 1993). The role of a brand in reducing perceived risk carries additional important in the hotel industry, where the product is considered to be intangible (Kandampully, 2007).

Intangibility is among four widely cited characteristics that distinguish manufactured goods from services in a marketing context, including inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability (Carman & Langeard, 1980; de Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1999; de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2001; de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2003; Kandampully, 2007; Mackay, 2001; Vallen & Vallen, 2009). Inseparability refers to the human interaction that occurs during simultaneous production and consumption of services (Carman & Langeard, 1980; de Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1999; Kandampully, 2007). Heterogeneity considers the variability that result from inseparability (Kandampully, 2007; Mackay, 2001). Finally, perishability considers the dual nature of fixed supply in which unsold inventory cannot be stored and additional inventory cannot be easily added to increase capacity for higher demand (Kandampully, 2007; Mackay, 2001; Vallen & Vallen, 2009).

Various authors discuss a continuum in which customers pass through hierarchical stages of brand loyalty (Back, 2005; Boone & Kurtz, 1995; Keller, 2008; Schultz & Schultz, 2004). First, Schultz and Schultz (2004) describe attitudinal to

behavioral loyalty, where a customer shifts from a desire to engage with a specific brand to actual consumption behavior. Similarly, Boone and Kurtz (1995) offer three stages of brand loyalty advancing from brand recognition, brand preference, and brand insistence. Three points where brand loyalty is important include pre-purchase behavior, satisfaction levels, and behavioral intentions (Back, 2005). These three points are loosely parallel to the loyalty stages previous mentioned. For example, pre-purchase behavior can be characterized by attitudinal loyalty and brand recognition. Finally, Keller (2008) offers a five stage model of "customer mind set" that includes brand awareness, brand associations, brand attitudes, brand attachment, and brand activity (p. 319).

Brand attributes that are "sensorialized" encourage both satisfaction and loyalty for hotel customers, as sensory branding provides a mechanism to influence positive emotions and subsequent behavioral loyalty (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Mehrebian and Russell (1974) are credited with advancing a model that considered stimulus – organism – response in the context of a consumer response to the stimuli. Concurrently, the renowned marketing author, Phillip Kotler (1973), posited a theory based on environmental psychology in which consumers responded to atmospheric elements. He discussed "sensory channels" including "sight, sound, scent and touch," as well as the corresponding atmospheric dimension which include visual, aural, olfactory, and tactile (p. 51). The compatible theories continue to be further developed for academic study of consumer behavior, including in hospitality and tourism contexts (Baker, Grewal, & Parasuraman, 1994; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Spangenberg, Grohmann, & Sprott, 2005; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999).

METHODOLOGY

The goal of this study is to examine revitalization strategies for a legacy brand in the hotel industry. Consideration of intangibility and inseparability provide implications for the brand elements implemented in brand revitalization efforts. Further, academic literature proposes methods to build emotional connections with customers to encourage behavioral loyalty study. The characteristic of inspeparability and its role in brand loyalty establish the need to examine service elements as part of a brand revitalization strategy.

A case study method was utilized in order to provide in-depth information regarding the concept of brand revitalization. This type of inquiry is considered a qualitative research method, and is appropriate when exploratory study of an issue is warranted by the desire to examine a complex topic in-depth (Creswell, 2007). In this particular study, Holiday Inn is considered a purposeful sample with the expectation that the example provided by the brand "can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). According to Creswell, a case study requires "detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (p. 78). He suggests the following sources for data collection in a case study: "documents and records, interviews, observation, and physical artifacts" (p. 121).

THE CASE OF BRAND REVITALIZATION: HOLIDAY INN

The first Holiday Inn was introduced by Kemmons Wilson in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1952 (Connell, 1992). Wilson never intended for that property to be the only unit, as he was determined to provide a chain that would be identified as offering consistent quality and service. Nearly six decades later, the Holiday Inn brand is described with terms such as legacy and icon (Ney, 2010; O'Connor, 2007). From its earliest ventures to establish a brand portfolio and business integration strategies, Holiday Inn pursued a house of brands strategy. Notably, the brand did not enter the limited service market with Holiday Inn Express. Holiday Inn first launched Hampton Inn which was later sold to Promus together with Embassy Suites and Homewood Suites (Rushmore, 1992; Vallen & Vallen, 2009). Around the same time the renamed Holiday Corporation was sold to the United Kingdom-based company, Bass.

During the 1990's, Bass grew the number of brands in the company's portfolio (Supplementary Information, 2009). First, the brand extension, Holiday Inn Express, was born in 1991. Next, the company entered the upscale market with the Crowne Plaza brand in 1994. Subsequently, Staybridge Suites by Holiday Inn was launched in 1997 to create a presence in the upscale extended state segment. As a parent company, Bass evolved into InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) following the purchase of the InterContinental brand. This took place in 2000, concurrent with Bass divesting its beer related interests. Following 2000, IHG has decreased the total number of brands to ensure the strength of its existing brands, and to offer clarity for consumers who might be confused by brands with only marginal differences.

The size and scope of Holiday Inn and its brand extension Holiday Inn Express give credence to the examination of the brands as an example for the hotel industry. Based on number of rooms, Holiday Inn is the largest single brand under the portfolio of its parent company, IHG, with 240,000 rooms of IHG's 656,000 system wide. By number of properties, Holiday Inn Express is the largest with 2,101 of IHG's 4,503 properties system wide. Holiday Inn is a close second with 1,315 (Supplementary Information, 2009). Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express both operate as mid-priced hotels, with the former offering food and beverage and the latter excluding restaurant outlets (Hotel World Network, 2009). Among the chief competitors for Holiday Inn are the Clarion, Howard Johnson, Quality and Ramada hotel brands. In the mid-scale without food and beverage price segment, more brands exist including AmericInn, AmeriHost, Baymont, Comfort Inn, Country Inn & Suites, Fairfield Inn by Marriott, Hampton Inn, LaQuinta, Sleep Inn, and Wingate Inn. It is important to note that Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express both maintain the largest number of properties in their respective price segments. Pointing out that distribution is a critical component in brand equity, Vallen and Vallen (2009) note Holiday Inn is a brand that is illustrative of this characteristic.

Holiday Inn is one of the most widely recognized brands in the United States (Vallen & Vallen, 2009). Therefore, the brand offers an illustration for a history of continuous brand evolution to adapt to changing dynamics within the hotel industry.

Hotel brands like Hampton Inn and Courtyard by Marriott continue to give Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express impetus for improving standards and increasing consistency across the chains (Van Dyk, 2009). In the current case, as well as historically, Holiday Inn introduces brand improvements as major overhauls. For example, an advertising campaign to unveil hotel renovations in 1997 features a housekeeper destroying the previous room with a chainsaw in an attempt to show that the new rooms are completely made over (Berry, 2000). In another advertising campaign that did not achieve the company's planned message, Holiday Inn promised a problem-free stay with "no surprises" (Kotler et al, 1999, p. 348). However, the campaign proved unsuccessful when too many customers still experienced service failures.

In 2007, IHG leadership announced a $1 billion initiative to improve the brand perception worldwide (InterContinental Hotels Group, 2007). The revitalization carries the biggest impact in the United States where Holiday Inn was first introduced and where both Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express represent some of the largest chains in any market segment. Clearly the marketers and executive team for IHG strive for a positive brand image that will leverage their brand awareness. The components of the brand revitalization are discussed in this section. Information regarding brand revitalization efforts was obtained through newspapers, trade journals, and brand communications.

The signage and characteristic green or blue color were retained by Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express respectively. For Holiday Inn, the green signage is a legacy of the brand, with Kotler et al (1999) noting "Holiday Inn's green sign (is) instantly recognizable to customers" (p. 284). This was especially important during the early days of Holiday Inn development, as the chain was built on providing a hotel that customers could count on for quality and consistency. When families or business travelers saw the green sign from the interstate, they knew what to expect. The signage re-design tweaks the shade from forest green to a brighter lime green, and changes the slant orientation of the letters. In the original logo, the letters slant to the left but in no logos the letters will slant to the right. The right slant is considered to be more forward looking (Van Dyk, 2009). The exteriors of hotel's who have completed the efforts feature dramatic outdoor lighting, with Holiday Inns featuring the characteristic green and Holiday Inn Express hotels illuminated with blue.

The signage update is one tangible aspect of changes that were made to the hotels as part of a brand revitalization effort. Other tangible factors that were part of the brand relaunch include physical product updates. Guests are welcomed by a less cluttered, more contemporary lobby (Watkins, 2009). With hotel chains in all price segments offering upgraded bedding packages, new brand standards require hoteliers to update to an all-white bedding package with triple sheeting. This eliminates quilted floral bedspreads, and replaces them with a cleaner, crisper bedding package where elements are laundered between each guest. Additionally, the updated bedding standards account for flexibility with customers' pillow preferences by offering four pillows on each bed: two soft and two firm (Van Dyk, 2009). The bathroom features upgraded showerheads, Bath & Body Works amenities, curved shower rods, and a crisp, white shower curtain (Watkins, 2009).

A comprehensive training initiative addresses the employee's integrated role in the guest experience. Kandampully (2007) notes that "delivery of services is so dependent on individual personalities and attitudes that consistency in service interactions at different sites is extremely difficult to maintain" (p. 47). IHG is commanding brand immersion for each general manager and another employee who the hotel must designate as the "guest-experience champion" to a week-long training for a comprehensive understanding of the new Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express brands (O'Connor, 2007). The two are then expected to disseminate service delivery expectations through each property. The training program required as part of the revitalization initiative, "Stay Real", encourages employees to embrace personal differences while providing authentic service delivery.

In addition to the physical product and the employee training programs, updated properties feature elements of sensory branding. Intangible aspects of the brand renewal efforts include elements of sensory branding. In the current economy, Pine and Gilmore (1999) advance the idea that today's businesses compete by engaging customers in memorable experiences. The goal of sensory branding is to promote memorable experiences that will positively influence customer satisfaction and loyalty (Barsky & Nash, 2002; Cai & Hobson, 2004; Lindstrom, 2005). Updated Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express branded properties include a customized scent and music selections that have been carefully tailored for the feel of each brand (Van Dyk, 2009; Watkins, 2009).

The outcomes of the revitalization strategy are not yet known comprehensively across the Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn systems. However, individual hotels and IHG executives report quanitifiable results with satisfaction scores and RevPAR improvements (Ney, 2010). The impact of a system-wide RevPAR increase could have an effect on the brands' price segment positioning. Thomas Corcoran, the Chairman of Felcor Lodging, a large franchisee of Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express, asserted that he expects Holiday Inn to rise to the upscale price segment and compete against Hilton Garden Inn and Courtyard by Marriott (O'Connor, 2008). IHG's chief executive officer considered that goal unrealistic, noting the company's goal was to maintain a midprice brand that is market dominant and closes revenue gaps between mid-price and upscale segments (O'Connor, 2008).

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There are numerous strategic management and marketing implications for a revitalization initiative for major hotel brands. While it is important to offer a physical product that is appealing to customers, efforts to engage the customer through authentic service and "sensorializing" the brand are keys to providing memorable experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p. 18). While Holiday Inn was selected for this study based on the size and scope of their current efforts, a study of brand revitalization across the industry would provide insight into systematic patterns for proactively managing lodging brands. Additionally, reviewing brand revitalization from multiple perspectives could provide critical insight into the processes and perceptions by parent companies, franchisees, employees, and customers.

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THE EMERGING CHINESE THEME PARK INDUSTRY: EXPLORING THE IMPORTANCE OF KEY VISIT ATTRIBUTES AMONG DOMESTIC CHINESE VISITORS

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to identify the perceived important attributes of Chinese theme parks and assess any gap between importance and satisfaction. The theme park attributes developed by Milman (2009) were adapted as the basis of the items used in this study. Self-administered survey questionnaires were distributed in six major Chinese theme parks to domestic visitors who ranked the level of importance and satisfaction of Chinese theme park attributes while visiting. The results provided a valuable description of the important attributes and domestic visitors' satisfaction with the attributes, such as staff's knowledge of the theme park, safety of roller coasters, security of the park and ticket price. A gap analysis based on the difference between importance and satisfaction level provides some managerial implication. For most of the top ten important attributes (except creativity exhibited in the park), satisfaction scores are lower than importance scores, indicating that theme parks did not meet guests' expectations and management action is required. However, for the ten least important attributes, satisfaction exceeds importance, revealing that theme parks didn't need to take any management measures regarding these attributes.

KEYWORDS: Attributes; Chinese; Importance; Satisfaction; Theme park

INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of Disneyland in Anaheim, California in 1955, the global theme park industry has grown considerably in the past several decades. In 2008, about

186 million people visited the top 25 worldwide parks (Rubin, 2009). It is interesting to point out that the number of visitors to the world's top 25 theme parks is slightly higher than the number of international tourists that visited Spain, China, Italy, and the United Kingdom combined in 2008 (World Tourism Organization, 2009).

In the U.S., the theme park industry has witnessed a continuous steady growth over almost two decades. Between 1990 and 2007, the estimated attendance at U.S. amusement and theme parks increased by 34.8%. While origin of the theme park industry is in the United States, the theme park industry has also expanded globally in recent decades. An analysis of the world distribution of facilities with over three million visits per year indicates an increasing contribution from Europe and Asia Pacific in the global attendance of theme park industry between 1998 and 2002 (Clavé, 2007).

Asia has particularly been recognized as the world's next leading international theme park market (Wong &Cheung, 1999). According to PricewaterhouseCoopers' 2008-2012 Outlook, theme parks in Asia will attract 290 million visitors in 2012 and annual revenue will grow 5.7%, from US$ 6.4 billion to US$ 8.4 billion (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2008). In this region, most of the existing large theme parks are currently located in Japan and South Korea. However, China, with its growing economies and expanding middle class as well as its huge population as potential customer base, is expected to witness substantial growth in the near future.

Just like the fast development of most industry sectors in China in the past decade, a mixed picture of both opportunities and challenges can be painted on the backdrop of the fast growth of the theme park industry in the country. China's theme park industry has attracted tremendous investment and development in the last several decades. Since the late 1980s when the first theme park was opened in Shenzhen, approximately 2,500 theme parks, small and large, have been built in China (Wu, 2009). Tax revenues from Chinese theme parks are estimated to grow by 7.1% a year to top US$1.8 billion by 2010 (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2006). While more international theme park companies will be expected to enter the China market, domestic theme parks are also seeking to invest and develop theme parks with Chinese themes overseas. For example, Huaqiang Group in China will invest $250 million to build a Chinese culture theme park in Johannesburg, South Africa (Xie, 2009).

Along with the growth of the industry, Chinese theme parks are facing many challenges. Among China's 2,500 or so theme parks and attractions, 70% are operating at a loss and only about 10% are making a profit (Chung, 2010). In Shanghai, after having invested $US57million, Universal Park shut its gates after only four years. In Hangzhou, Future World closed with US$37 million in lost investments (Chung, 2010). Furthermore, despite some successful parks, the Chinese theme park industry is fraught with problems (Wu, 2009). According to Ap (2003), most parks in China replicated each other due to lack of a unique theme. For example, the success of a Journey to the West theme park in Hebei province resulted in about 260 parks with similar themes all over China. Moreover, the majority of the theme parks are composed of static man-made landscape and lack of visitors' interactive experience so that visiting a theme park became a once-only

experience (Chung, 2010). Further, some theme park developers and operators still held "supply-led" mentality, believing that people would come once the park was built. The parks' developers did not conduct a thorough market research to understand consumers' needs and preferences or to estimate what attributes a successful theme park should have (Ap, 2003).

Although theme park development in China has been booming since 1990s, market research has lagged behind to support the industry growth. For the most part, researchers, most of them domestically, are still adopting a rather descriptive and normative research paradigm, by focusing on either defining and classifying the concept of theme parks, or highlighting problems without providing effective solutions to the problems based on sound and valid research. So far, no empirical study has been conducted to identify and measure the important attributes of theme parks, which are significant for attracting visitors and extending their length of stay. In addition, due to little communication between theme park developer and Chinese government, official data regarding the theme park industry have not collected, recorded or compiled (Ap, 2003).

The objectives of this research are: (1) to identify the most important theme park attributes from Chinese domestic visitors' perspective; (2) to assess visitors' satisfaction with their theme park experience; (3) to identify the gap between importance and satisfaction of Chinese theme park visitors. The findings of the study may not only help theme park operators and marketers develop appropriate products and introduce new marketing strategies, but also enhance potential visitors' overall experience based on an understanding of their needs and preference analysis in relation to theme parks and attractions. For the purpose of this study, a theme park was operationally defined as 'a commercially operated enterprise that offers rides, shows, merchandise, food services and other forms of entertainment in a themed environment' (Milman, 2009, p. 379).

THE CONCEPT OF THEME PARKS

As a relatively new concept of tourist attractions, theme parks attempt to create fantasy atmosphere of another place and time (Milman, 2008). According to the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), a theme park is an amusement park that has themed attractions, be it food, costumes, entertainment, retail stores and/or rides (Wong & Cheung, 1999, p.320). What makes theme parks different from amusement parks is a theme which runs through all or most park attractions (Pikkemaat & Schuckert, 2007). In contemporary theme parks, theming is reflected through architecture, landscaping, costumed personnel, rides, shows, food services, merchandising, and any other services that impact the guests' experience (Milman, 2008).

The theme is the main component of the theme park experience (Wong & Cheung, 1999; Milman, 2008). In addition, Mills (1990) attributed several unique characteristics to modern theme parks, including technological wonders, spectacular buildings (exotic, vast and novel), educational presentations, sideshows to entertain and amuse guests, historical presentations, pageant or displays, party atmosphere like

fireworks, shows, and "fun", as well as food and beverage. According to Clavé (2007), a theme park should have a thematic identity, feature one or more themed areas, be designed as an enclosed space with guest-controlled access, have a single admission price, offer some form of entertainment, food services, and merchandise, and have the potential to attract families.

Many destinations around the world support the development of theme parks as it can improve the image of the destination, increase tourism and economic benefits, and provide leisure and recreation facilities for their local communities. From the tourist perspective, theme parks are perceived as a condensed holiday product, which is attractive to people who have limited vacation time (Wong & Cheung, 1999). Pikkemaat & Schuckert (2007) applied the concept of authenticity to explain why people visit theme parks. They claimed that theme parks are able to deliver two aspects of authenticity: personal fulfillment and escape to other places. Furthermore, the twenty-first century consumers are no longer satisfied with merely consuming products or services (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). They seek unique and memorable experience to supplement or substitute for traditional commodities (Milman, 2008). Theme parks of today are able to create fantasy atmosphere, engage visitors' senses, stimulate their minds, and thus deliver unique experiences for all ages.

THEME PARKS IN CHINA

China's first theme park, Splendid China in Shenzhen, was built by Overseas Chinese Town (OCT) in 1989. In the first operation year, it hosted 3.1 million visitors and recouped its capital investment within nine months (Ap, 2003). Subsequently, the OCT developed more theme parks, such as the China Folk Culture Villages, Windows of the World and Happy Valley in Shenzhen and other Chinese cities. So far, Happy Valley has been the most successful and opened three additional parks in other major cities, including Beijing, Shanghai and Chengdu. From its opening until September 13, 2009, Happy Valley received 35 million visitors and generated US$5 billion sales revenue (Qian & Wang, 2009).

The initial success of Splendid China created lots of false understandings of theme park development. For example, Chinese developers had a misconception that size was an important factor for theme parks and the larger the park, the better. Therefore, of the 2500 theme parks opened in China, seven parks covered an area of more than 666 hectares and 89 parks cost over US$14 million (HuiDian Consumer Market Report (HDCMR), 2007). However, due to lack of entertainment, shows and activities, theme parks in China are more like an exhibit with or without theme.

Most theme parks in China are located in the Pearl River Delta (Guangzhou, Zhuhai, Shenzhen and Hong Kong), Yangze River Delta (Shanghai), Jingjin areas (Beijing and Tianjin) and major regional cities such as Chengdu (Ap, 2003). All these are populous and economically-developed metropolitan areas. According to a study by China National Tourism Administration, most theme park visitors are from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and other neighboring countries in Asia (Wu, 2009).

According to the CEO of OCT, theme park industry has great potential in China (Ren, 2009). There are no real theme parks in many other large cities in China, such as Tianjin, Chongqing, Wuhan, Shenyang and Xian, leaving great room for future development. From 1990 to 2009, the theme park industry has experienced stages from rampant replication to proper planning and development. However, compared with other developed countries, China's theme park industry is still 10 or even 20 years behind. Beginning in 2010, China will enter a new era in theme park development. While more international theme park companies will enter the Chinese domestic market, domestic theme park companies also will develop new parks (Ren, 2009).

As a new research discipline in China, theme parks have attracted attention from quite a number of scholars in China, though their research focus has been to the most part definition and/or classification related. For instance, Bao (1995) defined theme parks as man-made stages and properties for entertainment and recreation that feature a specific subject (cited in Ap, 2003, p.196). Dong (2000) described theme parks as one type of modern tourist destinations with creative theme and activities, aiming to meet diverse leisure and recreational needs of tourists. According to Wang (cited in HDCMR, 2007, p. 280), theme parks are a leisure and entertainment place staged with certain theme and a typical representative of modern man-made attraction. Since scholars agree that theme parks are all created by human, the concept of theme parks is often interchangeably used with man-made attractions.

In his dissertation, Bao (1995) identified characteristics of China's theme parks. They are entertainment and amusement, an identified theme throughout the park, escape from daily life, high level of investment and high admission fees (cited in Ap, 2003, p.196). Dong (2000) discussed the evolution of theme parks from nine aspects, including cultural content of a theme, technical application, entertainment, visitor participation, scene and atmosphere, landscape, consumption type, length of stay, safety and comfort. Moreover, based on themes, China's parks can be classified into six categories: ethnic and custom, animal, science and fiction, history and culture, miniature, and fantasy/amusement (HDCMR, 2007).

Since the majority of theme parks in China operated at a loss during 1990s, some studies were involved in identifying reasons for failure in order to provide future developers with strategic options. Ap (2003) categorized the reasons for failure under three headings of planning, development and operation. Reasons concerned with planning included inappropriate location, repetition and copying of other parks, inadequate feasibility studies, ineffective evaluation of projects, lack of market knowledge and research, poor design planning, and lack of effective control. Under the heading of development, Ap (2003) included low quality development and lack of interactivity and dynamism. Further, poor management, naiveté of investors, joint venture partners and local officials, and political interference are operation-related reasons.

Research of Chinese theme parks from consumers' perspective is scarce. Li (2001) conducted a survey in four theme parks of OCT in Shenzhen. The objective of the

study was to understand how satisfied visitors were with the theme park visit. The results showed that less than half of the visitors were satisfied with their visit though they liked the pleasant atmosphere. However, the attributes used in the study were quite limited and failed to cover all aspects of the theme park experience. Limited theme park research inhibited the sustainable development of theme park industry in China (Dong & Li, 2006). The current study aims to explore the perceived importance of attributes of Chinese theme parks visited by domestic guests and assess any gap between importance and satisfaction. This will be done through a survey of Chinese domestic theme park visitors.

METHODOLOGY

A self-administered survey questionnaire was used to collect data. The theme park attributes developed by Milman (2009) were adapted as the basis of the items used in this study. The attributes covered eight major areas of theme parks, including general park facilities, value for money, entertainment, food services, market appeal, merchandise, staff and park's operations. Due to differences in culture, business environment, and theme park operational practices, the items were revised based on Chinese theme park features in order to be more relevant to the Chinese context. For instance, culture is an important theme and widely applied to China's theme parks. However, there is no question related to cultural theme in Milman's (2009) questionnaire. Therefore, two items, "number of cultural themes" and "cultural activities" were added to the questionnaire. Then the questionnaire was translated by two different scholars from English to Chinese and then again from Chinese to English to control consistency in translation.

The structured questionnaire contained three sections. In section 1, respondents were asked to rate the importance of 41 theme park attributes on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "very important" (5) to "not important at all" (1). Section 2 assessed visitors' satisfaction with these attributes on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "very satisfied" (5) to "very dissatisfied" (1). In section 3, respondents were asked to report on their theme park visitation in the past three years, likelihood to visit theme parks in the next 12 months and demographic characteristics.

The population for the study was all visitors of six major Chinese theme parks, including Beijing Happy Valley, Shanghai Jinjiang Amusement Park, Guangdong Chimelong Paradise, Shenzhen Happy Valley, Chengdu Happy Valley and Suzhou Amusement Park. These theme parks are located in most developed cities of theme park industry and are fantasy/amusement type of theme parks. The survey was conducted in May, 2009 in the six theme parks in China.

A convenience sampling approach was used to choose the sample for the study. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to visitors at popular rides or attractions (i.e. Hurricane Bay in Shenzhen Happy Valley) in each park when visitors waited in line,

and then collected immediately after completion. The rides and attractions were recommended by park managers. If a potential respondent was not willing to participate, then the next convenience sampling unit was chosen.

Descriptive statistical methods including dispersion and distribution analysis were used to measure importance and satisfaction of theme park attributes. Paired t-test was applied to test the significant difference between the two means of importance and satisfaction.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

General Profile of the Respondents

Altogether 1042 usable questionnaires were obtained. In terms of individual theme park, 180 usable questionnaires were collected in Beijing, 179 in Guangzhou, 174 in Suzhou, 172 in Shanghai, 171 in Chengdu and 166 in Shenzhen. The gender distribution was 54.6% females and 45.4% males (Table 1). The majority of respondents were married (51.9%) and the rest were single (48.1%). About 33.4% of the respondents completed junior or high school; 28.5% graduated from a vocational school; 20% had college education; and 17% received graduate school education. Most respondents were relatively young with 68.4% of them less than 36 years old.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents.

Gender (n=1042)	%	Age group (n=1042)	%	Education background (n=1042)	%	Family status (n=1042)	%
Female	54.6	18 or under	27.1	Junior or high school	33.4	Single	48.1
Male	45.4	19-25	20.1	Vocational school	28.5	Married	51.9
		26-35	21.2	Undergraduate	19.7		
		36-45	18.8	Master or higher	18.4		
		46-55	9.4				
		56 or older	3.5				
Total	100.0	Total	100.0	Total	100.0	Total	100.0

The respondents had extensive visiting experience of theme parks in China. About 40% respondents visited theme parks more than three times in the past three years. The rest of patrons visited 1-3 times in the past three years. The respondents also indicated a strong likelihood to visit theme parks in the next 12 months. More than half of the respondents (70.4%) were 'very likely' and 29.6% were 'likely' to visit a theme park in the next 12 months. It is obvious from this data that Chinese have great interest in visiting theme parks.

Level of Importance and Satisfaction of Attributes for Chinese Theme Park Visitors

Table 2 indicated the respective importance means, satisfaction means and t-values regarding the difference between importance and satisfaction. The values in the table were sorted from high to low by the level of importance.

The findings indicate that staff's knowledge of the theme park, safety of roller coasters, security of the park, ticket price, creativity exhibited in the park, price of merchandise, level of theming of the park, overall number of park attractions, entertainment quality of shows and activities, and park cleanliness were perceived as the most important ten attributes of theme parks. It is interesting to note that part of the study results were consistent with Milman's study (2009) in that visitors placed higher importance to attributes like staff members, safety and security, and cleanliness. Therefore, these attributes should be considered as basic factors of building and developing theme parks though regional and cultural considerations should be taken into account. Moreover, admission price was addressed in many theme park studies in China (Ap, 2003; Li, 2001), indicating price is a major consumer attribute when visiting theme parks. However, Chinese patrons didn't perceive the pricing as fair or good value for money (Chung, 2010). This could be explained by the fact that for most mainland Chinese, visiting a theme park is a luxury experience (Ap, 2003).

It was generally perceived that a theme park should have lots of rides, which provide visitors thrilled and unforgettable experience. However, the findings showed that Chinese visitors rated the number of park attractions more important than the number of roller coasters. Hence, theme park managers should impress visitors with a variety of offers rather than merely roller coasters.

Less important attributes were perceived to be availability of activities for all weather conditions, variety of food, number of automatic selling machine, number of restaurants, availability of multilingual staff, variety of shopping options (store and outside vendors), diversity of merchandise, number of shops, appropriate display of show & entertainment times & location, and level of interactivity of show & entertainment. The results indicated that Chinese visitors paid less attention to auxiliary services of theme parks, such as food and merchandise.

Given the fact that the theme park industry is in its infancy in China, findings suggest that theme parks currently focus on the core component of their products, such as guest experience, by adding certain "wow" element or developing an adventure theme.

As shown in Table 2, the most satisfied theme park attributes are creativity exhibited in the park, activities that cater exclusively for kids, rides or activities that appeal to family, feeling of escape from reality, quality of landscaping, rides or activities that appeal to kids, entertainment quality of activities & shows, rides or activities that appeal to adults, availability of activities for all weather conditions, and number of entertainment options. Whereas, safety of roller coasters, level of interactivity of show & entertainment, price of merchandise, park cleanliness, uniqueness of theme design, value of food, ticket price, level of educational experience, number of cultural themes, and quality of food are the most dissatisfied attributes. No attributes had mean satisfaction level below 3.

Satisfaction was linked to active and experience-related attributes, such as creativity, activity and entertainment. Since the majority of visitors were young, energetic

activities satisfied their needs. Further, the results demonstrated that theme parks in China do well in serving the needs and wants of kids and families, with a satisfaction score of 4.44 and 4.37, respectively. The low satisfied attributes regarding safety of roller coasters, park cleanness, uniqueness of theme design found in this study demonstrated consistency with Emmon's (1999) conclusion which stated that many Asians viewed theme parks as unsafe, unclean, and poorly-designed.

Table 2. Level of Importance and Satisfaction of Attributes in Theme Parks (n=1042).

Perceived Attributes	Level of Importance[a]		Level of Satisfaction[b]		T-test	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	T value	Sig.*
Staff's knowledge of the park	4.64	0.79	3.79	1.18	-19.58	.000
Safety of roller coasters	4.60	0.71	3.48	1.26	-24.05	.000
Security of the park	4.55	0.80	3.79	1.05	-18.31	.000
Ticket price	4.39	0.86	3.63	1.22	-16.02	.000
Creativity exhibited in the park	4.31	0.81	4.46	1.01	3.88	.000
Price of merchandise	4.28	0.93	3.51	1.25	-15.90	.000
Level of theming of the park	4.23	1.05	3.68	1.12	-11.23	.000
Overall number of park attractions	4.20	1.09	3.69	1.14	-10.51	.000
Entertainment Quality of shows and activities	4.15	1.08	4.01	1.07	-2.94	.003
Park cleanliness	4.12	1.13	3.59	1.23	-10.13	.000
Friendly and courteous staff	4.03	1.06	3.82	1.17	-4.22	.000
Activities that cater exclusively for kids	4.00	1.10	4.44	0.88	9.93	.000
Rides or activities that appeal to kids	3.94	1.23	4.17	1.00	4.76	.000
Rides or activities that appeal to families	3.89	1.13	4.37	0.96	10.13	.000
Feeling of escape from reality	3.86	1.21	4.29	0.87	9.16	.000
Localization of theme	3.85	1.10	3.74	1.16	-2.15	.032
Number of entertainment options	3.78	1.13	3.90	1.10	2.47	.014
Quality of food	3.75	1.18	3.64	1.13	-2.10	.036
Layout of the park	3.71	1.17	3.88	1.04	3.50	.000
Uniqueness of theme design	3.70	1.14	3.60	1.13	-2.08	.038
Management for rides and attractions	3.68	1.10	3.77	1.20	1.76	N.S.
Value of food	3.64	1.21	3.63	1.09	-.33	N.S.
Level of educational experience	3.64	1.19	3.63	1.22	-.28	N.S.
Variety of entertainment options	3.63	1.08	3.88	1.13	5.10	.000
Number of cultural themes	3.60	1.34	3.63	1.13	.56	N.S.
Quality of landscaping	3.59	1.03	4.26	1.05	14.23	.000
Cultural activities	3.49	1.32	3.67	1.17	3.26	.001
Rides or activities that appeal to people of all ages	3.46	1.41	3.75	1.12	5.19	.000
Quality of parade and show	3.34	1.35	3.83	1.09	8.91	.000
Rides or activities that appeal mainly to adults	3.34	1.02	3.93	1.15	12.78	.000
Number of roller coasters	3.24	1.32	3.73	1.09	9.43	.000
Level of Interactivity of show and entertainment	3.06	1.19	3.50	1.32	7.96	.000
Appropriate display of show and entertainment times and location	2.90	1.07	3.67	1.22	15.46	.000
Number of shops	2.85	1.16	3.83	1.16	19.40	.000
Diversity of merchandise	2.68	1.39	3.70	1.19	18.49	.000
Variety of shopping options (store and outside vendors)	2.58	1.30	3.85	1.09	24.20	.000
Availability of multilingual staff	2.55	1.19	3.84	1.12	25.32	.000
Number of restaurants	2.40	1.16	3.74	1.10	27.10	.000
Number of automatic selling machine	2.36	1.21	3.66	1.17	25.46	.000
Variety of food	2.28	1.23	3.64	1.16	27.03	.000
Availability of activities for all weather conditions	2.19	1.31	3.92	1.11	31.78	.000

*Paired t-test two-tailed with probability < .05.

Although theming is the essence of a theme park, it is often limited by imagination in China. As a Chinese tourism scholar commented, "many theme parks in China are only as good as a backdrop for a photo shoot, which included miniatures of nature from ethnic minorities inside China or a collection of replica of historic landmarks from outside China. There's little interactive function" (Chung, 2010). Thus, park

developers need to procure innovative themes and use them to create competitive advantages over others. A good example is Universal's newly-opened 'Wizarding World of Harry Potter' in Orlando, Florida in June, 2010. Focused on every detail, Universal creates exclusively the atmosphere of another world and brings to life the weird and wonderful stories of Harry Potter. In addition, integrating high technology into theme design can enhance visitors' experience. For instance, to transmit high quality audio signals in seven themed zones and twelve top level entertainment facilities, Happy Valley Amusement Park in Shanghai installed a twin-channel QSC system. Customers were impressed not only by the efficiency and stability of the system, but also the energy-saving capability (Evans, 2010).

The results of the paired t-test showed that the gap between importance and satisfaction was significant for all except four attributes: management for rides and attractions, value of food, degree of educational experience and number of cultural themes. For the top ten and bottom ten attributes, the difference was all statistically significant. It should be noted that among the top ten important attributes (except creativity exhibited in the park), all the satisfaction scores were lower than the importance scores, indicating that theme parks did not meet guests' expectations and management action is required. The largest t-value gap scores were found in "safety of roller coasters" (gap score = -24.05), and "staff's knowledge of theme park" (gap score = -19.58).

While staff's knowledge of the park was perceived to be the most important attribute, it had the second largest gap score when compared to guests' satisfaction. Therefore, theme parks should implement long-term human resource strategies to recruit, train and develop competent employees. Furthermore, ongoing training programs for all levels of employees should be carried out to ensure their knowledge of any innovation of theme parks.

For the average Chinese visitors, admission price is too high. Moreover, the high price resulted in a low rate of repeat visitation. The "once only" phenomenon of theme park visitation in China is evident and needs further investigation (Ap, 2003). Compared with theme parks in western countries that generate more revenue from food, merchandise and games sold at the park and outside the park, theme parks in China rely merely on admission fees. The findings are consistent with Clavé (2007), who indicated that in general, about 80-90% of Chinese theme park revenue was generated from entrance fees. Hence, theme parks should employ a variety of pricing strategies to attract more people to come and visit more frequently. As China's prosperity continues and Chinese people become more affluent, it is important to point out that future Chinese customers would be willing to pay more for a unique and memorable experiences.

In addition, among the bottom ten attributes, all satisfaction scores were higher than the importance score, revealing that theme parks didn't need to take any management measures regarding these attributes. For the remaining attributes, all had positive gap scores except "friendly and courteous staff", "localization of theme", "quality of food and uniqueness of theme design". This is consistent with Ap's (2003)

claim that unique and effective theming is scarce in China's theme park industry. In addition, employees' attitude had a negative impact on visitors' experience. Visitors are not satisfied with bad service attitude of park staff.

CONCLUSIONS

The introduction and development of theme parks enrich tourism products in China. As Chinese visitors become more experienced, their demand for quality experience and ability to judge product quality and value will increase. Theme park owners and operators must dispel the misconception that theme parks will succeed once they are built. Maintaining high quality experience is essential for today's managers. As more international theme parks enter the Chinese domestic market, China's theme park operators will face intense competition. Therefore, identifying key attributes of theme parks is important and can help developers design and plan new products.

This study adapted the theme park attributes identified by Milman (2009) to the Chinese context. The results indicated that there was a great potential of theme park development in China, since all the respondents showed high likelihood to visit theme parks in the next 12 months. In addition, the results provided a valuable description of the important attributes and domestic visitors' satisfaction with these attributes. A gap analysis based on the difference between importance and satisfaction suggested that some attributes require management attention.

Chinese theme parks did not meet or satisfy customers' expectations. This study revealed that Chinese theme park patrons placed higher importance on attributes like staff's knowledge of the park, safety of roller coasters, security of the park, ticket price, etc. However, theme parks' practices regarding these important attributes were disappointing. For most of the top ten important attributes (except creativity exhibited in the park), level of importance exceeded level of satisfaction. In comparison, the ten least important attributes seemed to draw more management attention and be allocated more resources, since satisfaction scores were all higher than those of importance. To be competitive, theme parks in China should reallocate their resources and dedicate more to improving the critical areas.

The study generated several future research questions. First, future studies can explore further how Chinese visitors' experience in theme parks varies among different visitor segments. Since different segments have different needs and seek different experience, a similar study based on different visitor segments may help theme parks identify niche markets and better serve their target markets. Secondly, this study focused on fantasy/amusement theme parks in China. Therefore, the results might not be applied to other types of theme parks and should be interpreted with caution. Theme parks may be also classified according to their geographical location, capacity, or resources used to create the theme (Milman, 1993). Future studies may investigate important attributes of other types of theme parks. In addition, future study can explore whether cross-cultural

difference exists between Asian and visitors from other regions in perceiving theme park attributes and attractions.

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THE GENERATION OF TOURIST FLOWS FROM THE VALORIZATION OF THE
NAVAL HERITAGE: MARITIME CULTURAL TOURISM.

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ABSTRACT

Culture is the biggest source of wealth for Greece as its valorization has established the country as a tourist destination for millions of visitors every year. In the era of sustainable development, tourism has to be ecologically acceptable, economically viable and socially and morally fair for local communities. In this way, tourism becomes part of the natural, cultural and human environment, with respect to the particular characteristics of of the host place. As the tourism industry contributes substantially to the national economy, sustainable tourism development can be achieved through special interest tourism (SIT) based on the rational utilization and protection of the natural and cultural environment. Maritime cultural tourism is a SIT form.

The sea contributed dramatically to the development of the Greek culture. Navigating, trading on the sea and shipbuilding are the triptytch of the heritage of Greece. Greece has an important naval tradition and history and fullfils the conditions for utilizing cultural heritage emanating from naval activities associated with the natural, social and historical environment. The development of naval cultural tourism can be made through different forms such as naval museums, ships museums, ports-museums, museums of the shipbuilding craft, representation of naval events and maritime cultural routes. That way it is possible to create the naval cultural image of the regions of the country, which can be utilized by enterpreneurship in order to attract tourists.

The present study aims aims at analysing the representations of naval cultural tourism as a special interest tourism form and suggesting forms of utilizing the naval national heritage for the generation of tourist fluxes.

KEYWORDS: Maritime cultural tourism, naval museums, ships-museums, ports-museums, museums of shipbuilding craft, re-enactment of naval events, maritime cultural routes
INTRODUCTON

The term 'cultural heritage' is used today by the scientific community in a broad sense, which is being constantly enriched and expanded through time with new categories of objects from the prehistory and the modern era as well. Thus the concept of cultural

heritage includes the whole complex of human creations (buildings, sites, objects, written monuments, audiovisual material), which present a great historical, archeological, scientific, religious or artistic interest, or have a particular significance for scientific research, technological and social progress (Konsola, 1992:41).

Overt the last decades, cultural heritage has proved to be the main axis of the cultural policy of most countries in the world as it is commonly accepted that the elements which form it constitute the foundation of the cultural identity of the population groups. Moreover, its dynamics has a direct impact on shaping the model of the social, cultural and economic development of the countries.

Today the state, through different bodies and agencies, the private sector and the social sector through agencies of collective action, are active in protecting cultural heritage. The action of big international organisations is also important: e.g. UNESCO, Council of Europe, ICOM, ICOMOS,[1] European Union, etc.

In order to protect cultural heritage every state establishes a special legislation[2] while the protection by virtue of international law rules set up by international organizations, mainly by UNESCO, is also important (Naskou-Perraki, 1990). In international conferences whose theme is 'Cultural Heritage'[3] it has been repeatedly pinpointed that the goal is not just the protection but also the participation of the peoples in it. The main aim is to make heritage accessible to the wide audience and to have its value appreciated. That way the mutual comprehension of the cultural values and particularities of the peoples is promoted resulting in the reinforcement of the cultural identity of each community.

For Greece, the biggest source of wealth is its culture. However, water, namely the sea, contributed significantly to the development of culture as it has been "the good fate of the Nation" (Lemos, 1969:15). "Navigating, marine trading and shipbuilding" is the triptych of the national heritage (Lemos, 1969:383). Starting from the mythical ship of the Argo[4], the hollow ships of the Homer's era, the penteconters[5] of the archaic era,

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[1] The International Council of Museums (ICOM) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), are international Non-Governmental Organisation, which collaborate with UNESCO, in its different fields of action.

[2] The state's obligation to protect the natural and cultural heritage in Greece is provided for by the Greek Constitution (Article 24, par. 1 & 6). See Mavrias, K., Pandelis, Ant. (1990). *Greek and Foreign Constitutional Texts*, Athens-Komotini: Ant. Sakkoulas editions. (in Greek)

[3] For example, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) which took place in Krakow, Poland in 1991 or the ICOMOS International Scientific Symposium in 1993. See *International Scientific Committee* (1993), Cultural Tourism.

[4] In Greek mythology, the *Argo* was the ship on which Jason and the Argonauts sailed from Iolcus to retrieve the Golden Fleece. The *Argo* was built by the shipwright Argus, and its crew was specially protected by the goddess Hera. Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argo

5 The pentikontoros were "monokrota" (Greek: "μονόκροτα") ships, which means that they had one row of oars in each side, where there were 25 oars (50 oars overall, this is what "pentikontoros" means in ancient Greek). They were about 38 meters long and 4.5 meters wide. These ships were suitable for war expeditions, for invasions, for piracy and for the transfer of goods and military units. Pentikontoros were used by the Foceans in their distant travels in the central and

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the triremes of Ancient Greece, the merchant ships and the maritime law of the Rhodians, the dromons (warships) of the Byzantine navy (6th to 12th century AD), the olkades[6] of the merchant navy, the galleys[7], the parones[8], the golettas, the trehantiria (small fishing boats), the sahtouria[9] from the period of the Ottoman occupation and the Greek Revolution up to the first steamers, the tramp vessels, the liberties of the overseas shipping, the ship and the sea have always been the 'fate', the beginning and the end of the 'fights' of our nation.

NAVAL CULTURAL TOURISM

Cultural tourism aims at facilitating the access of the public to the monuments of cultural heritage. Its significance has been highlighted during special international conferences[10]. Cultural tourism or cultural heritage tourism is a special interest tourism, which shows nowadays a turn to quality and originality. It refers to the creation and the use of cultural resources for tourism reasons (Cater, 1987; Gould, 1994). By visiting cultural sites and venues (e.g. monuments, museums, art galleries), the visitor has the opportunity to deepen his knowledge of the elements of the peoples' cultural wealth.

Research has shown that a constantly increasing percentage of tourists are attracted to the artistic and cultural sites and events which can be valorised through tourism, such as the monuments, the museums, the festivals. In this way, the need to discover older and more modern cultures is used as an incentive for a lot of tourist areas (Lozato-Giotart, 1996:62). By the term 'cultural tourism', we mean touring whose main aim is to discover the historical, artistic and intellectual heritage but also the modern cultural activities of a place (Mylonopoulos & Tsakiris, 2004:211). Cultural tourism expresses the need to look back to the people's lifestyle in the present as well as in the past (Kennedy, 2002). It is a perception created by the synthesis of different feelings, such as nostalgia, romanticism, aesthetic pleasure and the sense of origin in space and time (Ashworth & Goodall, 1990). Moreover, cultural tourism is based on nostalgia about

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west Mediterranean, according to Herodotus. By using these ships, Achilles and Philoctetes transported their troops from Magnisia of Thessaly to Ilion (Troy). Since the 7th century BC, the pentikontoros had only been used for war purposes. Their role was very important because of their ability to sail in opposite sea streams and to confront hostile ships along dangerous shores and passages. They were regarded as war ships par excellence before the appearance of the trireme, according to Thucydides. Source: http://library.thinkquest.org/06aug/00368/ pentikontoros.html

[6] The "hull" (olkas) was the common name for freighters, built for bulk cargo.

[7] In the 14th and 15th centuries merchant galleys traded high-value goods and carried passengers. Although primarily sailing vessels, they used oars to enter and leave many trading ports of call. The availability of oars enabled these ships to navigate close to the shore where they could exploit land and sea breezes and coastal currents, to work reliable and comparatively fast passages against the prevailing wind. The large crews also provided protection against piracy. Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galley

[8] The *paro* (plural *parones*) is a vessel suited for pirates, and is so named from them. Source: *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, edited and translated by Barney S.A. et al., Cambridge University Press, 2006.

[9] The 'sahtouria' were named after the name of Georgios Sahtouris (1783-1841), from the island of Hydra, Vice-Admiral during the Greek Revolution. Spetses was the first island on which the Greek Revolution was declared on 3 April 1821.

[10] In Lyons in 1991, in Barcelona, in Malta, at Trier (Konsola, 1992: 243).

the past and the desire to acquire experiences from different cultural landscapes (Zeppel & Hall, 1992).

This new form of tourism is undoubtedly the most effective means in order to comprehend and promote the cultural identity of a country or of an area, which contributes at the same time to the economic and social development of the less developed regions. In addition to this, this form of tourism has reinforced the coexistence of culture and tourism (Ashworth, 1995:265-284) and does not exert excessive pressure to the natural, social, human and built environment, which often causes its deterioration, as the usual forms of mass tourism do.

 Exchanging ideas through various cultural goods such as books, magazines, works of art, works of music, films, theatre performances, museums, tourist sights and other creations of culture contributes to the approaching of the peoples and the creation of human communication channels. In fact, it was the sea which brought the peoples of the East and the West into contact (UNESCO, 2000). The result of this communication was the exchange not only of commercial goods (mercantile communication) but also the exchange of ideas and customs (cultural communication), from which great cultures emerged (Mylonopoulos, 2003:120). In the past, the people of the sea found a solution to the problem of linguistic communication, the equivalent of the lingua franca of the Mediterranean Sea. Thus the language of the seamen of the West ended up being, from one nation to another and from one language to another, an ensemble to which everyone contributed. In France, Antoine de Conflans, a royal navy captain, wrote in 1520:"it seems that in the Mediterranean Sea the language is mingled and that the Normans and the Provincians can communicate" (Mollat Du Jourdan, 1998:110).

The rational valorization of knowledge emanating from shipping and naval tradition, the registration, the classification, the promotion, the guarantee of the continuity of shipbuilding practices and techniques, is an important step towards saving and valorizing this tradition. Many different ways of safeguarding and promoting the naval heritage have been developed while this tradition is converted at the same time to a significant tourism attraction. Saving, safeguarding, restoring, promoting, etc. is achieved through the following schemes: a) naval museums, b) ships-museums, c) ports-museums, d) shipbuilding craft museums, e) enactment of naval events, f) maritime cultural routes (Mylonopoulos & Moira, 2005:84-89).
a) The main objective of the naval museums is to search, collect, gather, conserve, safeguard, study, display and promote whatever historical heirloom is related to the performance of the inhabitants of a country in sea works, from ancient time up to the present, the study and documentation of the naval history, the safeguarding and promotion of the naval tradition and heritage through the valorization of every form of art in order to nurture the nation's love and especially that of the young people for the sea. Thus through a multifaceted activity, the Hellenic Navy is rendered a live cell of creation, entertainment, education and intellectual culture, contributing to the fulfillment of the individual.
b) The ships-museums: The focus of interest is on ships which have played an important role in a time in history or which were built with the traditional methods so that

they became the live monuments of the shipbuilding tradition and technique. The historical ship often constitutes an independent museum venue, maintains all its equipment and instruments and can be visited by the public. At other times, when its condition does not allow it to be visited, it is the focus of the naval museum, accompanied by exhibits which represent the way it was built, the life of its seamen and the journeys it made.

c) Ports-museums: It started as a European institution for the conservation of remarkable samples of the art of local shipbuilding which must be saved as irreplaceable documents of the modern cultural heritage. In this framework, the vessels, apart from their restoration to their original shape, the conservation and the protection, are berthed at ports- museums, which are specially designed and organized venues where they are displayed to the public. Actually the port museum is an open venue of naval culture where visitors can see objects and activities of the naval tradition, traditional vessels being the attractions, while at the same time visitors can participate in educational naval activities, such as wood shipbuilding workshops, fishing by using traditional ways, etc. (Moira, 2003).

d) Museums of shipbuilding craft: They are installations of every kind, such as shipyards, dockyards, shipbuilders' workshops, etc. where traditional practices of the shipbuilding craft, tools along with documents, contracts, photographs and objects related with the national shipbuilding tradition are displayed to the public. Moreover, educational programmes, workshops, conferences and other types of events take place in order to familiarize the public with the national cultural heritage.

e) Re-enactment of naval events: The organisation of representations of historic naval events or battles, in the framework of maritime festivals and/or races is an important attraction for tourists. In 1986, during the event 'Operation Sail', which was organized for the celebration of the Statue of Liberty centennial, sailing vessels from 23 countries were gathered in New York Harbour (Neill, 1991). Another example is that of 'Tall Ships' Races', an annual international sailing race in which traditional sailing vessels from al over the world participate.[11] During the race, the vessels berth at different ports according to a schedule. The ships can be visited at these ports and become the focus of maritime activities, where participants are initiated to the maritime life of the past.

f) Maritime cultural routes: In an effort to develop communication and cultural cooperation among its Member States, the European Union promotes cultural tourism programmes, while the Council of Europe promotes 'cultural routes' programmes[12]. These routes are 'paths' which allow tourists to discover the history and the culture of a

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[11] The first Tall Ships' race was held in 1956. It was a race of 20 of the world's remaining large sailing ships organized by Bernard Morgan, a London lawyer. The race was from Torquay, Devon to Lisbon, and was meant to be a last farewell to the era of the great sailing ships. For the year 2008, the race route is: Liverpool (UK)-Måløy (Norway)-Bergen (Norway)-Den Helder (Netherlands). Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ The_Tall_Ships'_Races (accessed on 20 April 2008)

[12] Council of Europe, European Institute of Cultural Routes, *Cultural routes and landscapes, A common heritage of Europe,* Available at <http://www.culture-routes.lu/php/fo_index.php?lng=en& PHPSESSID=1084e3b293> (accessed on 20 April 2008)

town or a historic site. They include organised visits to monuments, museums which belong to a specific theme and they are accompanied by exhibitions, conferences, festivals and other activities related to the selected programme.

Through these promotion schemes of the naval heritage, visitors have the possibility to get to know cultural sites associated with shipping, can visit naval museums and experience the cultural unity emerging from these trips. Through these institutions the naval history of each country is presented and the communication of the people with their naval tradition and heritage is conserved and maintained. Thus a cultural tourist flux is generated towards the local communities, which acquires particular social and economic dimensions when these communities do not possess other cultural assets (Moira, 2003:97).

THE NAVAL TRADITION AND THE GREEK REALITY

After a thorough survey, it was concluded that the safeguarding and promotion of the naval heritage in Greece is channelled through the following schemes:

a) Naval Museums
In order to investigate the modes and the methods of valorization and promotion of the Greek naval cultural heritage, a desktop survey was conducted. We sought to identify the maritime museums in operation throughout Greece. The initial stage of the survey took place over the Internet search engines by inserting key words in Greek such as 'naval museum' and maritime museum'. Just four maritime museums were found despite the fact that there are more. The search result was due to the fact that the majority of these museums do not have a website. Then the 52 Prefectures of Greece were contacted and information was asked whether there are maritime museums operating in their area. In addition to this, information was sought in the websites of the local government authorities. This survey revealed that there are currently 21 naval/maritime museums operating throughout Greece (Table 1).

In Greece there are too few of them in comparison with the huge Greek tradition and heritage. They have been established and operating under different legal forms (legal entities governed by private law, associations, municipal enterprises etc.). For instance, the Naval Museum of Greece in Piraeus is the first naval museum established in Greece in 1955.

b) Ships-Museums
In Greece the following vessels operate as museums: the battleship 'G. Averof', the destroyer (torpedo-ship) 'Velos' and the cable-laying ship 'Thales of Miletus', while there are still three ships-replicas of old ones: the triereme 'Olympias', 'Argo' and 'Minos'. Furthermore, two important ships are in good condition and can make journeys: 'Evangelistria' and 'HS Eugenios Eugenidis'.
♦ The battleship *Georgios Averof* was built in 1905 in Livorno, Italy by the company of the Orlando brothers. Its length is 140 metres, its breadth is 21 metres and its displacement is 10,200 tons. In 1984 the Navy decided to restore it as a museum. Today

the ship is anchored at Paleo Faliro, Athens and operates as an independent museum venue. "The *G. Averof* battleship museum honours those who served and died during its time of active service. It also keeps alive a sense of the Greek Navy's heritage. The battleship serves its educational purposes by hosting day visits from schools, institutions, organizations and private individuals."[13]

♦ The destroyer *Velos II* (D16 type Fletcher) was built in the USA in 1942. It took part in the military operations in the Pacific Ocean during World War II. She was accepted by Cdr G. Moralis HN on July 15th 1959 in Long Beach, USA. In May 1973 under the command of Cdr N. Pappas HN she took refuge in Italy's Fiumicino as an act of protest against the military dictatorship in Greece and within the actions of the Navy's coup against the colonels. The CO. six officers and twenty five petty officers requested and remained abroad as political refugees. 'Velos II' returned to Greece under another CO. Decommissioned on February 26th 1991, she was anchored in the Park of Maritime Tradition in Phaliron coast and has been converted into a maritime museum[14].

♦ The ship-museum *Thales of Miletus* is a specially designed cable-laying ship, built in 1909 in Newport News shipyards in Virginia, USA. It has a capacity of 475.69 tons, length of 51.26 metres and breadth of 10.34 metres. Today she is considered to be the oldest cable boat in the world (Naftiki Ellas, 1992). She operates with her original steam engines and she is the oldest ship registered in the Greek ship registers.

♦ The ship *Evangelistria* was built on Syros island in 1940 at Mavrikos' shipyard and had been sailing until 1978, when she was laid up. She was donated by her owner to the Aegean Maritime Museum of Mykonos[15]. The work of restoration to her original form was completed in 1989. Cargo capacity 90 tons, length 20.15 m breadth 6.40 m. sails of a total surface of 220 m^2. It belongs to the 'perama' type of sailships, which means that the stern and the bow have the same shape. The vessel represents a shipbuilding tradition of 3,000 years from the ancient times to the present.

♦ The sailing ship *HS Eugenios Eugenidis* is a three-masted schooner built in 1929 at William Denny & Brothers shipyard in Scotland after an order placed by Sir Walter Runcinman Bart. She made pleasure cruises in the Mediterranean Sea followed by clandestine missions to rescue resistance fighters in the Second World War. After the war she was taken to the North Sea, where under Swedish ownership, she acted as a training vessel. In 1965 she was bought by the Ministry of Mercantile Marine and was used for the trying of merchant marine cadets in Hydra[16]. She also participated in the two first races of the Tall Ships' Race. One third of the money for her purchase came from the legacy of the will of the patron and businessman Eugenios Eugenidis (1882-1954) and for this reason she was named after him. On 29 November 1995, the Ministry of Culture accepted the donation of the training sailing ship 'Eugenios Eugenidis' made by the

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[13] Source: http://www.bsaverof.com/uk/history.htm (accessed on 20 April 2008)
[14] Source: Hellenic Navy, Available at http://www.hellenicnavy.gr/velos59_91_en.asp (accessed on 20 April 2008)
[15] It was founded in 1983 and in 1985 it opened its doors to the public. The goal of the museum is the preservation, promotion and study of the Greek maritime history and tradition, and in particular the evolution and activities of the merchant ship, chiefly in the historic region of the Aegean Sea. Source: http://www.culture.gr/h/1/eh151.jsp?obj_id=3486 (accessed on 20 April 2008)
[16] Source: http://www.hellenicnavy.gr/evgenidhs_en.asp (accessed on 20 April 2008)

Minister of Merchant Marine. On the same day, the Ministry of Culture ceded the use of the training sailing ship to the Maritime Museum of Greece.

♦ The ship *Minos* is a replica-reconstruction of a realistic documented version of a prehistoric transport ship propelled by oars (15th century BC), which belongs to the typology of the 'island shipbuilding school'. The building was carried out in the framework of a research programme on Experimental Naval Archaeology by the Naval Museum of Crete and *Naudomos* Institute of Research in Ancient Shipbuilding and Technology and was completed in 2003. The ship made an experimental sailing from Piraeus to Chania calling at Aegina, Methana, Hydra, Spetses, the Peloponnesus coasts, and Kythira from 29 May to 4 June 2004.The ship participated in cultural events carrying the Olympic flame during the Athens Olympic Games 2004, along with other two ships-replicas, the trirme *Olympias* and the ship *Keryneia*[17].

♦ The trireme *Olympias* is the second known ship-replica. It was the result of the cooperation between the Aegean Maritime Museum, the Hellenic Navy, the Trirene Trust (UK), the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and dozens of Greeks and Philhellenes which joined their efforts for the successful completion of this project. *Olympias* was transported to Britain in 1993, to take part in events celebrating the 2,500 years since the beginning of democracy. She is now an exhibit in a dry dock in Faliron, Athens, Greece. The ship symbol of the naval power of the Athenian democracy was the best ambassador of the Greek naval tradition and heritage, when she sailed in the River Thames with 170 rowmen on board, crossed the London Bridge up to the British House of Commons, reminding the British people of the ancient Greek Democracy. She is now an exhibit in a dry dock in Faliron, Athens, Greece

♦ *Argo*: The building of *Argo*, a prehistoric rowboat of the 15th century B.C. was completed by the Municipality of Volos and the Municipal Tourism Enterprise of Volos, in cooperation with *Naudomos* Institute of Research in Ancient Shipbuilding and Technology. It is the first known penteconter measuring 28.5 metres length, 4 metres breadth and 2 metres height of hull. Argo is a version of a row-driven ship which belongs to the typology of the 'shipbuilding school from Epirus', that is the same typology as Homer's 'long boats'. The shipbuilding took place at the old shipyard of Pefkakia, where the old port of Pagasses used to be. It was built from wood from Mount Pelion and with Bronze Age tools to the specifications of a Mycenaean-era vessel. Argo is an exhibit at a dockyard at Pedion Areos park in Volos.

c) Museums of the craft of shipbuilding: In Greece there is currently only one shipbuilding museum which was created in the Municipality of Perama, close to the port of Piraeus. Its goal is to inform and acquaint visitors with the shipbuilding tradition

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[17] *Kyrenia II* is a replica of a wreck of a merchant ship of the early 4th century B.C. and is the oldest Greek vessel ever discovered.[17] It is the only preserved ship from Greece's Classical Age. The ship was considered to be very well preserved with approximately 75% of it in good condition. It found a new home at the Ancient Shipwreck Museum in Kyrenia Castle. In the replica ship every detail of the hull and its components was copied, the original contemporary technology was applied and the original contemporary construction methods, materials and tools were used (Tzalas, 1997:39). After the shipbuilding was completed, the ship travelled to the Aegean Sea, to New York, to Nara in Japan in 1988 (the emperor's old capital city of Japan), to Germany and to Portugal (Lisbon) in 1986.

(Damianides, 1997:46). The museum has three main halls where three traditional vessels are on display as well as six secondary thematic units of the exhibition with regard to the history of the shipbuilding craft and the process of construction of the hull. The business plan of the Municipality of Perama includes the valorization of the cultural and historical tradition through the creation of a Refuge for Traditional and Historic Vessels, a Museum of Shipbuilding Craft and a Centre of re-enactment and interpretation of the naval Battle of Salamis (480 BC)[18].

d) Re-enactment of naval events: In Greece various cultural activities re-enacting naval events take place throughout the year, such as the celebration of Virgin Mary the 'Armata' on the island of Spetses (Moira, 2006). The *Armata* is the re-enactment of the sea battle in Spetses on 8 September 1822 which ends by setting fire to a model of the Turkish flag-ship[19]. It is an authentic popular festivity with a religious and national content accompanied by special cultural activities, such as cannonades, exhibitions of paintings, plays, concerts, etc.

e) Maritime cultural routes: *Ulysses' voyage* (GNTO, 1996) is a typical example of an organized maritime cultural itinerary with stopovers where the mythical Ulysses wandered during his voyage. For the implementation of this itinerary, local public authorities and local private bodies (e.g. travel agencies, shipping companies, etc.) cooperated. The Center for Greek and European Studies and Education for Tourism of the University of Piraeus, in collaboration with the Greek National Tourism Organisation, has taken the initiative of promoting *Ulysses' Voyage* - nationally and internationally - as a 'Cultural Route'. Four countries, Greece, Italy, Malta, Tunisia, four universities and four National Tourism Administrations[20] have decided to bring *Ulysses' Voyage* to life, to present it to the public, giving today's travellers the opportunity to follow the hero's trail in these four lands.[21] A similar programme is entitled "Maritime merchant routes of Venice and fortifications: the case of the Ionian islands", which was proposed by Greece in the framework of the programme "Paneuropean Cultural Corridors: Routes in the trail

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[18] It is a battle in the Greco-Persian Wars in which a Greek fleet defeated much larger Persian naval forces in the straits at Salamis, between the island of Salamis and the Athenian port-city of Piraeus. By 480 the Persian king Xerxes and his army had overrun much of Greece, and his navy of about 800 galleys bottled up the smaller Greek fleet of about 370 triremes in the Saronic Gulf. Source: http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9065030/Battle-of-Salamis (accessed on 25 April 2008)

[19] Based on the need to create and accomplish cultural, educational and financial targets and with the initiative of the town of Spetses (Greece) the cities, towns and regions: Bailen (Spain), Cork (Ireland), Dublin (Ireland), Tewkesbury (U.K.), Hydra (Greece), Slavkov (Czech Republic), Spetses (Greece), created a Network of European cities and towns which program and organize enactments of historic events with the title: "European Historical Re-enactment Network". The goals of the Network correspond to those set by the European Union. The initiatives which will be undertaken by the Network should contribute to the conservation and the promotion of the European historical heritage Source: http://www.livestories.org/Re-enactment-Network/About-the-network (accessed on 25 April 2008).

[20] From Greece Professor Phanis Kakridis, President of the Centre of Odyssean Studies; from Italy Professor Marcello Gigante, Head of the Department of Classics at the University of Naples; from Tunisia Professor Mhamed Fantar, Head of the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History at the University Institute of National Heritage; from Malta Professor Anthony Bonanno, Head of the Department of Classical Studies and Archaeology at the University of Malta.

[21] Source: http://www.gogreece.com/learn/ulysses.htm (accessed on 25 April 2008).

of ancient merchant routes" in an effort to develop the cultural cooperation between the European countries which have cultural bonds.

THE VALORIZATION OF THE NAVAL CULTURAL HERITAGE - SUGGESTIONS

Greece, a naval country par excellence, with an important naval tradition and history has the potential to valorise and promote the cultural heritage deriving from maritime activities connected with the natural, social and historical environment. The cultural identity of the naval sites of Greece is linked with their long history. The conservation of this identity should be the object of a coordinated policy by the State, based on the interdisciplinary studies and research of different scientists, e.g. historians, sociologists, archeologists, economists, architects, shipbuilding engineers, regional science experts, museologists, jurists, military officers, captains, ship owners and other experts on the naval craft and the shipping science (Mylonopoulos, Parthenis & Nikolaou, 2008:56). Using the international experience from international organizations, such as ICOM, UNESCO, etc., will contribute significantly to this aim.

It is necessary to record those areas which have a naval tradition using geographical, historical and sociological criteria in order to create the "Naval Cultural Image" of the Greek regions. Then the framework for the cultural and tourist valorisation can be established. The naval cultural image can be promoted through already established schemes, which have a static character (Naval Museums, Ships-Museums, Ships-Re-enactments, Ships of Traditional Shipbuilding Craft, Ports-Museums, Museums-Shipyards-Port installations, etc.). It can also be promoted through the new form of cultural communication, the Maritime Cultural Routes. These maritime routes will constitute the 'paths' which will allow the exploration and discovery of sites with a naval tradition and history.

It is also possible to combine destinations with a different cultural identity. The Mediterranean Sea is suited for the establishment of such maritime cultural routes.
The arrangement of a programme of maritime cultural routes can be based on two general criteria: the historical and the geographical.
According to the first criterion, a route can cover:
⮰ the naval history and culture of a specific time period (e.g. the Athenian Golden Age)
⮰ the course of a historic ship (e.g. the journey of Argo)
⮰ the monuments and the areas connected with the life and action of famous persons from the naval field (e.g. that of Miaoulis, Kanaris, etc.)
⮰ a specific area which had en important naval/maritime activity during a specific time period (e.g Hydra, Spetses, Crete, Syros, Kalymnos, etc.)
According to the second criterion, the cultural route can be:
⮰ Regional, which will cover monuments of our naval tradition at a regional level (e.g. Cycladic civilization, etc.)
⮰ National, which will include venues throughout the country (e.g. naval museums, merchant stations, ports, warehouses, fortification works, etc.)

⮕ Interstate, including touring the sites, monuments, museums with regard to maritime 'labours' by Greeks which took place on the territory of different countries, as the Ulysses' trail.
⮕ Mediterranean, including visits to sites, museums, monuments, ports of different Mediterranean countries.

After a special study has been conducted, the journeys can be carried out by ships of traditional shipbuilding craft (originals or replicas). Furthermore, these ships can visit ports-museums and berth at museums of shipbuilding craft.

CONCLUSIONS

In the era of sustainable development, tourism has to be ecologically acceptable, economically viable and socially and morally fair to the local communities. In this way, tourism becomes part of the natural, cultural and human environment, with respect to the particular characteristics of the host place. As the tourism sector contributes dramatically to the national economy, the sustainable tourism development can be achieved through alternative tourism, such as the maritime cultural tourism, which is based on the rational valorization and protection of the natural and cultural environment.

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THE NGOs' CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT. THE CASE OF GREECE

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ABSTRACT

The States develop various policies aiming at tourism sustainable development. These policies approach tourism development as ecologically acceptable, economically viable and socially and morally fair for the host communities. In this way tourism becomes a part of the natural, cultural and human environment with respect to the particular features of the host destinations. As the tourism sector contributes dramatically to the national economy, sustainable tourism development can be achieved through alternative tourism which is based on the rational valorization and protection of the natural and cultural environment.

The concept of sustainable development goes back to a series of international conferences. In the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism in Lanzarote in 1995 were laid the principles of sustainable tourism development. According to the Charter for Sustainable Tourism, the undertaking of actions by NGOs' is judged as the basic condition for ensuring the attainment of these goals and indispensable to the integrated planning of tourism development.

The NGOs' contribution to sustainable tourism development ranges from supplying aid to tourism industry bodies so that they can develop tourism management plans to the formulation of guidelines with regard to the visitibility of the destinations, tool development, identification of resources and supply of education, etc. so that the impact of tourism on host communities can be measured. The more special role assumed by each NGO depends on the conditions under which it operates, its mission, its objectives and the tourism environment in which it functions.

This paper seeks to assess and highlight the NGOs' contribution to sustainable tourism development in Greece as this is dictated by the necessity for the protection of the environment and social progress and more generally by the moral obligation to comply with the Manila Declaration on World Tourism (1980) and the Global Code of Ethics on Tourism (2001).

INTRODUCTION

In the early 21st century the existence of a clean and healthy environment is an integral part of quality of life and well-being. The rational use of the natural resources and the protection of the ecosystem coupled with economic prosperity and balanced social development are the main condition for ensuring sustainable development, which is something more than just a clean environment since it takes into consideration both the social and economic effects of environmental action. According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), sustainable development is a change process which lays particular emphasis on the conservation of the available resources in each area with respect to the needs of future generations.

The States all over the world develop various policies aimed at tourism sustainable development (Lane, 1993; Weiler and Hall, 1992). These policies perceive tourism development as ecologically acceptable, economically viable and both socially and morally fair to the local communities (EC, 2001; EC, 2002: 1). In this way, tourism becomes a part of the natural, cultural and human environment with respect to the particular features of the host destinations (EC, 2007:21). Sustainable development can be achieved through harmonizing the environment with tourism activities (Eccles and Costa, 1998: 5). As the tourism sector contributes dramatically to the national economy, sustainable tourism development can be attained through alternative or special forms of tourism, based on the rational valorization and protection of the natural and cultural environment (UNEP, 2001).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Tourism is a rapidly developing phenomenon of modern societies and one of the biggest industries in the world (Walker, 2006). It offers investment opportunities, is a job generator, increases the demand for local products and services and promotes local and regional development. The economic impacts of tourism are as much significant as its social and environmental effects. The increasing complaints from tourist destinations about the far-reaching impacts of tourism on their cultural and natural capital have led to the demand for sustainable development in the field of tourism.

The concept of sustainable development goes back to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment[22] held in Stockholm in 1972, the Manila Declaration on World Tourism (WTO, 1980), the Report of the Brundtland Commission *Our Common Future* (WCED, 1987) and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Rio Summit (UN/Agenda 21, 1992).

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[22] It was the UN's first major conference on international environmental issues, and marked a turning point in the development of international environmental politics. Retrieved on 17 February 2010 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Conference_on_the_Human_Environment#cite_note-Baylis3-0

Agenda 21 suggests the reconciliation of <u>environmental</u>, <u>social</u> and <u>economic</u> demands - the 'three pillars' of sustainability. It also refers specifically to the necessity for developing environmentally compatible leisure and tourism activities (UN/Agenda 21, 1992: 326) while chapter 27 (section III) refers to the strengthening of the role of non-governmental organisations as partners for sustainable development:

"A non-governmental organisation (often referred to as an NGO) is defined by the United Nations as any formal association that is neither a government nor hopes to replace a government or its officials, is funded from voluntary contributions and is not involved in for-profit activity, and does not engage in or advocate violence. The NGOs must support the goals of the United Nations or other governmental agency that recognizes them. A number of such organizations, due to their scope, have direct involvement in tourism" (Lew, 2000: 414-415).

Furthermore, it is underlined that NGOs possess well-established and diverse experience, expertise and capacity in fields which will be of particular importance to the implementation and review of environmentally sound and socially responsible sustainable development. In addition to this, it is stated that the United Nations system and Governments should launch a process to review formal procedures and mechanisms for the involvement of these organizations at all levels from policy-making and decision-making to implementation of sustainable development policies (UN/Agenda 21, 1992: 282).

During the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism in 1995 were laid the principles of sustainable tourism development. The main core of these principles focuses on the environmentally-friendly tourism development which is economically viable and socially fair for host communities, the assumption of a joint and coordinated course of action by all the bodies of the public and the private sector and the expansion of opportunities for host communities through the development of tourism activities. More specifically, Article 9 of the Charter on Sustainable Tourism stipulates that "Governments and the competent authorities, with the participation of NGOs and local communities, shall undertake actions aimed at integrating the planning of tourism as a contribution to sustainable development".

The NGOs' contribution to sustainable tourism development can take the form of lobbying (UNCSD NGO, 1999:4-5) or aid supply to the tourism industry bodies so that they can develop tourism management plans which will take into account a series of factors, e.g. the location, the land use zones. NGOs can also contribute towards the formulation of guidelines concerning the visitibility of the destinations, tool development and supply of training to tour operators and local agencies so that the impacts of tourism on host communities can be measured. These actions are aimed at sustainability, that is meeting the economic needs while maintaining and strengthening the sense of place which is indispensable so that the protection of the environment (natural and cultural) can be ensured in the long term. The NGOs' role is also important with regard to the management, reinforcement and promotion of collaboration plans and the prosperity of the host destinations. The NGOs' goal is to support and reinforce the local and indigenous communities through the creation of jobs, education and training programmes

and health care supply. However, their most significant contribution is raising questions and making the developed world more aware of the situation of the developing countries (Burns, 1999).

In the perspective of sustainable tourism development, NGOs have to participate in the elaboration of a business plan. Through their participation in this procedure they can assist tourism businesses to identify the social and environmental benefits from the development of their business activity. The NGOs' participation is considered to be an important factor which influences the competitiveness of a sustainable tourism business as it can assure the wide trust of the public in relation with the rational use of the environmental resources (Hassan, 2000: 239-245). As the NGOs are regarded as 'neutral players', they can play a particular role among competing interests (Droom and Moore, 2005: 49-50). The more specific role adopted by each NGO depends on the conditions under which it operates, its mission, its objectives and the tourism context in which it operates. In many cases they act as educators and suppliers of technical knowledge and expertise.

Since the prosperity of the local communities does not only refer to the economic development of an area but also to the building of a healthy society which retains its population, is alive and open to changes without losing its identity, NGOs contribute to this procedure through tourism development and the protection of human rights, environment and health.

THE ROLE OF NGOs IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Tourism activities would be impossible to be developed without the appropriate environment, natural and human. As the environment is a main resource, preserving its quality is a necessary condition in order to attract tourists and meet tourist needs. Nevertheless, the existence of tourists and the satisfaction of their increased needs are a threat to this environment. The concept of sustainable development is called upon to cover various forms of economic activity, through a new approach which takes into account the environmental, cultural and social parameters in addition to the economic ones.

The principles of Agenda 21, incorporated into the Commission Green Paper on Tourism (CEC, 1995), underline the necessity for a positive relation between society and ecology, under the rationale that there is a direct relationship of tourist destinations and economy in general with the protection and sound management of the resources of each site.

As the protection of the environment is a component of alternative or sustainable tourism, many NGOs[23] are engaged in this field. The states all over the world develop alternative tourism policies, often referred to as 'responsible' or 'mild', in order to get away from the mass model, thus avoiding the negative impacts and creating positive social, cultural and environmental impacts on host destinations. Furthermore, in the framework of the special relationship existing between ecology and tourism, ecotourism has become the field of specialization for many NGOs. It is a field where ecological, cultural and socioeconomic characteristics are combined (Farrel and Runyan, 1991: 26-40). According to the Greek National Tourism Organisation, ecotourism is the tourist activity in the nature, which does not exceed the carrying capacity of the area in which it is carried out, while it promotes at the same time the protection of the natural and cultural environment and the conservation of the social tissue (GNTO and MD: 2000: 12).

A significant number of NGOs are engaged in the field of the protection of the environment. In this case, NGOs act as vehicles which bring into contact all the elements of ecotourism (Droom and Moore, 2005: 26) as they can assume different roles when implementing ecotourism. So NGOs:

(a) can act as intermediaries between the stakeholders in the ecotourism network, e.g. communities, tourism, industry, agencies of protected areas. Their role is particularly valuable as NGOs are often considered to be neutral players among competing interests which is difficult to reconcile;

(b) can expand their scope and achieve more significant environmental benefits when they collaborate with or offer services to a community ecotourism business or a private ecotourism company;

(c) can often act either as tourists' educators so that the latter can change their consumption patterns and adopt an appropriate, environmentally and socially acceptable conduct in the destinations or as sources of supply of relevant technical knowledge and experience (UNCSD NGO, 1999: 8), especially when those involved in ecotourism may not have access to data or may not have the time to collect it and process it. The information may be provided in the form of reports or studies published by NGOs or through special hands-on training programs addressed to those engaged in ecotourism;

(d) can promote research on the impacts of tourism, the adoption of sustainable tourism criteria and the possibilities for their implementation;

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[23] In 1992 "Beyond the green horizon: principles for sustainable tourism: a discussion paper commissioned from Tourism Concern by WWF UK" was published. WWF has also published *WWF's Code of Conduct for Mediterranean Tourists*.

(e) can monitor tourism development in different areas, tourism industry actions as well as the residents' reaction to tourism development;

(f) can collaborate with the operators of the protected areas for the implementation of an ecotourism program, e.g. training or the operation of an information center. NGOs are usually funded by external bodies and implement their action plan after a joint approval. In some cases, NGOs fully undertake the implementation of an ecotourism program.

(g) can manage their own protected areas or they are asked to undertake the management of protected areas which are under the state supervision. In these cases, NGOs are responsible for elaborating on and implementing the management program for the area. NGOs sometimes manage the protected area in collaboration with a state body;

(h) can offer ecotourism services, in exceptional cases, such as the organization and promotion of packaged excursions, transport and board. Even though this seems to be a normal activity within the NGOs' action, it often disorientates NGOs from their primary goals. Moreover, this can lead to the loss of opportunities for community businesses or the private tourism sector.

Nevertheless, regardless of the particular action field, NGOs play an important role in the promotion of ecotourism practices through the positive interaction with the local communities, the private sector and the tourism industry.

NGOs AND THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK IN GREECE

In Greece there has been no survey so far as for the NGOs and their involvement in the tourism sector. In Greece NGOs which are engaged directly or indirectly in the field of tourism are mainly environmental. Thus a primary survey was conducted in order to record these NGOs and investigate their action in the domain of tourism in Greece. The goal was to identify all the NGOs, record the institutional framework under which they operate and explore their likely involvement in the tourism sector. The survey was first carried out through search engines, by means of key words in Greek such as 'NGOs' and 'environment', so that the Greek NGOs can be traced. Then further details about these NGOs were sought both through the NGOs' websites, when this applied and through telephone contacts with the persons in charge. The survey showed that there were altogether nineteen environmental NGOs, while only seven of them were engaged in the field of tourism. More specifically, these are:

- Arcturos: it was founded in 1993 as an NGO for the Protection of Wildlife and Natural Environment "in order to put an end in the phenomenon of the 'dancing bear'

which was at the time a common sight around Greece".[24] In 1998 the Arcturos' Environmental Center was established in Aetos Florina, which originally was founded to provide shelter and care for bears and wolves that were found in a situation of illegal captivity. The Environmental Center collaborates with the local community in order to promote sustainable development in the wider area. The result of this partnership was the establishment of the Ecotourism Company of Vitsi in 2001, which is an example for the cooperation between the businesses that deal with tourists and visitors aimed at the development of alternative forms of tourism in the region of Vitsi. Its members are local businessmen (hoteliers, guest house owners, restaurant owners and café and bar owners), local government bodies, profit and not-for-profit companies and various important local bodies. This company was the outcome of the need for coordination of all those involved in tourism in the region so that the necessary conditions were created to ensure the best possible presentation and organization of the promotion of the region and the satisfaction of the needs of visitors and travelers. The Company organizes every August the Ecotourism Celebration which includes ecotourism itineraries and cultural events.

- MEDITERRANEAN SOS Network: it is a non-profitable, non-governmental organization, active since 1990, aimed at the protection of the Mediterranean Sea from pollution and the economic and tourist model of development (Article 2 of its Statute). It has no direct involvement in the field of tourism, but indirect trough the promotion of ecological practices for saving water and energy and for climate change, coast cleaning and interventions for the conservation and management of ecologically sensitive areas and generally for supporting sustainability.

- MOm/ The Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the Monk Seal: in 1988, a team of young biology graduates from the University of Athens decided to study the barely known Mediterranean Monk Seal. The first important outcome was the foundation of Mom. MOm acts locally and nationally, it conducts research, information, and training actions, creates alliances, and promotes the protection of the species and the Greek seas in national and international political agenda.[25] It is a member of the Operator of the National Marine Park of Alonnissos and Northern Sporades[26].

- MEDASSET: The Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles is an international NGO founded in 1988, working for the conservation of sea turtles and their habitats throughout the Mediterranean. It has been involved in conservation and scientific research programs, public awareness, environmental education and

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[24] Retrieved from: http://www.arcturos.gr/en/arcturos.asp on 22 February 2009.
[25] Retrieved from: http://www.mom.gr/displayITM1.asp?ITMID=40 on 22 February 2010
[26] The importance of this area's ecosystem in a biological and cultural view moved the Greek government to declare it protected in May 1992, by founding the National Marine Park, the first one in Greece and one of the biggest and most important in a European level. Retrieved from http://www.mom.gr/displayITM1.asp?ITMID=141 on 22 February 2010.

lobbying decision-makers. MEDASSET develops awareness raising campaigns to reach particular target groups such as fishermen and tourists. Furthermore, a short animated training DVD for UK tour representatives and another for tourists in the Mediterranean has been produced by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS UK) with MEDASSET's cooperation. The DVD is distributed at Mediterranean holiday destinations through dedicated workshops to teach tour reps about sea turtle-friendly actions they and their customers can take to mitigate tourism impacts on turtles and nesting beaches in the Mediterranean.[27]

- The Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature (HSPN): this non-profit society, founded in 1951, is the country's oldest nationwide environmental organization. It deals with nature protection activities and programs, formal complaints for environmental issues, public information and awareness campaigns, as well as environmental education, with five environmental education programs that are endorsed by the Greek Ministry of Public Education. HSPN represents in Greece the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and the Centre Naturopa of the Council of Europe. It is also a member of important international conservation organisations, e.g. IUCN, EEB, ECNC, EUCC and works with the Greek environmental organisations and public authorities.[28] The international "Blue Flag" Programme[29] has been managed in Greece since 1992 by HSPN, which is the National Operator.

- The Greek branch of WWF: it started operating in 1995 and is actively involved in the field of ecotourism. The ultimate aim of WWF Greece is to maintain the rich biodiversity of the country as well as to prevent and eventually reverse environmental degradation in the region. Moreover, it is studying the relationship between tourism and protected areas, conducting ecotourism pilot projects and offering training programs and printed guidelines to local communities. Eleni Svoronou, WWF Coordinator of Ecotourism Projects, cautions that prior planning and certification

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[27] Retrieved from: http://www.medasset.org/cms/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=43%3Atoursim-fishing&catid=6%3Aactivities&Itemid=36&lang=en on 22 February 2010

[28] Retrieved from: http://www.ecofirms.org/ECO-SERVICES/Investigation/2-151-0-621-0-0-HELLENIC-SOCIETY-FOR-THE-PROTECTION-OF-NATURE.html on 22 February 2010

[29] "Blue Flag" is an environmental awareness and protection campaign carried out every year. It is an international quality symbol and has been awarded since 1987. On the international level, it is implemented by the Foundation for Environmental Education, based in Denmark, in more than 40 countries in Europe, as well as in other locations across the globe. The objective of the campaign is to promote the protection of the natural environment and improvements in the organisation of beaches which make them safer for swimmers. In order for a beach or a marina to be awarded the "Blue Flag", it must meet 29 strict criteria which regard cleanliness, the organisation of beaches and seas, the safety of visitors, and the level of awareness of citizens regarding environmental issues. Retrieved from: http://www.alphabank.gr/files/corporatesocial/%CE%93%CE%91%CE%9B%CE%91%CE%96%CE%99%CE%95%CE%A3_%CE%A3%CE%97%CE%9C%CE%91%CE%99%CE%95%CE%A3_2008EN.pdf on 23 February 2010

systems are necessary before the promotion of ecotourism can begin and adds that "programs should have a definite, positive affect to both the physical and social environment." [30] The study of ecotourism was assigned to WWF Greece by the Greek National Tourism Organisation. WWF Greece lobbies for the drafting of a National Spatial Planning Framework and a Special Spatial Planning Framework for Tourism. Furthermore, the WWF has a strong presence in the sector of bird watching, especially in the Dadia Forest, where a famous observatory for predatory birds is situated.[31] Additionally, it has campaigned in the past against construction projects that threaten indigenous flora and fauna, led an education drive against the import and sale of illegal species (and products derived thereof) and increased awareness about endangered sea creatures such as turtles and seals, among many other projects.

- The Greek branch of Greenpeace: it is actively involved indirectly in the field of tourism through its campaigns and actions in order to draw public attention to environmental issues and to increase public accountability, which contribute to the protection of the environment, the mitigation of pollution, the creation of protected areas.

	NAME	WEBSITE	ESTABLISHMENT	REGISTERED OFFICE
1.	GREENPEACE GREECE	HTTP://WWW.GREENPEACE.ORG/GREECE/		ATHENS
2.	MEDASSET – MEDITERRANEAN ASSOCIATION TO SAVE THE SEA TURTLES	http://www.medasset.org/cms/index.php	1988	ATHENS
3.	MOM- MEDITERRANEAN MONK SEAL	HTTP://WWW.MOM.GR/HOMEPAGE.ASP?ITMID=101	1988	ATHENS
4.	WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE (WWF) GREECE	HTTP://WWW.WWF.GR/	1995	ATHENS
5.	ALKIONI WILDLIFE HOSPITAL	HTTP://WWW.ALKIONI.GR/#	1995	PAROS ISLAND

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[30] Retrieved from: http://www.stigmes.gr/br/brpages/articles/TOURISM_CRETE.htm on 23 February 2010
[31] It is located at the centre of the District of Evros, in the heart of a large forest that provides sanctuary for 31 kinds of day active and 8 kinds of night active birds of prey, together with 134 other bird species, 46 mammal species and 41 kinds of amphibians and serpents, covering an area of 20 acres of pine, oak, willow, aspen, matchwood and bearberry trees. Retrieved from: http://www.mygnto.gr/Default.aspx?id=2672&nt=18&lang=2 on 23 February 2010

6.	ANIMA-ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF WILDLIFE	http://www.wild-anima.gr/	2005	ATHENS
7.	ARCTUROS-NGO FOR THE PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	http://www.arcturos.gr/gr/	1992	AMYNTAIO (PREFECTURE OF FLORINA)
8.	HELLENIC WILDLIFE HOSPITAL	HTTP://WWW.EKPAZP.GR/MULTI158/	1990	AEGINA
9.	HELLENIC SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATURE (HSPN)	HTTP://WWW.EEPF.GR/	1951	ATHENS
10.	HELLENIC SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE	http://www.ellinikietairia.gr/	1972	ATHENS
11.	HELLENIC ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY	HTTP://WWW.ORNITHOLOGIKI.GR/	1982	ATHENS
12.	SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATURE AND ECODEVELOPMENT (EPO)	HTTP://WWW.EKKE.GR/ESTIA/GR_PAGES/MKO_PO/ORGANOSEIS/GRENORAG/ESTMAKTH/97.HTM	1988	CHRYSSOUPOLI
13.	CALLISTO - ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATION FOR WILDLIFE AND NATURE	http://www.callisto.gr/publications.php	2004	THESSALONIKI
14.	MEDITERRANEAN SOS NETWORK	http://medsos.gr/medsos/	1990	ATHENS
15.	ECOLOGICAL MOVEMENT OF KOZANI	HTTP://WWW.ECOKOZ.GR/HOME/INDEX.PHP?OPTION=COM_CONTENT&TASK=VIEW&ID=14&ITEMID=	1999	KOZANI

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16.	PANHELLENIC CENTRE FOR ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP OF NGOS-PAKOE	HTTP://WWW.PAKOE.GR/TI%20EINAI%20TO%20PAKOE/TI_EINAI_TO_PAKOE.ASP	1979	ATHENS
17.	SOLON FOR SYNTHESIS AND ECOLOGICAL CIVILIZATION	HTTP://WWW.SOLON.ORG.GR/	1994	(MAKRI) PREFECTURE OF FTHIOTIDA
18.	ARCHELON - THE SEA TURTLE PROTECTION SOCIETY OF GREECE	HTTP://WWW.ARCHELON.GR/	1983	ATHENS
19.	PHILODASSIKI SOCIETY OF ATHENS - ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL SOCIETY	http://www.philodassiki.org/	1899/2004	ATHENS

TABLE 1. Environmental NGOs in Greece
Editing & Representation: Polyxeni Moira

From the above it is concluded that the NGOs' role in Greece concerns mainly informing and raising public awareness through public events, brochures, environmental education, workshops, congresses as well as collaborating with state bodies (e.g. GNTO, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Merchant Marine), private bodies (e.g. development companies, sponsors) and other NGOs. They also form partnerships with Universities and Technological Education Institutes on elaborating studies and conducting research. Furthermore, NGOs in Greece are actively engaged in volunteering, contribute towards the conservation and management of ecologically sensitive areas, the rehabilitation of abandoned paths, old buildings and their use for hosting environmental events.

Furthermore, Greek NGOs lobby for state policy change on environmental issues. For instance, since spring 2005 seven of the aforementioned environmental NGOs have coordinated their efforts in order to raise public awareness for the omissions and failures of the policy followed by the Greek Ministry for the Environment in relation with the Natura 2000 Network and have lobbied for a policy review. In addition to this, in 2008 ten of these NGOs criticized the Special Spatial Planning Framework for Tourism discussed in the framework of the National Council of Spatial Planning.

As far as tourism planning and management are concerned, the Greek legislative framework does not offer a lot of possibilities for action to NGOs. The provisions in the legal texts are limited to their potential collaboration with state bodies, local government and local societies. For example, the Greek Collaboration Network for the Sustainable

Development of Coastal and Island Areas addressed to the coastal and island municipalities allows different bodies, NGOs included, to collaborate on development and management issues concerning the coastal zone.

Moreover, representatives of NGOs are accredited to participate in the councils of the operators of protected areas. More specifically, Article 15 of Law 2742/1999 provides for the establishment, by virtue of a Presidential Decree, of legal entities of public law as Operators, aimed at managing the areas designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). The operators care for the collection, classification and process of environmental information and data in their areas of jurisdiction as well as for the building and operation of relevant databases according to the national standards in force. In order to carry out their tasks, the operators collaborate with the Greek Ministry for Environment, Energy and Climatic Change, other ministries, higher education institutions, research centers and institutes, NGOs and other bodies from the public and the private sector. By virtue of the Law 3044/2002 (Gov. Gaz. 197/A) 25 operators were established aimed at managing the respective protected areas.

In addition to this, the same Law (article 15, par. 4a) provides that the operators of protected areas are administered by Boards composed of representatives of the Ministry for Environment, Energy and Climatic Change, the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, the respective administrative region, the local government, social and scientific associations engaged in the relevant field, experts, scientists as well as representatives from environmental NGOs whose aim, according to their articles of association, is the protection of the natural environment as long as they have previous experience and action in relevant issues. The composition of the Boards of the operators complies with the guidelines set by the European Union about the establishment of effective Operators (Efthymiopoulos and Modinos, 1999: 105). So the majority of these Operators are mainly managed by representatives from the public administration, which means that the state has the control (Daoutopoulos, 1997: 129). The Boards have an interdisciplinary composition while all stakeholders participate in it, namely the public sector, the local societies and the scientific and environmental bodies. The participation of Environmental NGOs is also provided for in the National Council for Spatial Planning Framework and Sustainable Development, which has been established within the Greek Ministry for Environment, Energy and Climatic Change.

In Greece Integrated Urban Development Plans (IUDP) are drafted, approved and implemented in order to promote integrated strategies for urban development in cities or parts of them as well as in wider urban areas which present critical and complex problems such as lack of social and economic cohesion, decline in environment and quality of life. The procedure for drafting IUDP can be launched either by the Ministry for Environment, Energy and Climatic Change or a regional government. In the first case, the proposal is sent out to the competent Regional Council for a consultatory response as well as to the competent bodies of the Local Government of first and second level. The competent first-level local government body cares for in any case for publicizing the proposal to the public and the local NGOs, in any suitable way e.g. open assemblies, press, news or media releases.

Furthermore, by virtue of Ministerial Decisions, Centers for Environmental Education have been established and have been operating throughout Greece. Their mission is to help students and young people to adopt responsible attitudes and participatory behaviors, which will contribute to ecological balance, quality of life and sustainable development. In order to achieve their goals, the Centers for Environmental Education form partnerships with local communities, schools, scientific bodies, the media and NGOs on issues related with education, training and information.

CONCLUSION

Tourism development can have serious negative economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts. The overconsumption of resources, the exceeding of the carrying capacity of the host destinations and pollution are gradually leading to the destruction of the natural and cultural environment. It seems that tourism can kill tourism as it destroys the very attractive elements of the environment that tourists come to enjoy in a destination (Glasson et al., 1995: 27).

The problem with tourism is similar to the more general problem of overconsumption of resources. A quarter of the world population lives in the developed world of the North while it consumes 80% of the world's resources leaving the remaining three quarters of the world population live with 20% of the world's resources. Tourism development attained through the residents' travels from the north to the South and in particular to the less developed countries of the South also means consumption of the remaining 20% (Muqbil, 2002). Thus a question of ethics in tourism is raised.
This issue has led the World Tourism Organization to draft and adopt the Global Code of Ethics on Tourism (WTO, 2001: 4-5), where it is stressed that:

> "All the stakeholders in tourism development should safeguard the natural environment with a view to achieving sound, continuous and sustainable economic growth geared to satisfying equitably the needs and aspirations of present and future generations; All forms of tourism development that are conducive to saving rare and precious resources, in particular water and energy, as well as avoiding so far as possible waste production, should be given priority and encouraged by national, regional and local public authorities; […] Nature tourism and ecotourism are recognized as being particularly conducive to enriching and enhancing the standing of tourism, provided they respect the natural heritage and local populations and are in keeping with the carrying capacity of the sites" (Article 3)

In order to reach sustainable tourism development in Greece both public and private tourism sector are called upon to form partnerships. However, the NGOs' contribution to this goal is crucial as their actions can give a practical perspective to the theoretical approaches of sustainable tourism development. To this end, the Greek State should lay down the necessary legal framework which will consolidate the participation of NGOs in the mapping of tourism policy aimed at sustainable development.

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DESTINATION POSITIONING OPPORTUNITIES ELICITED THROUGH THE REPERTORY TEST WITH LADDERING ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

While in many travel situations consumers have an almost limitless range of destinations to choose from, their actual decision set will usually only comprise between two and six destinations. One of the greatest challenges facing destination marketers is positioning their destination, against the myriad of competing places that offer similar features, into consumer decision sets. Since positioning requires a narrow focus, marketing communications must present a succinct and meaningful proposition, the selection of which is often problematic for destination marketing organisations (DMO), which deal with a diverse and often eclectic range of attributes in addition to numerous self-interested and demanding stakeholders. This paper reports the application of two qualitative techniques used to explore the range of cognitive attributes, consequences and personal values that represent potential positioning opportunities in the context of short break holidays. The Repertory Test is an effective technique for understanding the salient attributes used by a traveller to differentiate destinations, while Laddering Analysis enables the researcher to explore the smaller set of personal values guiding such decision making. A key finding of the research was that while individuals might vary in their repertoire of salient attributes, there was a commonality of shared consequences and values.

KEY WORDS: Repertory test, construct elicitation, laddering, destination positioning, decision sets

INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1990s there has been a rapid growth in brand positioning initiatives by destination marketing organisations (DMO), the public face of which are the place name, a short slogan and representative visual imagery. DMO interest in brand positioning is underpinned by a marketing orientation that recognises consumers have an almost limitless range of destinations from which to choose. For example, Baker (2007, p. 16) noted that in the USA there are approximately 20,000 cities, over 3,000 counties, and 12,800 designated National Historic Districts: "No wonder most small and mid-sized cities find it hard to be seen and heard in this crowd!" Morgan, Pritchard and Pride (2002) observed that 70 % of international travellers visit only 10 countries, and over 90 NTOs compete for the remaining 30% of international arrivals. Following Howard and Sheth (1969), the number of destinations a consumer actually considers in decision making is usually within the range of two to six. For a discussion on how this proposition has been supported in the extant literature see Pike (2006), whose longitudinal study identified a strong relationship between stated preferences and actual travel. Therefore,

DMOs must somehow differentiate against the myriad of competing places offering similar features, by positioning their destination into consumer decision sets. Very few tourism products are unique, (see Murphy & Pritchard, 1997) and there is a danger some destinations will become commodities, and therefore increasingly substitutable (Gilbert, 1990). Plog (2000) also lamented the increasing sameness of destinations due to the impact of globalisation. This 'modernity' has all but destroyed any opportunities for travellers to experience 'different' attractions (Dann, 2000). The standardisation of facilities that has enabled mass tourism thus provides travellers with familiarity: "As a result, countries become interchangeable in the tourist's mind. Whether he is looking for good beaches, restful forests, or old cities, it becomes relatively unimportant to him where these happen to be found" (Cohen, 1972, p. 172).

Positioning can be a source of competitive advantage for organisations (Porter, 1980). Porter suggested a competitive strategy was one that positioned a business to make the most of strengths that differentiated the firm from competitors. Positioning was first introduced as a marketing strategy in 1969 (see Trout and Ries, 1979), and has been defined as "establishing and maintaining a distinctive place in the market for an organisation and/or its individual product offerings" (Lovelock, 1991, p. 110). The concept of market positioning theory is based on three propositions (Ries & Trout, 1986). First, we live in an over-communicated society, confronted with increasing loads of information every day. Second, our mind develops a defence system against this clutter, in the form of selectivity of what we notice, read and retain. Third, the way to cut through the noise in the marketplace is through a focussed message.

While effectively positioning a destination into consumer decision sets represents a potential source of advantage for destinations (reference with held), the process is also beneficial for travellers, since understanding consumer needs is fundamental to the process. A meaningful proposition helps simplify a consumer's decision making (Ries & Trout, 1986). Effective positioning offers the decision maker consequences to solve a problem, in a way that is different to rivals (Chacko 1997, DiMingo 1998).

A key challenge for DMOs in the positioning process is the design of a succinct theme to cut through the noise of competing places offering similar attractions and be noticed by the right audience, for the right reasons, at decision time. Developing a focused proposition is arguably the greatest challenge in branding (Gilmore, 2002). To be effective the range of differentiated features emphasised is small (Aaker & Shansby 1982, Crompton, Fakeye & Lue 1992). Such a narrow focus is at the heart of positioning, since a brand is "a singular idea or concept that you own inside the mind of a prospect. It's as simple and as difficult as that." (Ries & Ries, 1998, p. 172). Since a destination usually comprises an often eclectic and diverse range of features, trade-offs must be made about which feature(s) to include and which to exclude. What is required is an understanding of the decision criteria used by the consumer when differentiating destinations in the decision set under consideration. In particular, which destination attributes are important in decision making? However, not all attributes that differentiate a product from competitors are actually important to the consumer, and not all important attributes are used in decision making (Myers & Alpert, 1968).

DMOs face a number of challenges in developing a succinct and meaningful positioning theme for heterogenous and increasingly dynamic markets, including for example (reference with held): the politics of decision making, the expensive nature of marketing research in diverse markets of interest to stakeholders, the range and diversity of local attractions and amenities, and the difficulty in differentiating against destinations in the competitive set that offer the same features. A single minded proposition might also be risky for a destination. For example, ten years after Queensland's state tourism organisation offered a 'sunshine guarantee', as part of the destination's *Beautiful one day, perfect the next* brand theme, the organisation was still fielding refund requests from travellers who encountered rain during their holiday (anon., Tourism Queensland, 2008).

Following Aaker (1996), the core constructs in the destination branding process are brand identity, brand positioning and brand image (Aaker, 1996). The brand identity, which has an internal organisation orientation, represents the self-image aspired in the market. Brand image has an external market orientation, and stands for the actual image held by consumers. Brand positioning is the attempt to enhance congruency between brand identity and brand image. Of the three constructs, destination image research has emerged as one of the most widely reported fields in the tourism literature. In comparison, there has been relatively little research published in relation to destination positioning.

Destination image research methods

Pike's (2002, 2007) reviews of the first 35 years of destination image research tabled 262 studies. Of these, 187 used structured quantitative methods requiring respondents to rate the destination(s) of interest across a battery of mostly cognitive scale items. A key difference between the analysis of destination image and destination position is that the latter requires a frame of reference with a competitive set of other destinations. In this regard, 129 studies analysed the image of a destination in isolation, which while providing a measure of congruence with brand identity, does not identify unique strengths. Of the structured studies, less than half used qualitative methods to bring the consumer into the scale development process. Even though there is yet no accepted destination image scale the most popular technique for questionnaire design has been by literature review, which runs the risk of not being relevant to the cultural context and travel situation.

Two related techniques with potential to better understand destination choice decision making, but which have been under reported in the tourism literature, are the Repertory test and Laddering analysis, both of which are underpinned by Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory (PCT). Kelly designed the Repertory test to elicit the constructs an individual uses to guide their behaviour, and is suitable for market research (Frost & Braine, 1967). The method is particularly suitable for identifying the range of salient attributes individuals use to differentiate a competitive set of brands. Descriptions of salient attributes are provided in the consumer's language (Stewart & Stewart 1981). Laddering analysis was originally developed by Dennis Hinkle, one of George Kelly's

PhD students, as an extension of the Repertory test (see Hinkle, 1965). It is important to note that many marketing researchers attribute the technique to Means-end theory (see Gutman, 1982), which focuses on the links between a product's attributes and their consequences for the consumer. Over time, the work of Kelly and Hinkle appears to have been lost by marketing academics who have followed Gutman and colleagues.

The aim of this research was to examine the efficacy of combining the Repertory Test and Laddering Analysis to identify potential destination positioning opportunities. Specifically, the objectives were to i) identify salient attributes that differentiate destinations for a specific travel situation, and ii) explore the consequences of these attributes and the personal values that underpin such information processing and decision making.

METHOD

Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory viewed individual man as a scientist whose ultimate aim was to predict and control his environment. At the core of PCT is constructive alternativism, which proposed that we have the creative capacity to interpret our environment, rather than simply respond to it in a stimulus-response manner. We all construe the universe in different ways, and it is open to reconstruction. Our individual construct system is the only model used to guide our behaviour (Jankowicz, 1987). Anticipation is at the heart of construing: "If we were not anticipating regularities in behaviour, why should we become upset about sudden change?" (Landfield & Leitner, 1980, p. 5). We have a repertoire of constructs that we continually test and amend through life experiences, in an attempt to aid our predictive efforts. Kelly's (1955, p. 46) fundamental postulate was that "a person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events".

Although Kelly (1955) developed the Repertory test for application with a single individual, a strength of the technique is the degree of flexibility in application and analysis (Frost & Braine, 1967). For example, the potential of the technique to provide group data was promoted by Kelly. Using a structured interview, the Repertory test explores a person's construct system through conversation (Fransella & Bannister, 1977). Originally developed for use in Kelly's field of clinical psychology, the Repertory test has been adapted for use in a diverse range of other domains. Examples include investigations into the perceptions of: management training needs (Honey, 1979), counselling (Jankowicz & Cooper, 1982), information systems attributes (Whyte & Bytheway, 1996), software quality (Wilson & Hall, 1998), retail store attributes (Mitchell & Kiral, 1999), technology (Frewer, Howard & Shepherd 1998), managerial jobs (Smith, 1980), museums (Caldwell & Coshall, 2002), bread (Hersleth et al, 2005), fruit (Jaeger, Rossiter & Lau 2005).

The technique has not been widely reported in the tourism literature. Destination image applications have included: seaside resorts (Riley & Palmer, 1975), countryside places (Palmer, 1978), pre and post travel images (Pearce, 1982), holiday photos (Botteril & Crompton, 1987), images of Austria (Embacher & Buttle, 1989), images of Japan

(Botterill, 1989), and domestic destinations (Walmsley & Jenkins 1993, Young 1995, Pike 2003).

While Laddering Analysis, was originally developed by Hinkle (1965) as an extension of Repertory Grid Analysis, the technique has commonly been used by marketing researchers to operationalise Means-end Theory, the underling convention of which is a cognitive hierarchy of means that serve ends (see Gutman 1982, Reynolds & Gutman 1984). The ladder moves upwards from cognitive attributes to consequences to more abstract higher order values. In the example shown in Figure 1, an individual might differentiate destinations on the basis of the variety of shops, which offers the potential benefit of obtaining fashion items that friends don't have. The interest in this tangible attribute and benefit is ultimately to enhance self esteem. A cognitive attribute provides a consequence that reinforces a personal value. In this way consumers are thought to consider certain brands that will achieve a desired outcome. An understanding of consumer values therefore aids understanding of buyer behavior, through an understanding of linkages between the product and the relevant role it plays in the consumer's life (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). Laddering analysis helps elicit the underlying reason(s) why an attribute or consequence is important in a product class. Thus, while the cognitive attributes elicited from Kelly's triads are brand specific, the higher order consequences and values are not.

Figure 1 - Example of a means-end ladder
Variety shops ⟶ Be different to friends ⟶ Self esteem
(Tangible feature)   (Consequence)   (Personal value)
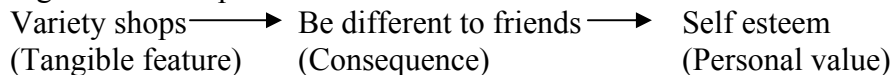
Since the work of Gutman and Reynolds in the 1980s, Laddering analysis has been reported in the marketing literature across a wide range of interests, including for example: fashion (Botschen & Hemetsberger, 1998), international market segmentation (Vriens & Hofstede, 2000), on-line newspapers (de Souza Leao & de Mello, 2007) and choice of employer (van Rekom & Wierenga, 2007). However, the technique has attracted scant attention in the tourism literature.

The purpose of this study was to combine the Repertory Test to elicit salient destination attributes, with Laddering Analysis to identify underlying consequences and personal values, and identify implications and opportunities for destination differentiation. The combination of the two techniques is not new (see for example Reynolds & Gutman 1988, Corbridge, Rugg, Major, Shadbolt & Burton 1994, Jankowicz 2004, Crudge & Johnson 2007). However, few applications appear to have been reported in the tourism literature. A recent exception was an investigation of visitors' experiences at an historical district in Japan using photographs as elements (Naoi, Airey, Iijima & Niininen 2006).

While attribute importance can vary between travel situations (Barich & Kotler 1991, Crompton 1992), destination image studies have generally been undertaken without explicitly defining the context in which the traveller decision is being made (Hu & Ritchie, 1993). Indeed only 37 of the 262 destination image publications tabled by Pike

(2002, 2007) featured an explicit travel context. As discussed in the introduction, the travel situation of interest in this study was short break holidays.

Since qualitative research requires information-rich participants, of interest were consumers with short break experience, who were likely to take such a holiday in the following 12 months. A convenience sample frame comprising staff and post graduate students of a marketing school were sent an email invitation to participate. While no tangible incentive was offered, it was suggested that participation would enhance staff and student understanding of the Repertory test and Laddering analysis. Following Patton (2002), another sampling aim was to keep interviewing until a point of data redundancy, where the addition of any new participants would not yield any new information. Previous applications of the Repertory test by one of the authors (reference withheld for reviewing) found that half of all data was elicited from the first two participants and that the addition of any new information ceased after 8-10 interviews. The previous applications, which were also related to domestic short break holidays, used a similar approach to this study. Following the previous applications, a total of 20 interviews were held during February and March 2009. The sample consisted of fourteen females and six males. Eight were staff and twelve were either part time or full time post graduate students; fourteen were aged under 45 years and six were over 45; ten were single, seven were married with dependent children and three were married with no children; ten earned less than $75,000 per annum and ten earned $75,000 or more. All but one participant had taken a short break during 2009 and all indicated a likelihood of taking a short break in 2009. Interviews lasted an average of 38 minutes.

Prior to the interviews each participant was emailed an information sheet briefly outlining the purpose of the research. Since the context of the consumer behaviour is essential in laddering (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988), participants were advised to think about short break holidays. Kelly defined a construct as "a way in which things are construed as being alike and yet different from others" (Kelly, 1955, p. 105). The triad card method is commonly used to elicit constructs. Kelly's (1955) minimum context card form of triad presentation was used. This has been the most common approach in Repertory Grid (Fransella and Bannister (1977), and has been employed in tourism applications (see Botterill and Crompton 1987, Pearce 1982). Elements are presented to participants in sequential sets of three verbal labels printed on individual cards, or triads, since Kelly believed three elements to be the minimum required. Kelly acknowledged that two objects could be differentiated between, but argued that without a reference to similarity, the difference would probably represent a chaotic heterogeneity. Dyads were utilised in an environmental image study by Smith (1989), who reasoned that elderly participants find this easier to understand than triads. Botterill and Crompton (1996) used a mix of triads and dyads.

An element is the object of interest, which in this study was short break holiday destination names. Elements should be broadly representative of the domain of interest, be meaningful to participants, represent a realistic choice set as well as non-preferred destinations. The list of elements is either supplied by the researcher or elicited from the participant. It was decided to use the latter approach in this case, given the sheer number

of short break destinations available to Brisbane residents. Each participant was invited to write down their own list of nine elements, by using the following questions, in the context of short break holidays, whether that be by air, car or other transport The purpose of the questions was to identify destinations that were meaningful to the individual, represented in their decision set as well less favorable places.

1. Write the name of the first destination that comes to mind
2. Write down the name of the next destination that comes to mind
3. Write down the name of the destination that next comes to mind
4. Write down the name of a destination you have visited for a short break but did not like
5. Write down the name of a short break destination someone has talked about favourably
6. Write down the name of another short break destination someone has talked about favourably
7. Write down the name of a short break destination some has talked about unfavourably
8. Write down the name of an expensive short break destination
9. Write down the name of a cheap short break destination

Following Embacher and Buttle (1989), and previous applications by one of the authors (references with held), at the start of each interview a practice example using a triad of car brands was used to demonstrate the technique. A balanced incomplete design formula (see Burton & Nerlove, 1976) was used to reduce the number of possible triad combinations from 84 ($n(n-1)(n-2)/6$, where n = number of elements) to 24, which is more manageable. Previous studies have shown that when using the 'no repeat' rule, participants use only around 8-12 triads (See Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). In a balanced incomplete block the number of triads required is calculated by: $b = \lambda n(n-1)/6$, where b is the number of triads, λ represents the number of triads in which each pair of elements appears, and n is the number of elements. Two further conditions were considered: $rn=3b$ and $\lambda = 2r/n-1$, where r is the number of replications of each element. With $\lambda = 2$, the number of triad combinations was reduced to 24. The following random order of triad combinations was provided by Burton and Nerlove (1976):

1,2,3 4,5,6 7,8,9 1,4,7 2,5,8 3,6,9 1,5,9 2,6,7 3,4,8 1,6,8 2,4,9
3,5,7 3,4,5 6,7,8 9,1,2 3,6,9 4,7,1 5,8,2 3,7,2 4,8,9 5,6,1 3,8,1
4,6,2 5,7,9

On presentation of each triad, subjects were asked one question: "When thinking of a short break holiday, in what <u>important</u> way are two of these destinations alike, and different to the third?" While both the positive and negative semantic poles were recorded, participants were asked which pole was most important to them. Participants were advised that there are no wrong answers, because in previous applications more than person needed to be reassured their response was alright. Following the completion of the first triad, participants were instructed that they would not be permitted to repeat any

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statements, and that the interview would end when they could think of no new similarity/difference statements.

The simplicity of responses is an advantage of the Repertory test (Burton & Nerlove, 1976), with one researcher's data able to be interpreted quickly by another because "there is very little waffle" (Stewart and Stewart 1981, p. 27). For example, a common response in this study was "good beach", which is representative of a cognitive attribute. This response then formed the basis of the Laddering Analysis. The laddering procedure was used per triad, immediately following the elicitation of a salient attribute. The question "why is that important to you on a short break" was repeated to move upwards from the cognitive attribute to consequence statements and ultimately the more abstract value statement. When a value statement had been reached, a new triad was used. Occasionally there was a need to ladder down from a consequence statement to elicit the cognitive attribute. In observing each participant's responses, it was clear the laddering process was more demanding than the triad procedure, and sometimes challenging in terms of finding the right word(s) to explain what they were thinking. At the point when a participant could not identify any similarity/difference, one further triad was used. When no more similarity/difference statements were elicited, a final question asked whether there were any other important destination features not already mentioned. The length of the intereviews ranged from 21 to 56 minutes, with a mean of 42 minutes. By comparison, interviews in previous applications of the Repertory Test, where Laddering analysis was not used, lasted on average around 16 minutes.

FINDINGS

Reynolds and Gutman (1988) were critical of many previous applications of laddering analysis in the marketing literature and so provided a detailed account of the procedure. While the process used relied on content analysis of spreadsheet data in this case, readers should note that for larger samples, where generalizing is an aim, there is a freely available DOS based *LADDERMAP* software developed by Chuck Gengler (see Peffers & Gengler, 2003). The first stage involved coding the initial triads data to enable the development of themes based on common wording. For example, responses such as 'more nature', 'natural attractions', 'beautiful scenery' and 'undeveloped' were grouped by a simple cut and paste method in the theme 'natural environment'. In this way the total 200 verbal labels elicited from participants were reduced to 16 theme codes that had been mentioned by at least six of the 20 participants. The reliability of these codes was verified by three co-researchers who were asked to follow Guba's (1978) guidelines, where themes should feature internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity. The same process was used to develop seven summary consequences codes and eight values codes. These codes and summary themes are shown in Table 1, where the fraction in brackets indicates how many of the 20 participants had elicited a verbal label represented in that code. Participants elicited a mean of nine attributes, ten consequences and four values.

Table 1 – Summary content codes

Values	V24. Happiness (18/20) V25. Healthy life (11/20) V26. Get closer to family/partner (10/20) V27. Self-fulfilment (9/20) V28. Broaden my mind (9/20) V29. Rewarding self (7/20) V30. Status/enhance my credibility (6/20) V31. Safety (6/20)
Consequences	C17. Refresh/recharge/relax (20/20) C18. Opportunity to try something new (20/20) C19. Break from routine/get away from it all (15/20) C20. See more/do more/eat more (12/20) C21. More time at destination (9/12) C22. Brag value (8/20) C23. Exciting (6/20) NB. Keep money in Australia (2/20) not included for further analysis
Attributes	A1. Closer to home (16/20) A2. Beach (14/20) A3. Metropolitan cities (14/20) A4. Pleasant climate (11/20) A5. Good value for money (10/20) A6. Lots to see and do (10/20) A7. Air travel required (10/20) A8. Less developed (10/20) A9. Good accommodation (9/20) A10. Good shopping (9/20) A11. Not previously visited (8/20) A12. Cafes/restaurants (8/20) A13. Different culture (8/20) A14. Natural environment (8/20) A15. Well known place (7/20) A16. Friendly people (6/20)

Figure 2 - Hierarchical value map
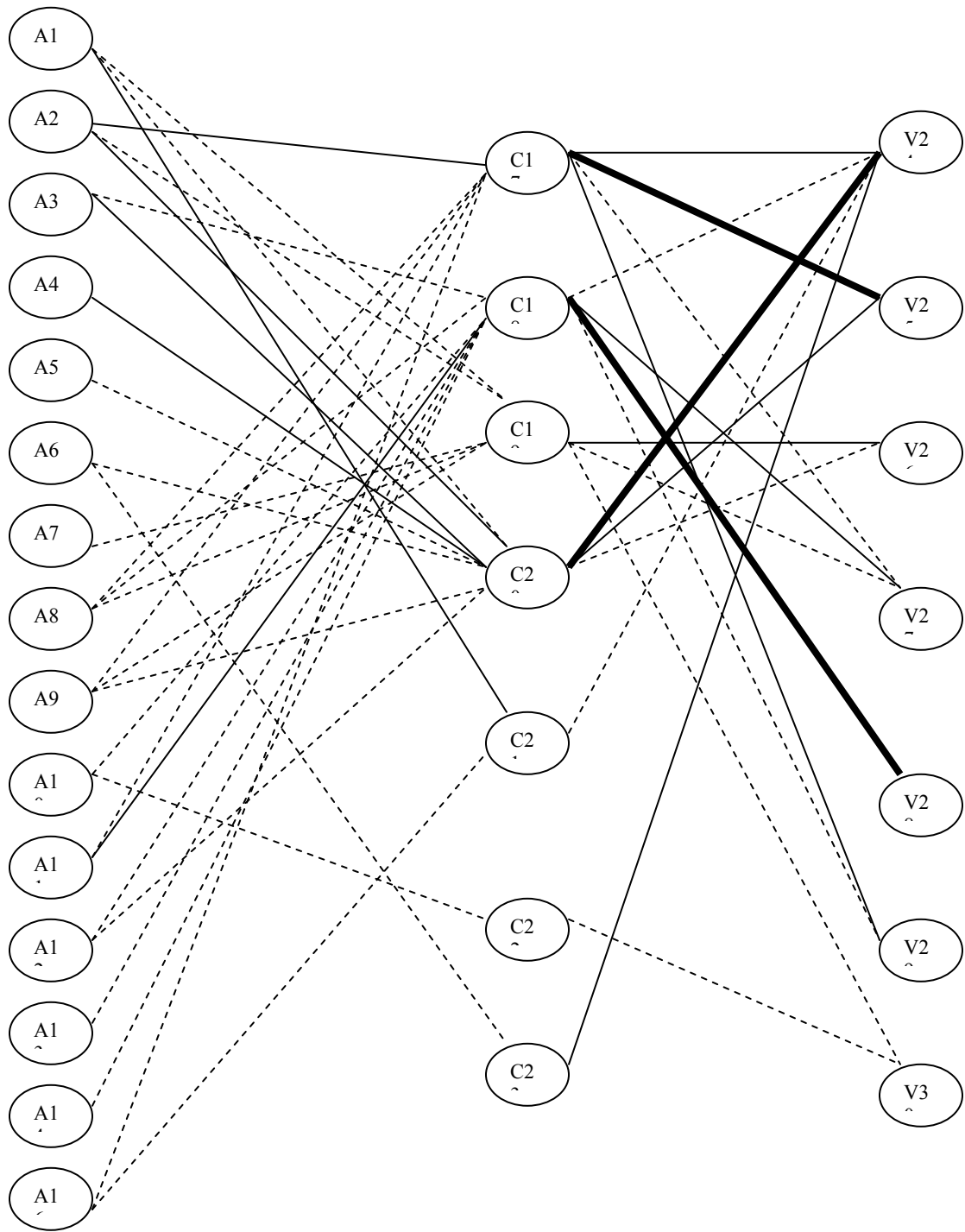
Key
----- 2 to 4 relations   ___ 5 to 9 relations   ▬▬ 10+ relations

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The hierarchical value map shown in Figure 2 was then developed by constructing chains of elements from the individual and aggregate data. While the term *ladder* is used to denote an individual's data, *chain* is used to refer to a sequence of linkages between elements in aggregate form. Only chains representing the ladders of at least two participants, 10% of the sample, were used. Reynolds and Gutman (1988) suggested a cut-off of 5% would suffice for larger samples. Figure 2 shows the core values guiding short break destination preferences for the sample were 'happiness', 'healthy life' and 'broaden my mind'. In line with the study aim, these values represent potential positioning opportunities for destinations interested in this geographic segment. Each of these core values subsumes a larger range of consequences. 'Happiness' was superordinant to seven consequences, which in turn subsume a total of 15 attributes. 'Healthy life' subsumed two consequences, which in turn were superordinant to 11 attributes. 'Broaden my mind' subsumed one consequence, which in turn was superordinant to seven attributes. Thus, it is proposed explicit positioning focused on a core value or consequence is likely to appeal to a broader range of travellers than positioning that focuses on one of a few cognitive attributes.

CONCLUSION

One of the greatest challenges facing destination marketers is positioning their destination into consumer decision sets, which are thought to be limited to between two and six places for a given travel context. To achieve this DMOs must somehow differentiate their destination against the myriad of competing places that offer similar features. A marketing orientation dictates a focus on the needs and wants of the consumer rather than on product features, and so the positioning theme must be developed on the basis of something that is meaningful to the target. Since positioning requires a narrow focus, marketing communications must present a succinct and meaningful proposition, the selection of which is a major challenge for DMOS representing a diverse product range. The purpose of this paper has been to present researchers and practitioners with an effective and efficient method for eliciting destination positioning opportunities from consumers. A combination of two qualitative techniques was used to i) identify salient attributes that are used to differentiate destinations and ii) explore the consequences of these attributes and the personal values that underpin such information processing and decision making.

The Repertory test generated 16 destination attributes, and the use of Laddering analysis identified seven consequences and eight values, in the context of short break holidays. The Hierarchical Value Map provides destination marketers with a foundation with which to develop a structured measurement tool to evaluate how their destination is perceived relative to the other destinations in the competitive set. One of the most interesting findings was that while different individuals might vary in their list of attributes, there was a commonality of consequences and values. While each of these 31 elements represents potential positioning opportunities, it is proposed the more abstract higher order consequences and values offer supply and demand side advantages over the use of cognitive attributes. Firstly, from the demand perspective, the approach would appeal to a broader range of travellers within the target segment. This is particularly

practical for smaller DMOs, where budgets preclude the development of multiple positioning themes to suit different groups. Secondly, from the supply perspective, a higher order benefit subsuming a broader range of tangible features would be more inclusive for a broader range of stakeholders such as local business and travel intermediaries. However, since these consequences and values are not destination specific the DMO must ensure the theme selected is relatively unique.

Since generalising was not an aim of the study the small sample size is not considered a limitation. However, one of the strengths of the Repertory test is the ability to elicit generalisable data from a small number of participants. Such data can then be used in the development of scales, tested through a larger structured survey requiring participants to rate the perceived performance of a competitive set of destinations for a specific travel context. It is however suggested that researchers in other parts of the world who are interested in destination positioning, destination image, segmentation or motivation could screen the attributes, consequences and values through local focus groups.

What this study did not investigate was the extent to which travellers base their destination decisions on elements at each of the three levels of abstraction. Reynolds and Gutman (1988) recommended extending Laddering analysis with cognitive differentiation analysis to determine the level of abstraction at which judgements towards brands are made. They found in some product categories respondents were more likely have preferences based on consequences and values.

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NAVIGATING REFLECTION: PHOTOGRAPHY AS A LEARNING TOOL ON A CRUISE FIELD TRIP

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ABSTRACT

Limited research has been done to date on tourism student's learning during field trips, despite the value of education in the field being recognised by other academic disciplines such as geography. An educational field trip that immerses students in the subject being studied, in this instance tourism and cruise operations management, can present opportunities for them to apply what has been learnt in the classroom to 'real life' situations and enable them to reflect on their learning. This study examines whether photography is a valuable tool in supporting student's reflective practice during a 7 day cruise field trip around the Eastern Mediterranean in May 2009. The 12 participating students were each given a digital camera and instructed to take an unlimited number of photographs that 'best represents your learning about cruise studies'. On return to the UK each student selected 5 photographs that held the most meaning for them and were individually interviewed on their choices. The study concludes that reflexive photography linked with elicitation interviews can help evidence learning and encourage students to reflect on their learning.

KEYWORDS: Cruise Field Trip, Learning, Photography, Reflection,

INTRODUCTION

In April 2009 2 members of staff and 16 levels undergraduate students undertook a 7 day voyage to the Eastern Mediterranean on the cruise ship Ocean Village II with the aim of providing an experiential learning environment for those studying cruise on the three year BA (Hons) Tourism Management with Cruise and Travel Operations pathway. Fieldtrips have become an integral part of the programmes on offer in the tourism programmes at Southampton Solent University (Power and Burton, 2007) providing learning opportunities for students to actively engage with the subject of tourism outside of the university classroom setting.

LEARNING AND FIELD TRIPS

Hawkins and Weiss (2004:1) suggest that given the demands of the global economy experiential learning in higher education tourism programmes, in the form of study abroad and the consulting practicum, is an important feature of preparing students for the 'real world' of work. Whilst limited research has been undertaken into the impacts of field trips on tourism students (Xie, 2004) the value of education in the field is a recognised in areas such as geography and indeed high achievement by school pupils in this subject has been linked to a high profile of fieldwork in the curriculum (Smith, 1997).

Field trips that involve travel away from home and overnight stays in a tourism environment implicitly involve the participant as both student and tourist at the same time and as such they become part of the phenomenon being studied. One of the issues in educational overseas fieldtrips is ensuring the academic content of the experience and the avoidance of the perception by students (and sometimes colleagues) of it being 'just a jolly'. The creation of clear aims and objectives on what the field trip intends to achieve from an academic, learning perspective prior to the trip is therefore essential.

Nevertheless, learning on a field trip is not guaranteed it simply provides an environment where students can be encouraged to learn by actively applying their knowledge to the touristic situation in which they find themselves. There is, however, evidence to suggest that the shared interaction between students and lecturers whilst on a field trip can serve as both an academic as well as social motivator and can lead to an increased enjoyment and understanding of the subject being studied (Manner, 1995). The value of fieldtrips is further discussed by MacKenzie and White (1982) who argue that active fieldwork can create memorable episodes which not only enhances learning but improves long-term knowledge retention. The field trip environment can lead to 'discovery' as emphasised in Ausubel's (1968) 'meaningful' learning and can lead to the testing of ideas and models previously taught and discussed in the classroom whilst Orion (1993) suggests that it also assist student's understanding of abstract concepts. Being immersed in the subject area by physically being, in this instance, on a cruise ship, can provide an opportunity to apply learning and can in turn be a basis for student active reflection and analysis.

Active learning implies that the students are themselves actively doing something or participating and engaging in an activity and are thinking about what they are doing (Bonwell and Eison, 1991). It is therefore imperative that whilst on a fieldtrip opportunities are created whereby students can engage with the subject being studied in an active manner that helps them to understand their own learning, and, that the learning environment consists of more that lecturer focussed didactic transmission of information. Field trips often contain interesting and entertaining lectures by practitioners and experts and as such can be inspiring for students. This does not necessarily, however, indicate that learning is taking place for knowledge is an active process requiring the involvement of the learner and it cannot simply be transmitted. The learner must actively process the information. Jarvis, Holdford and Griffen (1998:46) describe experiential learning as the

process of 'creating and transforming experience into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and senses'. A field trip can provide the experience and the field trip organisers can provide guidance and create space and time, for observation and reflection thus facilitating the process whereby this transformation can take place. As Biggs (2001:75) suggests, 'Cognitive growth lies not just in knowing more but also in the restructuring that occurs when new knowledge becomes connected with what is already known.'

REFLEXIVE PHOTOGRAPHY AS A REFLECTIVE TOOL

The importance of reflection as part of the learning process is well established (Kolb, 1984, Schon, 1983, Higgs, 1988) and helps the learner to clarify thoughts and gain insights and deepen understanding of information. Schon (1983, 1987) suggests that reflection requires the use of prior knowledge and is the cultivation of the capacity to reflect in action whilst doing something and to reflect after it has been done; focusing on constructing, deconstructing and reconstructing knowledge. There are many ways to encourage reflective practice in students and some of the methods cited by Henderson *et al* (2004:357) include learning journals/logs, critical incident diaries, fieldwork diaries, action research and collaborative enquiry. Whilst photography does not feature as one of the techniques listed it is a recognised empirical research method (Pink, 2007, Rose, 2007). Images produced by research participants known as 'reflexive photography' (Harper, 1988) have been used posits Schulze (2007:537) to 'stimulate members of a group to critically analyse their own situations', and, when accompanied by photo-elicitation interviews, can provide 'insight into the meaning and symbolism inherent in the photographs' (Harrington and Schibik, 2003:27). Not only can photography act as a useful tool for reflection but as Larsen (2001:241) suggests the link between tourism and photography is such that they are 'modern twins', with photography playing a key role in 'structuring the tourist gaze' (Urry, 2002:125) and as such the researchers argue it is an apt means by which to record learning in this touristic activity.

According to Keegan (2007:59) 'the development of technology and the media has led to mushrooming of visual images in teaching and learning resources' and increasing familiarity with the use of the internet and digital photography has enabled 'sharing of photographs on a massive scale' (Snavely *et al*, 2006). An unscientific questioning of students in a recent lecture produced a 100% show of hands when asked if they had a mobile phone with a camera and an equally full house when asked if they had taken pictures with it. Whilst students may not have been formally taught how to use a camera this anecdotal story suggests informal know-how and expertise.

Miller and Stoica (2004:13) argue that taking photographs is 'a cognitive process where perceptual information is represented in working memory' relating to the personal experience. It is a means of gathering selective information to record events and situations and in its broadest sense is an 'aid in preserving vivid first impressions in a

responsible usable form' (Collier and Collier, 1986:16). Photography gathers selective images that are precise records of events and situations and as such produce tangible evidence of observations. Even an unprofessional 'snapshot attitude' (Cederholm, 2004:227) allows the recording and framing of experience enabling the moment to be 'held' until the image is revived for interpretation, in this case of learning, at a later date (Bruner, 2005). Schulz (2007:540) cites Ruby (1995) who suggests that photos as such have no 'intrinsic meaning' as individuals give different subjective meanings to the pictures they take and that it is through the use the use of photo-elicitation interviews that these meanings become apparent.

METHODS

The field trip organisers established the learning aims and objectives that it was anticipated would be achieved during the cruise trip. These were not based upon one particular academic module but were an amalgamation of outcomes that were deemed by the undergraduate cruise pathway tutor to be underpinning elements of learning from the programme of study. The fieldtrip aim was to: provide a real-world opportunity to learn about the cruise industry and contextualise prior cruise industry related learning. The identified learning objectives were to:

A.   Experience the process of embarkation, disembarkation
B.   Examine staff roles and duties of main departments on board a ship
C.   Explain communication systems for crew and passengers
D.   Examine health and safety processes on board a ship
E.   Understand the experiences of a cruise passenger offered on board a ship

In order to facilitate the achievement of these aim and objectives contact was made with the cruise company prior to the fieldtrip and the following activities organised, and confirmed on arrival on board:

• Talk on roles and duties by Hotel Director/ Entertainment and Retail Director/Food and Beverage Manager/Executive Chef/ Laundry Manager/ Stores Manager/ Restaurant Manager/ First Officer/Entertainment Manager
• Tour behind the scenes of galley, stores, accommodation, crew mess, laundry, restaurant, theatre, health and fitness suite/spa facilities/ Bridge

Based on the cruise operator website voluntary optional activities were identified that the students could choose to participate in as 'cruise tourists'. These included:

• Off ship organised excursions/ independent excursions/ use of on ship facilities:
i.e. sundeck, pools, hot tub, fitness classes, spa and beauty salon, 4 restaurants, 8 bars, entertainment including live theatre shows, comedy venue, acrobatics, urban dance, tribute bands, quizzes, cookery demonstrations.

Prior to departure a meeting took place with students who were informed that they were to use this trip to reflect on what they had learnt to date in the classroom about

the cruise industry and to try to contextualise their learning whilst on the ship. They were given by staff digital cameras and informed that they would take photographs that would provide a visual representation of that learning. It was emphasised that the 'set-up' of the photo was not important and the focus was content/context. No limit was given on the number of photographs they were allowed to take. Permission was sought and granted for the use of their photographs for subsequent publication.

Students completed a Honey and Munford (2000) learning style questionnaire in order to encourage them to think about their own learning and a tutor led participative discussion on reflection and learning took place. In addition students were told that they would receive a reflective learning log where they could record their reflections on their experiences and they would receive further guidance on this during the trip. Whilst the reflective log is not the focus of this particular paper this was another method by which students were encouraged to reflect on their learning throughout the voyage.

After the cruise cameras were collected and all digital photos downloaded by researchers. Students were asked to save onto a memory stick any further digital photos from their own cameras and individual appointments were made with each student. On return to the university 4 students declined to participate in the photo-elicitation stage and have therefore not been included in this study. 12 students were interviewed individually and asked to choose 5 photos (which could include those from their own camera) that best evidenced what they had learnt about the cruise industry. Students were required to explain why their chosen photos best represented learning and to provide details of what that learning was. This was then transcribed by the researcher.

The learning objective B 'Examine staff roles and duties of main departments on board a ship' was further categorised to help identify specific areas of onboard activities namely: Bi General/ Bii Bridge/ Biii Kitchen/ Biv Stores/ Bv Talk by Senior Ship Personnel.

Learning objective E 'Understand the experience of a cruise passenger offered on board a ship' was also further categorised: Ei Food/ Eii Excursions/ Eiii Entertainment/ Eiv Views of ships. The researchers coded the photos based on the learning objectives with reference to the students' comments.

Each photo was given a code based on: Student 1-12: i.e. S1, Photo number 1-5, Learning Objectives A, Bi, Bii, Biii, Biv, Bv, C, D, Ei, Eii, Eiii, Eiv.

Step 1. Researchers matched photographs 1-5 to learning objectives A-E based on photo elicitation interviews.

Step 2. Researchers sought evidence of learning linked to learning objectives A-E from photo elicitation interviews.

Step 3. Researchers sought evidence of learning not linked to learning objectives from photo elicitation interviews.

FIGURE 1- CATEGORISATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo Theme	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	Total Photos
Behind the Scenes													33
Bridge	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓			✓	✓✓	8
Kitchen	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Laundry	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓									6
Stores						✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	5
Tour of Ship	✓	✓											1
Talk by Officers					✓				✓				2
Crew Info Board						✓	✓	✓					3
Onboard Ents													**6**
Cookery Demo.							✓	✓					2
Nightclub		✓											1
Stage Show								✓			✓		2
Restaurant											✓		1
On Board Various													**7**
Bins						✓	✓						2
Fire Hose						✓							1
Life Jacket				✓	✓								2
Views from Ship			✓	✓									2
Offshore Excursions													**14**
Touristic Scene			✓	✓	✓✓		✓		✓	✓✓		✓	9
Being a Tourist			✓	✓									2
Embarkation											✓		1
View of Ships									✓	✓			2

FINDINGS

A categorisation of the photographs (Figure 1, above) shows, perhaps unsurprisingly considering the nature of the pre-arranged activities, that all students included pictures depicting images from 'behind the scenes' tours. Indeed one student S1 chose all 5 photos from these activities. Of the 60 photographs taken in total, over half fell into the 'behind the scenes' category which highlights, from a learning perspective, the importance placed by students on the opportunity to participate in activities that give them an insight into the operation and management of the ship something that most cruise passengers are not able to do. The visit to the Bridge, the Kitchen, the Laundry and the Stores were the source of 22 of the photographs. The images of the Bridge tended to be of the technical equipment and the navigation maps. The pictures of the kitchens and stores were more varied. See below for typical examples:

S121BII

S61BII

S23BIII

S32BIII

S103BIV

S122BIV

Other onboard activities photographs provided included those that one might expect from a cruise tourist and depicted scenes of entertainment S115Eiii, and views from the ship, S34Eiv. However, photographs of seemingly random items including rubbish bins S62D identify the student as cruise 'learner' rather than cruise 'tourist'.

S115EIII

S34EIV

S62D

14 of the 60 chosen photographs were taken during off-ship activities and portray typical tourist scenes S91Eii, S102Eii and students engaging in touristic activities S45Eii.

S91Eɪɪ   S102Eɪɪ   S45Eɪɪ

The reflexive element of the research elicited comments that confirmed that the field trip did indeed create an environment whereby students could apply learning from the classroom into the real-life environment of the cruise ship. The photo elicitation interviews revealed that of the 12 participating students 9 used the term 'learnt' or 'learning' in their discussion. Whilst the remaining 3 did not use the terms specifically, learning was implied by 2 through comments such as 'I absorbed a lot about what the officer was saying about the importance of navigation' S13Bii, and, 'I was shocked at the impact of the cruise industry on Dubrovnik' S7Eii. Only one student provided a simple descriptive narrative of what was in the chosen photographs with no reference to learning. Examples included:

'To see how much food is required for just 1 weeks cruise voyage helps me to understand the enormity of the way food is brought onto the ship and then processed to all the different departments. They are very strict with the way food is used and everything is monitored. The dates of foods, rotation of foods and different storage rooms with different emperatures is recorded with sophisticated computer system.' S92Biv.

'This has re-enforced the importance of the operations behind the scenes. The kitchens are laid out in separate stations and in the background there are a group of chefs who are preparing the vegetables. Note that all staff are wearing appropriate uniforms and this is for safety and health reasons when preparing foods for passengers. Food for staff is prepared in a different area. There are different areas for different sections for example the washing up is in a different area away from the fresh food area.' S114Biii.

Additional observations relating to the reality of ship life included comments such as, 'Looking behind the scenes has given me insight into the vastness of the ships operation and how strong management is needed to keep it all going' S64Biv, 'There is

so little space to do so much work' S1Bvii, and, 'the staff have very small cabins and sometimes there can be up to 4 in a cabin' S25Bi.

Photographs were provided to cover all the learning objectives although only one student took a photograph to represent objective A 'Experience the process of embarkation, disembarkation'. As all students experienced embarkation and disembarkation for themselves it can be suggested that they all acquired first-hand knowledge of process but did not deem it significant enough to photograph, or, if they did indeed take a picture of these procedures, significant enough to choose for evidence of learning. Whilst on the Bridge 1 student did however, take a picture of the ships record which showed the 'berth allocation and departure dates as these are very important.' S112C.

Images reflecting objective B 'Examine staff roles and duties of main departments on board a ship', were the most numerous. This was not necessarily surprising as many meetings had been pre-arranged where students would be able to meet and listen to staff discuss their roles and responsibilities. 8 students took photographs of the Bridge where they met the Captain and listened to a talk by the First Officer:

'This picture was taken when we had the opportunity to visit the Bridge. I learnt a lot about the role of the 2nd officer. I was amazed about the amount of technology and learnt about the importance of navigation on a cruise ship. Those working on the bridge had a range of qualifications but they also had to have knowledge of health and safety – it's not just the Captain who had major responsibilities.' S54Bii.
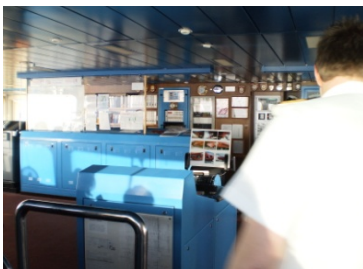
'This photo is during the Bridge tour and it was interesting to see how the ship was managed from the senior navigational officers. We learnt a lot about navigation. There is a hierarchical structure of officers- at the top is the Captain. Communication is vital for efficiency throughout the ship and they need to be constantly aware of any faults which could happen throughout the ship.' S24B2.

Similar photographs depicting the talk by the Hotel Director, Entertainment and Retail Director and Food and Beverage Manager were chosen by 2 students and their comments expressed their enthusiasm for this opportunity: 'We had chance to ask

questions about working on board ships. The speakers were very honest and gave the positive and negative side of working on a ship – which we had already discussed in class. This discussion made me feel good and positive about life on board a ship. This was information out of the classroom and this was about real life great coming from those working in the industry.' S53Bv.

'I chose this picture because we had an opportunity for a question and answer session with some of the senior officers on the ship. The discussion was informal and we were free to ask lots of questions. I'm very interested in the working lifestyle on the ship. They told us that it's not just a job, it's a lifestyle, it's hard work but very rewarding – although it may not suit everyone to work in quite an intense environment.' S93Bv.

Interviews also revealed comments about the cultural diversity of the crew members: 'I didn't expect the amount of dishes and pans. This man is working on his own and seems to get on with his work. He looks as though he is from the Philippines and employed in a manual job. This is an important job for him because he can send money back home to his family which is important for their economy.' S104Biii.

'

This picture shows a level of hierarchy working in an environment where there are different people for different jobs. He looks as though he works well with others and seems dedicated to his work. I think the only British staff member in the kitchen I've seen is the Executive Chef.' S15Biii.

Whilst Communication systems (Learning objective C 'Explain communication systems for crew and passengers') were not discussed in great detail by students- possibly because of the difficulty in visually capturing a process that is often intangible, 2 students took photographs of the Staff Notice board, and one discussed the importance of communication between various groups during off-shore ship arranged excursions: 'This shows different queues for the different excursions which have been organised next to the coach and the ship. I noticed that they are managed by both the cruise and the ship. A passenger is chatting with the coach driver. Communication is very important as it is a three way process, the ship, the shore tour operators and the passengers.' S111Eii.
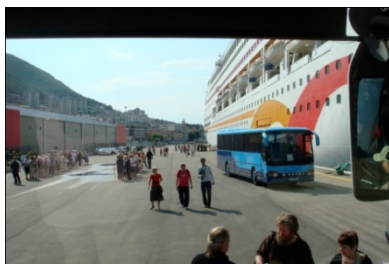
Themes relating to learning objective D 'Examine Health and safety processes on board a ship' appeared in 6 pictures although discussion with students revealed that

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health and safety issues were reflected upon even if they were not immediately apparent from the picture alone (see S54Bii):

'This picture shows the responsibility the cruise industry takes to get rid of waste responsibly. It shows how waste is managed on board a ship and stored before it is got rid of -flat pack as much as possible and shrink the waste packages because they
need to store the stuff. Stuff is stored off the ground for hygiene reasons.' S84D.

Learning objective E 'Understand the experience of a cruise passenger offered on board a ship' appeared in images representing onboard activities and off shore excursions. In total there were 14 pictures taken off-shore during ship and self organised excusions. The comments around these pictures often related to memorable experiences:

'This is a picture of a main course I ordered from the special dining room and we had to pay an extra charge. This was served in the La Luna Restaurant. Interesting how the way the meal was served denotes contemporary cuisine. The table was in a contemporary setting, quite modern and even the design of the plate was to compliment the overall theme of the place.' S113Ei.

'This is me and G. drinking champagne in St Marks Square. This is a typical tourist pose which shows tourists enjoying the moment and experience the cruise lifestyle experience in a different country. Cruising brings in many tourists that can contribute to the local economy through purchasing goods, such as souvenirs, food and drink in local restaurants and other things.' S35Eii.

'This was a really good way of getting passengers involved with trying the different foods. The 2 head chefs are working together although in competition. I noticed that one of them was from the special restaurant- Passengers loved this – I liked this as it was different. What a great way to build up passenger – cruise relationships!' S71Eiii.

Students also covered learning about the cruise industry that the researchers were not necessarily covered by the learning objectives per se:

'Seeing this ship on the quay side reinforced my learning of budget cruise. I don't think I would like to go on this ship as it looks tired and quite small although I'm quite happy to go on a budget flight. Budget cruises meet the needs of the different target markets otherwise they would not be operating. They are in competition with some big brand names such as P&O, Carnival and Royal Caribbean International.' S101Eiv.

'Mixed with the locals and learnt about their culture and boats were important as some of them relied on them for their income.' S42Eiv. 'This is us enjoying the local drinks and mixing with the local people. Immersing with local people be it for a short time. Learning something about their culture was interesting. Enjoying the cruise experience is not just about being on board the ship.' S45eii. 'They (gondolas) were expensive to hire because a local person has to operate them.' S33Eii.

The photo elicitation interviews enabled the researchers to discover what the photograph did not immediately reveal particularly the photographs of S2:

'This is the main corridor which links all departments below decks. They call it the M4 corridor. Staff work different contracts usually about 6 months. The staff have their own restaurant and because of the varied cultures there is a selection of food which caters for all tastes. The staff have small cabins and sometimes there can be up to four in a cabin.' S25Bi.

'Although this picture is blurred I learnt a lot about passengers and communication. You would have thought the elderly passengers would be intimidated by a group of younger passengers like ourselves. Communicating with a different typology of cruise tourist was interesting. Although there was a huge age different we were able to talk to these people because we all had something in common and that was the cruise where it seems that barriers are broken down to allow greater communication between cruise passengers.' S22Eiii.

CONCLUSION

A cruise field trip such as the one described in this paper enabled the students to immerse themselves in the subject directly linked to their studies. Clearly defined academic aims and objectives created a structure around which activities were designed that would reinforce classroom based learning. Whilst the students were not aware of the specific nature of these aims and objectives they were aware of the need to reflect on

what they had learnt and to apply this learning in the cruise ship environment. Taking photographs enabled them to provide tangible evidence of their reflection and photo elicitation interviews provided the opportunity for them to reflect further. Whilst the photographs are not necessarily technically proficient and some are indeed obscure and blurred they nevertheless have meaning for the individuals who took them. Being able to articulate the meanings behind the photographs encouraged students to discuss what they represented to them as individuals and how they linked to prior and new knowledge. Furthermore the photographs also show that learning has taken place at different times be it during a tour of the kitchens, laundry and other similar areas or during their own personal 'space' such as tour visits or leisure time on and off the cruise ship. Each photograph links to one or more of the learning outcomes and the comments show that the photograph is a 'creative tool' which reveals how learning goes beyond just 'looking and learning' but by 'learning from experience' and drawing from previous knowledge. For example the photograph (chosen by S11) shows a chef in a kitchen but the student also draws upon a greater understanding of health and safety, job roles, organisational structure and activity which is something that is not tangibly embedded in the photograph.

A cruise field trip is a valuable activity that allows students to contextualise knowledge gained in the classroom. Photo elicitation provides an interesting method for both staff and students alike to reflect upon the experience and hence embed knowledge. Whilst this paper makes no claim for the depth of learning achieved and some might very well argue that we provide only evidence of surface learning it is nevertheless a worthy and enjoyable method that engages students in reflection in a contemporary way. It must be noted that for a field trip to be truly worthwhile then clear academic objectives must be set and the ground work provided in advance.

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THE INFLUENCE OF DINING ENVIRONMENTAL PERCEPTIONS ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS THROUGH CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE UPSCALE RESTAURANT CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of dining environmental perceptions on behavioral intentions through customer satisfaction in the upscale restaurant context. Structural equation modeling showed that five dimensions (i.e., facility aesthetics, lighting, layout, ambience, and service staff) of the physical environment influenced customer satisfaction level. In particular, service staff was the most significant predictor of customer satisfaction among the six components of the physical environment. Customer satisfaction was also found to be the predictor of behavioral intentions. Additionally, customer satisfaction played partial mediating role in the proposed model. Finally, theoretical and practical implications for academic researchers and restaurateurs are discussed.

KEYWORDS: Physical environments, customer satisfaction, behavioral intentions, upscale restaurants.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last one decade, hospitality scholars and managers have paid growing attention on the important role of physical environments (also interchangeably known as 'atmospherics') since it is considered one of key factors in satisfying customers in the hospitality industry (Dube & Renaghan, 2000; Han & Ryu, 2009; Heide & Gronhaug , 2009; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Kim & Moon, 2009; Liu & Jang, 2009; Magnini & Parker, 2009; Ryu & Jang, 2007). In particular, the physical environment is an important determinant of consumer psychology (e.g., satisfaction) and behavior (e.g., patronage and word-of-mouth) when a service is consumed primarily for hedonic purposes and when customers spend moderate to long time periods in the atmospheric place (Ryu & Jang, 2007; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). For instance, in the case of upscale restaurants, customers' consumption is primarily driven by hedonic purposes, not functional motives (Lin, 2004; Ryu & Jang, 2007; Tang et al., 2001). Moreover, customers may spend two hours or more, and they sense the physical surroundings consciously and unconsciously before, during, and after the meal. In addition to food and service, pleasant physical setting (e.g., innovative interior design and décor, pleasing music, subdue lighting, unique color scheme, ambient odor, spacious layout, appealing table settings, and attractive service staff) should determine to a large extent the degree of overall customer satisfaction and loyalty (Han & Ryu, 2009; Kim & Moon, 2009; Sulek & Hensley, 2004).

Figure 1 presents various types of service settings combining the effects of longer stays in the service environment with consumers' hedonic motives (e.g., as when customer spends all week at a vacation resort). Typology clearly shows that the physical environment is more critical in those settings in which consumers patronize service providers more for emotional motives than for functional purposes, and for which they spend more time in the service facility than for shorter stays (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). This study examines the determinants of customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions with hedonic services, particularly in the upscale restaurant context.

		Consumption Purpose	
Time Spent in Facility		Utilitarian	Hedonic
	Importance of the Physical Environment	Low ——————→ High	
Low (minutes)	Low	Fast food restaurants	Miniature golf
Moderate (hours)	↓	Health clinics	Upscale restaurants
Extended (days)	High	Hospitals	Resorts

Source: Wakefield & Blodgett (1999)

Figure 1. Typology of Service Environments

Bitner (1992) claimed that managers continually plan, build, change, and control an organization's physical surroundings, but frequently the impact of a physical environment or its change on ultimate consumer satisfaction is not fully understood. The importance of the physical environment has gained great attention in areas such as environmental psychology, retailing, marketing, organizational behavior, and consumer research texts. However, its elements have not been empirically examined to any great extent, particularly in the upscale restaurant context. Moreover, the empirical research conducted has primarily focused on one or several particular elements (e.g., music, color, lighting, crowdedness) of the physical environment on the customers' purchasing behavior (Han & Ryu, 2009; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Kim & Moon, 2009; Liu & Jang, 2009; Ryu & Jang, 2007). Little detailed investigation has been conducted on the influence of the combined effect of the physical environmental elements on customers' satisfaction level and subsequent behavior within hospitality settings, specifically in upscale restaurant settings. Despite the indication that tangible physical environment indeed plays an important role in enhancing customer satisfaction and subsequent behavioral intention in hedonic services such as upscale restaurants, little previous studies examined such impacts in this context. Thus, this study seeks to address this gap by investigating the influences of customer perceptions of physical environment on their satisfaction and their intended behaviors in the upscale restaurant setting. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of customers' perceptions of dining environments on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in the upscale restaurant context.

This study is important from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Although theory related to the service environment has been well developed, little customer behavior research has been performed to test how multi-components of physical environment influence overall customer satisfaction and subsequent customer behavior in the upscale restaurant context. By investigating multi-dimensions of environmental stimuli, this study attempted to understand the distinct effects of each environmental dimension on consumer behavior so that upscale restaurant managers might understand more fully how to enhance the perceived quality of their dining environment. An understanding of the effect of changes in physical environment on customers' behavior might thus guide management's actions when making decisions regarding the renovation of interior design. It is expected that the conceptual model, survey instrument, methodology, and findings of this study can be used to establish what they are doing right or wrong to meet customer satisfaction, which could lead to customer loyalty.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Physical Environment

Considerable research has paid attention on the role the physical environment (also interchangeably used as 'atmospherics') on consumer behavior (Dube & Renaghan, 2000; Han & Ryu, 2009; Heide & Gronhaug , 2009; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Kim & Moon, 2009; Liu & Jang, 2009; Magnini & Parker, 2009; Ryu & Jang, 2007). In particular, during the past several decades, a number of studies have been conducted to discover various components of physical environments (Baker, 1987; Baker, Levy, & Grewal; 1992; Berman & Evans, 1995; Bitner, 1992; Brady & Cronin, 2001; Knutson, & Patton, 1995; Raajpoot, 2002; Ryu & Jang, 2008a; Stevens, Turley & Milliman, 2000; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). Recently, Ryu and Jang (2008b) developed a scale called DINESCAPE to measure how customers perceive dining environments in an upscale restaurant context. Similarly, in this study, the physical environment refers to the man-made physical and human surroundings in the dining area of upscale restaurants, which can be controlled by restaurateurs, as opposed to the natural environment. The following sections describe the six DINESCAPE dimensions (facility aesthetics, lighting, ambience, layout, table settings, and service staff) and propose hypotheses for the relationships between the physical environments, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. The measurement items used in this study are presented in Table 1.

Facility Aesthetics. Facility aesthetics means architectural design, along with interior design and décor that contribute to the attractiveness of the dining environment (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). Facility aesthetics can be a critical aspect of attracting and maintaining customers to a restaurant (Cobe, 2007). Not only it can influences consumer traffic to a restaurant, but it can also affects the revenue of restaurant. A lot of restaurants recognize and utilize facility aesthetics to capture specific restaurant themes (Barbas, 2002). For instance, Rainforest Café and Planet Hollywood made their mark through innovative interior design and décor. Additionally, it can play as an important marketing tool by affecting customer responses such as attitudes, emotions, price perception, value,

satisfaction, and behavior (Berry & Wall, 2007; Han & Ryu, 2009; Liu & Jang, 2009; Pullman & Robson, 2007; Ryu & Jang, 2007). For instance, once inside the dining area, customers often spend hours observing (consciously and subconsciously) the interior of the dining area. These evaluations are likely to affect their attitudes towards the restaurant.

Lighting. Research indicates that there is the relationship between lighting level preferences and individuals' emotional responses and approach-avoidance behaviors. Areni and Kim (1994) identified the impact of in-store lighting on various aspects of shopping behavior (e.g., consumer behavior, amount of time spent, and total sales) in a retail store setting. The results revealed that brighter lighting influenced shoppers to examine and handle more products but did not have an impact on sales or time spent in the store. Knez and Kers (2000) examined the influence of indoor lighting, gender, and age on mood and cognitive performance. It was found that indoor lighting was an affective source that may convey emotional meanings differentiated by gender, age, or both. Lighting can be one of the most powerful physical stimuli in restaurants, particularly in upscale restaurants. While bright lighting at fast-food restaurants (e.g., McDonald's) may symbolize quick service and relatively low prices, subdued and warm lighting may symbolically convey full service and high prices.

Ambience. Ambient elements refer to intangible background characteristics (e.g., music, scent, temperature) that tend to affect the non-visual senses and may have a subconscious effect on customers (Baker, 1987). Previous studies have found that atmospheric music can (1) affect customer perceptions of business places (Mattila & Wirtz, 2001; North & Hargreaves, 1998); (2) elicit emotions (Ryu & Jang, 2007); (3) influence customer satisfaction and relaxation (Magnini & Parker, 2009; Oakes, 2003); (4) increase shopping time and waiting time (Yalch & Spangenberg, 2000); (5) decrease perceived shopping time and waiting time (Hui et al., 1997; Yalch & Spangenberg, 2000); (6) influence dining speed (Milliman, 1986); (7) influence purchase intentions (Baker et al., 1992; North & Hargreaves, 1998); (8) amend consumer perceptions of brand personality (Magnini & Parker, 2009); (9) influence buyer/seller interaction (Magnini & Parker, 2009); (10) enhance employee productivity (Magnini & Parker, 2009); and (11) increase sales (Magnini & Parker, 2009; Mattila & Wirtz, 2001; North & Hargreaves, 1998). Moreover, the influence of pleasant scents as a powerful tool to increase sales has gained much attention in retail businesses (Bone & Ellen, 1999; Chebat & Michon, 2003). Retailers know that aroma can have an impact on a consumer's desire to make a purchase. It is also suggested that ambient scent might also influence a consumer's mood, emotion, or subjective feeling state (Bone & Ellen, 1999; Chebat et al., 2009). Additionally, Zemke and Shoemaker (2009) conducted an empirical study to investigate how introducing an ambient scent affects interactions between people within a meeting room. The study revealed that introducing an ambient scent into a meeting room significantly increased the number of social interactions between subjects.

Layout. Spatial layout refers to the way in which objects (e.g., machinery, equipment, and furnishings) are arranged within the environment. Just as the layout in discount stores facilitates the fulfillment of functional or utilitarian needs, an interesting

and effective layout can also facilitate fulfillment of pleasure or hedonic needs (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994; Ryu & Jang, 2008b). Spatial layout that makes people feel constricted may have a direct effect on customer quality perceptions, excitement levels, and indirectly on their desire to return. This implies that service or retail facilities that are specifically designed to add some level of excitement or arousal to the service experience such as in an upscale restaurant should provide ample space to facilitate exploration and stimulation within the physical environment (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). The locations of tables in restaurants have a tremendous impact on the overall experience of a customer. Table placement has the ability to transmit a sense of privacy, portray the functionality you desire, and operates as a boundary for the customer (Lin, 2004).

Table Settings. Raajpoot (2002) explored the domain of tangible quality construct known as TANGSERV in foodservice industry. The results found that TANGSERV captured three dimensions: ambient factors (e.g., music, temperature), design factors (e.g., location, seating arrangement), and product/service factors (e.g., food presentation, food variety). The findings proved that product/service were very important aspects of tangible quality. Ryu and Jang (2008a) suggested that table settings should be considered important determinants of tangible quality in the luxurious market such as upscale restaurants. Upscale restaurants should be designed to deliver a prestigious image to attract upper-class customers as to their intended market. Thus, high quality of flatwares (e.g., knives, spoons, forks), chinawares (e.g., plate/china, dishes, cups), glasswares (e.g., glass), linen (white table cloths, napkin presentation) will impact customer perceptions of quality. The way in which the table is decorated can also make customers feel prestigious or elegant. For example, visually attractive candle on the table may be appealing to the customers, especially female. The way in which the table is decorated can also make customers feel prestigious or elegant. For example, visually attractive candle on the table may be appealing to the customers, especially female. Even though this dimension has not been much examined in the academia probably because it is very unique and valid only to restaurants, dining equipment is presumed to influence diners' satisfaction levels.

Service Staff. Social elements refer to the people (i.e., employees and their customers) in the service setting (Baker, 1987). The social variables include employee appearance, number of employees, gender of employees, and dress or physical appearance of other customers. A professional employee uniform may effectively convey an organization's image and core values in a very up-close-and-personal way. Baker et al. (1994) found that consumers perceived a card and gift store with prestige-image social factors (e.g., more sales personnel on the floor, sales personnel wearing professional attire, and a salesperson greeting customers at the entrance to the store) as providing of higher service quality than a store with discount-image social factors (e.g., one salesperson on the floor, sales personnel not wearing professional attire, and no greeting offered at the entrance to the store). Tombs and McColl-Kennedy (2003) found that the social environment dictated the desired social density which influenced customers' affective and cognitive responses as well as repurchase intentions.

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Influence of Physical Environment on Customer Satisfaction

Previous empirical studies have shown the influence of the physical environment on customer satisfaction (Chang, 2000; Han & Ryu, 2009; Hui *et al.*, 1997; Knutson & Patton, 1995; Mattila & Wirtz, 2001; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) suggested that service/retail facilities, specifically designed to add some level of excitement or arousal to the service experience as in an upscale/family restaurant, should provide ample space to facilitate exploration and stimulation within physical surroundings. This effective layout induces a positive customer evaluation of overall consumption experiences. Knutson and Patton (1995) found five essential components of service quality and stressed the importance of physical surroundings, such as décor and artifacts, in influencing customer satisfaction and post purchase behavior in the restaurant industry. Hui et al. (1997) noted that creating favorable ambience such as playing music in the service environment is like adding a favorable feature to a product (or service), and the likely outcome is a more positive evaluation of the environment. Dube et al. (1999) found that quality of service involving physical surroundings like guest room design/cleanliness correlated highly with guest satisfaction in the hotel industry.

Chang (2000) found that physical environments (i.e., visually appealing physical facilities, cleanliness, comfortable seating, and safe layout) had a significant impact on customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction, in turn, functioned as a significant determinant of return intentions. However, the study failed to capture the multi-dimensions of the physical environment by using only one dimension. Mattila and Wirtz (2001) examined the main effect of matching ambient stimuli on consumer behaviors in retail setting. The findings showed that the matching ambient stimuli, specifically when ambient scent and music are congruent with each other in terms of their arousing quality, resulted in high evaluations of the store environment, enhanced satisfaction level, and higher levels of approach and impulse behaviors. Namkung and Jang (2008) found that not only food (i.e., appealing food presentation, tasty food) and service (i.e., reliable service, responsive service, and competent employees) were important attributes, but atmospherics (i.e., spatial seating arrangement, fascinating interior design, pleasing background music) were also salient attributes to the high satisfaction of diners.

Recently, Han and Ryu (2009) conducted a study to examine the relationships among three components of the physical environment (décor and artifacts, spatial layout, and ambient conditions), price perception, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in the restaurant industry. The findings revealed that all three factors of the physical environment strongly influenced how customers perceived price, and this price perception, in turn, enhanced customer satisfaction level and directly/indirectly influenced customer loyalty. It was also found that customer satisfaction as a significant determinant of customer loyalty. Based on aforementioned discussions, the following hypotheses were proposed:

H1: Facility aesthetics have a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
H2: Lighting has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
H3: Ambience has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

H4: Layout has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
H5: Table settings have a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
H6: Service staff has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

Influence of Customer Satisfaction on Behavioral Intentions

A great deal of previous research has shown empirical evidence of a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Fornell et al., 1996; Han & Ryu, 2009; Kim et al., 2009). Cronin and Taylor (1992) revealed that satisfaction is a critical determinant of positive behavioral intentions in various service sectors (e.g., fast food, banking, and dry cleaning). Fornell et al. (1996) indicated that enhancing satisfaction level contributed to building customer loyalty in regards to the repurchase likelihood and price tolerance given repurchase. Kim et al. (2009) examined the relative importance of institutional DINESERV factors (i.e., food quality, atmosphere, service quality, convenience, and price and value) on customer satisfaction, return intention and word-of-mouth endorsement in the university dining facilities. The results indicated that all DINESERV dimensions had a positive influence on overall customer satisfaction and revisit intention. Customer satisfaction was also found to be a significant determinant of return intention and positive word-of-mouth endorsement. Han and Ryu (2009) conducted a study to provide empirical evidence of building customer loyalty through the physical environment (i.e., décor and artifacts, spatial layout, and ambient conditions), price perception, and customer satisfaction in the restaurant industry. The findings showed that the direct effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty was statistically significant. Satisfied customers are likely to remain loyal to the provider by repatronizing the service/product, by spreading positive word-of-mouth, and by spending more. Therefore, it was hypothesized that customer satisfaction was a significant predictor of customer loyalty in the upscale restaurant industry.

H7: Customer satisfaction has a positive effect on behavioral intentions.

Figure 2 shows the conceptual model of the relationships among six components of the physical environment, customer satisfaction, and behavior intentions.
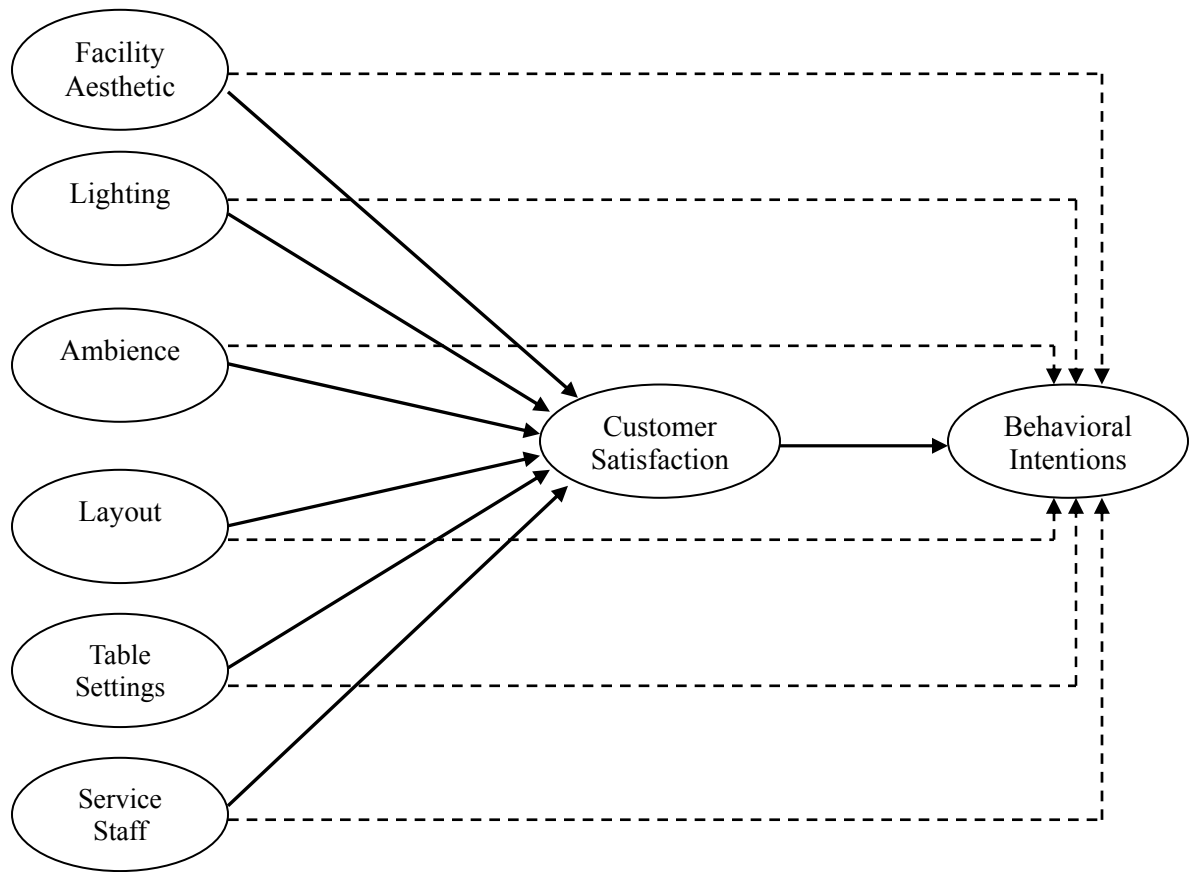
Note: (1) solid lines: Links and constructs in the proposed model; (2) dotted lines: Added links to the proposed model in an alternative model

Figure 2. Causal Relationships Between Latent Variables

METHOD

Measurements

The operationalizations of the questionnaire were developed based on the extant literature to examine the relationships between the physical environments, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions in the upscale restaurant setting. Six dimensions of DINESCAPE scale (i.e., facility aesthetics, lighting, ambience, layout, table settings, and service staff) were measured with 21 items using a 7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) in order to assess how customers perceived the quality of dining environments in an upscale restaurant context as presented in Table 1 (Ryu & Jang, 2007, 2008a). Specifically, facility aesthetics were assessed using five items (i.e., paintings/pictures, plants/flowers, wall décor, colors, quality of furniture). Lighting was measured using three items (i.e., warm lighting, welcoming lighting, comfortable

lighting). Ambience was assessed using four items (i.e., relaxing music, pleasing music, comfortable temperature, enticing aroma). Layout was measured using three items (i.e., enough seat space, crowded seating arrangement, easy-to-move layout). Table settings were assessed using three items (i.e., high-quality tableware, attractive linens, attractive table setting). Service staff was measured using three items (i.e., attractive employees, neat and well dressed employees, adequate number of employees).

Customer satisfaction was measured using a 7-point Likert scale with three items (e.g., "Overall, I am satisfied with this restaurant") (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Oliver, 1997). Finally, behavioral intentions were assessed using a 7-point Likert scale with four items (e.g., "I would like to come back to this restaurant in the future") (Han & Ryu, 2009; Ryu & Jang, 2007). Finally, socio-demographic variables (e.g., gender, age, income, education level) were measured at the end of the questionnaire. Then, a pilot test of the research instrument was conducted as a preliminary test of the questionnaire. 20 actual customers at an upscale restaurant participated to assess content adequacy assessment. In summary, based on the results of content adequacy assessment, modifications of items were made.

Data Collection

A field survey approach was employed in this study. The data were collected from customers at three upscale restaurants which provide customers with full table service under high-quality of physical surroundings. Using a convenience sampling approach, a total of 300 responses were collected at three upscale restaurants in Midwest and Southeast states. Customers were given surveys at the end of their main entrée and asked to participate in the study. After deleting incomplete responses, 292 questionnaires were used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS for Window 12.0 and LISREL 8.54. As suggested by Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two step approach, a measurement model was first estimated before the structural model was tested. In the first step, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to identify whether the measurement variables reliably reflected the hypothesized latent variables (facility aesthetics, lighting, ambience, layout, table settings, service staff, customer satisfaction, behavioral intention) using the covariance matrix. All latent constructs were allowed to intercorrelate freely without attribution of a causal order. In addition to Cronbach's alphas, item reliabilities, composite reliabilities, and average variance extracted (AVE) were also calculated to check the reliability of the proposed model. Furthermore, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the model were tested by using Average variance extracted (AVE) which reflects the overall amount of variance captured by the construct. It has been suggested that the AVE value exceed .50 for a latent construct to meet convergent validity (Hair et al., 1998). Fornell and Larcker's (1981) suggestion for discriminant validity test was conducted. The AVE for each construct should be higher than the squared correlations between the two associated constructs to meet discriminant validity.

In the second step, a structural equation modeling (SEM) with latent variables was used to test the hypotheses. The facility aesthetics, lighting, ambience, layout, table settings, and service staff were exogenous variables and customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions were endogenous variables in the analysis. Finally, a multiple regression analysis was furthermore conducted to examine the effects of individual physical environmental attributes on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions.

RESULTS

Profile of the Respondents

In the present study, 43.66% of customers were male and 56.34% of customers were female. 66.7% of customers were older than 46 years old ($\leq$ 25 years age = 2.0%; 26-35 years of age, 13.7%; 36-45 years of age, 17.6%; 46-55 = 25.5%; $\geq$ 56 years of age, 41.2%). The survey participants were relatively highly educated. 92% of customers had at least some college level education. In terms of household income, approximately 98% of customers make at least $20,000 per year. 62.5% of customers make more than $99,000 per year and 87.5% of respondents made more than $60,000 of household income level. In particular, 40% of customers make more than one million dollars per year. A majority of respondents were Caucasian (85.7%). Among the participants, 36.9% described that it was their first time to visit the restaurant, and 63.1% reported that they have visited the restaurant two or more times.

Measurement Model

A series of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using maximum likelihood estimation on the covariance matrix were conducted to refine the factor structure of the measurement model. The initial 28 items were subjected to a CFA. Based on the results of the first CFA, five items were deleted because of low factor loadings and low squared multiple correlations. Specifically, a total of 2 items of facility aesthetics (i.e., "Temperature was comfortable" and "Aroma was enticing"), 1 items of service staff (i.e., "An adequate number of employees made me feel cared for"), and 2 items of behavioral intentions (i.e., "I intend to stay longer than planned" and "I intend to spend more than planned") were removed. Once these items were dropped, CFA was conducted again.

The overall model fit was evaluated by the Chi-square test and other goodness-of-fit statistics on the remaining 23 items. The Chi-square test of measurement model was significant ($\chi^2_{(253)}$ = 732.72, p = .00), which indicated that the model did not fit the data. However, since the Chi-square statistic is very sensitive to a large sample size, researchers typically tend to discount the Chi-square test and resort to other indices for evaluating the model fit (Bearden, Sharma and Teel, 1982). Other widely used goodness-of-fit indices consistently showed that the measurement model fit the data well (χ^2 / d.f. = 2.90; CFI = 0.97; TLI = 0.96; NFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.079). Consequently, this measurement model was used for all further analyses.

A reliability test was conducted to assess internal consistency of multiple indicators for each construct. As shown in Table 1, all values of Cronbach's alpha estimates were between .82 and .96, indicating internal consistency of multiple measures for each construct (Nunnally, 1994). The item reliabilities ranged from .50 to .97, indicating an acceptable level of reliability (Hair et al., 1998). The composite reliabilities of constructs ranged from 0.83 to 0.98. These values indicated adequate internal consistency of multiple indicators for each construct in the model since they exceeded .70 (Hair et al., 1998). Construct validity test was conducted using the factor loadings within the constructs, average variance extracted (AVE), and the correlation between constructs. All standardized factor loadings emerged fairly high, ranging from 0.71 to 0.98. This showed that the measurement had convergent validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Table 1. Measurement Items and Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Factors (Cronbach's Alphas)	Standardized Factor Loadings	Item Reliabilities	Composite Reliabilities	AVE
Facility Aesthetics (.89)			.87	.65
Attractive paintings/pictures	.74	.54		
Appealing wall décor	.76	.58		
Beautiful plants/flowers	.71	.50		
Warm colors	.79	.63		
High-quality furniture	.79	.63		
Lighting (.92)			.95	.87
Warm lighting	.89	.80		
Welcoming lighting	.96	.87		
Comfortable lighting	.94	.83		
Ambience (.88)			.94	.89
Relaxing music	.95	.90		
Pleasing music	.94	.89		
Layout (.87)			.89	.72
Enough seating space	.82	.67		
Crowded seating arrangement	.94	.89		
Easy-to-move layout	.79	.62		
Table Settings (.87)			.87	.68
High-quality tableware	.77	.60		
Attractive linens	.87	.76		
Attractive table setting	.83	.69		
Service Staff (.82)			.83	.72
Neat and well dressed employees	.95	.91		
Attractive employees	.71	.51		
Customer Satisfaction (.94)			.96	.88
Overall, I am satisfied with this restaurant.	.88	.77		
I have really enjoyed myself at this restaurant.	.95	.91		
Overall feeling I get from this restaurant puts me in a good mood.	.97	.95		
Behavioral Intentions (.96)			.98	.96
Intention to revisit	.97	.95		
Intention to spread positive word-of-mouth	.98	.97		

Note: AVE = Average variance extracted.

Convergent validity was also indicated because all AVE values exceeded Hair et al.'s (1998) suggested cutoff of .50. Fornell and Larcker (1981) indicated that discriminant validity exists when the proportion of variance extracted in each construct exceeds the

square of the coefficient representing its correlation with other constructs. All AVE values were greater than the squared correlations between constructs, indicating adequate discriminant validity. In summary, the assessment of the measurement model showed good evidence of reliability and validity for the operationalization of the latent constructs.

Structural Model Comparisons

After confirming the measurement model, the structural model was then examined to assess the proposed conceptual model using the maximum likelihood estimation method. As suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), the structural model was evaluated using two criteria: fit indices and path significance. Chi-square value (χ^2 = 738.76, *df* = 253, *p* < .001) and other model-fit-indices (RMSEA = 0.079; TLI = 0.96; NFI = 0.96; CFI = 0.97) of the model revealed that the model fit the data reasonably well. This proposed structural model was then compared with the alternative model. A few studies suggested the direct causal relationship from the physical environment to behavioral intentions (Ryu & Jang, 2008b; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994, 1996). Thus, in the comparison model, the direct impacts of the physical environment on customers' behavioral intentions were estimated by adding six causal paths from six components of the physical environments (facility aesthetics, ambience, lighting, layout, table setting, and service staff) to behavioral intentions (see Figure 2). The results showed that the Chi-square value (χ^2 = 731.59, *df* = 247, *p* < .001) and other goodness of fit indices (RMSEA = 0.080; TLI = 0.96; NFI = 0.96; CFI = 0.97). In comparing this model with the hypothesized structural model, no significant differences emerged ($\Delta\chi^2$ = 7.17, Δdf = 6, p > .05). This indicated that adding the direct paths from the six dimensions of physical environments to behavioral intentions did not significantly improve the model fit. Additionally, while the indirect effects of facility aesthetics (β = .28, *t* = 3.22, *p* < .01), ambience (β = .13, *t* = 2.81, *p* < .01), lighting (β = .13, *t* = 2.26, *p* < .05), layout (β = .26, *t* = 3.15, *p* < .01), and service staff conditions (β = .38, *t* = 4.43, *p* < .01) on behavioral intentions in the proposed model were all significant, the added paths in the comparison model were all insignificant at the level of .05. As a result, the originally proposed model was maintained for further analyses.

Testing of Hypothesized Paths with Proposed Structural Model

The SEM was utilized to test relationships among study constructs. Table 2 presents the results of the hypothesized relationship between components of DINESCAPE and customer satisfaction. The regression paths from facility aesthetics (β = .47, t = 3.51, p < .01), lighting (β = .16, t = 2.05, p < .05), ambience (β = .23, t = 3.14, p < .01), layout (β = .40, t = 3.24, p < .01), and service staff (β = .58, t = 4.74, p < .01) to customer satisfaction were positive and significant, supporting hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, 6. However, the paths from table setting (β = .14, t = 1.76, p > .05) to customer satisfaction was not significant. Thus, hypothesis 5 was not supported. Lastly, as expected, the linkage between customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (β= .78, t = 19.53, p < .01) was positive and significant, supporting hypothesis 7. This model achieved a satisfactory level in predicting the total variance of customer satisfaction (R^2 = .66) and behavioral intentions (R^2 = .75).

Table 2. Structural Parameter Estimates

Hypothesized Path	Standardized Path coefficients	t-value	Hypothesis
H1: Facility aesthetics → CS	.47	3.51**	Supported
H2: Lighting → CS	.16	2.05*	Supported
H3: Ambience → CS	.23	3.14**	Supported
H4: Layout → CS	.40	3.24**	Supported
H5: Table settings → CS	.14	1.76	Not supported
H6: Service staff → CS	.58	4.74**	Supported
H7: CS → BI	.78	19.53**	Supported
R^2 (Customer satisfaction)	.66		
R^2 (Behavioral intention)	.75		
Goodness-of-fit Indices:	$\chi^2_{(253)} = 738.76$, (p = 0.00)		
	χ^2 / d.f. = 2.92		
	RMSEA = 0.079		
	TLI = 0.96		
	NFI = 0.96		
	CFI = 0.96		

Note: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, CS = Customer Satisfaction; BI = Behavioral Intentions, RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index; CFI = Comparative Fit Index.

Relative Importance of Physical Environmental Attributes

A multiple regression analysis was conducted with the factor scores of three measurement items for customer satisfaction as the dependent variable and 21 physical environmental attributes as the independent variables in order to test the relative importance of those attributes that lead to customer satisfaction. The results revealed that 'high-quality furniture' (t = 3.203; p < .01), 'comfortable lighting' (t = 2.264; p < .05), 'warm lighting' (t = 1.989; p < .05), 'pleasing music' (t = 4.606; p < .001), 'crowded seating arrangement' (t = 2.317; p < .05), 'attractive linens' (t = 0.102; p < .05), 'neat and well dressed employees' (t = 6.493; p < .001) were significant determinants of customer satisfaction in the upscale restaurant context (see Table 3). Based on the magnitude of standardized coefficients, 'neat and well dressed employees' (β = .320) emerged as the most important physical environmental contributor to customer satisfaction, followed by 'pleasing music' (β = .250), 'high-quality furniture' (β = .133), 'comfortable lighting' (β = .124), 'warm lighting' (β = .112), '(un)crowded seating arrangement' (β = .105), and attractive linens (β = .096). The R^2 value of .68 in the model indicates that approximately 68% of the variance in customer satisfaction was explained by physical environment in the upscale restaurant setting.

Table 3. The Effects of Physical Environments on Customer Satisfaction

	Unstandardized coefficients	SE	Standardized coefficients	t-value	p-value
Constant	-6.789	.235		-28.915	.000
Appealing wall decor	-.029	.049	-.028	-.583	.560
High-quality furniture	.130	.043	.133	3.023	.003**
Attractive paintings/pictures	.018	.050	.017	.363	.717

Beautiful plants/flowers	.003	.041	.003	.062	.951
Warm colors	-.012	.052	-.011	-.231	.818
Comfortable lighting	.127	.056	.124	2.264	.024[*]
Warm lighting	.118	.059	.112	1.989	.048[*]
Welcome lighting	-.093	.058	-.092	-1.614	.108
Relaxing music	.033	.051	.032	.649	.517
Pleasing music	.270	.059	.250	4.606	.000[***]
Comfortable temperature	-.006	.039	-.006	-.143	.886
Enticing aroma	.079	.044	.079	1.795	.074
Layout	-.007	.046	-.007	-.151	.880
Enough seating space	.072	.054	.070	1.343	.180
Crowded seating arrangement	.103	.044	.105	2.317	.021[*]
Attractive table setting	-.025	.051	-.024	-.495	.621
High-quality tableware	.062	.050	.060	1.250	.212
Attractive linens	.102	.049	.096	2.069	.039[*]
Neat and well dressed employees	.375	.058	.320	6.493	.000[***]
Attractive employees	.024	.049	.022	.491	.624
Adequate number of employees	.014	.045	.013	.315	.753

Note: $F(291) = 38.136$; $R^2 = .684$; Adjusted $R^2 = .664$

$P < .05*$ $p < .01**$ $p < .001***$

CONCLUSION

This study attempted to examine the relationships between multi components of physical environment, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions in the upscale restaurant context. A structural equation modeling analysis showed that customer perceptions of dining environments explained 66 per cent of variance in customer satisfaction. The overall variance explained in behavioral intention was 75 per cent, indicating the model of this study could well predict and explain customers' behavioral intentions in an upscale restaurant context. The findings revealed that facility aesthetics, ambience, lighting, layout, and employees had significant effects on the level of customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. This study contributes to the literature by examining the combined effects of multi dimensions of physical environments on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Thus, this study provided more comprehensive view in understanding the influence of physical environment on customer satisfaction an intended behavior.

The results of current study provide new insights for upscale restaurant managers by stressing the significant role of physical surroundings. It indicated that high quality of the physical environments could be an effective marketing tool for hedonic nature of fine-dining experience to establish customer satisfaction. Aesthetically pleasing and exciting atmospherics can play a crucial role in meeting customers' hedonic needs, which in turn leads to customers' favorable post-dining behavioral intentions. The findings of this study indicated that dimensions of the physical environment directly affecting customer satisfaction were facility aesthetics, lighting, layout, and service staff in the context of upscale restaurant, thereby suggesting better marketing and service strategies.

Certain factors were more vital than others in enhancing customer satisfaction, so the findings provide insights into determining how management efficiently allocates business resources. For instance, out of six physical environmental dimensions, service staff exerted the greatest influence on customer satisfaction. In the eyes of customers, the appearance of service staff could be an important dimension of an upscale restaurant's image. Service staff of restaurants has this important role until the service delivery process is completed. The results of this study reinforced the vital role of service staff on customers' satisfaction degree, so restaurateurs planning to enhance customer satisfaction need to consider the employees' style such as professional appearance and attractiveness. The results of regression analysis further found that the most influential element of physical environments was 'neat and well dressed employees'. Therefore, the restaurant management should keep an eye on how service staff looks (e.g., clean and styled hair, appropriate makeup, no visible underwear lines for woman,) and what he or she wears (e.g., clothing/uniform ironed, clothing/uniform with stains or spots removed, stylish tie, polished jewelry) to maintain the professional appearance of front-line employees harmonizing with the image of an upscale restaurant.

This study also revealed that facility aesthetics was the second most important contributor to customers' satisfaction level. This finding supports the important marketing role of facility aesthetics in creating unique and innovative upscale-style decorations since it is most likely to differentiate the overall atmospherics of an upscale restaurant from the competition. This study suggests restaurant managers who plan to redesign their dining area should evaluate customer perceptions of facility aesthetics (e.g., ceiling/wall décor, furniture, and color) before making any significant investment since they can vary depending on individual differences (e.g., first-timers versus repeaters) and different time period (e.g., one week after renovation versus one year after renovation). In particular, the results of regression analysis furthermore revealed that 'high-quality furniture' directly influenced the degree of customer satisfaction in the upscale restaurant context. Therefore, the restaurant management should allocate and maintain high-quality furniture that is congruent with the prestige image as well as the theme of the restaurant.

Another major physical feature directly affecting customers' satisfaction was ambience. In particular, the regression analysis found that 'pleasing music' significantly affects the degree of customer satisfaction. It is important to recognize that pleasing music can be controlled to a large extent by management, and it is probably among one of the least expensive means to manipulate customer perceptions of physical surroundings. Moreover, lighting was found to be a significant antecedent of customer satisfaction. Lighting can be one of the most salient physical stimuli in fine-dining restaurants. Restaurateurs need to be careful in controlling the level of lighting to symbolically convey the image of fine-dining experience that leads to the degree of customer satisfaction. For instance, the results of regression analysis indicated that warm and comfortable lighting can directly influence customer satisfaction. Thus, upscale restaurant management need to elicit warm and comfortable lighting to meet customer satisfaction in this dining sector. Restaurant's interior and color scheme also need to be considered to produce warm and comfortable lighting in the dining area. In addition, the

results showed that layout was another significant determinant of customer satisfaction. This indicates that upscale restaurant managers should also consider the functional/utilitarian aspect of the physical environment (e.g., enough space, uncrowned seating arrangement) besides hedonic aspects to enhance customer satisfaction. The layout of upscale restaurants needs to be designed to the largest extent to offer physical convenience, psychological comfort, and enough tangible privacy to customers.

The limitations of the present study should be noted before discussing future research suggestions. Since the data were collected in three upscale restaurants in two states, the caution needs to be paid in generalizing the findings to other restaurant segments and other places. Given the great diversity of hospitality and tourism industries, more research is necessary to determine if similar results would be derived from different contexts across various hospitality and tourism industries. Future research should also incorporate demographic differences (e.g., gender and age) since customers' reaction to physical environment may vary depending on their demographic characteristics. Moreover, incorporating other antecedents or consequences of customer satisfaction would be a fruitful avenue for future research. For instance, examining how customers' perceptions of physical surroundings elicit their affective response such as emotions as well as cognitive responses such as value perception in the hedonic consumption services would be an interesting study. In addition, the longitudinal studies can be conducted for stronger inferences. Since customers' perceived quality of physical environment can vary from time to time (e.g., one month after renovation versus one year after renovation), time is an important variable. Thus, the findings of current study could benefit from conducting a longitudinal study. Furthermore, the current study revealed that the physical environment only indirectly influenced behavioral intentions through customer satisfaction.

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DIGITAL DESTINATION MARKETING: A CASE STUDY OF THE ADIRONDACK REGION

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ABSTRACT

The advent of the Internet created a digital marketplace for information. The tourism industry has utilized this dynamic medium for e-commerce and e-marketing with international reach. This study examined the cooperative destination marketing site for the Adirondack region through website analysis. Initial analysis was performed by the researchers, with 100 participants subsequently analyzing the website and completing a survey of their behavioral intentions toward the region. Results indicated the digital media was effective in increasing awareness of the region and interest in visitation. Implications for similar destinations are presented.

INTRODUCTION

In years past, if a person wanted to acquire information about a tourist destination, he or she could seek out a travel agency and ask about specific places. There could be television ads or billboards placed haphazardly, with a chance the advertisements would be effective in getting people who already lived near the area to visit the destination. Brochures, books, and travel guides created interest in destinations, but were limited by the static nature of the mediums. All of this changed, however, with the growth of the Internet over the past decade. The tourism industry has embraced the technology and has been considered the most important service or product on the web in terms of e-commerce (Li, 2007).

This study examined the website of the Adirondack region, determining the success of creating awareness of the destination and interest in visitation. The region recently implemented a cooperative destination marketing strategy, marketing the eight separate tourism destinations as one macrodestination (D. Yu, personal communication, December 10, 2009). The purpose of this study was measure the results of the initiative.

Using the methods of Lee (2004) and Baggio (2003), website analysis was first done by the researchers. After the initial analysis, 100 participants analyzed the website and completed surveys on their behavioral intentions toward the destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Presence of the Internet

With the growth of the Internet has come the growth of one-to-one and one-to-many communications, which has enhanced the marketing tools for destination marketing (Baggio, 2003). Surveys from the past 10 years show that the top 15 tourism-spending countries also demonstrate the highest percentages of Internet users among the population, with the exception of China. The issue with the Internet being a growing media, however, is that because it is growing for everyone, the competitive pressure for destinations grows. Marketers must ensure the website is always at the same caliber as their competition. This could require hiring people who specialize in website design in order to make sure the website is highest in quality. While this can be costly, overall it is much less expensive than running advertising campaigns for only a couple months or a couple weeks. The website is a semi-permanent fixture that is dynamic in nature and can be updated with new information rather than completely starting anew every single time.

Using the Internet, tourism organizations have been able to further their branding images. Branding images, according to Kotler (2010), are "the set of beliefs held about a particular brand." Kotler goes onto talk about how the most popular brand every year is Google, which is not a physical product, but more of a service and computer destination. The second most famous brand, year after year, is Las Vegas, a destination. Travel and tourism companies are beginning to lean away from mass advertising and are starting to develop a more targeted approach to seeking and keeping customers. This will bring more communication between the individual and the business, meaning the business can provide what the customer is really looking for, instead of assuming what they want and creating a television campaign behind that (Küster, 2006). It is important in brand imaging to make sure that all parts of the brand are cohesive and connected together, there can be no gaps and nothing that differs from the central theme (Lee, 2004).

Destination Collaboration

Traditionally, when a destination decides to market itself, the areas around it are considered its competitors. It is important, however, to look into "how small neighboring destinations with limited tourism products and resources can collaborate" in their marketing campaign (Naipaul, Wang, & Okumus, 2009). In an increasing and very competitive marketplace, "the ability to create greater levels of awareness may give advantage to a poorly understood destination," (Palmer, 1995). Especially for smaller destinations, such as small towns and counties outside of larger cities, collaborating together and discovering similar attributes to bring in customers could help them gain a customer-base that they were not able to tap into before.

Neighboring destinations can form partnerships because of three different reasons: strategy, costs, and learning experiences (Naipaul, et al., 2009). While many smaller destinations are joining together to make one large destination for these reasons, it is important to look and see how they are also branching out from each other as well. The

eight regions that comprise the Adirondack Mountains are one such area working to join forces.

The Adirondack State Park is different from many tourist attractions because it spans hundreds of miles and is broken up into multiple regions. It is considered to be the largest National Historic Landmark in the United States, as well as the largest state-level protected area. Many national parks that are well known, such as Yellowstone, can easily fit inside the Adirondack State Park multiple times. The Adirondacks span from upper Fulton County (roughly 40 minutes north by northwest of Albany) to Plattsburgh on the Canadian border. Lake Placid, home of the 1982 Winter Olympic Games, is nestled in the middle of the Adirondacks and holds many well-known ski and snowboard attractions. The park has more than 3,000 lakes and 30,000 miles of rivers and streams, which provide fantastic boating, swimming, and fishing accommodations. By looking at the Adirondacks as both one destination and eight separate destinations at the same time, it is possible to examine whether or not one region is separating itself from another region, clashing with it, or hiding behind it. One can delve further to see how one region is prospering over another, and if one has strong suits that need to be brought into other regions to help their business.

METHODOLOGY

The website examined is located at http://visitadirondacks.com, the homepage for the Adirondack State Park, in Upstate New York. The Adirondacks are broken up into eight different regions: the Adirondack Coast, Adirondack Lakes, Adirondack Seaway, Tughill, Adirondack Wild, Old Forge Region, Lake George Region, and Lake Placid Region. The park takes up more than 6.1 million acres in the state of New York, much larger than even some national parks.

Before expanding the research to include a survey, the first approach to examining the website was the Lee approach, which consists of looking at the simplest aspects of the website, such as the common directories, the front page, formatting, etc. It was also important to do a content analysis of the website. Content analysis consists of observational research to evaluate the communication within the website (Lee, 2004). This research method was optimal for the initial examination because it provides an overall cursory examination, mimicking the methods of a consumer searching for destination information.

To look at the site with a little more detail, the Baggio (2003) approach was then implemented. This approach is comprised of six categories of items that can be inspected and evaluated on any website:
  1. First impact (FI): the initial impression of the website. This is a cursory examination similar to the Lee approach.
  2. Design and graphics (DG): the quality of pictures, photographs, symbols and the balance between texts and images within the website.
  3. Information contents (IC): the thoroughness and usefulness of information and clarity/correctness of the language used.

4. Interactivity and services (IS): examines the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the interactive services and the user-friendliness of the functions.
5. Structure and navigation (SN): examines the rationality of the website structure and how it is navigated.
6. Technical management (TM): includes the frequency of website content updates, response times, and the amount of errors or missing links within the website (Baggio).

These categories were represented in measurement items included in an online survey (Table 1). Items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree.

Table 1. Baggio Items[a]

Measurement Item	Category
When first entering the website, it appears to be professional and eye catching.	FI
The design of the website is of high quality and the graphics are eye-catching	DG
There is an appropriate balance of text and graphics on the website	DG
The language used on the website is clear and concise, very easy for me to understand	IC
The information on the website is thorough and useful for what I am looking at	IC
There is a fair amount of interactive services within the website and is user-friendly.	IS
The navigation and interface of the website is clear and easy for me to follow	SN
The website appears to be updated on a regular basis and is filled with new events and news	TM
There are minimal technical errors or missing links on the website	TM

[a]Baggio, 2003

A survey to measure pre- and post-website visitation awareness and behavioral intentions followed the website analysis for participants, utilizing the same 5-point scale as the previous section (Table 2). Results were analyzed via dependent t-tests.

Table 2. Destination Awareness and Intentions

Pre-website visitation	Post-website visitation
I was knowledgeable of the attractions in the Adirondack region.	I am knowledgeable of the attractions in the Adirondack region.
I was knowledgeable of the lodging accommodations in the Adirondack region.	I am knowledgeable of the lodging accommodations in the Adirondack region.
I was knowledgeable of the restaurants in the Adirondack region.	I am knowledgeable of the restaurants in the Adirondack region.

| I had a desire to visit the Adirondack region. | I have a desire to visit the Adirondack region. |
| I intended to visit the Adirondack region. | I intend to visit the Adirondack region. |

Awareness of the destination, prior visitation to the destination, frequency of visits, and proximity to the region were measured, as were demographic characteristics including gender, age, income, and marital status.

RESULTS

One hundred fifty (150) email invitations were sent using a convenience snowball sample. One hundred nineteen (119) surveys were completed, with 104 usable submissions, resulting in a 69.3% response rate. Demographics of the participants are represented in Table 3.

Table 3. Demographics of Participants (n=104[a])

Gender	Male	38
	Female	62
Age	18-24	46
	25-34	15
	35-44	9
	45-54	7
	55-64	13
	Over 65	8
Income	Under $25,000	18
	$25,000-$39,999	13
	$40,000-$59,999	6
	$60,000-$79,999	12
	$80,000-$100,000	13
	Over $100,000	7
Marital Status	Single	68
	Married	15
	Partnership	1
	Divorced	3
	Widowed	2

[a] Missing values represent participants that did not wish to answer the question

Using the Baggio based survey for analyzing the website, each participant rated the quality of the destination site (Table 4). Mean scores are based on a 5-point Likert scale with 1=Strongly disagree and 5=Strongly agree.

Table 4. Website Analysis

Measurement Item	Mean [a]	SD
When first entering the website, it appears to be professional and eye catching.	4.43	.647
The design of the website is of high quality and the graphics are eye-catching	4.35	.799
There is an appropriate balance of text and graphics on the website	4.04	.867
The language used on the website is clear and concise, very easy for me to understand	4.36	.701
The information on the website is thorough and useful for what I am looking at	4.19	.756
There is a fair amount of interactive services within the website and is user-friendly.	4.16	.770
The navigation and interface of the website is clear and easy for me to follow	4.43	.695
The website appears to be updated on a regular basis and is filled with new events and news	3.85	.879
There are minimal technical errors or missing links on the website	4.06	.959

[a] 5-point Likert scale with 1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree

The highest mean scores were initial impression and the ease of navigation, reflecting the Baggio (2003) categories of First Impact and Structure and Navigation. The lowest mean scores were the balance of text and graphics and the updating of information, reflecting the Baggio categories of Design and Graphics and Technical Management. The website did increase awareness of the destination, depicted in Table 5.

Table 5. Destination Awareness

Measurement Item	Pre-website visit		Post-website visit		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Sig.
Knowledge of the attractions in the Adirondack region.	3.00	1.26	4.27	.595	.068
Knowledge of the lodging accommodations in the Adirondack region.	2.38	1.12	4.21	.638	.199
Knowledge of the restaurants in the Adirondack region.	2.27	1.11	4.10	.731	.042*

* p<.05
[a] 5-point Likert scale with 1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree

All of the measured features of the Adirondack region experienced an increase in mean score. Dependent t-tests indicated a statistically significant increase only in the awareness of dining choices, but the increase in all dimensions may have significant implications for destination organizations. The travel intentions to the destination also increased significantly (Table 6).

Table 6. Destination Travel Intentions

Measurement Item	Pre-website visit		Post-website visit		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Sig.
Desire to visit Adirondack region.	3.50	1.20	4.18	.837	.000*
Intention to visit Adirondack region.	3.23	1.25	3.83	.956	.000*

* p<.05
[a] 5-point Likert scale with 1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree

Dependent t-tests indicated statistically significant increases in the desire and intention to visit the Adirondack region from pre- to post-website visitation.

DISCUSSIONS

The Lee Approach

When the website is initially launched, the consumer is brought to the home page, which sets the standard for the rest of the site. At the top, links are titled "First Time Visitors", "What to Do", "Where to Stay", "How to Get Here", "Groups", "Newsroom", and "About Our Regions," with a search bar above these links to search the website. Consumers can also enroll in newsletters and updates. The "I Love New York" symbol, representing the state of New York's destination marketing campaign, is found in the upper right corner, with a link to the New York State website.

Initially, when analyzing the homepage, one is attracted to the clean, crispness of the website. There are smooth lines, clear divisions between things, yet everything fits seamlessly together. The links at the top are clear and concise as to what they lead to and because they contain the main objectives for the website, they are useful for the visitor. However, there are some weaknesses in the homepage. One participant stated the video was distracting and took away from the main point of the website, She suggested it could have gone somewhere in a link, or could have been smaller. "The page is a little cluttered because of the video," the participant went on to say.

One suggestion that can be made for the website is to take the start they have made on social networking and expand on it even further. At the moment there is only a link to the Twitter account that flashes briefly for a couple seconds before moving on to other news. There is also a link embedded in the website in the "First Time Visitors" section, but the consumer must search for it. By becoming members of places such as Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr, and posting icons to the respective accounts on the bottom of the website, they are more likely to attract the younger crowd as well as older people who are starting to get into social networking themselves.

The Baggio Approach

Participants were asked, "When first entering the website, it appears to be professional and catches my attention," The strongest response was "Agree" with 47 responses (42.0%), followed by "Strongly Agree" with 45 responses (38.5%). "The design of the website is of high quality ad the graphics are eye-catching," also had a high mean ranking, with 46 participants noting strong agreement (39.3%), while 47 participants (42%) strongly agreed with the statement while "the website is user friendly." These two categories, Design and Graphics (DG) and Interactivity and Services (IS) identified by Baggio (2003), do not need to be improved further because they are already incredibly strong.

While no question had an overwhelming amount of "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree," there was a couple that had more than a few "Neutral" answers. None of the "Neutrals" were the highest percentage of answers, but had a high enough amount to warrant an examination. "There is an appropriate balance of text and graphics on the website" had nine (9) "Neutral" responses, as did the question "There is an adequate amount of interactive services within the website."

The questions "The website appears to be updated on a regular basis and is filled with new events and news," and "There are minimal technical errors or missing links on the website," had the highest amount of "Neutral" responses with 30 (25.6%) and 14 (12.0%), respectively. These are the things that would need to be worked on the most on the website in order for it to receive a more favorable response. Possibly adding an update ticker at the top of the website that shows new events concerning the Adirondacks would allow people to know that the website is often being updated to show more things. Doing a thorough run-through of the website twice a month to make sure all links are working would also help to make sure there are no broken links or errors on the website or its videos.

Impact on Travel Intentions

The impact of the website on awareness and travel intentions is substantial. While the increase in awareness is important for name/brand recognition, the behavioral intentions of travelers is the ultimate focus of marketers. The purpose of a comprehensive marketing plan should be to transition travelers' buyer readiness stage from basic awareness and knowledge to conviction and purchase.

In this study, participants showed a stronger knowledge of the individual elements of the destination, which include attractions, lodging, and dining options. Interestingly, when asked the question if they lived within 100 miles of the region, 18% of the participants stated they were "not sure," with another 13% opting not to answer the question. The non-response could be attributed to the participant not wanting to disclose their ignorance of the destination. This indicates awareness was initially lacking for many participants.

More importantly, participants desire to visit the region increased after examining the website, as did their intention to visit the region. With this one relatively inexpensive marketing tool, the desire to visit increased by 23.2%, while the intent to visit increased by 19.2%. These results would indicate the importance of a professionally designed, continuously updated website in the marketing of destinations.

CONCLUSIONS

The Adirondack region was well known to people who live in close proximity, but for people who lived further than 100 miles away, there was little to no awareness of the Adirondack region and what it has to offer. The Adirondack website was shown to be an effective marketing tool and helped raise awareness of the destination. Desire to visit the destination increased from 75% to 92% based solely on the website depiction of the Adirondack region.

While the website is very thorough and provides significant information, improvements to the overall marketing plan are possible. Marketers of the region should seek to spread knowledge of the park's existence through alternate avenues, because the initial information could motivate consumers to visit the website, which was shown to increase positive travel intentions. Additionally, building a stronger relationship with the "I Love" New York" campaign could assist with gaining a larger amount of New York City and tri-state area (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut) residents.

Future research with the participants from this study could highlight the true effectiveness of the Internet marketing tool. Follow-up information regarding the transition from the intent to visit (conviction) to actual visitation rates (purchase) could identify necessary steps destination marketers can take to increase actual visitation, especially from participants stating their new intention to visit. Additionally, comparing the separate destinations in the region with travel intentions could highlight any discrepancies in the website target market reach.

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MEASURING OF THE ATTRACTIVENESS AND INTENSITY OF TOURISM IN
CASTLES AND CHATEAUX

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ABSTRACT

To be able to manage and develop tourism and to assess the importance of individual towns, micro-regions and regions, we need an unbiased method for the evaluation of a tourist destination from various points of view. The tools for the evaluation of the influence of tourism on a municipality, a micro-region or a region should, in our opinion, include the attractiveness of castles and chateaux (ATO). To determine the ATO, we used results of primary marketing research carried out among visitors to several cultural destinations in the Czech Republic. We defined the ATO from the average distance between the tourists´ place of residence and the destination, the average number of tourists and visitors per day and the mean number of repetitive visits to castles and chateaux. This paper has confirmed the possibility of using the ATO for complex evaluation of the degree, type and intensity of tourism in the researched cultural facilities. It proved to be true that the ATO calculated from non-economic data significantly correlates with economic benefits of tourism in the given destination.

KEY WORDS: Attractiveness; Castles; Chateaux; Marketing research; Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become a significant phenomenon in our age and an important aspect of economic policy of many regions. There are various methods how to evaluate the benefit of tourism from the economic point of view, such as the payment balance of the state, the creation of direct job openings and indirect support provided by this field to other fields of economic activity. The importance of tourism also overlaps with the non-economic sphere; it contributes to the creation of the image of the state abroad and encourages cooperation of individual tourist destinations in various countries. Therefore, the competitiveness of tourist destinations has often been researched with the aim of identifying the attractiveness of a tourist area. Destination attractiveness can be defined as a combination of the relative importance of individual benefits and the perceived ability of the destination to deliver individual benefits[10]. The dimensions of destination attractiveness consist of core and augmented attributes[16]. In previous tourism research, the core dimension of cultural attractiveness included various heritage resources[15], such as history, music, paintings, folklore, and special events[12]. In contrast, the augmented dimension represented functional and physical attributes that usually influence visitors' evaluation of the core attributes. These included accommodation and catering facilities, transportation, guiding and other auxiliary services, environmental management accessibility, and quality of service, affordability or climate.

Thinking of destination attractiveness as a collection of functional attributes might, however, be rather limited in the context of cultural tourism experiences because

they depend as much on the setting as they do on its symbolic significance[13]. Several authors have suggested that places were best understood by focusing on their symbolic meaning [12, 21]. Nevertheless, physical attributes of destinations continued to be important to legacy tourists[11]. Previous studies suggest that the attractiveness of cultural destinations includes learning, awareness and understanding of other cultures, cultural exchange, and stronger cultural identity for visitors with cultural background different from that of the hosts [4, 6]. For visitors with the same cultural background as the hosts', the attractiveness of a destination depends on aspects like family bonding, community pride, and ethnic identity [2, 7].

In general, we can say that destination attractions are tourism supply factors, which represent the driving forces generating tourism demand[18] and also primary sources or determinants of measuring destination attractiveness[10]. Another measurement of destination's competitive position relative to other destinations is estimated along seven attributes – facilities, accessibility, quality of service, overall affordability, location image, climate and environment, and attractiveness[17].

The tourism industry recognizes the need to maintain its main assets, for example the attractivness of destinations. While it is now generally recognised that tourism will be a successful industry only if it is managed in an ecological and sustainable manner, some efforts are still needed to move towards a broader and more integrated approach to the tourism development[9]. Another way how to measure the attractiveness of a location is to view it from the quantitative point of view. We tried to measure of attractiveness of destination (regions or towns) [20]. And this paper presents the measuring of castles and chateaux attractiveness (ATO).

Sometimes statements about the attractiveness of a tourist destination express only a personal opinion of a speaker, and are free of any not unbiased criteria used for the determination of the extent of attractiveness. The subjective understanding of the attractiveness of a tourist destination by its visitor is very significant; nevertheless, the potential of a destination is also influenced by a number of physical factors. Tourism is a certain type of service, and like other commodities and services, it fulfils its customers' needs. Therefore, what we can influence is the quality and type of the provided services and the range of additional services which increase the attractiveness of the basic product or service.

CALCULATION OF THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF TOURIST REGIONS (ATD) [19]

To determine the attractiveness of tourist regions, we used results of primary marketing research carried out among tourists in individual tourist regions in the Czech Republic (CR) [5, 8, 14]. Such division of the CR is not identical with its administrative regions; individual tourist regions form geographic units with similar places of interest. When estimating the number of tourists, we used the data about the number of tourists in individual regions of the CR published by the Czech Statistical Institute which based these figures on the numbers of people accommodated in hotels and similar facilities.

Monitoring enabled us to determine the ratio of such tourists in individual tourist regions; from these two numbers we were able to estimate the number of tourists and

one-day visitors (see table 1). We defined the attractiveness of a tourist destination as follows:

$$Attractiveness\ of\ a\ tourist\ destination\ (ATD) = d * n * f /1000 \qquad /1/$$

Where d is the average distance of the place of residence from the destination and n is the average number of tourists and visitors per day in the given region, f is the number of days spent in the destination. Of the number of customers and the average amount of money spent per day and person, we were able to calculate the total amount of money spent by tourists during their stay in the specific region a year.

DETERMINATION OF THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF SELECTED CASTLES AND CHATEAUX (ATO)

A group of students worked on a research task in which they determined the attractiveness of selected castles and chateaux in the CR[20]. Castles and chateaux differ only in the attribution. In some case was castle rebuild onto chateaux in the past. It is reason why we do not confuse them. Castles and chateaux (ATO) were selected with regard to students´ permanent residence. At present we have data from 12 ancient monuments in the CR which have a different status on the tourist market as far as their tourist potential and the type of places of interest are concerned. This paper introduces the results of monitoring in the following castles and chateaux: chateau Hluboká nad Vltavou, chateau Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou, chateau Jindřichův Hradec, chateau Konopiště, castle Křivoklát, castle Lipnice, chateau Litomyšl, castle Pernštejn, castle Rožmberk, castle Špilberk, chateau Telč, chateau Uherčice.

Table 1: The number of visitors, ATD of individual regions and money spent by visitors

Tourist regions of the Czech Republic	Number of tourists per year accord. to the ČSÚ	Estimated number of tourists and one-day-visitors per year	General attractiveness of the region	Total amount of money spent by tourists per year in billions of Euros
Prague	3 863 989	5 926 363	65 570	1,128
Prague environs	803 835	2 734 852	12 039	0,172
South Bohemia	572 701	1 190 144	4 556	0,100
The Šumava Mountains	736 264	1 753 010	7 836	0,156
The Plzeň Region	224 038	1 061 233	889	0,044
Spas in Western Bohemia	615 805	1 031 773	5 156	0,164
North-Western Bohemia	353 122	809 327	2 048	0,048
North of Bohemia	385 572	1 013 330	1 822	0,044
The Český Ráj Region	194 251	371 350	1 023	0,028
East Bohemia	643 381	1 603 713	2 991	0,088
The Vysočina Region	392 255	952 691	2 653	0,060
South Moravia	1 282 097	2 513 508	8 132	0,172
Central Moravia	286 113	875 856	2 074	0,048
North Moravia and Silesia	993 210	2 852 000	4 706	0,152
The Krkonoše Mountains	873 056	1 568 364	4 688	0,208

Note: ČSÚ – Czech Statistical Institute

The monitoring of visitors was carried out after their visit to a chateau or castle. We used a questionnaire which had two parts. The first part was identical for all the selected destinations, the second part of the questionnaire contained questions specific for

individual destinations and its target was to discover the interest of visitors in individual local places of interest; in addition to that, students tried to estimate the number of one-day-visitors and tourists in each town. The group of so called one-day-visitors apparently includes people who spend less than 24 hours in the destination and who arrive either from home or from a different destination for a short trip.

The number of respondents in each town was between 150 and 200 and the questionnaires were filled in throughout the whole year; the number of respondents in individual seasons reflected the expected number of tourists in individual seasons. It means that most people were addressed in summer. During the research, students asked the respondents where they came from and also about some aspects of their stay (the reason for their coming, how long they were going to stay in the town, whether they stayed in the selected town or whether they stayed somewhere else in the CR and came to the town just for a short visit). The structure of visitors is apparent from Figure. 1.
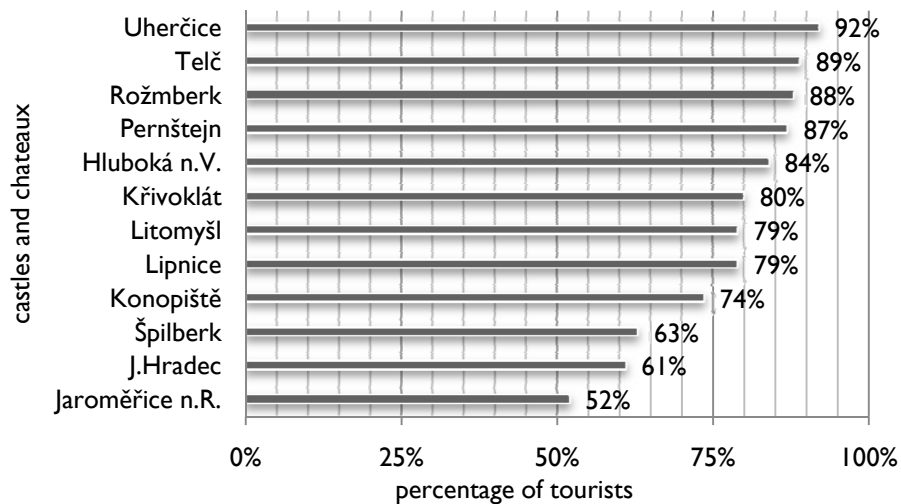

Figure 1: The rate of tourists and one-day-visitors

Figure 2 shows average reasons for visiting invidividual monuments. There are significant differences between them. Visitors usually come to castles and chateaux during a one-day trip (46%). While 68% people visit Hluboká Castle during their trip, in Uherčice the proportion is only 13%, which is highly atypical, and this is followed by Jindřichův Hradec where the percentage is 30%. About one third of visitors come to a castle during their holiday. Again an atypical proportion of 79% come to Uherčice during their holiday spent in the vicinity. Also Rožmberk castle is situated in a popular holiday resort and a high percentage of visitors (48%) stop by at the castle during their holiday. Visiting relatives´ has still been a significant way of spending holiday which makes a difference in the proportion of paying visitors to castles and chateaux (11%).The largest number of visitors who are provided board and lodging by their relatives is in Jindřichův Hradec (36%). On the other hand, in Uherčice the proportion is negligible (1%). The number of those who are passing through, heading for another location and just stop to visit a monument is fairly low, only about 5% on average, even though the percentage ranges from 2 to 15%. Only 3% of business travellers take advantage of their trips to visit monuments, but surprisingly enough in Křivoklát the proportion is 8%.
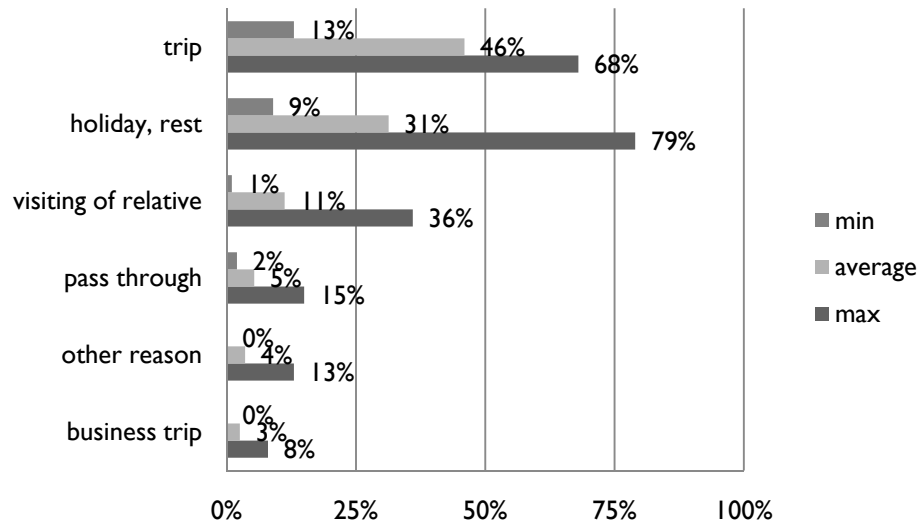
217

Figure 2: Why you come here?

In monuments where the proportion of foreign tourists is higher, we could discover some differences between natives and foreigners. As an example we can mention Konopiště chateau in Figure 3. Even though the proportion of those who visit Konopiště during a trip or holiday is about the same as in other destinations, 54% of foreigners visit the castle during their holiday while only 20% of domestic tourists do so. Foreigners often stop by in Konopiště also when they are just passing by (16%).

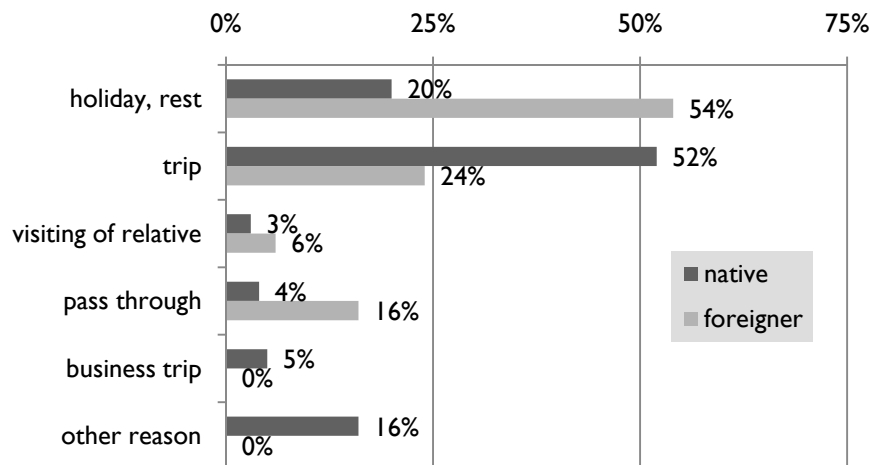Figure 3: Why you come to chateau Konopiště?

Also reasons to visit popular castles and chateaux can differ significantly in natives and foreigners. For example Telč castle (Figureure 4) is mostly visited by people who decided to do so base on their own experience or recommendation by friends (about two thirds of answers). Foreigners base their decision mostly on printed materials which they manage to obtain (43%).
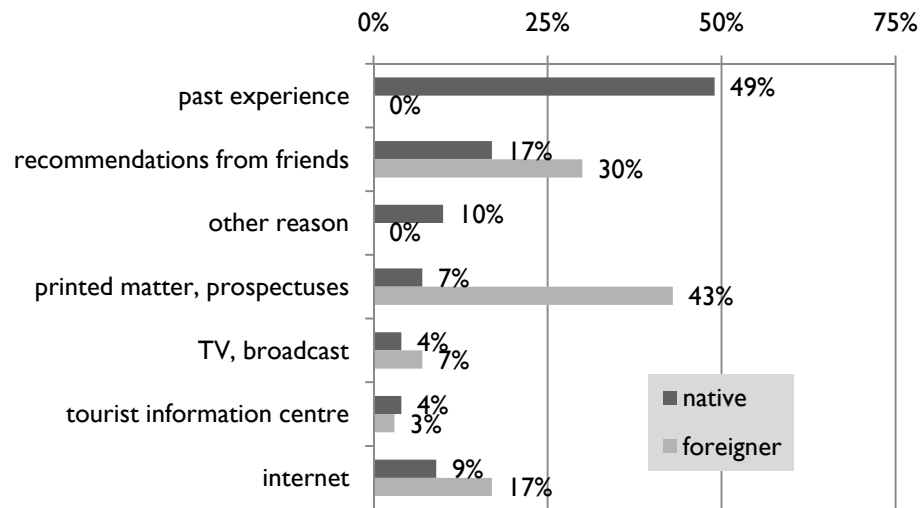
Figure 4: Chateau Telč visiting motivation - monument of UNESCO

Because we also know the average number of daily chateau or castle visitors, we are able to calculate the ATO according to equation.

$$\textit{Attractiveness of a castles and chateaux (ATO) = d * n * f /1000}$$

We defined the ATO from the average distance of the tourists´ place of residence from the destination; $\underline{n}$ is the average number of daily chateau or castle visitors and the mean number of repetitive attendance at castles and chateaux.

Where $\underline{d}$ is the average distance of the place of residence from the destination and $\underline{n}$ is the average number of tourists and visitors per day in the given region, $\underline{f}$ is the mean number of repetitive visits to castles and chateaux. The results of our calculation are showed in Figure. 5.
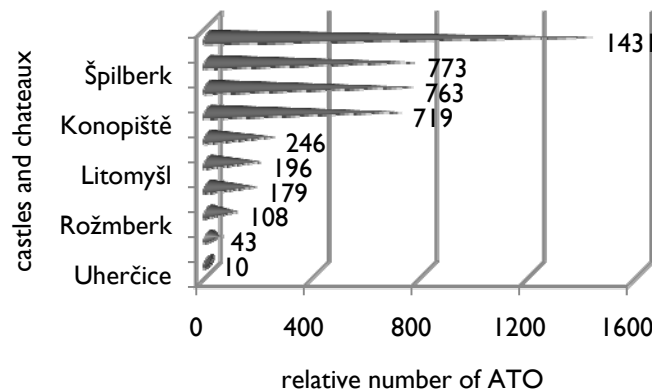
Figure 5: Attractiveness of a castles and chateaux (ATO)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTRACTIVENESS AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The close correlation between the ATD and economic benefits of tourism for a destination has been documented in our previous work[1]. The data about the cost of tourists´ stays is rather distorted, since it is not easy for visitors to estimate their expenses accurately. It can be very difficult to answer the following question "How much did you, on average, spend during your stay on accommodation, food and other things per day?",

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if we consider that the respondent often travels with all his family and stays in various places. His/her expenses can vary significantly on individual days.

Therefore, we used data from both the researches (regions and towns) to determine the correlation between average expenses (which influence the sales of local businessmen) and the ATD. It means we had a total of 29 pieces of data obtained for regions, large towns and smaller villages. Moreover, the data for Prague differ significantly from data obtained for other destinations since nearly three fifths of all foreign tourists visit only Prague and its environs reachable during a one-day trip. Therefore, we calculated the correlation including Prague and excluding it. Since the equations differ according to the aspects we select, we attempted to find the simplest relations in which the difference between the calculated and discovered value of sales is as small as possible. We concluded that the economic benefits (expressed as the sales of service providers) of tourism for the given destination can be calculated from the following relationship:

Economic benefit of tourism for the specific destination (in mil. of Euros/year) = 0.019 ATD

When the linear correlation was calculated from Table 1for column "Total amount of money spent by tourists per year in billions of Euros", as a independent variable and "General attractiveness of the region", as a dependent variable. We

CONCLUSIONS

The comparison of results obtained from individual publicly accessible monuments shows the following:
→ The largest proportion of visitors to castles and chateaux originates from those who shortly visit the region with the intention to visit a castle or a chateau.
→ Regions which are popular holiday destinations boast a greater portion of tourists who visit a monument even repeatedly.
→ In some regions a visit to a relatives´ or friends´ house can play an important role.
→ The greatest portion of visitors to a castle or a chateau who make a trip to visit the monument or who are spending their holiday there is in popular tourist regions.
→ Reasons and motivation for visiting monuments and sources of information can differ significantly in domestic visitors and foreigners. Domestic foreigners make decisions mostly on the basis of their own experience or recommendation by friends; foreigners are mostly inspired by printed materials.

The paper summarizes the information regarding the utilisation of quantitative marketing research for the purpose of determining the attractiveness of a tourist destination (ATD) or attractiveness of a castles and chateaux (ATO). To determine the ATD, we used the results of visitor monitoring in fifteen tourist regions of the CR during 2005, and twelve castles and chateaux in the CR during 2009. Due to the fact we used a standardized questionnaire and a standard method of monitoring was used as well, we were able to compare the character and intensity of tourism in selected destinations. The basic pre-requisite for the quantitative assessment of the intensity of tourism in the given location is the estimate of the number of visitors. This paper has confirmed the possibility of using the ATD or ATO for complex evaluation of the degree, type and intensity of

tourism in the researched destinations. Beside ATD/O values characterizing the intensity of tourism related to the number of inhabitants or the size of the destination were calculated. This method can be used to measure the attractiveness of individual events organised in a destination (festivals, sports competitions, congresses etc.), too.

It is important for people who are in charge of the management and marketing of a tourist destination or castles and chateaux to obtain feedback when they make marketing decisions or decisions regarding changes in the destination image. It is becoming apparent that the quantity called ATD or ATO could be a suitable tool for the comparison of various destinations or heritage objects, or it could be used to determine the changes of ATD/O in time. It proved to be true that the ATD/O calculated from non-economic data significantly correlates with economic benefits of tourism in the given destination.

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STUDY ABROAD: DEVELOPING A GLOBAL MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of globalisation has placed pressure on educational institutions to develop and consolidate global concepts and practices in educational contexts as well as establishing links with global enterprises. Short study tours abroad provide a means of linking this significant development with the emerging trend of internationalising tertiary education. This discussion details a research proposal to examine if cross cultural attitudinal changes occur for Australian tertiary management students who participate in a short study tour abroad. The study participants will be Australian management students completing an elective subject in International Human Resources Management via an intensive two week program in Bordeaux, France. The study will utilise both quantitative and qualitative research methods via the use of the Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory and one-to-one student interviews. A deeper understanding of the conscious and subconscious learning acquired during a short study tour abroad has the potential to improve teaching and learning modes and models in future Australian management courses.

KEYWORDS: Cross cultural awareness; Internationalisation; Tertiary education; Study tours abroad.

INTRODUCTION

This research seeks to establish if cross cultural attitudinal changes occur for Australian management students who participate in a short study tour abroad. The effectiveness of students' cross cultural communication capability will be identified prior to, and post, a two week study tour in France. This study is designed to establish if a short study tours abroad (SSTA) delivery mode has had a positive effect on Australian management students' cultural awareness and, in turn, contributed to their ability to function more effectively as a potential manager in the global business community of the 21st century.

Australia is a multicultural country with almost a quarter of Australia's population having been born overseas. Australia has a diverse mix of cultures from over 200 countries, and this diversity has resulted in a rich variety of indigenous and non-indigenous languages, religions, beliefs, traditions, and activities (ABS, 2006).

In addition to this cultural diversity, the acceleration of globalisation is a phenomenon increasingly integrated into programs offered by Australian tertiary educational institutions. The contemporary Australian management student must have a greater knowledge and understanding of global policy and practice if they are to perform optimally in business contexts, as all enterprises operating globally require management staff with cultural competence, hence the current development of management programs that provide international perspectives.

Such a perspective can be developed in a number of ways by tertiary educational institutions. Internationalisation strategies can be achieved through curriculum development and enhancement, staff exchanges, establishing joint degree programs, research, and consultancies with overseas institutions and providing study tours abroad (Harris, 2008; Howe and Martin, 1998; Research Centre for Languages and Cultures Education, 2004).

LITERATURE REVIEW

A study tour abroad provides an excellent vehicle for experiential learning (Hopkins, 1999). Experiential learning practices provide an environment where the participant experiences the learning on a first-hand basis and is immersed in the learning experience. Harvard and Hodkinson defined experiential learning as:

> Learning in which the learner is directly in touch with
> realities being studied and makes use of that direct contact
> to acquire changed insights that are carried forward to
> subsequent encounters with other realities (1994: 40).

Hopkins (1999) proposed that students who undertake a study tour often reflect their experience at two levels: looking inward as well as looking outward. A completely different sense of experiential learning occurs, one of self examination and personal reflection which may lead to further self-development. This increased inclination to reflect is usually a special feature of experiential learning for study tours abroad (Hopkins, 1999). The experience allows the student to investigate and examine their preconceived ideas about another society, and usually develop a modified cultural perspective.

Study tours abroad have been a research focus for the last three decades. Much of the research has investigated American students studying abroad, especially in programs of one semester or longer where the student takes residence in the host country for that time and is self sufficient with limited support from the host institution (Carlson and Widaman, 1988; Hadis, 2005; Kitsantas and Meyers, 2001; Wortman, 2002; Zhai and Scheer, 2002).

However, there has been less research conducted into short study tours abroad. Wang, Peyvandi and Moghaddam (2009) investigated whether or not a short study tour abroad (SSTA) affected American students' diversity attitudes, linking experiential

learning theory to SSTA in business education. Their findings were consistent with those of Ismail, Morgan, Hayes (2006) and Wortman (2002) who also found significant positive changes occurred in the students' diversity attitudes as a result of completing a SSTA program. Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, and Hubbard, (2006) reported that there was a significant improvement in the American students' overall intercultural sensitivity after participating in a short term, non-language-based study abroad program situated in the United Kingdom. Kitsantas and Meyers conducted research into the cross cultural awareness of American students studying abroad by utilising the cross cultural awareness inventory test (CCAI). Their findings indicated that study abroad programs 'significantly contribute to the preparation of students to function in a multicultural world' (2001:13).

Few studies have focussed on the effects and implications associated with completing a SSTA program for Australian management students, where the students are accompanied by faculty members to facilitate the learning experience, and to assist with travel and visitation arrangements (Hutchings, Jackson, and McEllister, 2002).

Relyea, Cocchiara and Studdard (2008) investigated why American students seem more hesitant to travel abroad to study for a semester or longer than students from other countries, such as China. Their study findings also supported those of Luethge (2004) indicating that there is a perceived danger or risk associated with travel outside the United States. The perceived value gained for the student's future career from the study experience must outweigh their reluctance to travel for the student to be interested in completing their learning in this mode.

Research conducted in Australia concerning similar study abroad and exchange programs for a semester or longer indicated that some Australian students are also reluctant to participate in a study abroad experience. Research indicated that this reluctance is due to a culture of not valuing the international skills obtained on such a tour highly enough (Davis, Milne and Olsen, 1999). Bakalis and Joiner (2004) investigated some of the aspects that influence why a student is willing to participate in study abroad program. Their findings identified that an individual's personality is a significant factor; if a student is open to new experiences and has a high tolerance of ambiguity they are more likely to be interested in joining an exchange program. Financial cost to participate was also identified as inhibiting factor in both of these studies.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will address gaps in the literature relating to what the cross cultural attitudinal changes are that occur for Australian management students who participate in a SSTA in Europe. Motivational factors which influenced the students to undertake this mode of delivery will also be investigated.

Given the above, the research questions which will drive this study are:

1. To what extent do students change in terms of global perspectives and attitudes towards cultural diversity after completing a SSTA?

2. To what extent do students change their attitudes towards host and home cultures as a result of participating in a SSTA?
3. What perceived cross cultural knowledge and skills (both tangible and intangible) do students gain from a SSTA as an experiential learning activity?
4. What factors motivate students to participate in a SSTA?

After Zhai and Scheer (2002)

METHODS

The study will utilise both quantitative and qualitative research methods. There are a number of quantitative instruments available to measure aspects of intercultural maturity. Among the most commonly applied are Kelley and Meyers' (1995) Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI), Corbitt's (1998) Global Awareness Profile, and Hammer and Bennett's (2002) Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI).

The CCAI instrument has been selected for this study, given that it provides data about the potential for cross-cultural adaptability. The CCAI instrument has also been widely applied by cross-cultural practitioners to identify four dimensions: emotional resilience; flexibility/openness; perceptual acuity; and personal autonomy (Kitsantas and Meyers, 2001).

Qualitative data will be collected via semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews will allow the researchers to further investigate this area of interest, and will also permit the participants to express their views in their own words (Esterberg, 2002). A sequence of questions will be used as a guide, allowing the interview to develop as a natural conversation (Brown and Dowling, 1998). A natural flow of discussion will assist in obtaining an honest account of the students The collection of qualitative data will assist in deepening and enriching the data already collected via the CCAI instrument.

Analysis of the collected data will focus on identifying what changes have occurred to the students' cultural awareness. The CCAI instrument provides data to uncover the students' strengths and weaknesses within four significant skill areas essential for effective cross-cultural communication and interaction. The four skills areas are:

- Emotional resilience;
- Flexibility and openness;
- Personal autonomy; and
- Perceptual acuity.

The semi structured interviews will be analysed using NVivo to identify themes and significant patterns in order to actively generate meaning and draw conclusions that relate back to the original research questions.

Third year Bachelor of Business students from a large government university in Australia will be offered the opportunity to complete an elective subject International Human Resources Management International Study Tour via an intensive two weeks program in Bordeaux, France. The targeted cohort for this elective subject will be completing a degree in any of the following disciplines: human resources; hospitality and tourism; tourism management; or business management. Approximately 30 students (over the two years of the research) will be selected by written submission, interview, and the satisfactory completion of the prerequisite second year subject Human Resource Management, or its equivalent.

The study tour group will be accompanied to France by two Australian academics, one male and one female. The students will attend six hours of pre-departure seminars in Australia presented by the Australian academics, these seminars will be delivered in two hour blocks commencing six weeks prior to departure. To facilitate a maximum rapport and trust, and to allow the students and staff members to learn about each other, multiple pre-departure sessions are recommended (Koernig, 2007). The pre-departure seminars will cover the course structure, the required reading and assessment. In addition, the group will discuss past overseas travel experiences and the students will be encouraged to complete a written reflective journal during the SSTA. Approximately 20 hours of lectures will be delivered at a Business Management School in Bordeaux by that School's academic staff. Site visits and presentations will also be conducted at various sites in Bordeaux and the surrounding region. In addition, whilst away, students will attend ten hours of tutorials discussing case studies, assessment requirements and their cultural experiences. This structure also allows students sufficient time to explore and immerse themselves in the local environs, community, and culture.

Data will be collected in three stages from the students undertaking the SSTA program. Stage One will involve all students completing a CCAI self- assessment worksheet at the commencement of the subject, prior to leaving Australia for the study tour. This data will measure the students' initial cultural sensitivity and awareness. Stage Two will involve completing a second CCAI self- assessment worksheet at the conclusion of the two week tour, once back in Australia. Stage Three will involve semi structured interviews with the students who have completed the SSTA. The interview will be conducted approximately one month after returning to Australia. Students will be expected to maintain a written, reflective journal whilst in France. The journal will record the student's personal thoughts, experiences pre-, during, and post–tour. This journal will assist students in recalling specific cultural experiences that can be discussed during the semi structured interview. The primary objective of the interview is to collect data about what motivated students to undertake the SSTA in the first instance, and what perceived skills and knowledge (both tangible and intangible) they believe they have gained from completing a subject via a study abroad delivery mode.

This study includes a number of inherent limitations. The size of the sample is small, however the study will be conducted over a two year period and will provide sufficient data for a rich and descriptive qualitative data analysis. The sample is drawn from the students who participate in a SSTA and, as such, may already be predisposed to

embrace cultural awareness due to their desire to experience this type of learning model. In addition to this, the researchers will also undertake the SSTA. This places them in the position of an informed participant and, as such, they may reflect their own bias and personal interpretations of their experiences on the data under analysis. Although this may be possibly considered a limitation, by being an informed participant, the researchers will presumably have a greater insight and understanding of the experiences disclosed by the other participants. This, therefore, can be viewed as a distinct advantage contributing to enriching the quality of interpretation of the data under analysis.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study is the first stage of an investigation, and is designed to establish if a SSTA delivery mode has had a positive effect on Australian management students' cultural awareness and, in turn, contributed to their potential ability to function more effectively as a manager in the global community of the new millennium. For more students to obtain benefits from internationalising a program, a larger percentage of the cohort must be prepared to become engaged with this style of learning.

The study findings will identify tangible and intangible benefits associated with SSTAs, and how these findings can be employed to encourage more participation in, and commitment to, this experiential learning activity. A better understanding of the conscious and subconscious learning acquired during a SSTA also has the potential to improve teaching and learning modes and models in future Australian management courses.

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ASSESSING THE ONLINE COMPETITIVE INFORMATION SPACE FOR HOTELS
THROUGH GOOGLE

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ABSTRACT

With the continuous growth of the Internet and emergent channels in online marketing and distribution, it is important to understand the new technological environment for the hotel industry. The goal of this study was to investigate the competitive information space for hotels reflected via one of the dominant search tools on the Internet, i.e., Google. A series of data mining exercises were conducted to understand the composition and structure of the information space as well as the visibility of hotel websites among Google search results. Results of this study clearly show that hotels are facing challenges when competing with other websites in gaining online customers' attention. Also, it demonstrates the gaps existing among hotel brands in terms of their visibility to online customers. Implications for online marketing and distribution strategy for the hotel industry are discussed.

KEYWORDS: Hotel; Electronic distribution; Internet marketing; Search engine marketing; Visibility; Competitive analysis.

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH BACKGROUND

With the tremendous growth of the Internet, it is important to understand the new online environment for the hotel industry because current technological trends affect the way hospitality products are distributed and accessed (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Carroll & Siguaw, 2003; Connolly, Olsen, & Moore, 1998; Dale, 2002; O'Connor & Piccoli, 2003). The goal of this study is to examine the competitive information space reflected in search engines that could have impact on hotels' presence on the Internet and, consequently, their online marketing and distribution strategies. Specifically, this study investigates the competitive information space reflected in Google search results and the visibility of hotel websites in relation to a number of factors including the presence of other types of websites, other hotel brands, and position on search result pages. As a result, this study will gain an understanding of the composition and structure of the online competitive information space for hotels and, thus, offer useful insights into the distribution and marketing strategy for the hotel industry.

Online Distribution of Hotels

A distribution channel can be defined as a mechanism that provides information for a purchase decision to be made, and allows the consumer to make a reservation and complete the transaction (O'Connor & Frew, 2002). Online hotel distribution, in its strict sense, refers to websites such as Expedia and Travelocity that serve as intermediaries between the supply (hotels) and demand (consumers/travelers) primarily with a goal to

facilitate transactions. Since the inception of the Internet, many issues and challenges have arisen for the hotel industry because of the restructuring of the online distribution channels due to the emergence and/or disappearance of various "players" and technological tools that have been made available to consumers (Gazzoli, Kim, & Palakurthi, 2008; Tse, 2003). Particularly, the imminent success of online intermediaries caused financial problems for hotel chains since the former offered better prices than the hotel brand websites (Carroll & Siguaw, 2003; Gazzoli et al., 2008; Tse, 2003).

As such, the hotel industry has been struggling to regain the control over online distribution. For example, Dev and Olsen (2000) called for the creation a knowledge-based marketing initiative that builds upon the understanding of how and why customers purchase a service in order for hotels to reach their customers in more direct and effective ways. In recognition of the complexity of online distribution, Dale (2002) emphasized the importance of building strong inter-organizational relationships to leverage the capabilities of partners in order to prosper in the competitive market. O'Connor and Picooli (2003) called for the re-consideration of the values of global distribution systems (GDSs), which had been gradually fading into the background due to the presence of online intermediaries. Importantly, they suggested that several actions must be taken in order to develop distribution channels that fully benefit hotels, which hinge on a solid understanding of the customer and the electronic distribution environment. Recently, Paraskevas et al. (2010) emphasized the important role of search engines on the Internet and postulated that effective strategies must be developed to "transform" search engines into hotel distribution channels. This insight may indicate that the concept of online distribution of hotels may have been shifted from viewing it as solely the online intermediaries to one that encompasses potentially a variety of tools and agents that contribute to the ultimate purchase of hotel products and services.

Emergent Channels of Marketing and Distribution on the Internet

The importance and various roles of information channels have been well documented in the hospitality and tourism literature (Buhalis & Licata, 2002; Carroll & Siguaw, 2003; Pan & Fesenmaier, 2000; Werthner & Klein, 1999). Recently, Xiang and Gretzel (2010) developed and applied a typology based upon nature of interaction to examine the emergent marketing and distribution channels of travel and tourism products online, which includes: 1) infomediaries of the tourism industry such as city guides, online travel guides (e.g., frommer.com), travel magazines, portals, & general media sites (e.g., local newspapers); 2) destination marketing sites; 3) intermediaries and metamediaries, including online travel agencies such as expedia.com, discount and bargain sites such as Priceline and Lastminute, as well as the more recent meta search engines such as Sidestep, Kayak, and Mobissimo; 4) industry supplier sites, e.g., transportation, accommodation, restaurants, attractions, museums/galleries, theme parks, resorts, parks, events, etc; and, 5) social media sites whose contents are largely consumer generated such as blogs, reviews, multimedia sites, and virtual communities.

Among these channels, two types of websites seemingly represent the recent "mega" trends on the Internet (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). First, particularly important to

hospitality and tourism is the tremendous growth of travel related social media on the Internet, which have recently gained substantial popularity in online consumers' use of the Internet for travel (Gretzel, 2006; Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008; Pan, MacLaurin, & Crotts, 2007b; Pudliner, 2007; Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). Many of them assist consumers in posting and sharing their comments, opinions, and personal experiences, which then serve as information for others. Since more and more travelers seem to tap into this "collective intelligence", this will challenge the established practices of hospitality and tourism businesses in their online efforts that aim to promote and distribute their products (Sigala, 2008).

Another important trend is, due to the huge amount of information on the Internet, search engines have grown to become one of the primary sources for online consumers to research about travel products. For example, studies conducted by the Travel Industry Association of America found that a substantial number of travelers use search engines for travel planning (TIA, 2008). Another study carried out by eMarketer (2008) showed that search engines served as the number one online information source for American families in the context of vacation planning. A series of reports by the Internet research firm Hitwise have documented the importance of search engines in terms of generating upstream traffic to hotel websites, leading to direct bookings for these businesses (e.g., Hopkins, 2008; Prescott, 2006). Therefore, search engines can be seen as a "gateway" that represents and provides access to the online travel related information space as well as an important marketing and distribution channel for hospitality and tourism businesses (Google, 2006; Paraskevas et al., 2010; Xiang, Wöber, & Fesenmaier, 2008).

Search   Engines   as   Competitive   Information   Space

Search engines can be used to gauge and assess the emergent changes of the competitive information space for hospitality and tourism products on the Internet (Wöber, 2006, 2007; Xiang et al., 2008). Technically, a search engine consists of two main components: 1) an offline component that collects hyper-textual documents on the Internet and builds an internal representation (index) of these documents; and, 2) an online component that allows users to search, order, and classify documents in order to select the most relevant search results (Henzinger, 2007). In the online interface, a search engine generates informational snippets consisting of the web address, a short description, and other metadata, and displays the snippets in the form of a rank ordered list on the search engine result page (SERP). The main part of a SERP is normally used to display those results based on the internal ranking algorithms (organic listings), while the top and right side of results pages, in major search engines such as Google and Yahoo!, are also used to display advertisements (paid listings). Studies in information science and other fields have found that the use of search engines can have significant impact on the online consumer's impression, perception, and overall evaluation of a website. Particularly, the ranking of search results, which reflects a "match" between the searcher's need and the document's text and a website's "popularity" on the Internet, is widely recognized as the most important factor that impacts a website's visibility on the Internet (Henzinger, 2007; Pan *et al.*, 2007a). Also, search engine users rarely will navigate beyond the first three SERPs (Spink & Jansen, 2004). This indicates that a search engine actually constitutes a competitive information space and, consequently,

search engine marketing is becoming an increasingly popular tool for hospitality and tourism businesses to reach, attract, and engage their customers online (Google, 2006; Paraskevas et al., 2010).

Recently, there is growing interest in understanding the way search engines represent the online information space and its implications for the industry. Particularly, Wöber (2006) showed that the visibility of hospitality and tourism businesses in general purpose search engines is diminishing. Xiang et al. (2008) demonstrated the inherent limitations of search engines in representing a complex domain like tourism, particularly the low visibility of small- and medium-size tourism businesses. In addition, their study showed the "power structure" in the information space in that a handful of big "players" dominate the search results in Google. The recent Xiang and Gretzel study (2010) examined the role of social media in online travel information search and it clearly showed the growing impact of social media on travelers who are looking for travel products. For example, websites such as Tripadvisor (http://www.tripadvisor.com) appear to make inroads into the information space traditionally dominated by intermediaries like Expedia and/or service providers. Importantly, it seems search engines dictate the way the hospitality and tourism businesses are represented to online consumers, which can escalates the level of competition and may lead to "oligopolistic" structure in the online presence of the industry (Buhalis, 2000).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

There are two important factors that motivate the current study: first, as the industry experiences the fast-paced changes driven by Internet technologies, it is imperative for hotels to gain a better view of the "big picture" of the new environment (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Dev & Olsen, 2000; O'Connor & Frew, 2002; Werthner & Klein, 1999). Particularly, considering the hotel industry is highly consolidated, the composition and structure of the information space for hotels represented by a search engine could be unique and considerably different from destinations (Xiang et al., 2008). Second, from a strategy viewpoint, hotels must gain a better understanding of possible channels to reach their customers as well as competitors that are vying for customers' attention on the Internet (O'Connor & Frew, 2002, 2004; O'Connor & Piccoli, 2003). For example, hotels need to know who they are competing with and what their current position is within the context of consumers' using a search engine for hotel related information. Also, given the growing importance of other channels such as social media in travel, hotels must find means by which they can closely monitor the change on the Internet that could have significant influence on their customer base.

As such, the goal of this study is to understand the competitive information space for hotels in search engines. Specifically, this study aims to achieve the following two objectives:

1. To describe the competitive information space represented in Google, i.e., its composition and structure, for the hotel industry.

2. To assess the visibility of hotel websites in Google in comparison to other types of websites (e.g., intermediaries, travel search engines, and social media sites) and among themselves.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a method that simulates an online traveler's use of a search engine to look for hotel related information and, based upon the search results presented by the search engine, conduct a series of analyses to identify the patterns in the data. Following Xiang et al. (2008), Google was chosen as the focal search engine because of its dominance in the search market. In order to provide a rich understanding of the information space in Google, the 30 largest cities in the United States (based upon 2004 Census population) were selected to construct the scenarios for searching for hotel information on the Internet. The research design consisted of three steps: 1) identify search queries related to hotels in these cities; 2) extract and mine search results from Google using these queries; and, 3) describe the composition and structure of the information space based upon Google search results and the visibility of hotel websites.

In Step 1, Google AdWords Keyword Tool (https://adwords.google.com) was used as the sampling frame to identify hotel related search queries. This tool is provided by Google for marketers to view the volumes and competitiveness of certain queries and, thus, allows them to select keywords for their search engine advertising campaigns. Given the popularity of Google, it presumably captures the highest volume of search for a single search engine. Specifically, for each city the city name and the word "hotel" (e.g., "New York City hotel") was manually typed into the interface and all queries that were related to searching for hotel products were extracted.

In Step 2, a Web crawler program written by the author in Perl programming language was used to simulate the use of Google by search engine users by applying the queries obtained from Step 1 for each of the 30 U.S. cities. Web addresses (URLs) of organic search results on the first three SERPs were extracted, along with the search query, search results page number (1, 2, or 3), and ranking (from 1 to 10) within a specific page.

In Step 3, a series of analyses were performed in order to answer the aforementioned research questions based upon the results of Steps 1 and 2. First, search queries gathered in Step 1 were categorized to show types of searches. Second, top-level domain names (e.g., www.marriott.com) were extracted from all the Google search results and then content-coded based on the typology and procedure used by Xiang and Gretzel (2010). Then, a number of descriptive analyses were conducted to show 1) the composition and structure of the information space and 2) the visibility of hotels in relation to other types of sites.

FINDINGS

Data collection, including extracting queries from Google Adwords Keyword Tool as well as Google search results based on these queries, was completed in early

July, 2009. In total there were 3,999 hotel-related queries extracted for these 30 cities, with an average of approx. 130 queries for each city. They represented the "popular" queries on the Internet for hotels in these cities, with huge variation in terms of search volume. These hotel-related queries were grouped into eleven categories, including a "base" type, i.e., a city name plus "hotel", and ten others related to specific aspects of hotel-related information including "price", "location", "brand", "hotel type", "reservation", "package", "room", "info", "entertainment", and miscellaneous. In terms of frequency, it is interesting to note more than half of these queries were about a specific brand (e.g., "new york city roosevelt hotel"). However, in terms of search volume, the "base" type constituted the vast majority (71.8%) of hotel-related searches, followed by price (10.8%) and brand (4.9%) related ones. Findings with respect to the composition and structure of the information space as well as the visibility of hotel websites are reported in the following sections.

Composition and Structure of the Competitive Information Space for Hotels

This analysis involved the examination of top level domain names (website URLs) extracted from Google search results. In total, there were 13,073 search results extracted from the first three SERPs based upon the queries generated constructed for the 30 cities. Among all search results 1,581 unique websites were identified. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the unique websites as well as the top ten websites, which constituted about 28.3% of all occurrences of all search results extracted from Google. As can be seen, this information space represented by Google manifested a structure consisting of a few big "hits" (those with high frequencies) and a "long tail" (those with considerably low frequencies). This result is consistent with Xiang et al.'s (2008) finding that the information space of a tourist destination in Google manifests such a structure. Also, the dominant "players" were a mix of websites represented by intermediaries such as Expedia (5.0%), social media sites such as Tripadvisor (4.3%), Realtravel (1.9%), and Virtualtourist (1.6%), infomediaries such as Yahoo! (3.5%), and hotel brands/chains such as Marriott (4.0%), Hilton (3.2%), Hyatt (1.6%), Starwoodhotels (1.6%), and Ichotelsgroup.com (1.5%).

Content analysis shows four types of websites represented the dominant majority of search results in Google, with hotel websites constituting more than one third (37.2%) of all search results, followed by intermediares (31.2%), infomediaries (15.5%), and social media (14.9%). Other websites included destination marketing organizations (1.0%), and some non-travel-related ones (0.3%). This indicates that, overall, hotel websites constitute a substantial part of the information space; however, they also face competition from other channels including online intermediaries and other information providers, particularly in the form of consumer generated content.
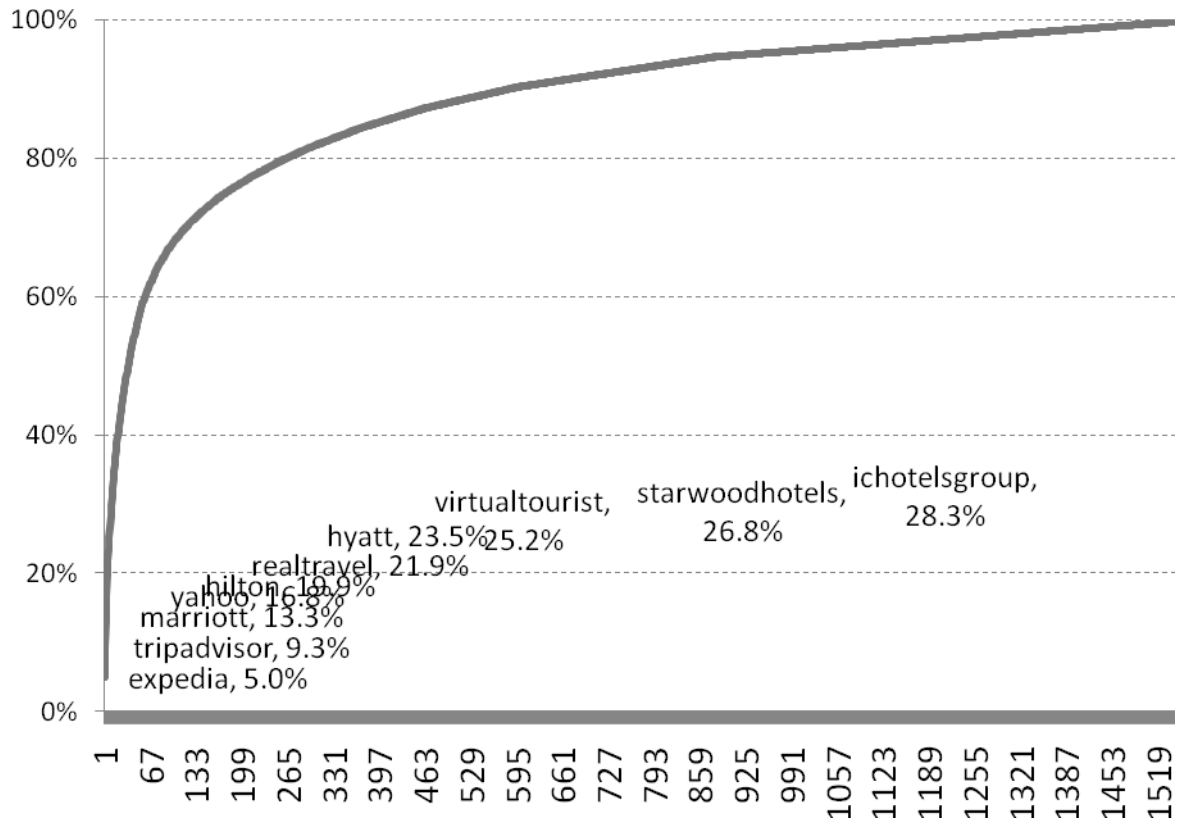
Figure 2 Distribution of Domain Names in Google Search Results

Table 1 lists the top 15 websites under the four most important categories, i.e., hotels, intermediaries, infomediares, and social media. As can be seen, each of these categories was dominated by a handful of websites. Among hotels, the top 15 hotel sites represented more than half of all hotel site occurrences; among intermediaries, half of their occurrences were presented by the top nine; among infomediaries, more than half was represented by the top five websites including Yahoo!, AOL, Citysearch,, Trails, About, and Hotelguide; and, finally, among social media sites the top three, i.e., Tripadvisor, Realtravel, and Virtualtourist, represented more than 60% of all their occurrences. This indicates that a handful of "players" dominate that category, suggesting the 20/80 rule (i.e., the composition of the hits and long tail) could be universally true. Particularly, contrary to conventional belief that consumer generated contents should be very much fragmented and distributed, it seems they are highly concentrated in a few social media websites, at least for the case of the hotel industry. In addition, it is interesting to note that, among intermediaries, traditional "big players" in online distribution such as Travelocity and Orbitz have lost their grounds to meta search engines such as Kayak and Hotelscombined. Also, some niche tools such as Dealbase, Quikbook, Istaygreen, and Nextag are certainly making inroads into the information space.

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Table 2 Top 15 Websites among the Four Major Categories

HOTELS				INTERMEDIARIES			
Website	N	PCNT*	Cum. PCNT*	Website	N	PCNT	Cum. PCNT
marriott.com	521	12.6%	12.6%	expedia.com	653	18.8%	18.8%
hilton.com	413	10.0%	22.6%	ihsadvantage.com	193	5.6%	24.4%
hyatt.com	215	5.2%	27.9%	kayak.com	169	4.9%	29.3%
starwoodhotels.com	207	5.0%	32.9%	hotelscombined.com	139	4.0%	33.3%
ichotelsgroup.com	198	4.8%	37.7%	hotel-guides.us	136	3.9%	37.2%
radisson.com	185	4.5%	42.2%	orbitz.com	129	3.7%	40.9%
omnihotels.com	148	3.6%	45.7%	priceline.com	118	3.4%	44.3%
extendedstayamerica.com	86	2.1%	47.8%	hotels.com	108	3.1%	47.5%
extendedstayhotels.com	74	1.8%	49.6%	dealbase.com	104	3.0%	50.5%
wyndham.com	74	1.8%	51.4%	quikbook.com	94	2.7%	53.2%
countryinns.com	69	1.7%	53.1%	travelocity.com	93	2.7%	55.9%
fairmont.com	62	1.5%	54.6%	hotels-rates.com	92	2.7%	58.5%
homesteadhotels.com	60	1.5%	56.0%	roadsideamerica.com	82	2.4%	60.9%
comfortinn.com	56	1.4%	57.4%	istaygreen.org	79	2.3%	63.2%
lq.com	52	1.3%	58.7%	nextag.com	72	2.1%	65.2%

INFOMEDIARIES				SOCIAL MEDIA			
Website	N	PCNT	Cum. PCNT	Website	N	PCNT	Cum. PCNT
yahoo.com	452	26.4%	26.4%	tripadvisor.com	568	34.4%	34.4%
aol.com	130	7.6%	33.9%	realtravel.com	252	15.3%	49.6%
citysearch.com	87	5.1%	39.0%	virtualtourist.com	215	13.0%	62.7%
trails.com	86	5.0%	44.0%	travelpod.com	153	9.3%	71.9%
about.com	79	4.6%	48.6%	yelp.com	103	6.2%	78.1%
hotelguide.net	75	4.4%	53.0%	travelpost.com	82	5.0%	83.1%
hotelrooms.com	70	4.1%	57.1%	fodors.com	35	2.1%	85.2%
professionaltravelguide.com	63	3.7%	60.8%	wikipedia.org	31	1.9%	87.1%
nytimes.com	48	2.8%	63.6%	tripwolf.com	24	1.5%	88.6%
maplandia.com	31	1.8%	65.4%	world66.com	24	1.5%	90.0%
allgetaways.com	30	1.7%	67.1%	gusto.com	23	1.4%	91.4%
10best.com	29	1.7%	68.8%	nileguide.com	20	1.2%	92.6%
travelmuse.com	29	1.7%	70.5%	bootsnall.com	19	1.2%	93.8%
vegas.com	24	1.4%	71.9%	travel-library.com	19	1.2%	94.9%
frommers.com	22	1.3%	73.2%	insiderpages.com	17	1.0%	95.9%

*: All percentages are calculated within a specific category, i.e., hotels, intermediaries, infomediaries, and social media, respectively.

Visibility of Hotel Websites in Google

To assess hotels' visibility in the competitive information space in Google, the frequencies of their websites' occurrences on the first three Google SERPs, the percentages of their occurrences on the first SERP as well as the average rankings on the first SERP were calculated (see Table 2). As can be seen in Column 3, hotels such as Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, Starwood, Omnihotels, and Wyndham seem relatively more effective in that more than half (>50%) of their total occurrences on the first three Google SERPs took place on the first SERP, even though some of them (e.g., Omni and Wyndham) were fairly low in terms of total frequency (Column 2). However, it seems hotel websites such as Ichotelgroup, Extendedstayamerica, Extendedstayhotels, Countryinns, Homesteadhotels, Comfortinn, and Lq did not have a good representation because all of them had less than 30 percent of their occurrences on the first Google SERP. Websites such as Omnihotels, Marriott, and Wyndham enjoyed a relatively good average ranking (<5) in Google. This indicates these websites are more likely to be displayed at top positions on the first SERP. Other sites such as Extendedstayamerica, Extendedstayhotels, Homesteadhotels, and Comfortinn were displayed at a very low position, suggesting the chances for them to be viewed by online consumer could be slim.

Table 3 Visibility of Hotel Websites

Hotel Domain*	N	PCNT on 1st SERP	Avg. Ranking on 1st SERP
Marriott	521	62.0%	4.4
Hilton	413	55.7%	5.2
Hyatt	215	53.0%	5.3
Starwoodhotels	207	51.2%	5.2
Ichotelsgroup	198	28.3%	6.6
Radisson	185	46.5%	5.5
Omnihotels	148	56.8%	3.8
Extendedstayamerica	86	17.4%	8.3
Extendedstayhotels	74	27.0%	8.6
Wyndham	74	55.4%	4.6
Countryinns	69	21.7%	7.9
Fairmont	62	46.8%	5.6
Homesteadhotels	60	16.7%	8.6
Comfortinn	56	5.4%	9.0
Lq	52	25.0%	7.0

*: Domain name identifiers (e.g., ".com") are omitted to save space.

Based upon this information, a visibility "map" was constructed to visualize the performance of these hotel websites. The X and Y axes of the map represent the visibility of hotel websites in terms of the "quality" and "quantity", respectively. Basically, "quantity" measures the number of times a hotel website was displayed on the first three

SERPs in Google, while "quality" measures, the degree to which these occurrences of a specific hotel website were displayed at a good position. Specifically, the "quantity" index was calculated by scaling the total occurrences of a specific hotel website on the first three SEPRs against the highest (that is, 521 in the case of Marriott). The "quality" index was calculated by scaling against the best performer based upon a compound score using the percentage of first SERP occurrences and the average ranking (Column 3 and 4 in Table 2, respectively). For example, a compound score was obtained first by multiplying the percentage of first SERP occurrences and the inversed average ranking (1/avg. ranking), which led to Omnihotels being the highest (approx. 0.149). Then, a percentage score was obtained by scaling the score of every hotel domain against this highest score.

As can be seen, hotel websites seem to fall into three quadrants in this map: Quadrant I consists of "low performers" including hotel domains such as Comfortinn, Homesteadhotels, Lq, Countryinn, Extendedstayamerica, Extendedstayhotels, and Ichotelsgroup, who were displayed less frequently as well as at a relatively low position on the first SERP. At the other extreme (Quadrant IV), there were two hotel websites, namely Hilton and Marriott, scoring high in both quantity and quality. It seems these two were the high performers with Marriott representing the industry benchmark. Quadrant II seems to represent a group of hotel domains, including Fairmont, Radisson, Hyatt, Starwood, Wyndham, and Omnihotels, who were high in quality measure but low in quantity measure. These hotel websites may have a good representation in certain market segments (e.g., searches pertaining to specific cities or related to a specific type of hotel products). Interestingly, there were no hotel websites in Quadrant III (high quantity and low quality), which seems to indicate that, if a hotel website is frequently shown by Google, it is likely to be displayed at a good position; however, this might not be true vice versa.
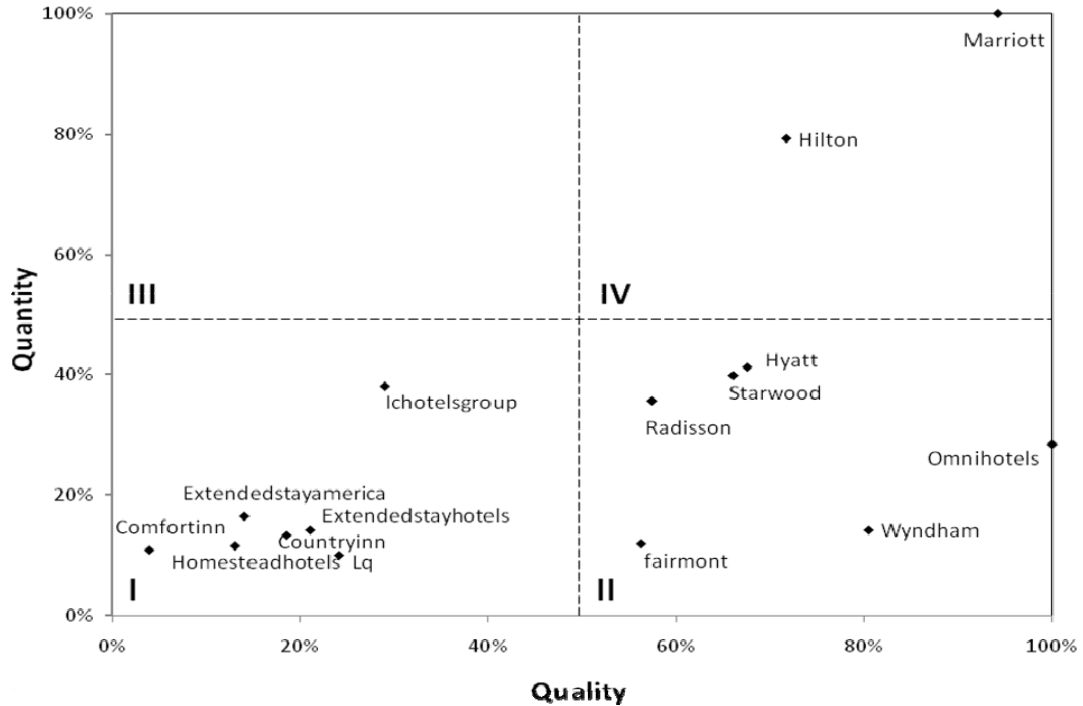
Figure 3 Visibility Map of Hotel Websites

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

While exploratory in nature, this study provides a systematic documentation of the competitive information space for the hotel industry through one of the most powerful search tools on the Internet (i.e., Google). It offers several important implications for both research and management.

First, this study revealed the composition and structure of this information space and, thus, contributes to our understanding of the emergent electronic marketing and distribution channels on the Internet for the hotel industry (Buhalis & Licata, 2002; Carroll & Siguaw, 2003; O'Connor, 1999; O'Connor & Frew, 2002). For example, this study clearly demonstrated and confirmed that meta search engines, social media, and niche websites are making inroads into the space traditionally dominated by hotels and intermediaries on the Internet. Consistent with previous research in tourism (e.g., Xiang et al., 2008), the online information space is dominated by a handful of "players" as shown in Google search results, which suggests that the information spaces for hotel brands, intermediaries, infomediaries, and social media, are highly consolidated. Social media websites such as Tripadvisor and Virtualtourist are certainly becoming very important "players" in this competition space. While hotel websites represent a substantial part of the information space, their visibility varies considerably among different hotel brands.

Second, the results of this study indicate that, given the increasingly complex and heterogeneous nature of channels on the Internet, hotels must have a solid understanding of consumer behavior, particularly in the use of the Internet for travel planning purposes,

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in order to come up with effective strategies in promoting and distributing their products by utilizing these channels (Dev & Olsen, 2000). For example, if search engines are increasingly used as the "gateway" for consumers to access travel products, then sufficient resources must be allocated to search engine marketing or search engine optimization in order to generate upstream traffic in competing with others (Paraskevas et al., 2010). Following the same logic, it is important for hotels to understand when, how, and why consumers use social media for travel in order to create online attention and positive "word of mouth". As such, hotels need to consider and monitor the competition and specific channels they may utilize to promote and distribute their products.

Finally, the analysis of hotel website visibility in Google provides the direction for hotels to improve their online marketing strategies, particularly through search engines like Google. The information space for hotels, although complex, is highly consolidated. This, of course, benefits consumers in terms of reducing information search cost and efforts when looking for travel-related products. However, it also presents enormous challenges for hotels with less market share and resources. Hotel brands such as Marriott and Hilton seem to represent the industry "benchmarks" and dominate the online competitive space in that they are highly visible through Google in terms of both the likelihood to be presented by Google as search results to consumers as well as the position of display. While it is obviously true these brands are important "players" with significant market share and, thus, it might not tenable for everyone to achieve such prominent status, an alternative strategy seems practical with the aim to improve the "quality" of their visibility online by being the leader in certain market segments like Omnihotels.com and others. Hotels must identify and develop these opportunities in order to better navigate the competitive information space on the Internet.

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PLACE BRANDING EXTENSION AND BRAND ATTITUDE: FROM CULINARY
TOURISTS' PERCEPTION

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationships among brand image, brand attitude, and behavioral intention from the culinary tourists' perspective. A self-administered online survey was performed to collect data on culinary tourists' cognitive image, affective image, and brand attitude. SEM was conducted to test the hypotheses. The findings show that culinary tourists' cognitive image impacts their affective image, which in turn influences their brand attitude. It was also found that the tourists' brand attitude affects their behavioral intention. Moreover, the study revealed that the emotional aspect of brand image was the most important factor underlining tourists' brand attitude and behavioral intention. In behavioral psychology, consumers' attitude has been viewed as antecedent of consumer behavior. This study not only empirically confirmed the attitude-behavior consistency theory, but also applied it in the context of branding places in culinary tourism.

KEYWORDS: Brand attitude, Brand image, Culinary tourism, Place brand extension

INTRODUCTION

In destination marketing, place identity has been used as a key component for implementing brand strategy. Destination and place branding share the same constructs as place or destination image and identity, which form linkages and associations between sense of place and consumers. The most typical application of place branding is country-of-origin (COO) image marketing and many studies have been done on the effects of COO image on consumers' purchase since the early 1970s (Kotler, et al., 2004; Papadopoulos, 2004). These studies posited that every place has its own image and image plays an important role in the consumers' decision (Bruwer & Johnson, 2010; Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2002). However, most of COO studies have been performed at

the country level rather than regional, local, and community level. Therefore, its application is quite limited.

Tourism destination is a place-based tourism product which involves place identity and image (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003). Among place branding applications, tourism destination branding can be viewed as the most advanced practice in place branding. Tourism destination marketers and researchers recognize a destination brand as compound of functional, symbolic, and experiential elements of place identity (Boo, Busser, & Baloglu, 2009; Dredge & Jenkins, 2003; Jago, Chalip, Brown, Mules, & Ali, 2003). They argued that a tourism destination may get some advantages through strong destination brand (e.g., raising awareness of a destination and increased visitation).
In brand management, brand extension has been recognized as a risk free strategy for firms introducing a product into new market. Brand extension is the ability to harness previously launched brand awareness and brand image so that brand managers reduce risk of the new product failure (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Basically, a brand extension leverages strong brand awareness and brand associations from the originally established brand, achieving consumers' brand familiarity.

Place brand extension is to use place identity, integrating place image and product image. Specifically, place brand extension has a long history in food marketing. French wines, Colombian coffee, and Florida oranges are typical examples of place brand extension. Recently, rural communities have implemented place branding in promoting agricultural product. Local farmers' markets serve as a collection point connecting place identity and local product as well as socio-cultural heritage in rural areas (Skuras, Dimara, & Petrou, 2006).

At a farmers' market, locally produced products are traded as main products. This is the basic function of the farmers' market and these products are inherently branded by place. Since the food and local farmers' market are traditionally classified in the rural sector, the farmers' market can be seen as a rural tourism resource that uses place/destination image. That is, the place brand extension is completed by using place/destination image.

With respect to the destination image formation process, Gartner (1994) defines destination image formation as three interrelated yet hierarchical components, building on each other to complete the image formation process. The sequential components are cognitive, affective, and conative. First, there is the cognitive component derived from facts. Second, the affective component, relates personal perception to the cognitive. Beerli and Martin (2004) state that the destination image must have integrity, meaning the projected destination image must match the actual destination image. Otherwise, the expectation of the tourist will not be met, leading to a tourist disconnect with the destination. Therefore, it is known that place/destination image is important for successful brand extension.

However, research on the destination image formation process in brand extension is relatively underexplored with regard to rural areas. Rural destination marketers are

trying to utilize every tourism asset to create a strong destination image. Place image is one of most influential assets in the tourism product mix and on image formation. Tourism in rural areas is small in scale and often has a limited number of tourist attractions. Destination marketers of rural areas have tried to develop a positive destination image through local attractions such as local festivals and farmers markets. The market plays a crucial role in representing residents' life and culture that is the basis place branding. Farmer's markets provide an ideal cultural, social tourism attraction, and a sense of place for rural culinary tourists.

It is still unclear how the tourists' experience from an attraction builds destination image and how destination image generated from a local attraction affects tourists' tourism behaviors. This study attempts to address following research questions:
 1) How are brand images formed in place brand extension?
 2) How are brand images affecting tourists' behavioral intention?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination image and destination branding

Destination image is one of the most actively studied tourism subjects. Tourism destinations have their own names and images, and destination image itself can be regarded as a unique selling point in destination marketing. Moreover, destination marketers have a great interest in how tourists perceive destinations and which image components affect tourists' decision making for destination. Destination image studies have tried to meet the tourism industry's needs. Among the destination image studies, it is widely accepted that Gartner's destination image formation process explains how destination image components are generated and affect each other well. Gartner (1994) specified the image components into three interrelated and hierarchical constructs including cognitive, affective and conative image, revealing that each destination image component has its own function and role in a tourists' destination choice. Based on Gartner's framework, efforts have been made to find a direct connection between destination image and tourists' behaviors (Hankinson, 2005; Jago, et al., 2003; Walmsley & Young, 1998). This trend is due to the basic idea that destination images and destination brand identities create strong brand associations in the consumer's memory connecting the destination brand and the consumer. It is argued that destination brand image could affect consumers' behaviors directly (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Hankinson, 2005; Kim & Richardson, 2003; Leisen, 2001; Pike, 2002).

According to previous branding literature, brand image is a systemically designed perception created by marketers' strategic planning. The image is also delivered by marketers' marketing activities such as promotion, advertisement, television commercials, and eWOM. Brand equity includes these two aspects of the brand: brand image and brand awareness. Keller defined the brand equity as "The differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (Keller, 1993), indicating that brand image affects consumers' behaviors through the medium of brand equity. Chernatony and Riley (1999) insisted that general brand principles of physical

products applies to the service industry, but marketing stratagy may be different for service product category. It can be assumed that destination branding is subject to general branding principles because the toursim industry can be viewed as a kind of service industry. Pertaining to destination branding, many attempts have been made to intergrate general branding theories and pratical destination marketing at the local destination branding level (Boo, et al., 2009; Hankinson, 2005; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; Tasci, Gartner, & Cavusgil, 2007). Commom results are destination brand image affect tourists' behaviors and the effect may be mediated by brand equity or brand-related constructs which haven't been explored yet.

Brand attitude and behaviors

In social psychology, attitude-behavior consistency has long been studied because the topic has been crucial for social psychologists and marketers to explore the mechanism of how humans behave or consumers react to persuasive message. In initial attitude studies, it was regarded that most of human behaviors were determined by social attitudes and this argument had been accepted until 1960s. However, some empirical studies provide negative findings on attitude-behavior consistency and the theory was challenged (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). For example, Wicker (1969) reviewed 42 studies and found that average correlation between attitudes and behavior was less than .15., arguing that attitude-behavior consistency theory had weak a theoretical foundation and insufficient evidence for existing. It looked as if the theory could hold out no longer.

However, Ajzen and Fishbein's work has revived the theory of attitude-behavior consistency. According to their research, most of the previous studies have failed to uncover evidence that general attitudes could predict specific behaviors because the measurement design administration strategies in previous studies were inappropriate to capture the relationship between general attitude and specific behavioral intention (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). Ajzen and Fishbein (1977) empirically examined the relationships among general attitude, attitude for single behavior, overall behavior, and single behavior, concluding there is a relatively high relationship between attitude and behavior at the different correspondence levels. For example, attitude for single behavior can be a predictor of single behavior and general attitude for an object or aggregated behavior can be reliable predictor of overall behavioral intention and behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Walster, 1994).

Ajzen and Fishbein developed attitude-behavior consistency theory into the theory of reasoned action and Ajzen extended the theory into the theory of planned behavior. (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The key components of the theory of reasoned action are attitude-behavior consistency and subjective norm, which represents the influence of an individual's social and cultural environment. The theory of reasoned action says that an individual's behavior can be predicted by the individual's behavioral intention and that intention is a function of attitude and subjective norm on a specific behavior. Literally thousands of studies have examined and utilized the theory in analyzing and predicting an individual's behavior, concluding that the sum of beliefs about a specific behavior can be seen as attitude, which is the most influential predictor

for actual behavior as well as for subjective norm. Ajzen (Ajzen, 1991) revised the theory and proposed the theory of planned behavior, which is intended to overcome the original theory's limitation. The limitation is that the theory of reasoned action has a limited explanation of the inconsistency between behavioral intention and actual behavior. Ajzen appended a new term, perceived behavioral control, into the theory of reasoned action and emphasized the individual's volitional behavior.

Keller (1993) defined brand attitude as 'consumers' overall evaluations of a brand' and mentioned the importance of brand attitude when consumers make choices. According to Ajzen and Fishbein's work, attitude can be seen as general beliefs about any objects such as product, product related attributes, functional, and experiential benefits from product consumption. Brand attitude is the sum of overall evaluation and beliefs pertaining to a specific brand (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) argued that brand attitude is one of crucial components of determining consumer behavior . For example, brand attitude affects consumers' brand choice and a repurchase decision. These behaviors are predicted by consumers' behavioral intention. Therefore, the intention is a consequence of brand attitude and a strong predictor of brand selection. Fishbein (2005) indicated that attitude construct is a multidimensional construct which consists of cognitive, affective and conative components. He argued that it is required that the conative or behavioral components be measured in order to get a better prediction of behavior. An analogous parallel can be found between the trilogy of brand attitude and image formation process. This is because brand attitude is a result of the overall evaluation of beliefs pertaining to the brand and beliefs that come from brand experiences. Therefore, it can be assumed that there is hypothetical relationship between brand image and brand attitude.

Place brand extension in destination marketing

Papadopoulos (2004) defined place branding as " the broad set of efforts by country, regional and city governments, and by industry groups, aimed at marketing the places and sectors they represent." Place branding's purposes are to enhance the residents' affection for the place and to attract or retain traveler and investors so that local communities secure social and economic sustainability (Papadopoulos, 2004). In order to achieve successful brand extension, consumers should have positive images and favorable attitudes toward the original brand. These positive associations would be transferred to the brand extension product when the new product is launched (Aaker & Keller, 1990). In destination marketing, place branding has been extensively performed because tourism markers want to promote destination (i.e. place) as tourism product with the advantage of existing place awareness and image.

According to Salinas and Pérez (2009), brand extension strategies and brand image have mutual a relationship because brand image is a form of mental system which consists of a network of conceptual linkages between associations. This idea has come from 'associative network theory', and provides a theoretical foundation for place brand extension in destination marketing. Place image provides strong linkages between a place brand extension product and the existing place brand in the consumers' mind set.

Therefore, place brand extension can be seen as a strategy to maximize benefits from pre-existing associations.

In general brand extension, an associative model of the memory and categorization model has been highlighted (Aaker & Keller, 1990). There have been managerial attempts at grafting place brand extension and tourism marketing. However, little has been done in the form of empirical studies to explore the hypothetical relationship between brand image, brand attitude, and behavioral intention in the context of place brand extension strategy.

In order to fill a gap between the managerial need of place branding extension and theoretical development, this study proposes four research hypotheses as follows:

H1: Cognitive image positively affects affective image.

H2: Affective image positively affects brand attitude.

H3: Cognitive image positively affects brand attitude.

H4: Brand attitude positively affects tourists' behavioral intention.

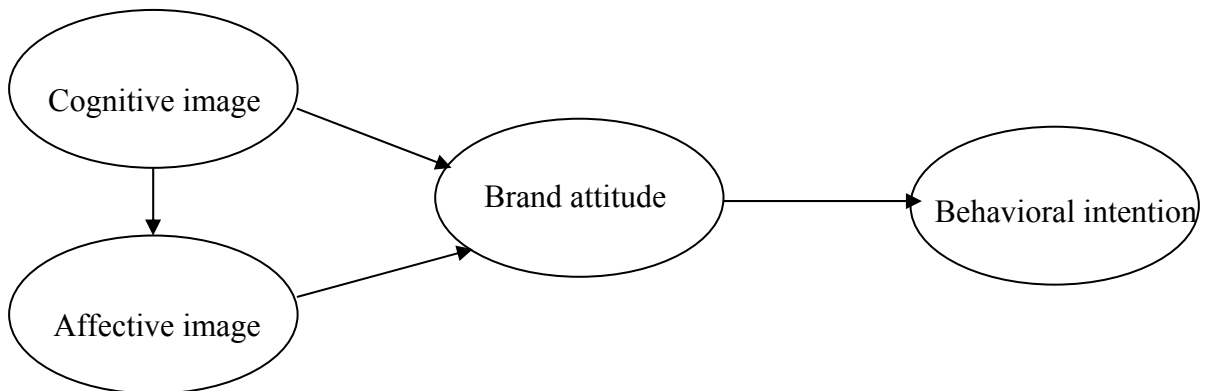These hypotheses are represented in Figure 1.

Figure -1: The Hypothesized Structural Model of Brand Image, Brand Attitude, and Behavioral Intention

This hypothetical relationship was initially proposed by Gartner (1994) and Keller (2003). They used different terms for destination image and brand associations, but their work showed a similarity between key constructs (Cai, 2002). In this research, this hypothetical relationship was empirically tested.

METHODOLOGY

A web-based online survey questionnaire was developed to conduct this study. Measurement items were based on previous wine and food festival studies and empirical tourism research. The survey was conducted from March 2009 to April 2009. Total 331 responses were obtained, resulting in a usable sample size of 223. The survey questionnaire consisted of five parts: cognitive image measurement, affective image

measurement, place brand attitude measurement, behavioral intention inquiries, and respondents' demographic variables. Especially, hedonic and utilitarian attitude measurement scales were utilized so that researchers could measure culinary tourists' attitude for place extended brand and its influence on tourists' behavioral intention.

Second-order SEM analysis was performed in order to test proposed research hypotheses because each construct consists of sub-components. For example, brand attitude has two dimensional aspects including utilitarian and hedonic. Each brand image construct also has five and three sub-dimensions respectively. Since Gartner (1994) argued that image formation process is hierarchical and Keller (2003) insisted that the process is simultaneous, the SEM analysis technique allows the researcher to compare their arguments. Four latent variables have been regarded as the key marketing constructs in the study. The latent variables are cognitive brand image, affective brand image, brand attitude, and behavioral intention. Measurement items for each construct have been modified from previous studies. The farmer's market characteristics - these characteristics can be summarized as small scale, face to face contact with residents and visitors, and service oriented attraction - employed SERVQUAL measurement items to measure service quality as cognitive image (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988), and affective image was measured by items from previous culinary tourism studies. Place brand attitude was measured by the Hedonic and Utilitarian attitude measurement items (Voss, Spangenberg, & Grohmann, 2003).

RESULTS

According to SEM results, all hypotheses were supported except H2 (i.e. cognitive image directly affects brand attitude). Model fitness indices showed very good fitness of the observed data (e.g. chi-square = 104.264, df= 61, p=0.000, chi-square/df = 1.709,GFI = .929, CFI = .806, RMSEA = .056). Hypothesis 1 has been supported. The SEM result and showed a strong relationship between cognitive image and affective image. The standardized path coefficient is .90, and means that most favorable experiences positively influence affective image formation and *vise* versa. Interestingly, the standardized path coefficient of the direction from cognitive image to brand attitude was -.02. However, the coefficient was statistically insignificant, showing no relationship between the two constructs. It was tested if affective image affects brand attitude. The hypothesis was statistically significant and the standardized path coefficient indicated that brand attitude is mainly influenced by affective brand image.

Hypothesis 4 was intended to verify the theory of brand-behavior consistency. This study confirmed the theory because the hypothesis was statistically significant and the standardized path coefficient was .50. Given that brand attitude is a general attitude toward brand and behavioral intention represents multiple behaviors such as revisit to farmers' market, recommendation to others, and willingness to pay premium on purchasing at farmers' market, the results showed that brand attitude is an antecedent of culinary tourists' behavioral intention. Results confirmed Gartner's hierarchical image formation process and the influence of attitude on behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005).

Moreover, it was revealed that brand image formation is a hierarchical relationship and the main effect of brand image is delivered through brand attitude.

Table 1: Results of Hypothesis Testing

Research hypothesis and path	Standardized path coefficient	Result
H1: Cognitive image ► Affective image	.90	Supported
H2: Cognitive image ► Brand attitude	-.02	Rejected
H3: Affective image ► Brand attitude	.92	Supported
H4: Brand attitude ► Behavioral intention	.50	Supported

Note: chi-square = 104.264, p=0.000, chi-square/df=1.709,GFI=.929, CFI=.806, RMSEA=.056
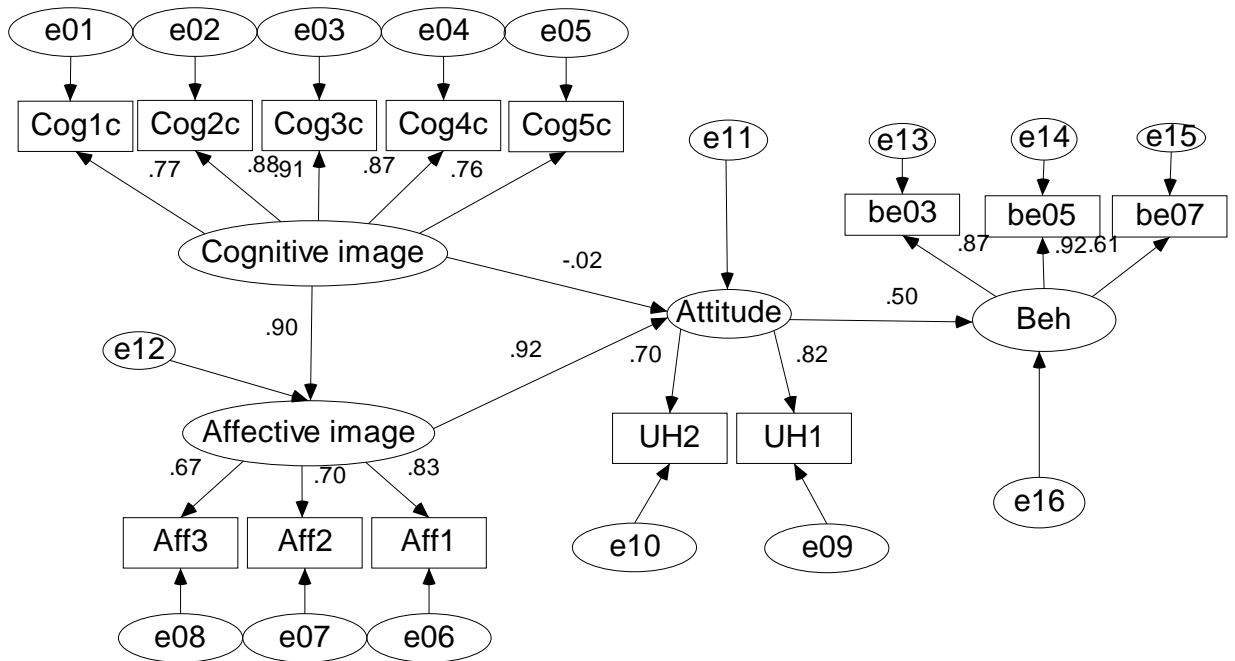

Figure 2: Results of Hypothesized Structural Model of Brand Image, Brand Attitude, and Behavioral Intention

CONCLUSION

This study examined the hypothetical relationship between brand image, brand attitude and culinary tourist's behavioral intention in terms of place branding extension. In order to test the relationship between these key marketing constructs, SEM was performed and significant results were obtained. The results showed that Gartner's image formation process is relevant to the brand image formation process. The findings show that culinary tourists' cognitive image affects their affective image, which in turn

influences their brand attitude. It was also found that the tourists' brand attitude affects their behavioral intention. Summarily, cognitive components of brand image have an effect on affective brand image, and the emotional aspect of brand image (i.e. affective brand image) functions as an antecedent of brand attitude. Behavioral intention can be seen as consequences of brand attitude. Therefore, the most important determinant of culinary tourists' behavior is the emotional component of brand image.

Given these findings, culinary tourism marketers can use place image as a marketing tool. Specifically, tourism experience reinforces place/destination image and the images influence culinary tourists' behavior. A critical finding was that only the tourists' emotional response affects brand attitude. This finding suggested that marketers should try to meet consumers' emotional needs and emphasize the emotional aspects of culinary tourism. Cognitive image definitely affects affective image, but cognitive image doesn't affect brand attitude, which is an antecedent of consumers' behavior. Cognitive image is based on consumers' direct experience and affective image is the experience influenced by consumers' emotion. This process is a key to successful branding and branding extension. This study explored how brand image affects brand attitude. A number of tourism researchers assumed that brand image is a source of differential marketing effect and directly affects consumers' behavior. However, in social psychology, it is widely accepted that human behavior is mainly affected by attitude. Brand image resides in the consumers' mind set but is evaluated by the psychological process, forming brand attitude (i.e. overall evaluation about brand image and consumers' experience). Findings of this study empirically support this process.

The relationship between brand attitude and behavioral intention was confirmed in this study. In the culinary tourism perspective, research findings showed that favorable brand attitude is an antecedent of behavioral intention. Behavioral intention involves revisit intention, recommendation intention, and willingness to pay premium for locally produced food. These three behavioral intentions are marketers' real interest and most marketing programs are designed to facilitate these consumer behaviors. This study provides strong evidence and guideline to achieve outstanding marketing performance in a culinary tourism setting.

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TECHNOLOGY SUPPORTED LEARNING - THE APPLICATION OF THE E-PORTFOLIO IN TOURISM EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The impact of ICT on tourism and hospitality industries has been widely recognized as one of the major changes in the last decade: new ways of communicating with the tourist, new forms of booking and buying behaviour of consumers and new approaches towards assessing customer experiences via new media became part of these industries. However, little attention has been paid to the role played by new media in education in these fields. But technological advances are also continually changing education in travel and tourism. This research investigates the role of new media in higher education in tourism by reporting a case study on the application of the ePortfolio as a useful teaching technique for tourism students. Results demonstrate that the use of this eLearning tool is highly appreciated by the students and has largely contributed to improve both, their personal and methodological skills.

KEYWORDS: tourism education, new technologies, eLearning, ePortfolio

INTRODUCTION

Growing world-wide competition, technological developments, changing demand patterns of multi-optional consumers and increasing uniformity of offers lead to new challenges for both, the tourism industry and the higher education system (Bagshaw, 1996). The interdisciplinary aspect of tourism is becoming more and more significant in the labour market i.e. recent challenges in the tourism industry have a direct impact on the expectations the industry has regarding specific knowledge and competencies of managers and employees as well as on the overall vocation-oriented competencies (Zehrer et al., 2006; Fallows & Steven, 2000). In order to meet the demands of the tourism industry both on a personal and job career level, people need to acquire competencies that enable them to cope with the changing circumstances of the business world. And these competencies today are very closely related to ICT applications.

Tourism has always been described as an information intensive domain (Buhalis, 2003; Gretzel, Yu-Lan, & Fesenmaier, 2000), where information processing and gathering is essential (Sheldon, 1997). Furthermore, recent advances in new technologies have reshaped the tourism industry (Buhalis, 2003) and have changed the information search behaviour of tourists (Werthner & Klein, 1999). Tourists are continually started to using new media for communication purposes more often, satisfying their information needs during all phases of consumption of tourism services (Gretzel, Fesenmaier, & O'Leary, 2006). Moreover, recent technological developments are also having some notable impacts on education by transforming educational curricula, learning materials and instructional practices (Sigala, 2002).

eLearning, which involves the delivery and administration of learning opportunities and support via computer, helps individual performance and development (Haven & Botterill, 2003; Poehlein, 1996). Its relevance and advantages for tourism and hospitality education however has been acknowledged only in recent years (Christou & Sigala, 2000; Kasavana, 1999). Sigala (2002) indicates that eLearning offers great flexibility to match specific conditions of work within tourism and hospitality education. Moreover, Cho and Schmelzer (2000) state that eLearning prepares students of tourism and hospitality programs to think critically, solve problems and make straight decisions, while being technologically alphabetized.

Several attempts have been made to understand the use of eLearning in hospitality and tourism. Braun and Hollick (2006) for example discuss how online skills and knowledge sharing could help capacity building in the tourism industry. Haven and Botterill (2003) evaluate the existing and potential exploitation of virtual learning environments within hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism. Sigala (2001) reviews the evolution of practices in internet pedagogy in order to identify effective eLearning models for tourism and hospitality education.

These attempts show that the hospitality and tourism industry is a very relevant area in which to study the role of eLearning. The aim of this paper therefore is to contribute to these attempts by discussing the application of the ePortfolio as a means of eLearning in tourism education. The paper is structured as follows: first, a literature review on learning theories, the generation "e", the concept of eLearning, and the concept of the ePortfolio is provided; second, the case of a higher education institution in Austria is described; third, the results of a small-scale quantitative and qualitative study are provided including implications on the specific higher education master program; and finally, the paper provides conclusions as well as suggestions for future investigations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Following this introduction, there are three areas of the literature that serve as a foundation of this study – learning theories, theoretical background on eLearning and ePortfolio – and will be briefly discussed in this section.

Learning

According to Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1987) learning is following five steps in the learning process – from novice via (advanced) beginner, competence, fluency to expertise. This suggests that we increasingly learn throughout our life-cycle (Gorard & Selwyn, 2005; Rees, Fevre, Furlong, & Gorard, 1997) and that learning is an essential, life-long endeavour for all human beings. Appreciating the life-long learning also shows the diversity in learning in terms of different learner profiles to which educational approaches must respond to (Fields & Shelton, 2006; Sohn, Doane, & Garrison, 2006). In this perspective, an interesting avenue is offered by educational psychologist Glasser (1990) already in the 1960s by claiming that we learn:

- 10% of what we read
- 20% of what we hear
- 30% of what we see
- 50% of what we see and hear
- 70% of what we discuss with others
- 80% of what we experience
- 95% of what we teach someone else

With the evolvement of learning theory, two major process models of learning were developed - "single loop" and "double loop" learning. Single loop learning refers to situations where improvement is sought but where values and ways of seeing things remain unchanged, i.e. in relation to a given set of operating norms. On contrast to single loop learning, double loop learning refers to situations where assumptions about ways of seeing life and values are challenged, and improvements are sought on this basis; this way of learning is particularly relevant when an issue is complex in nature (Mezirow 1990; Gibbs, 1988; Kolb, 1984; Schon, 1983; Argyris & Schon, 1974).

Hence, with the development of new tools and technologies to support learning, new learning environments are created for knowledge creation, knowledge gathering, and knowledge sharing (Martinsons, Ng, Wong, & Yuen, 2005). Our increasingly technology-oriented society provides more enhanced opportunities for students to be interactive in learning and to continually refine their learning habits from a typical classroom learning to a digitalized way of learning (Herman, Coombe, & Kaye, 2006; Manafy, 2006).

eLearning

The speed of change in our society is most visible in the different names we came up with for each generation in relation to technological development. The Generation X (born 1960-1975) which grew up with computers; the Generation Y (born 1975-1990) which grew up with networked technologies; and the Generation "e" (born 1990-2005) which takes digital technologies for granted. Lately, we also hear much about eLearning in association with universities (virtual or not) and with professional training. Hence, the computer's influence on today's society has been broad and is affecting the field of education and training (Cornish, 2004).

So, modern learning becomes inseparable from information and communication technologies and is often referred to as eLearning. Learning today takes advantage of the multi-channel communication of multimedia contents. In such an environment, students are enabled to access universal knowledge. Learning is therefore migrating from a passive education process, whereby students receive the information from few imposed sources, to a form of learning, whereby students dig for the information from any multimedia source they may choose.

Table 1: Definitions of eLearning (own illustration)

Year	Author	eLearning definition
1998	Driscoll	The transmission of teaching material content and replication of files by using the Internet; reviewing books online, and sending multimedia images and sound effects.
2000	Trace & Cornelia	E-learning is supposed to include a series of courses, involving computer-based learning and web-based learning.
2002	Cardno	E-learning refers to extensive applications of computer-based training, web-based training, and virtual classrooms using the Internet.
2002	Peng & Chang	Connects the web through the media, using all kinds of electronic or digital appliances, including all types of computers, domestic appliances, mobile phones, PDA, etc., to allow learners to acquire updated knowledge at any time and anywhere.

Since the term 'e-learning' and related expressions are being so often understood and interpreted very differently (see table 1), it is useful to attempt to define the new styles of learning that have progressively emerged along with technologies, which are distance learning, online learning, web-based learning, virtual learning and eLearning.

Distance learning is a relatively old concept that connects learners with distributed learning resources and takes place without the physical presence of the instructor and the learner or student (Mantyla & Gividen, 1997). It involves interaction between instructor and students, and possibly between co-students, at a distance. Distance learning includes all e-learning applications – internet-based live instructor broadcasts, video-conferencing, chat and scheduled online conference discussions, e-mail courses or discussions, etc.

Online learning has become a rather confusing expression, since people nowadays tend to understand the term 'online' as 'connected to the internet'. However, the concept of online learning surfaced before the development of the Web, and 'online' here should be understood as 'connected to a digital environment' (whether networked or stand-alone computer). It is associated with readily available learning materials in a computer environment and is related to the common concepts of online help, online documentation, and online services.

Web-based learning entails content (not just activities) in a web browser, and actual learning materials delivered in web format. Simply offering computer-based training for download from a web site is not web-based learning since there is no learning content in web format. Web browsing the learning content is the key feature of web-based learning.

Virtual learning is often used to add to the traditional face-to-face classroom activities, commonly known as blended learning. Virtual learning environments (VLE) work over the internet and provide a collection of tools for students, such as upload of content, peer assessment, administration of students' grades, etc.

eLearning is the sub-category of distance learning that uses digital media, i.e. that is delivered by electronic technology. According to Fry (2001, p. 31), eLearning is defined as „… delivery of training and education via networked interactivity and a range of other knowledge collection and distribution technologies". The European Union defines eLearning as "the use of new multimedia technologies and the Internet to improve the quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services as well as remote exchanges and collaboration" (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, p. 1). However, eLearning is growing beyond a mere technical solution to qualify an entirely new concept of learning, which is really efficient only if it uses a variety of media in the form of audio clips, graphical objects, annotated video segments, and online simulations, etc. The modes of learning change from textual to audio, and audio to video, and so forth. eLearning therefore enables the free exploration of all cognitive pathways, from the sensory perceptions of the human mind (vision, hearing, touch, smell, and taste) that allow the assimilation of information and knowledge, to those requiring language skills (text, graphics, audio, video, animation, and simulations) that allow a higher order of learning (Lee et al., 2008).

The ePortfolio

An electronic portfolio is also known as an ePortfolio or digital portfolio and is defined as "a digitized collection of artifacts, including demonstrations, resources, and accomplishments that represent an individual, group, or institution" (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005, p. 29). ePortfolios are collections of electronic evidence items usually assembled on the web and are a means of eLearning. "Created by the three principal activities of collection, selection, and reflection, student portfolios can be succinctly defined as collections of work selected from a larger archive of work, upon which the student has reflected. Portfolios can be created in many different contexts, serve various purposes, and speak to multiple audiences" (Yancey, 2001, p. 187).

The main advantage of an ePortfolio is that it demonstrates the user's abilities and acts as a platform for self-expression. Furthermore, it is an authentic assessment for the electronic alphabetization of the student, giving evidence of his/her skills and abilities to learn and apply content by creating artifacts (e.g. videos, audios, photos, photo stories, texts, ppt presentations, blogs, links, forums, discussion boards, news groups, etc). By means of ePortfolios integration across disciplines is encouraged and students can create

and share knowledge and learner-generated content using Web 2.0 technologies. The contemporary learner has therefore been described as a "prosumer", who has the ability to produce the knowledge that he consumes (Lee & McLoughlin, 2007). "Through the use of e-portfolios, student work is digitized and kept on record in computerized systems, revised over time, and available for students to organize and present to faculty, friends, and prospective employers" (Ciocco & Holzmann, 2008, p. 70). The instructor can view the information presented online by the student and respond to the student very fast electronically, i.e. by leaving a comment on a discussion board etc. This implies that the ePotfolio method allows for ongoing evaluation, student reflection on feedback, and continual directed improvement.

Apart from the fact that it is widely accepted that the most interactive eLearning experience can never ever replace the face-to-face learning experience from a professor speaking to his students, many universities have started to implement eLearning tools and methods into higher education (Cope & Kalantzis, 2001).   An although in-person communication provides opportunities to clarify, ask questions, restate, etc., students have changed their learning behaviour too and engage in online communications via e-mail, mailing lists, and discussion boards or chat rooms with their classmates. Hence, instructors increasingly integrate eLearning activities actively in the construction of knowledge that encompasses all different forms of learning types.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

A small-scale research project exploring the impact of ePortfolio work on the learning experience of students was conducted as part of the course evaluation of the international study program of the tourism masters program at MCI Management Center Innsbruck[32] entitled "Entrepreneurship & Tourism". The 4-semester masters program's focus lies in the combination of a professional approach to entrepreneurship with the market needs of the tourism and leisure industries. Schumpeter's attempt to describe the entrepreneur as being the 'creative destroyer' (Schumpeter, 1942) could be looked at as being a prerequisite for innovation and advances in business. Therefore, the concept of 'entrepreneurship' comprises both the initiation and implementation of entrepreneurial projects as well as advancing and developing well established business sectors. Graduates of the master 's program 'Entrepreneurship & Tourism' will therefore take on a variety of different roles to (further) develop the tourism service sector, either under taking the

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[32] The Management Center Innsbruck (MCI) is an integral part of the unique "Open University Innsbruck" concept in Austria and has attained a leading position in international higher education as a result of its on-going quality and customer orientation. MCI's programs focus on all levels of the personality and include areas of knowledge from science and practice relevant to business and society. Besides degree programs (full-time and part-time in the fields of Biotechnology, Engineering & Environmental Technologies, Management & IT, Management & Law, Nonprofit, Social & Health Care Management, Social Work and Tourism & Leisure Management). MCI also offers postgraduate programs, executive education, customized programs and management seminars.

commitments of self employment or advancing and enhancing their business careers through acting as intrapreneurs. The program has been designed around four areas of concentration: 'Entrepreneurship & Leadership Skills', 'Family Business Management', 'Destination & Innovation' and 'International Tourism & Markets'. This guarantees a comprehensive but focused orientation as regards program content and ensures an emphasis on challenges entrepreneurs have to face in today's rapidly changing marketplaces.

The international study program for which the ePortfolio was elaborated is taking place in the 3rd semester of the master program. It covers two master courses of the international semester, respectively „International Marketing & Sales" and „International Tourism Management". The key success factors of the study program are a combination of thematic preparation and monitoring, theoretical inputs by guest lecturers at universities, a dialogue with industry experts, experiences and visits on the spot, as well as a thorough reflection and treatment as regards content by means of an ePortfolio. The goal of the international study program is to combine theoretical findings with problem statements from the industry, whereas students shall be active in critical thinking and creative problem solutions. This means, that 'real' case studies are integrated into academic research questions. According to problem-based learning, it is guaranteed to assist students in their individual learning styles, cooperative group works and creativity.

METHODOLOGY

For analyzing the learning outcome of students related to the ePortfolio and the International Study Program, a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods was used.

First, a questionnaire with closed questions served as a quantitative method to evaluate the satisfaction of the students with both the ePortfolio and the International Study Program. The questionnaire was self-administered in that it was posted to the students who participated in the International Study Program asking them to complete it and post it back. A 5-point Likert scale was applied ranging from 1=very unsatisfied to 5=very satisfied.

Second, a focus group with all students was applied to get more in-depth input, perceptions, points of views and feedback on the method of the ePortfolio with the two instructors as moderators. "While [focus groups] appear to be less formal than a survey, focus groups do provide an important source of information..." (Edmunds, 2000, p. 2). This method especially helped to capture personal comments of students and evaluate them. The focus group interview lasted 90 minutes and was documented with flip charts, pictures and a written report. Both instructors analyzed the transcript of the discussion in terms inter-rater reliability.

Findings

Out of the 15 students participating in the International Study Program, 13 completed the survey and took part in the focus group interview, resulting in a response

rate of 86.66%. As far as demographic characteristics of the master students are concerned, most of the students are female (93%). The majority of the students are aged between 25 and 30 (73%). As far as the nationality is concerned, the majority of the students is of Austrian nationality (n=10), followed by Germany (n=3) and the German-speaking part of Italy (n=2). This fact relates to the largely German-speaking master program. The main demographic characteristics are summarized in table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Master Students (own illustration)

Characteristics	n	percentage
gender		
male	1	7%
female	14	93%
age		
20-25	3	20%
25-30	11	73%
> 30	1	7%
nationality		
German	3	20%
Austrian	10	67%
Italian	2	13%

First, students were asked about their satisfaction with the international study program and its single components, such as lectures at universities, business talks, field trips, social program and program organization (see figure 1).

Second, students were asked to rate their satisfaction with the ePortfolio as a tool used to evaluate their learning experiences. The mean value of satisfaction was 4.15. According to a focus group interview with the 13 students, it could be found that some of the students suggested receiving more information prior to the study program and the eportfolio work (n=2). The majority of the students (n=12) argued that it would have been appreciated to have group reflections during the study program in order to be able to more vigorously work on the findings and relate them to the tasks given for the ePortfolio work.
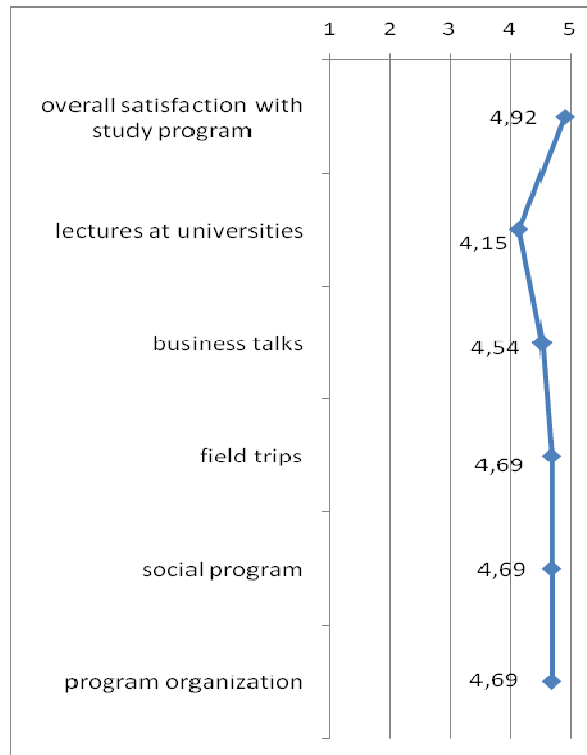
Figure 1. Satisfaction of students with international study program (n=13)

The international study program, on which the ePortfolio was based, was set up to enhance interface competencies, problem solving skills, entrepreneurial thinking and acting, communication abilities, social networking skills, decision-making abilities, etc. and therefore integrates professional and methodological competencies with social-communicative competencies and personal competencies. This goal was evaluated by designing an experience portfolio or matrix together with the students. The x-axis depicts the personal experience outcome; the y-axis depicts the learning experience outcome. Again, a 5-point Likert scale was applied ranging from 1=very unsatisfied to 5=very satisfied. Figure 2 illustrates the overall result. As far as the four quadrants in the depicted portfolio are concerned, they can be interpreted as follows:

- quadrant I: this quadrant says that the learning outcome of the ePortfolio is high, but the personal experience is low, which could mean that the students did not have a good personal experience with the assessment tool, however learnt a lot in elaborating the ePortfolio.
- quadrant II: this quadrant symbolizes a very high personal and learning outcome of the students. This quadrant means to keep up the good work and to continue with the ePortfolio as an assessment tool.
- quadrant III: this quadrant is the worst case scenario with little personal and learning experience. In case students would find themselves in this quadrant, the international study program and the ePortfolio as an assessment tool needed to be rethought thoroughly.
- quadrant IV: this quadrant means that student learnt a lot in terms of their personal experience, however not with regard to content-based learning

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experience, which could refer to the fact that the elaboration of the ePortfolio did not help them gaining knowledge.
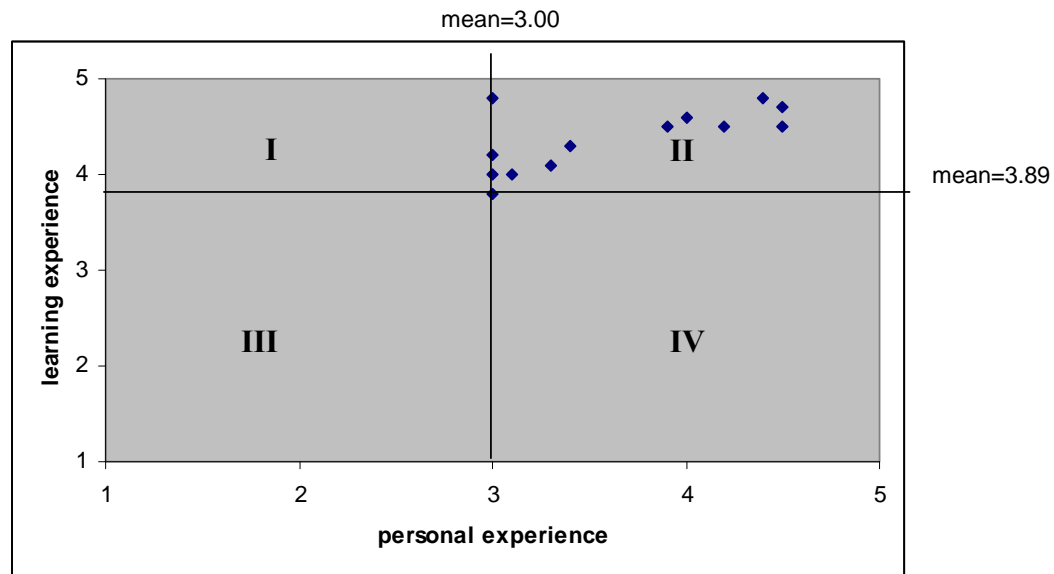

Figure 2. Experience Matrix of Students (n=13)

As can be seen in figure 2, the majority of the students rate their experiences very high in terms of personal experience as well as learning experience. This shows that the goal of the ePortfolio as an assessment tool for the international study program was successful and contributed to the methodological competencies of our students as well as to the personal and social skills.

IMPLICATIONS

Before summarizing the contributions of this study, it is important to highlight the lessons learned and implications from the ePortfolio work.

- **Orient students before the work starts**: students are in a learning process, i.e. they need very specific guidelines and instructions on the outcome expectations of the instructor. In the study program the students received their ePortfolio tasks two weeks before the program started, which seems to be too less time for students to go through the material provided and figure out what exactly they need to deliver.
- **Identify and defuse tension**: it is hard for students when they work with ePortfolios for their first time. It is the task of an instructor to identify and defuse tensions about the new medium and render students comfortable with this tool. This suggestion was also given by students, who stated that the sometimes felt 'unsecure' of how to proceed.
- **Maintain connection**: student learning and experience must be valued by the instruction by means of continuous interaction and connection to the students.

This has specifically been a result of the focus group interview where students suggested undertaking group reflections during the study program in order fully understand the topics covered and discuss the main messages of the guest lecturers and practitioners who spoke to them during the university visits or the field trips.

LIMITATIONS

The present study has certain limitations that need to be taken into account when considering the results of the study and its contributions to eLearning methods in tourism education. One limitation relates to the single case study methodology applied in the research. It would be interesting to compare several cases according to a multiple case research methodology in order to derive basic or general results for similar eLearning approaches at other universities. Moreover, a cross-cultural study on ePortfolio work with students would be interesting to reveal if there are cultural differences in students as regards technology supported learning and alphabetization. A second limitation arises from the small-scale nature of the study that doesn't allow generalizing results to the population at large.

As far as the methodology is concerned, the focus group has been found useful to assess needs and generate information on the perception of both, the program and the use of the ePortfolio method. Focus group findings can now be used to advise decision-making after the program in terms of future improvements related to the international study program and the ePortfolio as an evaluation tool.

CONCLUSIONS

Developing skills in critical reflection poses challenges for the future of education in tourism. The ePortfolio technique supports tourism students to construct their own meaning from the knowledge they are acquiring and gives them also time and space for reflection. Hence, this approach offers several opportunities to encourage students to better understand their own learning process.

eLearning and ePortfolios in particular have gained in importance when it comes to state-of-the-art teaching methods at universities. Universities should be the ground-breakers and pilots of any new learning experience. The study at hand helps understanding the pros and cons of eLearning methods especially in terms of the application of ePortfolios and shows that for the case study at hand, the use of the ePortfolio seems apt. Results of the study therefore are of interest for both, the academic and professional communities involved in tourism and eLearning.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SECOND HOMES – HOW THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY OF KITZBÜHEL (AUSTRIA) PERCEIVES IMPACTS OF SECOND HOMES

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ABSTRACT

The holiday property market has seen a genuine boom in recent years with second homes being an integral part of today's tourism and mobility and an important pillar in the accommodation sector. Second homes are seen as an enabler for destination development and repositioning, yet also show serious concerns with regard to the consequences they might have in terms of sustainability. Therefore, literature often discusses if second homes are a curse or blessing for tourism destinations. The paper reports a case study approach on the perceived socio-economic and environmental impacts of second homes from the point of view of the business community of the destination of Kitzbühel, Austria. Data was retrieved from the local tourist office and via a standardized online questionnaire distributed among the business community of Kitzbühel. Results show that the business community perceives economic aspects to have the biggest positive impact on the destination, followed by social and environmental factors. Limitations of the study and implications for managers and researchers are discussed.

KEY WORDS: sustainable development, perception analysis, importance grid, second homes

INTRODUCTION

Second homes are not an issue of the past – they are an important element of contemporary lifestyles, mobility and tourism. Since the 1990s the growing interest in second home tourism has been shared across social sciences (Müller & Hall, 2004) and the demand for second homes has increased significantly during the 1990s (Müller et al., 2006; Müller, 1999; Kaltenborn 1998; Buller & Hoggert, 1994). "Numbers of second homes increased rapidly in the twentieth century, especially in North America where rural scenic land was cheap and available" (Butler, 2000, p. 523). Second homes can be

an expression of elitism, exclusion and a more authentic holiday experience. Although second homes are seen as an enabler for destination development and repositioning, this issue also shows concerns of sustainability and the arising question, therefore, is if second homes are a curse or blessing for tourism destinations. The paper reports a quantitative online survey on the socio-economic impacts of second homes among service providers of the destination of Kitzbühel, Austria. The research question posed is: which socio-economic and environmental impacts of second homes does the business community of Kitzbühel (Austria) perceive? Results show that the business community perceives economic aspects to have the biggest impact on the destination, followed by social and environmental aspects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Second home industry

Second homes are a phenomenon of contemporary tourism and – for many destinations – largely contribute to regional economies. There is a great variety of definitions for second homes, such as vacation homes, holiday properties, summer houses, cottages, recreational homes or weekend houses (Hall & Müller, 2004). Mainly, second homes have become popular destinations for seasonal retirement migration (Williams et al., 2000). Basically, definitions of second homes vary depending on the focus of interest (destination and tourism management, city and regional planning, or sociology), yet no generally accepted definition exists. However, figure 1 illustrates a categorisation of second homes leading to a useful definition, on which the paper is based upon. Authors therefore define second homes as *temporarily inhabited individual holiday homes of persons with and without local municipality registration* (Plaz & Hanser, 2006).
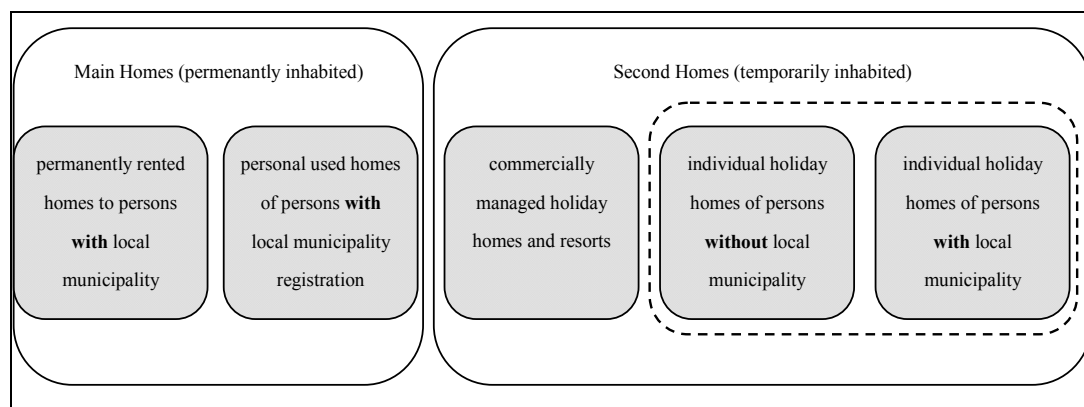
Source: Plaz and Hanser, 2006, p. 5

Figure 1. Classification of Second Homes

"In many areas of the world, second homes are the destination of a substantial proportion of domestic and international travellers, while the number of available bed nights in a second home often rivals or even exceeds that available in the formal accommodation sector" (Hall & Müller, 2004, p. 3). The integration of second home owners into the local community of the destination depends on the ambitions and

attitudes of both owners and residents. "Clearly, where demand is focussed on types of property that bring second home owners into direct competition with local people, tensions may arise" (Gallent et al., 2005, p. 25). While for many destinations, second homes are a major contributor to the regional economy, they often result in negative effects among residents and tourists alike and can have impacts in terms of visual amenity and exploitation of natural areas.

Sustainable tourism development

Tourism is an industry that involves several decision-makers in delivering the holiday product. In literature, the tourism destination is seen as a complex system, in which the various agents must be coordinated to create a satisfactory tourist product (Laws, 1995; Pearce, 1989). The tourist is engaged into various services such as accommodation, restaurants, culture, sports activities, etc. within a destination. Most of the time, the 'worse' experiences dominate the overall picture. This means, that in terms of competitiveness of the destination and long-term success, the whole service chain and the overall quality performed are of utmost importance. As a single actor in a destination is not able to provide an overall product to the tourist, there is a necessity to collaborate in order to provide an integrated and harmonious offer. Tourism development planning therefore requires careful coordination and cooperation of all tourism decision-makers (Font & Ahjem, 1999).

In this regard, the concept of sustainable tourism development has received considerable attention in the last years (Butler, 2000; Hall & Lew, 1998; Stabler, 1997). The expression 'sustainability' has been traditionally used as synonymous with words such as long-term, durable, sound or systematic. According to Dunphy et al. (2000), sustainability means the focus for a new value debate about the shape of the future and shows the general direction we must take. The most widely used definition of sustainable development derives from the Brundtland-Comission that defines sustainable development as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987, p. 43). Pearce et al. (1990) state that sustainable development involves devising a social and economic system, which ensures that these goals are sustained and lead to a rise in real incomes, an increase in educational standards, an improvement of the health of the nation, and an advancement of the general quality of life. According to Holdgate (1996), sustainable development of renewable natural resources implies respecting limits to the development process, even though these limits are adjustable by technology.

Constitutive criteria for sustainable development can be conceptualized by the three dimensions of environmental, economic and socio-political sustainability (Holdgate, 1996). While environmental sustainability refers to the aim of contributing to sustainable ecologic development by protecting and renewing the biosphere, economic sustainability refers to the economic growth of a country by acknowledging the importance of natural resources. Socio-political or human sustainability refers to building human capabilities and skills for sustainable performance and for community and societal well-being.

Sustainability of second homes

Above other factors, facilities and issues, second home properties do have impacts on three different levels, the environment, the economy and the society. In particular, these impacts refer to

- the *environmental amenity* of a destination, as they are often purpose-built and not integrated into the overall picture of the destination; furthermore, they likely lead to degradation of the environment and abuse of natural resources;
- the *economic development* of a destination by providing temporary or permanent employment, or by additional spending in local shops or facilities; and
- the *local residents' perception* of second homes due to the 'absentee' ownership or temporary use of the majority of second holiday home owners.

"The sustainability of any activity is today judged in terms of its social, economic and environmental consequences: second home purchasing and subsequent use is no exception" (Gallent et al., 2005, p. 35). Yet, it is extremely difficult to quantify the impacts of second homes. Fact is that the concentration of second homes in well-settled destinations leads to both negative and positive effects for the destination. Recently, various concepts and approaches have emerged regarding a sustainable development in tourism, e.g. benchmarking of sustainable tourism or CSR reporting in tourism (Holdgate, 1996). Furthermore, few works also focus on local or regional case studies on sustainable development of second homes, e.g. second home tourism and sustainable development in North European peripheries (Müller, 2000). By comparing relevant literature regarding second homes, discrepancies between different regions become evident. Second home tourism is an opportunity especially for regions with few experiences in tourism, e.g. Norway (Flognfeldt, 2004). However, the opposed situation appears in regions with long experiences in tourism and high tourism dependency, e.g. Switzerland or Austria. While in some cases second home tourism is generally accepted as a form of profitable tourism, in others it has a downside for the well established local tourism industry. For instance, Heddema (2007) says that in St. Moritz the second home issue results in a 'cold-bed syndrome' that affects the popularity of the tourism destination and increases costs. The perception of second homes appears to shift according to different stages of tourism life-cycle development.

METHODOLOGY

The case study is solely one of several ways of doing social science research and the role of case study methodology in research is a paradox – while on the one hand, case studies are widely used by many researchers in business research, on the other hand, there is a strong resistance towards this research method (Dul & Hak, 2007). Case studies are particularly suitable for answering "how" and "why" questions, and are ideal for describing phenomena and building and testing theories. "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (Yin, 2003, p. 13f), i.e. case studies are explanatory in nature. Rather than using large samples

to examine a limited number of variables, case study methods involve an in-depth, longitudinal examination of cases by systematically analyzing data and information related to the respective case. Case study methodology enables researchers to use "controlled opportunism" to respond flexibly to new discoveries made while collecting new data (Eisenhardt, 1989). Basically, we distinguish two types of case studies: a) one case or single case studies and b) the comparative or multiple case studies that require data from two or more instances. Within these two major types of case studies, we again distinguish among exploratory, descriptive and confirmatory cases (Yin, 2003). The case at hand is an exploratory single case study.

The research methodology was chosen to achieve a multi-faceted description of relationships, due to the exploratory facet associated with the subject, so as to reveal relevant and updated information for practitioners. In order to gather relevant input, the business community of Kitzbühel, i.e. all service providers which are registered members of the Kitzbühel tourist board (n=100), were the sample population. The gathering of data was undertaken during April 2008 via the local tourism association (Kitzbühel Tourismus). The aim of the study was to answer the main research question relating to the perceived impacts of second homes for the Kitzbühel business community.

The Case

Kitzbühel is situated in the touristic region of the Tirol in Austria with 61,557 registered inhabitants in 2008, including 21,193 second home residents, resulting in Tirol's highest second home quote of 34% of all registered residents. In the federal state of the Tirol, 99,972 out of 704,472 inhabitants are second home residents, which equal a total second home quote of 14.2%. Whereas the regional capital Innsbruck (25,567) outruns Kitzbühel (21,193) in terms of registered second home residents due to the university located in Innsbruck, Kitzbühel is by far the area being influenced most by second homes. In the Tirol, registered second homes have continually been increasing since 2002 (+3.1% in 2008). Since 2004 this figure is dominated by an increasing number of foreigners (+6.6% in 2008) compared to Austrians (+0.4% in 2008). In Kitzbühel, the same trend becomes apparent, however, on a lower level (total increase of second homes in 2008: 2.0%, foreigners: +3.2%, Austrians: -0.4%). In the Tirol, 54.8% of all second home residents are Austrians, followed by Germans (28.5%), Italians (4.8%) and others, while Kitzbühel has only 32.5% second home residents with Austrian nationality and a majority (50.4%) of second home residents with German nationality (BEV, 2008). These figures prove the tremendous importance of second homes for the area of Kitzbühel in comparison to the greater region of the Tirol and therefore substantiate the selection of Kitzbühel as a case study for this paper.

Research Design

The service providers registered as members of the Kitzbühel tourist board (n=100) were contacted via email containing a link to a standardized online questionnaire. With the growth of the internet (in particular the World Wide Web) and the expanded use of electronic mail for business communication, the electronic survey is

becoming a more widely used survey method (Bosnjak et al., 2001). Web surveys are rapidly gaining popularity, as they have major speed, cost, and flexibility advantages. The study at hand made use of an email containing a link to the survey website (web-based survey), as it was considered to be an appropriate mean of soliciting a response to the survey because of the generally high use of the electronic mail by the business community.

The survey design allows investigating the perceived impact of second homes on the destination of Kitzbühel. It contains one overall item regarding the *importance of sustainable development* and then splits sustainable development into the three sustainability dimensions derived from literature. Each of these three dimensions then is interrogated in more detail by five positively and five negatively associated items (Hall and Müller, 2004). The last part of the questionnaire focuses on socio-demographic data.

Method

Importance-Performance Analysis, IPA, was formulated by Martilla and James (1977) and is a measurement instrument based on the difference among importance and performance of single services. The grid can be reduced to a tabular form with only two columns – the perception about the performance of a dimension and the expectation about the importance of a dimension (Pitt et al., 1995). A resulting gap between the perceived performance and the expected importance of a dimension might provide some indication of critical dimensions.

The instrument has been applied and adopted by several researchers, and is also known as the four quadrant Dual Importance Grid (Matzler et al., 2002; Vavra, 1997), which was slightly adjusted from the traditional instrument. The Dual Importance Grid is a measurement instrument based on the difference between explicit (self-stated and specified by the customer) and implicit (indirectly derived) importance. The diagram enables you to prioritize improvement action, starting with those items in the bottom right of the grid, where there is high explicit and low implicit importance. This method is used in the empirical study with the retrieved data plotted for each attribute on the grid that classifies the attributes into the three-factor model categories: threshold, performance (important and unimportant), and excitement. These values are spread among the two-dimensional matrix shown in figure 2.
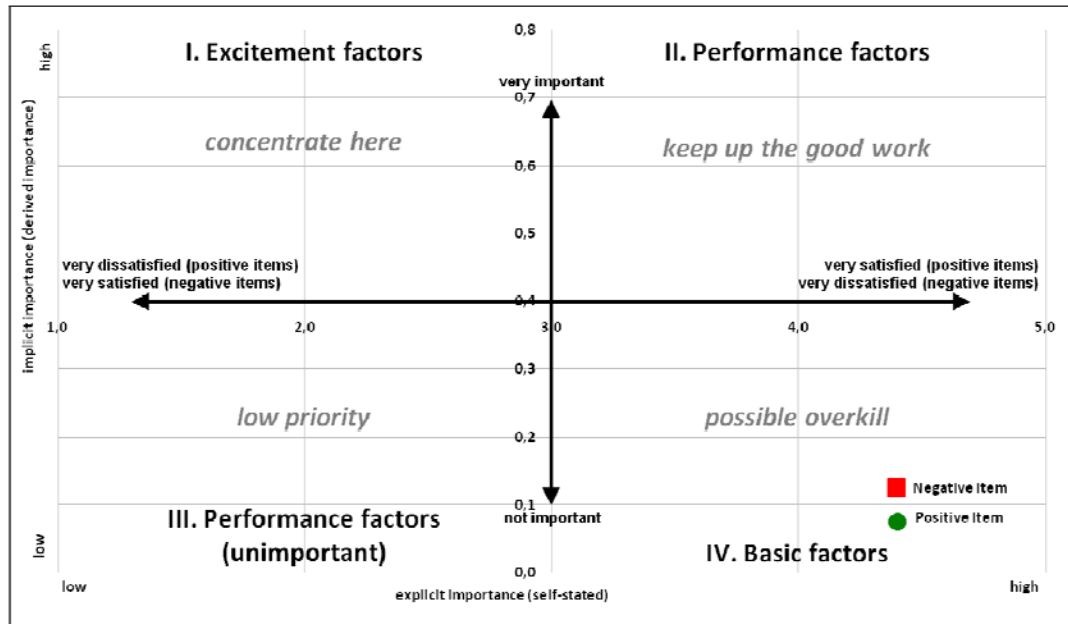
Source: adapted from Vavra, 1997, p. 385

Figure 2. Importance Grid

The rationale underlying this method can be summarized as follows: threshold attributes are high in self-stated importance but low in implicit importance. Performance attributes have both high levels of stated and derived importance. Excitement attributes are those consumers say are not particularly important but are high in implicit importance. Finally, other attributes, low in direct and indirect importance, have little impact on satisfaction and require little attention from the service provider. The combination of implicit and explicit importance therefore results in the following four quadrants (including a rough guideline for interpretation):

- Quadrant I: excitement factors are classified unimportant and are not expected, yet have a high implicit importance ('concentrate here').
- Quadrant II: important performance factors are characterized by high direct and indirect importance ('keep up the good work' or 'improve on challenges').
- Quadrant III: unimportant performance factors are characterized by a low implicit importance and a low explicit importance ('low priority').
- Quadrant IV: basic factors are classified as very important and are largely expected. The indirect calculation only has a minor impact on the overall satisfaction ('possible overkill').

In the following paragraphs, basic factors, performance factors and excitement factors are calculated for the perceived impacts of second homes on sustainable development of the destination of Kitzbühel to deduce necessary future needs for action in terms of sustainable destination planning. Therefore, the purpose of the grid in the Kitzbühel case study is to promote strategic analyses.

STUDY RESULTS

Socio-demographic data

Out of the 100 service providers who received the questionnaire, 74 took part and 61 fully completed the survey, resulting in a response rate of 61%. All respondents are Austrian and 93.4% of them live or work in Kitzbühel. 96.7% are employed, most of them in the tourism service sector (24.6%), followed by other local service providers (21.3%), hotel sector (13.1%), public sector (9.8%) and others, i.e. construction businesses, other local industries, gastronomy, estate agents, tax counsellors, etc. Almost all of them work in small and medium-sized businesses (67.1%). Only 11.5% are self-employed and 14.6% work in larger businesses with more than 100 employees. Indicatively 55.8% claim to be dependent on tourism, 25% to be more or less tourism-dependent, only 18.3% answered to work in a business which is not or not so much depending on tourism. The vast majority of respondents (83.6%) do not personally know or know just very few second home owners in their region, only 9.8% do know some and 6.5% indicated to know many. This socio-demographic background data is important for the following presentation and interpretation of results, since it reveals a broad and characteristic mix of respondents for a traditional tourism destination like Kitzbühel.

Explicit and implicit importance

Besides social demographic data, the survey uses twofold-stratified overall-items to test the perceived importance of second homes measured on a 5-point Likert scale from (1) very low importance/satisfaction to (5) very high importance/satisfaction. First, the importance of second homes for the region in general and second, the impact of second homes on the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, ecological and economic aspects) were rated by survey participants. Furthermore, the latter ones (social, ecological and economic aspects) are scrutinised by, respectively, 10 operationalizing items for social, ecological and economic aspects equally balancing positive and negative impacts of second homes.

Table 1. Explicit and implicit importance of second homes

Item	#	Item	Explicit	Standard	Implicit	Value	Sig.	Implicit	Value	Sig.
OA	-	**Second homes**	3,57	1,12	n.a.	n.a.	**n.a.**	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
OA	A0	**Social Aspects**	**3,84**	**1,04**	**-0,25**	**0,25**	**n.s.**	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
POS	A1	Enhanced community lifestyle	2,48	1,23	0,46	0,46	**	0,01	0,01	n.s.
POS	A2	Creation of social facilities	2,34	1,28	0,47	0,47	**	0,01	0,01	n.s.
POS	A3	Increase in local pride	2,46	1,25	0,36	0,36	**	0,09	0,09	n.s.
POS	A4	Preservation of a traditional way of life	2,05	1,06	0,43	0,43	**	-0,07	0,07	n.s.
POS	A5	Use of redundant housing stock	2,11	1,36	0,29	0,29	*	0,00	0,00	n.s.
NEG	A6	Increase in crime rate	2,36	1,08	0,12	0,12	n.s.	0,11	0,11	n.s.
NEG	A7	Loss of cultural identity	3,54	1,23	-0,22	0,22	n.s.	0,20	0,20	n.s.
NEG	A8	"Cold Beds" - Empty properties in off-season	4,07	1,14	-0,19	0,19	n.s.	0,19	0,19	n.s.
NEG	A9	Insufficient housing stock	4,84	0,45	-0,14	0,14	n.s.	0,15	0,15	n.s.
NEG	A10	Change in social life	4,16	0,97	-0,33	0,33	**	0,69	0,69	**
		Mean	3,04	1,10	0,12	0,12	n.a.	0,14	0,15	n.a.
OA	B0	**Ecological Aspects**	**3,67**	**1,04**	**-0,06**	**0,06**	**n.s.**	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
POS	B1	Beautification of area	2,90	1,15	0,37	0,37	**	-0,01	0,01	n.s.
POS	B2	Opportunity to realise new projects	2,79	1,21	0,61	0,61	**	0,08	0,08	n.s.
POS	B3	Protection of heritage buldings	2,13	1,06	0,39	0,39	**	-0,07	0,07	n.s.
POS	B4	Protection of natural areas	2,05	1,10	0,52	0,52	**	0,00	0,00	n.s.
POS	B5	Creation of environmental facilities	2,02	1,06	0,43	0,43	**	0,03	0,03	n.s.
NEG	B6	Loss of visual amenity	3,75	1,26	-0,15	0,15	n.s.	0,43	0,43	**
NEG	B7	Environmental degradation	3,56	1,22	-0,39	0,39	**	0,45	0,45	**
NEG	B8	Stress on road systems	4,41	0,80	-0,21	0,21	n.s.	0,16	0,16	n.s.
NEG	B9	Exploitation of natural areas	4,46	0,85	-0,34	0,34	**	0,23	0,23	n.s.
NEG	B10	Overpopulation	3,05	1,22	-0,23	0,23	n.s.	0,33	0,33	**
		Mean	3,11	1,09	0,10	0,10	n.a.	0,16	0,18	n.a.
OA	C0	**Economic Aspects**	**4,11**	**0,61**	**-0,32**	**0,32**	*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
POS	C1	Increase in employment opportunities	3,33	1,25	0,31	0,31	*	0,06	0,06	n.s.
POS	C2	Creation of predictable economic base	3,28	1,25	0,50	0,50	**	-0,06	0,06	n.s.
POS	C3	Growth of construction industry	4,26	0,83	0,14	0,14	n.s.	0,20	0,20	n.s.
POS	C4	Growth of service industry	3,80	0,91	0,26	0,26	*	-0,08	0,08	n.s.
POS	C5	Increase in govermental revenues (tax)	3,64	1,10	0,68	0,68	**	-0,26	0,26	*
NEG	C6	Increase in property prices and rents	4,95	0,22	-0,22	0,22	n.s.	0,17	0,17	n.s.
NEG	C7	Increase in costs of local goods and services	4,54	0,77	-0,27	0,27	*	0,08	0,08	n.s.
NEG	C8	Replacement of existing hotel industry	3,39	1,24	-0,39	0,39	**	0,47	0,47	**
NEG	C9	Low frequentation in off-season	4,30	0,90	-0,27	0,27	*	0,21	0,21	n.s.
NEG	C10	Minor added value for local economy	3,74	1,14	-0,43	0,43	**	0,38	0,38	**
		Mean	3,92	0,96	0,03	0,03	n.a.	0,12	0,20	n.a.

	*	Significant on a 0.05 level		n.s.	not significant			OA	overall item	
	**	Significant on a 0.01 level		n.a.	not applicable			POS/NEG	positive / negative item	

Source: own illustration

Table 1 indicates the arithmetic means (explicit importance) and respective standard deviation of the four overall-items (OA) and the corresponding items regarding the positive (POS) and negative (NEG) impacts of second homes. The scale ranges from (1) very unimportant to (3) neutral to (5) very important. Implicit importance represents each item's Pearson correlation of the overall-item of second homes (implicit importance overall) with the respective sustainable development aspect's overall evaluation (implicit importance category), followed by the respective value and significance (value/sig.).

The findings show that second homes in general are perceived as slightly important (3.57) for the region, while their impact is evaluated as more important on economic (4.11), social (3.84) and ecological aspects (3.67). All positive items are recognised as less important than negative ones (mean of all positive vs. negative items: 2.78 vs. 3.94). Hence, all positive items obtain positive correlations with the overall evaluation of second homes and almost all negative ones have negative correlations. The only exception is A6 "increase in crime rate", showing a positive implicit importance (+0.12). C6 "increase in property prices and rents" (4.95) and A9 "insufficient housing stock" (4.84), which are thematically closely related to each other, do have the most important impact on second homes. While all positive items of the categories social and

ecological aspects do have low impact ($\leq$2.90, mean: 2.34), all positive items regarding economic aspects show high impact ($\geq$3.28, mean: 3.66), indicating the importance of the economic value of second homes. Moreover, comparing the arithmetic means of the 10 items with each category's overall-item proves the very significance of the economic aspects, since it shows the least discrepancy between the two (economic aspects: 0.19 vs. social aspects: 0.80 and ecological aspects: 0.56). This goes hand in hand with literature, where it is said that economic sustainability refers to the economic growth of a country by acknowledging the importance of natural and human resources (Holdgate, 1996).

Linear regression analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical tool for the investigation of relationships between variables. By means of regression analysis the degree of influence of each factor on the total importance of second homes was tested. The stepwise regression model considered the overall item of second homes to be the dependent variable and all other items to be independent variables. The dependent variable (perceived importance of second homes) was measured on a 5-point Likert scale from (1) very low importance to (5) very high importance. Results indicate that three items predict the overall second home importance with an accuracy of 63.1 per cent (adjusted r^2).

Table 2. Linear regression analysis

R	R²	corrected R²	Estimated standard error
.806	.649	.631	.679

| ID	Item	B	Standard error	Beta	T	Sig.
	Constant	.783	.341		2.496	.015
C5	Increase in governmental revenues (tax)	.493	.091	.484	5.408	.000
B2	Opportunity to realize new projects	.337	.082	.366	4.093	.000
B9	Exploitation of natural areas	-.393	.103	-.298	-3.796	.000

Source: own illustration

Interestingly the most predictive item is the positive economic aspect of C5 "increase in governmental revenues (tax)" (correlation of +.68[**] with second homes overall item). This single item is capable of predicting the overall item with an accuracy of 44.7 percent. By adding the other two ecological items B2 "opportunity to realise new projects" (POS; correlation of +.61[**] with second homes overall item) and B9 "exploitation of natural areas" (NEG; correlation of +.34[**] with second homes overall item), the accurateness increases to 63.1 percent.

Importance grid

To analyse the importance of second homes, an importance grid model was chosen to identify the relation between explicit and implicit perception and discover those aspects with inconsistent perceptions. Those attributes which show the highest discrepancy between high implicit importance and low performance provide a starting point for a change. While the horizontal axis reflects the explicit importance (self-stated importance by service providers), the vertical axis shows each item's correlation with the overall perception of second homes or each sustainable development aspect's overall assessment ranging from (0) no correlation to (1) perfect correlation. To provide boundaries between the quadrants the arithmetic mean or median is used for the explicit, and the arithmetic mean for the implicit importance (Fuchs, 2002; Vavra, 1997).

Figure 4 reveals an evident general trend. While positive items tend towards the first quadrant *excitement factors*, negatives, as well as the overall assessment of the three aspects of sustainable development, show a tendency towards the fourth quadrant, *basic factors*. However, there is no clear disjunction between both clusters, rather than a transition between them. Remarkable are items A6 "increase in crime rate" and, even though of less importance, also B10 "overpopulation", rated as *unimportant performance factors*. In contrast to these items there are few items which are distinctively assessed as *important performance factors*, overriding the two items C5 "increase in governmental revenues (tax)" and C10 "minor added value for local economy." Moreover, among the positive items two mavericks are observable. The *basic factors* C4 "growth of service industry" and even more C3 "growth of construction industry" – both thematically closely related to each other- are the only evident exception of the two clusters of positive and negative items and their intermediate transition zone.
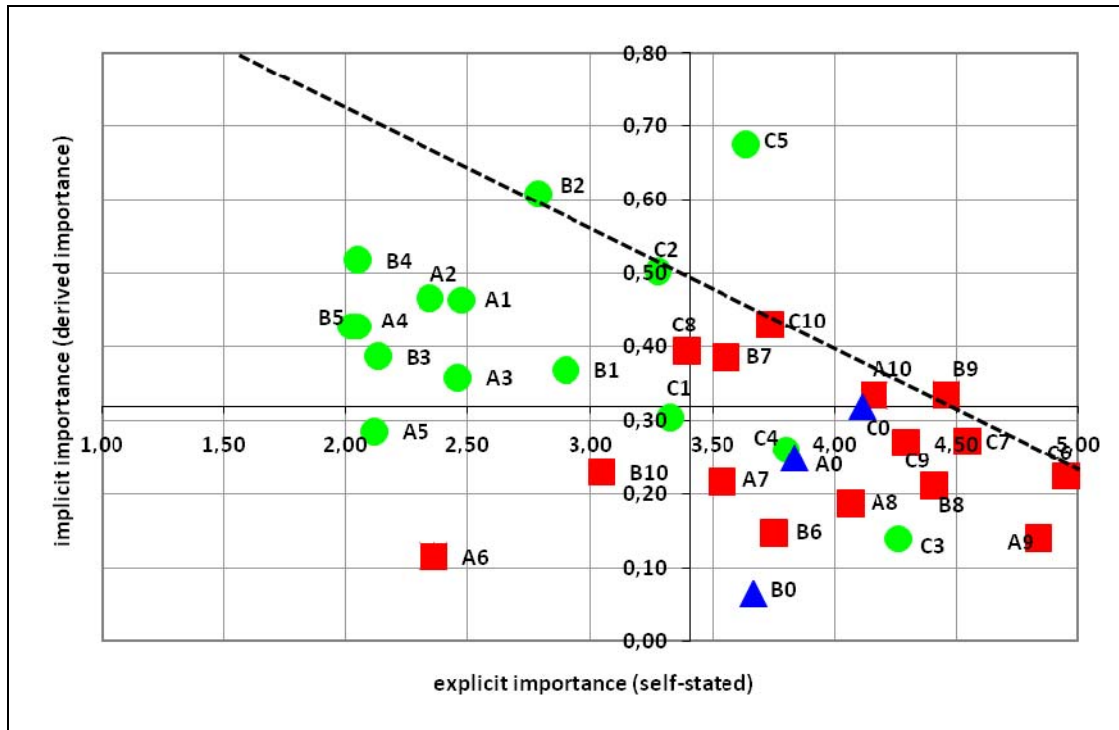
Source: own illustration

Figure 4. Importance grid

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The three resulting items of the regression analysis are C5, B2 and B9, all of them situated in the upper right corner of the importance grid, set apart through the black line. Hence, the importance grid is not only an approach to identify the importance of single items, but also facilitates linear regression analysis. The illustration even reflects the preeminent importance of C5 "increase in governmental revenues (tax)" by the gap between it and the successive items B2 and B9, as obtained by linear regression analysis. Applying this framework to the presented results leads to the following remarks:

Quadrant I - excitement factors: although these factors are classified to be explicitly unimportant to respondents, they have a high implicit importance, i.e. actors responsible for sustainable destination development should concentrate here. For the present study though, these are the four positive social aspects A1 "enhanced community lifestyle," A2 "creation of social facilities," A3 "increase in local pride," and A4 "preservation of a traditional way of life;" the positive ecological items B1 "beautification of area", B2 "opportunity to realise new projects," B3 "protection of heritage buildings," B4 "protection of natural areas," and B5 "creation of environmental facilities;" and the positive economic aspect C2 "creation of predictable economic base."

Quadrant II - important performance factors: these factors are characterized by high explicit and implicit importance, which indicates that actors should keep up the good

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work (for positive items) or should improve on challenges (for negative items). These factors are the negative social factor A10 "change in social life," the negative ecological items B7 "environmental degradation" and B9 "exploitation of natural areas," and the economic aspects C5 "increase in governmental revenues (tax)" (POS), C8 "replacement of existing hotel industry" (NEG) and C10 "minor added value for local economy" (NEG). Consistent with Martilla's and James' (1977) assertion that the positioning of the horizontal and vertical grid lines serve as a guide, it seems reasonable to suggest that responsible actors should also take special note of attributes that are very close to the boundaries of the dividing grid lines. For example, even though items C8 "replacement of existing hotel industry" and B7 "environmental degradation" fall into quadrant II, they are sufficiently close enough to quadrant II's boundary with quadrant I, that they should also be considered to be items on which responsible actors should concentrate.

Quadrant III - unimportant performance factors: these factors are characterized by a low implicit importance and a low explicit importance and therefore do have low priority. In the study at hand, these factors are the social factors A5 "use of redundant housing stock" (POS) and A6 "increase in crime rate" (NEG), the negative ecological item B10 "overpopulation," and the positive economic aspect C1 "increase in employment opportunities."

Quadrant IV – threshold or basic factors: these factors are classified as very important by the customer. The indirect calculation only has a minor impact on the overall customer satisfaction of service providers. Therefore, a bad performance of these factors does mean a possible overkill for the destination. In the study at hand these factors are the negative social factors A7 "loss of cultural identity" and A9 "insufficient housing stock," the negative ecological items B6 "loss of visual amenity" and B8 "stress on road systems," and the economic aspects C3 "growth of construction industry" (POS), C4 "growth of service industry" (POS), C6 "increase in property prices and rents" (NEG), C7 " increase in costs of local goods and services" and C9 "low frequentation in off-season."

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study has certain limitations that need to be taken into account when considering the results of the study and its contribution.

One limitation relates to the method of a single case study approach relying mainly on the reported quantitative study. To complete the overall picture, a qualitative approach by means of in-depth interviews with service providers would be most valuable. Moreover, it would be interesting to compare several cases according to a multiple case research methodology in order to derive basic or general results for similar destinations like Kitzbühel with regard to perceived impacts of second homes on sustainable destination development.

It has been suggested in literature that importance-performance is a dynamic construct, reflecting the interdependence between the two items over time (Sampson and Showalter, 1999; Slack, 1994). Therefore, it would be useful to further discuss this issue

by comparing importance-performance profiles for a given sustainability scenario from multi-year studies vis-à-vis management actions taken in relation to the respective attributes.

Another limitation arises from the small sample size that doesn't allow for the generalization of results to the population at large. This shortcoming might be explored and addressed in future research. Given the high level of access, and frequent use of email as a communication medium it was felt that a web-based survey had the advantage of being relatively time-efficient for respondents. Yet, even though research shows that e-mail response rates are higher, the study found response rates higher only during the first few days after the first invitation to participate in the study (Bosnjak et al., 2001). Furthermore, in electronic mailings, people can easily quit in the middle of a questionnaire and are not as likely to complete a long questionnaire on the web, which has been evidenced in the empirical study at hand with 13 questionnaires being not fully completed.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The paper reports an online survey on the perceived socio-economic and environmental impacts of second homes among service providers of the destination of Kitzbühel, Austria. Single case study research methodology was chosen to achieve a multi-faceted description of relationships.

Second homes are a critical issue in today's tourism market. The paper reports a quantitative study among service providers on their positive and adverse perception of second homes in Kitzbühel and the resulting implications for sustainable destination development with regard to society, economy and environment. The method used is the importance grid analysis, which from a strategic point of view, provides a tool for strategy development as it gives a clear picture of factors that are critical. Out of the three dimensions of sustainable development, the economic aspects are evaluated to have the most vital impact on the region (1.89), followed by social (2.16) and environmental aspects (2.33).

While there are many interesting areas that need to be more closely addressed, the following areas appear to be related to those that have the highest impact on sustainability:
- **Social sustainability**: the survey shows that the positive social aspects A1 "enhanced community lifestyle," A2 "creation of social facilities", A3 "increase in local pride" and A4 "preservation of a traditional way of life" are issues where destination management must pay attention and concentrate.
- **Ecological sustainability**: also, some ecological items (B1 "beautification of area," B2 "opportunity to realise new projects," B3 "protection of heritage buildings," B4 "protection of natural areas," and B5 "creation of environmental facilities") are an area of focus, as these aspects seem of high implicit importance for service providers in the destination of Kitzbühel.

- **Economic sustainability:** in this dimension, only one economic aspect (C2 "creation of predictable economic base") seems to be an issue where Kitzbühel should pay more attention when it comes to future second home development.

Altogether it can be said that Kitzbühel's business community is highly sensitive towards second homes and aware of those issues where they should keep the good work or improve on challenges (quadrant II) and where they should concentrate (quadrant I). To sum it up, the study revealed that the economic factors of second homes are perceived to be most important aspects for the local community, while ecological and social aspects represent rather the downside of second homes. Future researchers may wish to discuss the extent to which conflicts arise among stakeholder groups impacted by second homes.

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INTERNAL MARKETING AS A MODERATOR IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HOTEL BRAND IMAGE

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ABSTRACT

As green activities are increasingly developed and implemented in hotels, hotel management is considering green activities to be a strategic tool to increase their competitive image. This study explores how green activities can affect hotel's brand image using the concept of cognitive image, affect image and overall image. This study, based on an online survey of 70 hotel managers, also investigate how internal marketing can moderate the relationship between green activities and hotel's overall image from the perception of hotel managers. The importance of this study is to examine the moderating effect of internal marketing between green activities and hotel's image from manager's perception, which indicates the importance and effectiveness of green activities in hotels. A range of theoretical and empirical implications are also discussed.

KEYWORDS: Green; Internal marketing; Image; Moderator

INTRODUCTION

Concern about environmental issues has increased dramatically in the past decade and is affecting the way consumers behave because challenges such as global warming lead to catastrophic social and ecological impacts (IPCC, 2007; CDP, 2007). The current levels of environmental crisis and climate change are largely due to human activities (IPCC, 2007). Most recently, the Copenhagen Climate Conference addressed the importance of being eco-friendly. There is growing significance in becoming environmentally friendly. From a recent report by PhoCusWright (Rheem, 2009),

consumers are more likely to live green in many aspects of their personal lives. Consumers are seeking more environmentally friendly products/ services (Trung & Kumar, 2005; Laroche, Bergeron, & Bararo-Forleo, 2001; Jimenez & Lorente, 2001; Ip, 2003).

The present study examines the indirect relationship between environmental sustainability programs and hotel brand image. It investigates potential methods through which an environmentally proactive hotel can gain competitive advantages and, thus, increase its green image.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Environmental Sustainability and Hotel Responses
Sustainability can be the solution for the limited natural resources on the earth, for the global warming of the planet, for the wasted water, for the increase in solid waste (Krebs, 2001; Mihelcic et al., 2003) and for the growing need of green consumers. In 1987, the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations (1987) defined sustainability in Our Common Future as development that "meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs." In 2003, a representation of sustainability showcased how both society and economics were constrained by environmental limits. Later in 2006, the definition of sustainability refers to the "three pillars" concept of environmental, economic and social dimensions, indicated as the "Triple Bottom Line (TPL/ 3PL)" interchangeably (Elkington, 1994). Specifically, environmental sustainability is the first and foremost element and it has direct and indirect impacts on the other two dimensions. Environmental sustainability maintains practices and strategies that contribute to the quality of the environment on both a short-term and long-term basis. In common with environmental sustainability, social sustainability incorporates the idea that future generations should have at least the same access to the social resources as the current generation. Both environmental and social sustainability will finally have potential impact on economic development and, thus, economic sustainability (Daly, 1996). It is considered the third element of sustainability, which is keeping the capital intact and creating economic growth. Environmental sustainability programs are paramount to business success.

In 2007, the North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Study (J.D.Power, 2007) suggested that 73 percent of consumers, who were aware of the hotel's environmentally friendly programs, said they participated in such programs. In hospitality literature, environmental sustainability is becoming a cutting-edge topic. Many researchers have investigated sustainability issues in tourism destinations and "best practices" of achieving sustainability.

Currently, hotel companies with a proactive environmental commitment are developing and implementing environmental sustainability programs. Such programs are implemented in various areas including housekeeping (e.g., Dagmar, 1994), food and beverage (e.g., Woodward, 1994), engineering, and operations. Previous research has categorized them into three main areas: energy management, water conservation, and

waste management (Bohdanowicz, 2006; Iwanowski & Rushmore, 1994). Energy management has been considered as one of the most important areas of environmental sustainability programs because hotel companies in general consume a large amount of electricity and unsustainable energy in various operational ways. The potential for energy saving through environmental sustainability programs such as replacing light bulbs with energy efficient ones has been estimated at 10 percent-25 percent, depending on the age and size of the hotel (Bohdanowicz, 2006). Water conservation is another key area of environmental sustainability programs. According to Marriott International's linen reuse program, encouraging consumers to reuse linens and towels during their stay contributes to water saving by 11 percent to 17 percent (Marriott International, 2007). The third key area is waste management. It is developed and implemented not only in front-of-house areas such as food and beverage service and housekeeping operations, but it is also in back-of-house areas such as maintenance and the engineering department (Baker, 2008). Environmental sustainability programs with regards to such areas as reduction of energy consumption, reuse of grey water and recycling of solid waste already have been investigated in much previous research. Such programs represent the responsible awareness and consciousness of hotel companies toward the environment.

Green Wash & Hotel Green Image

Green washing can be used to describe hotel companies that attempt to show that they are adopting environmental sustainability programs beneficial to the environment, which is in fact illegitimate (Makower, 2009). Some hotel companies may dishonestly claim that their products/ services are environmentally friendly. For instance, they may claim themselves "environmentally friendly" by joining commercial "green" marketing associations that market and promote a "green hotel" for a fee without checking the credentials. That is an insincere use of green marketing or green corporate communication and can cause consumers to question the efforts of genuine environmentally friendly establishments. Fortunately, effective branding can help lessen the hazards of green washing.

According to Burkitt and Zealley (2006), the challenge for internal marketing is not only to communicate the right environmental sustainability messages but to embed them in such a way that they both change and reinforce senior management's attitudes and behaviors. The concept of internal marketing is associated with hotel companies' environmental impacts. Increasing environmental responsibility stimulates the implementation of environmental sustainability programs in the hotel industry, which is undertaken to help hotel companies maximize their market-based benefits by promoting and positioning the hotels as "green hotel brand" in the minds of consumers (Ries & Trout, 2000). To accomplish a strong "green brand" of a hotel company, the "simple premise", explored by Schreuer, is that marketing communication creates brand expectations, while senior management delivers that promise efficiently. Simoes and Dibb (2001) argue that branding plays a special role in service companies because strong brands increase consumers' trust of the invisible assets, enabling them to better visualize and understand the intangible and reduce consumers' perceived financial, social or safety risk.

Sangster et al. (2001) indicated that branding can help hotel companies reduce perceived risks, increase competitive advantage, reduce marketing costs, and build brand loyalty. A strong hotel brand enables consumers to better visualize and understand the intangible side of the products/ services (e.g., environmental sustainability programs in hotel settings). In addition, a strong hotel brand reduces consumers' perceived economic, social and safety risks (Bharadwaj et al., 1993; Berry, 2000). An increasing number of companies consider the incorporation of environmental sustainability programs into their brands as one of the key methods to long-term business successes. Such programs in hotel companies can not only save cost, but also gain good reputation as well as receive public recognition of a hotel brand. Such brands appeal to consumers who are becoming more aware of the need to protect the environment. A green brand can add a unique selling point to a product and can boost corporate image. Green hotel brands are those hotel companies that consumers associate with environmental conservation and sustainability programs.

A Conceptual Framework
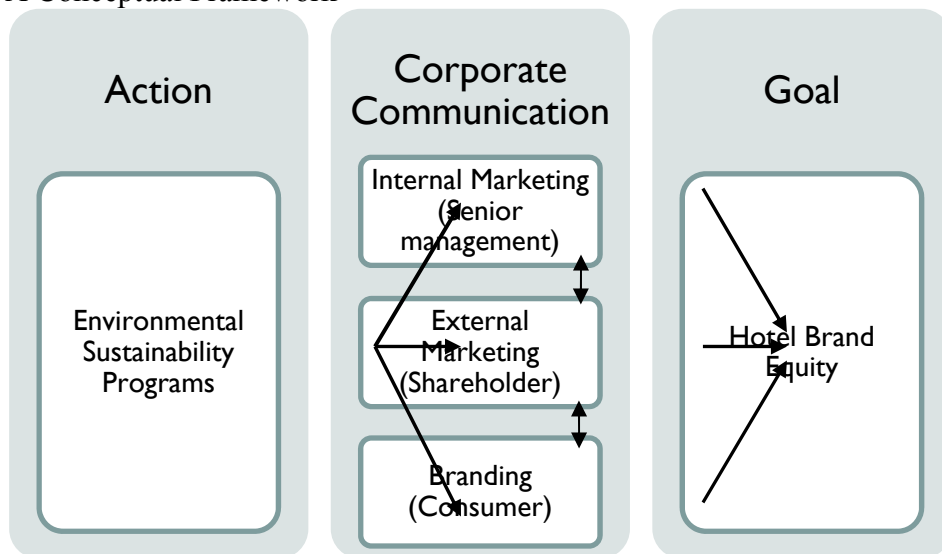
METHODOLOGY

In the present study, a quantitative method is employed. On-line surveys have been sent to senior managers working for hotels that received the Energy Star rating. The purpose of the survey is to examine the efficiency and effectiveness of internal marketing/ branding on their existing environmental sustainability programs. The study is designed to examine management perspectives of hotel management that, to some extent, has shown commitment to green programs.

Data Collection

There were mainly two initiatives for the recruitment process. One was that the respondents have to be senior managers working for hotel companies in the United States. Another initiative was that those properties must have possessed of the Energy Star Label at least once within the past three calendar years (2009, 2008, and 2007).

The purposive sampling method was employed. The study aimed to investigate the indirect relationship between environmental sustainability programs and hotel brand image. In particular, the internal marketing program moderating the relationship between environmental sustainability programs and hotel brand image. Therefore, senior managers in hotel companies in the United States were the population of interest. They must have been in certain positions and have been involved in or been working for environmental sustainability programs. The on-line survey was conducted from April 21st 2010 to June 6th 2010 with the distribution of over 200 surveys.

In order to collect data from the appropriate population, two steps were used. First, we used secondary database from the Energy Star Program. It was a government-backed program helping sustainable business and protecting the environment through superior energy efficiency.

The questionnaire targeted senior managers from hotels that have received the Energy Star rating. The questionnaire was designed based on literature review and empirical question often discussed when examining internal marketing and the implementation of environmental sustainability programs for business success. It was related to marketing and is part of a larger study addressing other issues. The survey included three main sections: accomplishment of environmental sustainability programs, internal marketing and branding strategies, and demographic characteristics. Twenty-seven (27) items were listed on the survey. The list was based on existing environmental sustainability programs in hotel companies and internal marketing literature review (Table 1).

Table 1. Survey Questions for Senior Managers in Hotel Companies

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Section A: Accomplishments and Outcomes of Environmental Sustainability Programs in Hotel Companies
Item 1   Our green programs are effective.
Item 2   Our hotel has been successful in achieving its environmental goals.
Item 3   Our environmental programs improve our operational efficiency.

Section B: Internal Marketing and Branding Strategies Regarding Environmental Sustainability Programs in Hotel Companies
Item 4   Senior management of this hotel brand supports our environmental goals.
Item 5   Our hotel considers "going green" to be a key priority in our mission.
Item 6   I believe in the value of our environmental programs.
Item 7   "Going green" is a good strategy for this hotel.
Item 8   I think management is making a mistake by introducing green programs.
Item 9   I have no choice but to go along with these programs.
Item 10   I feel a sense of duty to these changes.
Item 11   I do not think it would be right to oppose these green programs.
Item 12   Involvement in associations promoting green programs.
Item 13   Increased demand for green programs from individual consumers (business or leisure).

Item 14   Our green initiatives are actively communicated to consumers as an important part of our brand.
Item 15   I believe consumers are aware of our environmental initiatives.
Item 16   It is easy for guests to identify green products and green initiatives in our hotel.
Item 17   I believe consumers choose our hotel based on our environmental programs.
Item 18   It is important that our green programs are validated by third party organizations, such as Energy Star.

Section C: Demographic Information of Hotels and Their Managers
Item 19   Room number of a hotel
Item 20   Type of a hotel
Item 21   State of a hotel
Item 22   Location of a hotel
Item 23   Ownership of a hotel
Item 24   Year when implementing a "green" hotel
Item 25   Gender of the hotel manager
Item 26   Educational level of the hotel manager
Item 27   Current position of the hotel manager

Data Analysis

The analysis procedure is conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS), Version 16.0. The collected data is analyzed in the following three steps.

First, the researchers use descriptive statistics to summarize potential relationships between the two main constructs. Such basic exploratory data analysis plays a significant role in understanding and identifying underlying patterns and relationships in the collected data.

Second, bivariate analysis is performed to examine the relationship between environmental sustainability programs and hotel brand image. A similar procedure is used to investigate the relationship between environmental sustainability programs and internal marketing as well as the relationship between internal marketing and hotel brand image. There are nine variables of both hotel personnel (3 items) and hotel companies (6 items).

- Variables of senior managers: gender, educational level, and current position.
- Variables of hotel companies: room number, types, states, locations, ownerships, and year when implementing the green program.

In the study, the researchers conduct tests to find the differences in and impacts on those demographic characteristics and hotel profiles.

Third, limited research has been done to examine the relationship between environmental sustainability programs, internal marketing/ branding and hotel brand

image. Canonical Correlation analysis is chosen because it allows testing the relationship between two groups of variables (Hotelling, 1936). In particular, the researcher test the relationship between the three constructs above two by two. For this analysis, Statistical Analysis Software (SAS), Version 9.2, will be used. Three (3) items of environmental sustainability programs eight (8) internal marketing and seven (7) branding will be involved in the analysis. Canonical loading will be used for the interpretation since it is commonly considered more reliable for interpretation than others.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS (WORKING-IN-PROGRESS)

In the study, the researchers addressed that sustainability programs can contribute to a hotel brand in many different ways. One way is to increase the green awareness of the hotel brand. Another is to help the hotel brand to increasingly gain a good reputation. Finally, sustainability programs can contribute to the internal department of a hotel brand. For example, the housekeeping department can benefit from the energy-saving practices. Water usage can be decreased, towels can be used for longer time and labor can be saved. Second, the characteristics of both hotel companies and their senior managers have potential impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of a hotel's green image. There is no direct relationship between environmental sustainability programs and hotel brand image. However, internal marketing/ branding strategies can be considered as a moderator in the relationship between environmental sustainability programs and hotel brand image.

However, there are still problems that cannot be neglected. One of the important problems is that although environmentally friendly consumers are concerned about sustainable issues, the most important for them is cost. They may purchase GREEN HOTEL; prefer hotels implementing energy-efficient renovations. However, they will feel disappointed if they do not see the return on the investment they expected. To conclude, they only care about "green" when they are allowed to; they have to have the economic capability to support sustainable programs in hotels.

The study will make important theoretical contributions to sustainability literature. This study explores the moderating effect of internal marketing's on sustainability programs in hotel companies in a descriptive manner since the response rate is relatively low. Future research can investigate its moderating effect in a broader sense. Researchers have investigated considerable sustainable practices in hotels and have analyzed the definitions of sustainability from three dimensions (economic, environmental and social). However, there is a lack of research on the interactive relationships between sustainability and a hotel brand. Therefore, the present study provides the understanding of the relationship between sustainability and a hotel brand. Sustainability programs enhance a hotel's brand image as an added element by attracting environmentally friendly consumers. It is theoretically important in the following domains: 1) the manager's perception of the importance and effectiveness of the green messaging/brand on consumers, and 2) the impact of brand message on managers. Another contribution is that the study's results will help hotel managers to increase the competitive advantage of the brand. What's more, a hotel brand also contributes to its

sustainable programs. Future research may investigate how a hotel brand can influence sustainability.

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TOWARDS A DESTINATION BRAND IMAGE

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ABSTRACT

The present study proposes a synthesized framework of tourism destination image with an emphasis on brand image. The study addresses the importance of understanding the image components that lead people to the actual visitation. The suggested framework, which synthesizes the extant conceptualization of image components, illustrates that the components interact in people's destination image formation process. To capture the additional elements which make the destination unique and competitive, this study proposes the concept destination brand image as differentiation from destination image. The former is the sufficient condition for visitation while the latter is a necessary condition. The proposed model suggests where the differentiated brand image is positioned in people's image formation process. In the model, cognitive, affective, and conative images are divided into two stages of image formation with the critical focus on destination brand image. The study proposes that destination brand image mediates people's image formation and their motivation for actual visitation.

KEYWORDS: Affective image; Cognitive image; Conative image; Destination brand image; Destination image.

INTRODUCTION

Destination image has been studied for more than 30 years since the seminal works of Hunt (1975) and Mayo (1973). Dimensions and attributes of destination image have been studied extensively and methodologies to measure the image have been developed. However, there has been a lack of critical review on what destination image really means. Few image measurement studies have identified exactly which components of the destinations they attempted to capture. Because of a lack of consensus on the conceptual understandings and methodologies, the dimensions and scopes of image are defined differently. More important, although branding has become a strategic issue for an increasing number of destinations, previous image studies have failed to capture the

unique image components that evoke special feeling for tourists and cause them to visit destinations. Understanding the destination image in the context of destination branding is, therefore, critical and urgent.

Gallarza, Saura, and Garc (2002) provided a conceptual framework to understand tourism destination image. They categorized it as having a complex, multiple, relativistic, and dynamic nature. They acknowledged that destination image studies can be used to derive "competitive and strategic image" (p. 71), which can be used for positioning the destination. However, they did not conceptualize the special image that is differentiated from other destination image components or suggest how to find it. Pike (2002) pointed out that destination image usually had been measured using the "multi-attribute model." Researchers acknowledge that attribute-based approaches are not the most effective methodology. However, there has been little critical review and few other counterproposals concerning this issue. Another methodology is to measure people's preference by standardized scales, but something that differentiates a destination from others still cannot be detected by this method.

The present study examined different approaches to studying destination image in extant literature and identified various image components and their relationship in a conceptual framework. The study also proposed that destination brand image is a more advanced concept for today's competitive marketplace. A conceptual model of destination brand image was presented.

DESTINATION IMAGE

Image has been defined as an "overall" impression (Dichter, 1985) in a broad sense. This definition has been adopted since the earliest era of destination inquiry (Crompton, 1979). Similar definitions have been empirically used in the most recent studies (Bigne Alcaniz, Sanchez Garcia, & Sanz Blas, 2009). However, such a description fails to provide criteria to capture the components of image. Therefore, several types of approaches in categorizing the dimension of destination image have been developed.

Attribute-based views show the strengths and weaknesses of the destinations and help to position each destination. O'Leary and Deegan (2005) categorized destination image attributes. They used attributes such as the scenery/nature/locations, people, pubs/beer, green, tradition/culture, and others. Open-ended questions usually are used in this type of image inquiry (Reilly, 1990). At the same time, structured questions with categorical analyses are used to identify the dimensions and the attributes of image (Murphy, 2000). Most studies using this category of image, however, identify fragmented features of the destinations; and this method fails to reveal further differentiating components of the destination that attract visitors and keep them returning.

Other studies focus on the process of how people form destination image. It is represented as an organic, induced, and modified-induced image spectrum. By considering how people are affected in forming the destination image, this framework helps to understand how people develop image at each stage. In tourism studies, such a

perspective was suggested by Gunn (1972) in his seven-stage process of tourism experience and image development. This organic-induced image classification was followed and developed by Fakeye and Crompton (1991) and Gartner (1989, 1994). However, it fails to capture specifically which image attributes have critical roles in building emotional bond with people and attracting visitors.

Many studies probe the image formation process from the visitors' perspectives (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Cognitive-affective-conative image categorization usually is used as a framework of image development. First, disregarding the conative dimension, studies categorize destination image into the cognitive and the affective image (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). Cognitive image deals with the functional aspect of the destination (Bigne Alcaniz et al., 2009; Chaudhary, 2000; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Grosspietsch, 2006; Hunt, 1975; Phelps, 1986). How the cognitive image leads to positive-negative spectrum of overall image also is recognized and measured (Chon, 1990). The other side of the spectrum, affective image, explains the feelings and emotional attachment towards the destinations (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Ryan & Cave, 2005; Son & Pearce, 2005). Cognitive dimension is regarded as the antecedent of affective image of the destination (Ryan & Cave, 2005). Echtener and Ritchie (1993) and Bigne Alcaniz, Sanchez Garcia, and Sanz Blas (2009) considered diverse aspects of a destination to test the structural relationships among the constructs. However, it is meaningless to test the relationship between each image construct and behavioral intentions, if the differentiating image of each destination is to be revealed.

As an extended model, image attributes and holistic image have been considered together with the cognitive and affective components (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Phelps, 1986; Um & Crompton, 1990). Another combined framework, multi-dimension or multi-layer structure of people's image perceptions of destinations has been discussed. For example, the destination image framework of Echtner and Ritchie (2003) is two-dimensional. Multi-layer structures of image reflect that people have mixed images of destinations which are concrete and abstract, functional and emotional. Qualitative research often has been used to find complex structure of image (e.g. Ryan & Cave, 2005). These perspectives contribute to understanding the broader concept of destination image. However, there is still a lack of consideration of the relationship among the constructs.

Components of destination image and their relationships are shown in Figure 1. The framework synthesizes attribute—holistic, functional—emotional, organic—induced—modified-induced, and cognitive-affective-conative image spectra. It shows that image attributes are developed and related functional-emotional image is formed by organic and induced forces. Further psychological process helps to form modified-induced image and people eventually have a holistic picture of the destination. This synthesis also suggests how cognitive-affective-conative image is developed. It shows that cognitive image shares the largest part with the surface of the cube while conative image does not. Implicitly, the image development process from cognitive to conative image is not solely explained by the destination image that previous studies have measured.
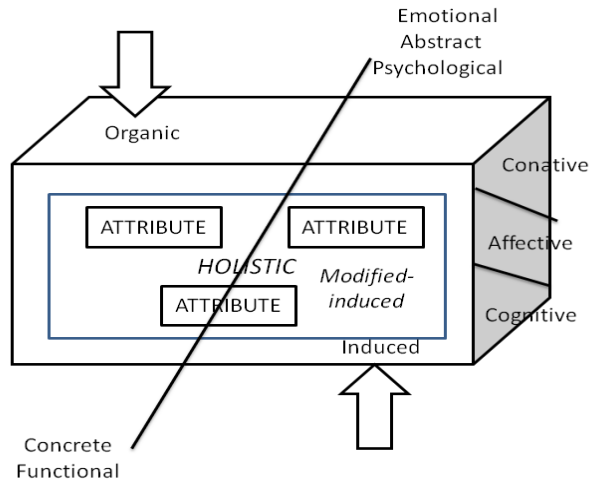
Figure 4. Components of Destination Image

DESTINATION BRAND IMAGE

Previous studies acknowledge the limitations of capturing the real destination brand image. An important issue is that attribute-based or cognitive-image-based investigation fails to explain what special image people possess and why people are motivated to visit the destination by the brand image. Affective and conative components of image may partially explain this motivation. However, most of the previous studies cannot explain why different destinations with the same image attribute attract people differently.

It is important to recapture Aaker's (1996) and Keller's (2008) emphasis on the role of brands. According to them, a brand is the source of differentiating image that customers have in mind. Accordingly, efforts to identify the destination brand image, which is differentiated from a mere destination image, need to be identified. As Morgan, Pritchard, & Piggott (2003) emphasized, although many places claim the same "sun and sand," it is the brand that differentiates destinations and "incite(s) beliefs, evoke(s) emotions, and prompt(s) behaviors" (p.286) towards the destination. Cai (2002) also pointed out that "(i)mage formation is not branding, albeit the former constitutes the core of the latter." He did not emphasize the formation of unique image itself. However, he did point out the importance of delivering the image by branding process, by suggesting that branding is a recursive cycle including brand element mix, brand association formation, and delivering and managing the image. It is important to know how the branding process form unique brand image in the people's minds. Should destination image studies capture the real "brand associations," destination brand image should follow what the real "points of difference" people perceive towards the destination. In addition, as current studies fail to distinguish between the two terms destination brand image and destination image (e.g. Boo, Busser, & Baloglu, 2009; Hankinson, 2005), such terms need to be used separately to capture two different types of images that are the necessary condition and the sufficient condition for visitation, respectively.

The suggested model (Figure 2) shows the relationships between the destination image and destination brand image. The model also describes what the necessary and the sufficient condition would be for a destination brand image. According to the suggested model, people build associations with the brand by collecting attribute-related information. This stage mainly affects the cognitive image. Communication with information affects affective image and it decides preference towards the destination. Through this process, organic image transforms into induced image and a set of holistic images. In this stage, the destination becomes one of the considerations for people to visit. The image collected in this stage forms the necessary condition to be considered as the actual destination to be visited.
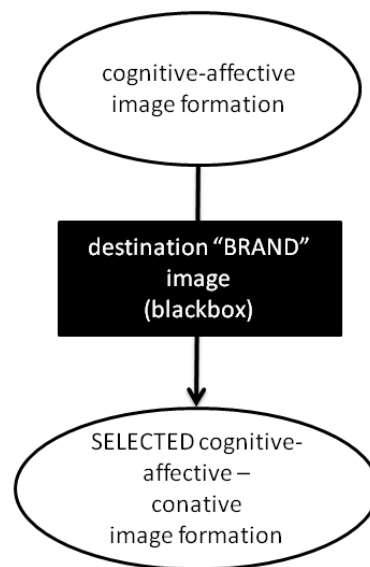

Figure 5. Destination Brand Image Model

Then the people's image process goes through the "blackbox" where the destination brand image is processed. Authenticity and the unique "aura" of the destination can be included in the brand image of the destination. The formation of destination brand image leads to the selected cognitive image that people differentiate from other destination images. It becomes the consequences of modified induced image. The selected cognitive image leads to modified affective image, the second stage of the affective image. Further process forms the conative image, which becomes the antecedent of the actual visit and further emotional attachments to the destination.

The model follows but separates the cognitive-affective-conative image spectrum. It also adopts a destination brand image construct, which mediates the two steps of image formation process. The suggested model integrates many perspectives of the image categorization explained in the previous sections and attempts to provide a comprehensive framework to interpret destination image.

Destination image has been measured by structured, open-ended or closed-ended questions. It is known that open-ended questions derive similar outcome as closed-ended questions. However, it fails to detect deeply into the destination brand image. Therefore, to avoid a gut impression of the respondents in detecting the deeper and differentiated brand image, three-steps of destination image measurement are suggested. The first stage of investigation, which narrows the scope of the image set that the respondents should consider, can be done by structured methods with closed-ended questions. To detect the brand image, open-ended questions can be asked to derive which images are differentiated from other destinations. In this stage, respondents are encouraged to derive any distinct image that differs the destination they actually visit by open-ended questions. The third step of destination image measurement is performed to confirm that those differentiated images derive selected sets of cognitive, affective, and conative images. Unstructured questions can be used to confirm this "confined" destination image.

CONCLUSION

Existing destination image studies are abundant in analyzing and measuring the process that people use to form destination image and image attributes that people finally possess of a destination. What is missing is the understanding of what image motivates people to go to the destination. The present study made the following contributions. First, based on the literature review, a synthesized framework of destination image was proposed. The framework illustrates that image components interact with one another in people's destination image formation process. Second, to capture the additional image components which make the destination unique and competitive, this study proposed the concept destination brand image as advancement to and differentiation from that of destination image. The former acts as the sufficient condition for actual visitation and emotional attachment towards the destination; the latter is a necessary condition for visitation.

Finally, a model was shown to denote where the differentiated brand image is positioned in people's image formation process. In the suggested model, cognitive, affective, and conative images are divided into two stages of image formation with the critical focus on destination brand image. Destination brand image mediates the image formation process and people's motivation for actual visitation.

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CONCEPTUALIZING CAREER ADVANCEMENT OF WOMAN MANAGERS IN HOTELS

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ABSTRACT

Women in the tourism and hospitality industry are as competitive as their male counterparts. However, the number of women at the top managerial positions is still very low. What are the most common factors that affect the career progression of women? Do these factors differ across cultures? The primary purpose of this paper is to identify the most common factors that affect female employees to move up the career path and compare how these are different in the three countries - China, India and the United States of America. Based on previous research, the author(s) propose three factors that can be examined: organizational culture and policies, national culture and social attributes, and individual's characteristics and choices. It is essential for the top management to understand the factors that affect female progression across cultures because of the global nature of the industry.

KEYWORDS: Career Progression; Culture; Gender, Diversity; Hotels; Women Managers.

INTRODUCTION

A key benefit of the growth in the tourism industry is the creation of employment and career opportunities. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (*Tourism Highlights,* 2009) estimates tourism generates approximately 6-7% of the global workforce (direct and indirect). The distribution of these employment opportunities is an important factor in ensuring communities maximize the benefits of tourism. The role of women in management in the tourism and hospitality industry is particularly important, but there is little extant research on the subject.

In the past, literature about women in managerial positions in the hospitality industry has mainly focused on the perceptions of the general managers or women who are currently in a managerial position (Brownell, 1994; Ragins, Townsend, & Mattis, 1998; Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999). Although little research has been done related to women in management in the hospitality industry, a substantial amount of research has been done about women in management in general. Some of the most dominant factors for managerial advancement of women have been identified by Catalyst (1998) and include gender discrimination, lack of mentors, stereotypes, and inhospitable corporate culture (as cited in Davidson & Burke, 2004, p. 3). The present researchers propose that these factors will impact the tourism and hospitality industry. Additionally, although extant literature on the role of woman in tourism is based in the cultural context of the research subjects, little research has been done to compare women's career advancement across different countries. Given the global nature of the tourism and hospitality industry, understanding the cultural factors contributing to female management progression will be useful to a wide range of management.

The primary purpose of this paper is to identify the most common factors that affect female employees' career progression and examine whether the factors are similar or different across three countries: China, India and the United States. By seeking the perceptions of female department heads, the researchers will provide the hospitality industry with some valuable information to better accommodate middle management female employees and equip them with the tools and resources to advance to upper managerial positions. The study will help the hospitality industry in each country and assist academic institutions to introduce programs that will support women to advance in their careers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For the purpose of the present paper, the researchers will separate factors that affect the advancement of women into three categories: (1) organizational culture and policies, (2) national culture and social attributes, and (3) individual's characteristics and choices. Each of these factors is interrelated and the combined impact of these factors contributes to the ability of each woman to achieve her career goals.

Organizational culture and policies: Robbins & Coulter (2009) describe organizational culture as "the shared values, principles, traditions, and ways of doing things that influence the way organizational members act". 'Organizational culture' develops over the existence of the organization and greatly influences the standards for business conduct (M. J. Hatch, 1993; D. R. Denison, 1993; and L. Smircich, 1983); as cited in Robbins & Coulter (2009). Organizational policies include but are not limited to – equal employment opportunities, sexual harassment policies, anti-discrimination policies, and support and/or mentoring programs.

Women in management are impacted by a variety of organizational issues such as gender discrimination, lack of career progression opportunities and mentors and networking opportunities (Brownell, 1994; Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999; Li & Leung, 2001; Sanal, 2008). Top management executives can augment an organizational culture or introduce policies that would create a positive work environment for women. Rossi (1966) stated that the "interpersonal environments" which are essential for career information gathering are less accessible by women than men (Brownell, 1994). Due to the fact that most executive level management positions are occupied by men, female managers have less opportunities to socialize with influential executives. (Chi-Ching, 1992 as cited in Li & Leung, 2001). This lack of network development opportunities not only hinders the development of mentor relationship but also restricts the expression of constructive views which could render recognition from organizational decision makers as noted by Noe in 1988 (Brownell, 1994)

National culture and social attributes: National culture can be defined as "the values, beliefs and assumptions learned in early childhood that distinguish one group of people from another" (Beck & Moore, 1985; Hofstede 1991; as cited in Newman & Nollen, 1996). Social attributes include but are not limited to family size, family income and age distribution. An individual's characteristics include values and locus of control (adopted from Robbins & Coulter, 2009, p. 100), knowledge, skills and abilities. Locus of control is "the degree to which people believe they control their own fate" (Robbins & Coulter, 2009, p.100).

Over the years, many research studies about women in management have discussed gender stereotypes (Schein, 1973; Sandal, 2008; Heilman, 2001). Most often these stereotypes are influenced by the national culture. Heilman (2001) describes that "men are most often characterized as aggressive, forceful, independent, and decisive; whereas women are characterized as kind, helpful, sympathetic, and concerned about others". However, another study conducted by Heilman, Block, and Martell (1995) describes women managers as "competent, active and potent" as compared to women in general (as cited in Heilman, 2001).

Individual's characteristics and choices: Individual's choices may include making personal sacrifices to get married or have children (adopted from Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999), willingness to work over time or night shifts and satisfaction with current job. Career choices and personal attributes also affect advancement of women. Women are more likely to take employment breaks to take care of their family responsibilities, which eventually result in reduced career advancement (Coogan & Chen, 2007). Difficulty in balancing work/ family relationship posts conflict in women in seeking career development (Freedman & Phillips, 1988; Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999; Li & Leung, 2001). Family obligation is one of the three major sources of pressure that discourage women from pursuing higher positions (Morrison et al., 1992). On the other hand, Signorella and Jamison (1986) recognized that self-concept of gender stereotyping affect

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the performance of individuals on stereotyped tasks (as cited in Freedman & Phillips, 1988).

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

In the present preliminary study the researchers propose the use of personal interviews. We believe that through personal interviews of female lodging department heads, we will be able to collect qualitative data and the most accurate data possible.

The participants will be department heads of front operation, food and beverages, sales and marketing and housekeeping. The sample size will be ten participants from each country and we will ensure that sample is diverse, i.e., include all departments uniformly instead of having multiple observations from the same department. The participants will be blind folded to the purpose of the study. We will approach department heads from full service hotels in each country. Full service hotels will be defined as – "those that provide food and beverage outlets and such other services as room service, bell and valet service, a concierge, laundry service, recreational and meeting facilities, a business center, and other similar amenities"(Brownell, 1994).

The list of hotels will be obtained from the following associations in each country: American Hotel and Lodging Association (USA), Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (India), and National Tourism Administration of People's Republic of China (China).We expect that this preliminary study will be followed by a larger quantitative study.

EXPECTED RESULTS

We expect that organizational culture, business culture and personal factors will be shown to contribute to women's ability to advance in managerial positions in each country and the impact of each of these factors will be different for each location. As an example, we expect that an individual's characteristics and choices will have a greater impact on women's advancement in China and United States; whereas in India, we expect that national culture and social attributes continue to play an important role in influencing a woman's career path.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Given the current role of women in management in all three countries, the study will establish a base line so that in the future the hospitality industry as well as academic

researchers will be able to identify and chart the changes that will occur. Moreover, hotels in all three countries will be able to evaluate and improve their organizational policies and support programs in favor of the advancement of women. The study also will add to the limited body of literature currently available about this subject in the hospitality industry. With the increasing globalization and standardization of techniques, skills and methods, the hospitality industry continually will see changes in the best practices that incorporate not only the regional identity but the best practices of the global community.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As an exploratory survey, the study will be limited by small sample. Nevertheless, we believe the study will provide a reasonable foundation for future quantitative research on the topic. Other factors that may impact the survey include responses of the female lodging department heads may be biased, factors other than the three that we have mentioned in our study such as political and legal policies may affect the advancement of women, factors beyond the scope of our study such as luck may affect the advancement of women. In addition, we have not taken into consideration the dynamic nature of all the factors.

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GENERAL MANAGERS' PERCEPTION OF GREEN PRACTICES IN SELECT SERVICE HOTELS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Environmental issues have now become a major concern for many industries, including the lodging industry. Hotels both large and small are increasingly engaging in environmental management programs. Previous literature has shown that implementing such programs have the ability to provide myriads of benefits, including waste reduction, cost savings, improved products, better public relations, increased customer satisfaction and competitive advantage.

Extant literatures have looked at managers of small and medium sized hotel inclination to engage in green practices. The literature showed that despite managers' strong green attitude and the numerous benefits to be accrued from greening hotels, there still exists a low level of implementation in small and medium sized properties. Costs, lack of information and financial resources, managers' personal ethics, expertise of managers, lack of managerial awareness of green practices, environmental threats and time are some impediments impacting environmental response.

The present intent of this paper therefore is to use qualitative data to examine general managers' perception of green practices within a narrowly defined segment of small and medium sized hotels referred to as select service hotels. The main aim is to identify whether the results obtained is similar to previous findings. The study will employ a face to face semi-structured interview with a purposeful sample of 13 general managers of select service hotels in Greater Lafayette Indiana.

KEYWORDS: General managers; Greater Lafayette; Green practices; Perceptions; Select service hotels;

INTRODUCTION

The impact of business on the environment has become an issue of increasing concern since the late 1980's, particularly in Western Economies (Gadenne, Kennedy and

McKeiver 2008). As Gadenne et al (2008) note, this concern has been shared not only by environmental groups and legislators but by customers, local communities, public authorities, businesses, financial institution and employees. Kirk (1998) indicted that because the hospitality industry is not one which causes conspicuous large-scale damage to the environment, it has been fairly slow to respond to the need for environmental management. However, as a result of public and corporate concern for the environment, and other factors, a greater number of hospitality companies have initiated environmental management programs.

In recent years, both large and small hotel companies have implemented significant green programs. Many large corporations have used environmental management as an integral part of their proactive strategies, while smaller companies generally have been reported as more reactive to environmental issues (Kasim 2009). Numerous studies have indicated a myriad of benefits for hotels that adopt green practices (i.e., Claver-cortez et al. 2007; Vernon et al. 2003; Graci & Dodds 2008; Gadenne et al. 2008). Research shows managers of small hotels are positive about the importance of greening the business but there is a discrepancy between their attitudes and their actions. It has been argued that despite the business owners/managers having strong "green" attitudes, the level of implementation of environmentally friendly practices are still rather low (Tzschentke 2008a; Gadenne 2008; Brown 1996). Even large hotel companies face a variety of challenges in implementing green programs. Several research studies have indicated challenges to effective implementation of green practices by small hotels (for example, Tzschentke et al. 2008; Kirk 1998; Bohdanowicz 2005; Park 2009; Kasim 2009).

While extant literature has focused generally on managerial inclination to engage in environmental practices in small and medium sized hotels and micro businesses, one expects that benefits and challenges will be different for various types of hotels. The intent of the present research is to examine these issues in relation to a specific type of hotel; referred to as Select Service. While there is still no clear cut definition of select service hotels, this study will utilize a conceptualize definition offered by Berger and Chiofaro (2007). In this study select service hotels therefore refer to hotels that fall in the upper midscale to economy price range typically omits many of the ancillary amenities including on-site restaurants, fitness facilities, turndown service etc. and offers slightly more in the way of amenities and is meant to fill the gap between full service and limited service hotels. The main purpose of the exploratory study is to examine how general managers of select service properties perceive green practices by exploring the following objectives:
   1. To ascertain the environmental practices being implemented for these hotels
   2. To determine the benefits general managers of select service hotels perceive for greening hotels.
   3. To determine what factors may influence the general managers' resistance to green practices.
   4. To determine how knowledgeable general managers are about green practices in the hospitality industry.

While studies have looked at similar issues previously in large as well as small and medium size properties, this study aims to examine the issue within a narrowly defined segment of small and medium sized hotels referred to as select service hotels, in a bid to identify whether the results obtained for this sample is similar to previous findings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In a response to the pressure for minimizing the detrimental impact on the environment as well as the numerous benefits that may be accrued from being green, hotels are implementing methods that facilitate the efficient use of energy, waste and materials. In implementing these programs, some hoteliers are undertaking a wide variety of activities including green procurement, and implementing new organizational systems and controls to manage environmental conservation practices (Park 2009; McLeish 2007). Some hotels are working towards green certifications such as The Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star ratings and or the US Green Business Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. In studies conducted in Small to Medium Enterprises (SME) and small hotels it was revealed that improvements in environmental management practices can result in a multitude of benefits to SMEs such as hotels. Such benefits include reduction in waste, cost savings, increase in customer satisfaction, higher commitment, improved products, better public relations and competitive advantage.(Cain 2008; Park 2009; Butler 2008; Tzschentke et al. 2004b; Kirk 1998).The prospects of economic saving and customer demand are crucial to hotel industry environmental awareness and responsible environmental management.

Despite the benefits of these programs, there are a variety of factors that contribute to the adoption of Environmental Management Systems and significant impediments to progress. Previous studies including Graci and Dodds (2008) noted that although most operators acknowledge the importance of the environment to their business, environmental practices are not widespread in the industry. The concept of a green hotel is not easily grasped by many hoteliers and perceived cost, lack of information and the need to share best practices were seen as impediments. Other issues identified were lack of financial resources, lack of government regulations to going green, lack of appropriate standards for what makes a hotel green, differences in managers' personal ethics, insufficient time as well as educational level and expertise of the managers (Porter &van der Linde 1995; Butler 2008; Kasim 2009; Gadenne et al. 2008; Graci et al. 2008) Managerial perceptions of various environmental issues such as threat and opportunities associated with environmental issues have impact on environmental responses (Sharma 2000).A significant implication to engaging in green practices is the lack of awareness by managers of small and medium sized hotels on environmental issues (Kasim 2009). Likewise, Gadenne et al. (2008), postulate that owners of SMEs had poor standards of ecoliteracy. They had low awareness of relevant legislations, were unaware of initiatives that provided support and information for small business, and had low awareness of ecolabels (Bohdanowicz 2005).

METHODOLOGY

Research design and procedures

The exploratory study will utilize a face to face semi-structured interview with general managers. Qualitative technique is suitable for a study of this nature, since the focus of qualitative research is on participants' perceptions and experiences (Creswell 2009). In a study conducted by Tzschentke (2008), a similar approach was utilized alluding to the appropriateness of the method. The protocol will consist of structured and open-ended questions. Probe and follow-ups will be used to facilitate more in-depth response. A letter to introduce the purpose of the study and asking for participation will be sent to each general manager. Interviews will be recorded in order to provide accuracy in data analysis. Recorded data will be transcribed into text for analysis. Patterns and themes from the perspective of the general managers will be identified and described.

Sample

A purposeful sample will be selected from the Greater Lafayette area of Indiana which consists of West Lafayette and Lafayette. Using the definition of select service hotels offered by Berger and Chiofaro (2007), the sample will therefore consist of the 13 hotels in this geographic area fitting the definition of select service hotels. The listing of these hotels and information regarding them were identified by a search for select service hotels, on the Lafayette Convention and Visitors' Bureau website.

IMPLICATIONS

It is expected that the research will show that there are generally accepted principles of green operation and specific categories of hotels require customized environmental management plans to meet environmental goals. The study is expected to show that progress towards greater environmental efficiency can be made in a variety of ways and that even small hotel properties that are not able to engage in large formal environmental programs, can benefit from simple "turnkey" initiatives. In addition, the researchers expect that training and education will remain a critical component of environmental management program implementation strategies.

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FOLK ARCHITECTURE AND TOURISM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the results of a sociological survey performed among inhabitants of a representative group of village architectural reserves and zones listed for architectural excellence. It quotes opinions of citizens regarding the cultural heritage protection, living in such places and ways of utilizing these sights in tourism. The presented data was taken over from graduation essays of ten students.

KEY WORDS: Architectural heritage protection; Sociological survey; Village architectural preserve; Village architectural zone; Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Folk art and architecture encompasses art produced from an indigenous culture or by peasants or other laboring trades' people. In contrast to fine art, folk art is primarily utilitarian and decorative rather than purely aesthetic [9]. As a phenomenon that can chronicle a move towards civilization, the nature of folk art is specific to its particular culture. The varied geographical and temporal diversity of folk art make it difficult to describe as a whole, though some patterns have been demonstrated. For example the well preserved South Bohemian village boasting houses in the folk Baroque style is also listed by UNESCO as a world cultural heritage site.

Rural tourism allows the creation of an alternative source of income in the non-agricultural sector for rural dwellers. The added income from rural tourism can contribute to the revival of lost folk art and handicrafts. It is an ideal and natural method of rural and urban economic exchange.

Any village can be a tourist attraction, and many villagers are very hospitable. Agriculture is becoming highly mechanized, and therefore, requires less manual labour. This is causing economic pressure on some villages, leading to an exodus of young people to urban areas. Rural tourism focuses on participating in a rural lifestyle. It can be a variant of ecotourism.

Every country and every region has a specific type of rural architecture which is influenced by the historical development of the territory and cultural traditions of the citizens who reside in this territory [3, 5]. They analyzed how different systems are able to maintain its functions in the context of identified perturbations (socio-economic and geophysical)[4]. The intersections between traditional and modern culture and the current

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"network society" produce hybrids and heterogeneity. Heterogeneity reflects diversity that exists in time and space and demands respect from current culture and values[6, 7, 9].

Village architecture in the Czech Republic underwent dramatic changes mainly in the 1960s and 70s, during which the villages were catching up with cities. Many traditional buildings were significantly rebuilt, farmers and craftsmen become members of cooperative farms and traditional home production, using the local materials, was substituted by industrialization. Despite this, in some families traditional arts and crafts continued to be passed from generation to generation. Also at this time specialized open air museums ("skansens") were developed. Traditional buildings were moved to these skansens and were soon occupied by craftsmen. The museum collections began to grow. Today all these exhibits serve as a source of enjoyment and education and rank among important cultural tourist attractions in the Czech Republic[1, 2]

Cultural tourism is very significant for the Czech Republic and the cultural sector should naturally be a strategic partner for tourism. There is also a higher-level method of protection applied on buildings of this type – the Czech government can establish a village architectural preservation or reservation (VAR) in a village where groups of folk architecture buildings have survived. If the number of listed buildings is small in a village, the Ministry of Culture can establish a so called village architectural zone (VAZ). This large-scale architectural protection has several advantages since it preserves the general features of a village and its surroundings, because consent of the national heritage authority is required for every modification and renovation of old buildings, even those which are not listed or are newly built. Due to this the general atmosphere of historical villages is preserved and they become an important factor of the cultural and rural tourism. The significance of village architecture was emphasized by listing one of Czech VARs in the UNESCO international cultural and natural heritage list. It is the village of Holašovice in South Bohemia; this region boasts the highest number of VARs and VAZs in the Czech Republic.

By establishing the VAR and VAZ status the National Heritage Protection Institute finally topped its effort aimed at preservation and promotion of the most precious historical settlements of rural type. This complemented their past effort which focused on the most valuable municipalities, and which resulted in gradual establishment of town architectural zones and town architectural preserves.

New criteria were added to the existing ones which were applied to assess the value of villages. The existing criteria considered only the outside appearance and the degree of preservation of groups of traditional wooden and bricked structures. New criteria were based on expanded knowledge about historical buildings in villages obtained by means of new research methods, which had been applied in towns only.

We can expect that as soon as listed villages become more famous, they will start playing their role as a feature of tourism which has been ignored so far. Villages will gradually be highlighted in tourist and road maps and the number of visitors of various kinds will grow – randomly coming ones, as well as specialists interested in the particular subject from both our country and abroad.

This work is the first study of this type since the time when villages started being granted the status of VAR or VAZ.

RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of the survey was to discover to what extent the protection of folk architecture in VAR and VAZ influences the development of rural areas. This paper includes opinions of citizens only and their opinions regarding the benefits the VAR or VAZ status brought to their village. Out of the total number of 61 VARs and 164 VAZs in the Czech Republic we performed the survey in 9 VARs and 53 VAZs. The research included regions boasting a large number of VAR and VAZ and which are famous for their local architecture. In these architecturally valuable villages we addressed 792 respondents. Respondents were selected randomly; groups comprising 10-14 people were addressed in each village. The questioning method was face-to-face. Therefore, we can conclude that the surveyed set of villages and respondents was large enough to describe opinions of people living in listed villages in the Czech Republic.

The article assesses the results of this survey regarding the whole researched group; in some cases it compares opinions of citizens from individual districts, in other cases it compares opinions of people living in VARs and VAZs. There are a high proportion of retired people (nearly 50%) which suggests that the population in villages is growing old. Only 25% of respondents can work in the place of residence and only 15% of people from the monitored villages work in agriculture or forestry. Only 17% of the respondents live in listed buildings[8].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first question was of a general nature and was supposed to find out the respondent's residential status. The structure of answers is apparent from the below figure 1. Three quarters of the addressed citizens of VAR and VAZ live in their own houses, the rest live in a rented building or their own summer house. The figure makes it apparent that most people reside and work in the monitored villages; town citizens coming to the country for weekends or holidays do not prevail.
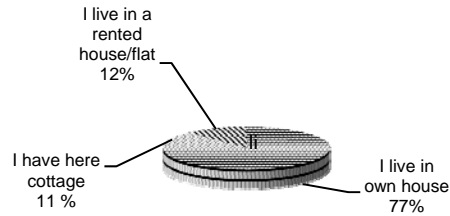
Figure 1:   Residential status of respondents

The second question was: "How long have you lived or stayed in this village?". Answers are summarized in figure 2. It is apparent that people who have lived in the village for a long time prevail - nearly two fifths of citizens older than 30 years of age. The discovered data correlate with the high number of retired people. Average time of residence is about 25 years. The next question was aimed to find out whether people from these villages know that their village has the VAZ or VAR status. 52% of people know about it and are interested in issues related to this. 37% know that their village has such a status. And only 9% heard such information for the first time and 2% are not interested in this.

Other questions focused on benefits and disadvantages resulting from the VAZ and VAR status. As far as benefits are concerned, people frequently mentioned the possibility to obtain subsidies and to make the village more attractive for tourists. Disadvantages most frequently included problems in construction and renovation of houses (fig 3). Only 28% of people think that the VAR or VAZ status has not brought anything positive to their village.
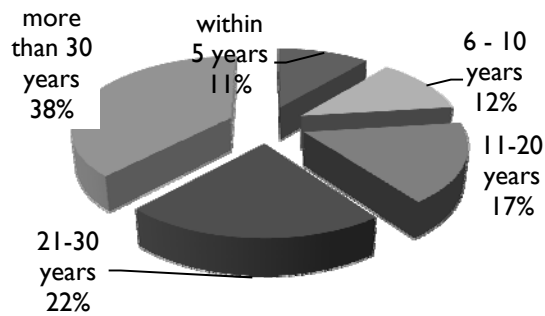

Figure 2:   Length of living in the village

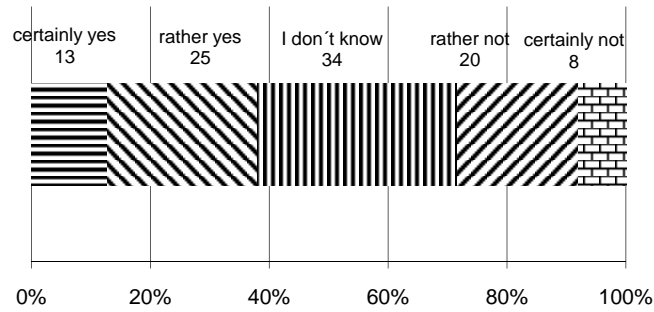| certainly yes 13 | rather yes 25 | I don´t know 34 | rather not 20 | certainly not 8 |

Figure 3: Do you think that the VAZ and VAR status was beneficial for your village?

The next figure 4 shows the structure of answers which related to emotional relation to a village. Nearly two fifth of inhabitants are proud of their village and 45% of them enjoy living in a listed settlement. Only 5% of people do not like living in such villages.
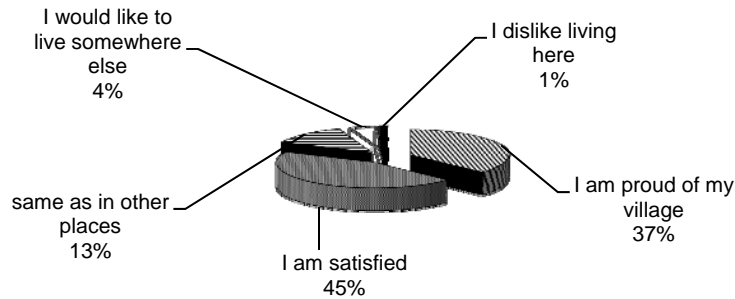

Figure 4: What is your relationship to your village?

It was difficult to estimate the number of tourists and visitors coming to these destinations. That was why we just asked inhabitants of the villages to estimate the number of visitors coming to their place. The result of the survey is apparent from figure 5. Two thirds of the respondents think that tourists do come to their village; of which, 28% think that tourists come very often. Answers differed significantly depending on the region. The smallest number of tourist come to VAZs in the Plzeň Region; on the other hand, people meet tourists most frequently in listed villages of the České Budějovice and Česká Lípa Regions. This result corresponds with the attractiveness of the whole regions. Tourists visit VAR or VAZ only if they spend holiday in the particular region. Strangely enough, it was people from the Plzeň Region who most frequently thought, that the VAZ status was beneficial for their village (64%), while in the Česká Lípa Region the proportion of people with the same opinion specified in the previous sentence was only 22% and in the České Budějovice region 24%. High numbers of visitors are not always considered beneficial.
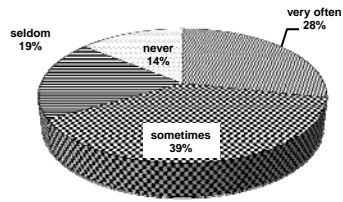
Figure 5: How often do you meet tourists who came to do sightseeing in your village?

The next question dealt with tourism as well: "What should your village do to attract tourists? " Every respondent was allowed to give maximum of three answers. In figure 6 the answers are organized according to frequency of occurrence. People most frequently think that villages should focus on quality of streets and roads, appearance of public areas and cleanliness of villages. The second most frequent answer was related to marketing (tourist information centres, brochures and leaflets and general promotion of the village). Surprisingly, the requirement to obtain money from public funds to repair houses, especially the listed ones, was only the third most frequent one. And the smallest number of suggestions related to construction of restaurants, bed&breakfast facilities, sports grounds, or cultural facilities.
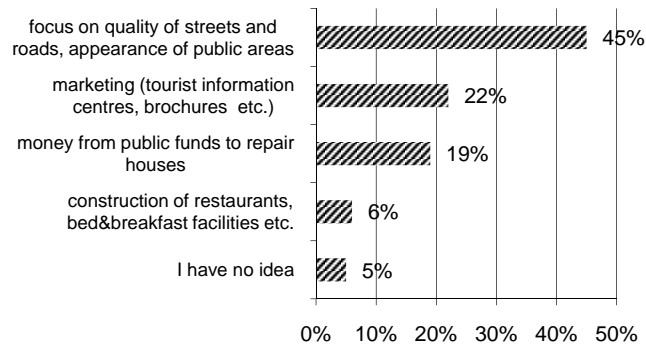
Figure 6: What should your village do to increase tourism?

When we statically processed the survey results, we also compared opinions of people living in VAZs and VARs. It could be assumed that inhabitants of village architectural preserves where the number of listed buildings is higher would have different opinions regarding some issues than people from VAZs. Table 1 shows answers of VAZ and VAR inhabitants which differed significantly. Briefly: inhabitants of VAZs have more information about the VAZ status of their village and about benefits resulting from that and they also encountered this fact when arranging things with authorities. They think that tourists come to their village more frequently and they are more proud of living there. Even more significant was the difference in the village of Holašovice which is included in the UNESCO heritage list (20 respondents).

Table 1: Variances in opinions of citizens from VAZ and VAR.

Type of pro-tection	I know that my village has the VAR/Z status and I am interested	I know what benefits the VAR/Z status brings	Heritage protection and dealing with authorities	Meeting tourists		I am proud of my village
				very often	very often or sometimes	
VAZ	48	33	37	26	65	33
VAZ	81	59	51	46	81	64
Holašovice	100	95	65	100	100	80

CONCLUSION

We can draw the following conclusion from the performed survey:

- There is a fairly low proportion of summer/weekend houses in villages with listed buildings; 77% of people live in the village in their own house
- Majority of people from VARs and VAZs have lived in the particular village for a long time and there is a large number of retired people.
- Nearly two fifths of people are proud that they live in such a village and only 5% of people dislike living there.
- Approximately two thirds of people think that tourists frequently or sometimes come to sightsee in their village. As far as this aspect is concerned, there is a significant difference between individual regions.
- Visits to VAZ and VAR are not primary destinations for tourists; they incorporate such visits into the programme of holiday spent in the particular region.
- In the VAZ and VAR inhabitants´ opinion, tourism would increase when the quality of roads, public areas and general tidiness in the village increased, and if their villages were more promoted.
- In some questions the structure of answers differed significantly in VAZs and VARs and in the UNESCO listed village (Holašovice). People living in VARs and in Holašovice have better information about the benefits and disadvantages arising from the status of their village. They are more frequently proud of their village and they are convinced that their village is more frequently visited by tourists than villages with the VAZ status.

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CAN YOU MEET ME HALFWAY? WHAT DO HOSPITALITY EMPLOYERS WANT FROM GRADUATES?

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to investigate what the hospitality industry and hospitality degree students in New Zealand consider as being the desired attributes of hospitality employees and what value a hospitality degree has. Research was conducted with 74 hospitality managers and 137 hospitality students to ascertain their views on employee attributes and the value of a degree in hospitality. Their expectations and assumptions were significantly different and the gap between what industry revealed and what students revealed is a cause for concern for New Zealand educators and the hospitality industry to address.

KEYWORDS
Degree; Educators; Graduates; Hospitality; Industry; New Zealand

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality and tourism industry is rated as one of the fastest growing in New Zealand. The Ministry of Tourism (2009, para 9) forecast an increase of 8.7 million tourists, or 8.5%, from 2009 to 2015. This projected rise in visitor numbers signals a corresponding rise in the hospitality and tourism industry, resulting in an increase demand also for qualified hospitality employees (Ladkin & Riley, 1996; O'Mahony & Sillitoe, 2001; Brien, 2004).

However, the hospitality industry does not generally appear to value hospitality qualifications very highly. As a result, those who study for hospitality degrees are often disadvantaged when competing for jobs against those with more industry experience but no tertiary qualifications (Li & Kivela, 1989; Connor & Pollard, 1996; Mason, 1995; Jameson & Holden, 2000; Harkison, 2004b; Petrova & Mason, 2004). Anecdotally, the industry values employees with experience over those with a degree, which is in contrast with the general expectation that degrees offer graduates an advantage in their chosen area of work (Jameson & Holden, 2000).

Studies on the value of education are inconclusive. Ladkin and Riley (1996) and Ladkin Juwaheer (2000) found that a university education did not appear to influence the rate of promotion to a hotel General Manager's (GM's) position. To the contrary, Harper et al. (2005) found that 64% of GM respondents in their study believed that 'vocational qualifications support a fast-track progression to the GM role' (p.56). Many studies (Nebel, Braunlich, & Zhang, 1994; Ladkin & Riley, 1996; Ladkin, 2000; Steele, 2003; Harper et al., 2005) have identified food and beverage (F&B) management experience as the main career route to a GM's position. In a British study of GMs (Ladkin & Riley, 1996), 49% had F&B managerial experience, and in Mauritius, 60% of GMs came from F&B background (Ladkin & Juwaheer, 2000). However, Nebel et al. (1995) found that 87% of their respondents had worked in only one department before their promotion to GM, and 75% had worked in either F&B or Rooms Division. Although front office experience was ranked second as a career route for reaching a hotel GM's position in Ladkin and Juwaheer's (2000) study, GMs also came from sales and marketing, accounting and finance, and housekeeping roles (Eddystone et al., 1995; Ladkin, 2002).

Collins (2002), and Raybould and Wilkins (2005) undertook research on the differing career expectations of students and industry personnel. Both studies found that undergraduates have high expectations of their hospitality careers, whereas some managers consider a bachelor of hospitality management degree irrelevant. Collins' study, undertaken in Turkey, found that graduates expected to enter a management position soon after graduation, yet employers considered new graduates unsuitable for a management role. Some managers even commented that graduates have a patronising 'know-it-all' attitude, and lacked resilience when trying to cope with the hectic industry environment (Collins, 2002). The studies particularly identified different perceptions about career expectations between students and managers, with all respondents generally believing they were right. In particular, students were very confident of the value of their degree and its impact on their future careers. This confidence was also seen in two New Zealand studies where most undergraduates taking a degree in hospitality management expect to reach senior management level soon after graduating (Brien, 2004; Harkison, 2004a). Purcell and Quinn (1990) suggested that hospitality managers may ignore qualifications because of graduates' unrealistic expectations of their skills and readiness for responsibility, and Raybould and Wilkins (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, p. 211) found that graduates were sometimes viewed as 'over qualified but under experienced', even for entry level management roles. Graduates were therefore recommended to gain operational (rather than management) experience during their first 12-18 months, rather than expect to be recruited into a management role (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005).

The hospitality industry is in a constant state of change as a result of changing economies, societies, and fast developing technologies (Baum, Amoah, & Spivack, 1997), and to cope with these changes, employees need an increasing variety of skills and abilities. The industry is therefore likely to benefit from employing graduates with vocational education and training (O'Mahony & Sillitoe, 2001), and who possess the skills to succeed in a rapidly changing environment.

The importance of skills is also debated. Spivack (1997) commented on 'skill development issues' related to changes occurring in the tourism and hospitality industry, and Christou (1999) noted that skills should be a priority when recruiting staff. Many authors (Ley, 1980; Damitio, 1988; Riley & Turam, 1989; Knutson & Patton, 1992; Damitio & Schmidgall, 1993; Hsu & Gregory, 1995; Ladkin, 1999) have pointed out the importance of specific skills in hospitality because of increasing globalisation. Particularly, the need for multicultural abilities and skills are becoming particularly important in hospitality (Sigala, 2001). Communication skills are also argued to be essential (Ruddy, 1990; Knutson & Patton, 1992; Stutts, 1995), particularly for GMs (Knutson & Patton, 1992), as have managerial accounting skills (e.g. Damitio, 1988; Damitio & Schmidgall, 1991), and leadership and interpersonal skills (Kay & Russette, 2000).

Baum (1990), Finegold, Wagner, and Mason (2000) and Jauhari (2006) also noted the requirement for hotel managers to possess multiple technical skills. For example, an F&B manager has to make decisions regarding the purchasing, storing, costing, processing, and serving of food and liquor to customers (Riley, 2005). An F&B Manager also needs skills in accounting, human relations, marketing, customer service and communication (Riley, 2005), and as these kinds of skills are also needed by other department managers for effective management and productivity, multi-skilled managers have significant value to offer. Multi-skilling allows one person to manage a large number of tasks simultaneously (Jauhari, 2006), and may affect the way employees view a range of employment opportunities, as well as increasing their understanding of the processes involved in different activities (Finegold et al., 2000). Hospitality graduates are therefore likely to require multiple skills to manage the rapidly changing working environment of the hospitality industry (Baum, 1990), as these will allow them to be enterprising and adaptable.

Harkison (2004b) commented that it is common for managers to believe practical experience is more valuable than a degree, and noted that a hospitality degree has poor recognition in New Zealand , except perhaps for those entering specialist areas such as sales and marketing, or finance. Not surprisingly, industry experience as part of a qualification is therefore considered particularly valuable. Managers rate the internship requirements of a degree as the most important feature of students' education, followed by the teaching staff's industry experience and the quality of students' interview preparation to successful gain a job in the for securing jobs in the industry (Chi & Gursoy, 2009).

Jauhari (2006) suggested that for managers without tertiary qualifications, most learning occurs through trial and error in the workplace. Qualified managers may therefore reduce their training needs and learn faster because of prior formal learning, benefits both the individuals and their employers. Several authors (Ladkin, 2000; Harper et al., 2005; Jauhari, 2006) therefore recommend the pursuit of a vocational qualification to enhance career development. Unfortunately industry and education providers are in disagreement as to the important subjects and topics to be taught in such a qualification.

Some studies (Li & Kivela, 1989; Harkison, 2004b; Petrova & Mason, 2004; Ricci, 2005) reveal that industry has a weak understanding of what constitutes a hospitality degree, and many educators have a similarly weak understanding of the skills needs of industry. Hospitality management courses often appear to be designed by administrators and educators (Jayawardena, 2001; Ricci, 2005) who have different viewpoints from those in industry, and neither group appears to understand the other's perceptions. Stutts (1995) and Harris and Zhao (2004) discussed ways to reduce the gaps between industry and academia, and noted the need for continuing discussions about curriculum, students, facilities, and faculty (Stutts, 1995). Harris and Zhao (2004) further stated that education providers and industry professionals might even consider periods of job swapping, which would likely bring benefits to both parties.

METHODOLOGY

This working paper focuses on students' and industry managers' perceptions of the attributes hospitality employees should possess and what value a degree in hospitality has. A quantitative methodology was used to collect and analyse views on a range of questions about attributes of hospitality employees and the value of a hospitality degree. A written self-completed questionnaire was used, and responses analysed as percentages of the total sample. Social scientific measurements do not produce consistent results, but are useful bases for discussion, as whatever result is obtained will still have implications for other groups of a similar nature to the group studied. As the literature view demonstrates, results are therfore likely to differ from group to group, because people do not necessarily give the same answer each time they are asked a particular question. However, the proportion of respondents with a given response is still likely to be a reflection of the proportion of the greater population that might have offered the same response if asked (Bryman, 2001).

The questionnaire for students was administered directly with the support of lecturers and researchers, and the questionnaire for hospitality managers mailed out with a stamped-addressed envelope for return. A self completed questionnaire allows respondents to answer as convenient (Bryman, 2001) and is therefore considered less intrusive than interviews.

Questions

The questionnaire was developed after an extensive review of literature relating to hospitality management, travel and tourism students' career expectations, and assumptions and perceptions of employees in the hospitality industry (e.g. Johns and McKechnie, 1995; Petrova and Mason, 2004). Questions were adapted from Petrova and Mason's (2004, p. 153) study, which was designed to identify 'the value of tourism degrees, comparing students' career expectations and aspirations with industry needs and perceptions of travel and tourism degrees and graduates'.

The students' questionnaire included questions about industry's perceived needs, its perceived requirements of potential employees, and the perceived value of a

hospitality degree. The industry questionnaire asked what employers expected from hospitality management graduates, what they believed to be the essential skills for graduates entering the hospitality industry, the desired attributes of recruits, and the value of a hospitality management degree to employers.

TABLES AND FIGURES

The value of a hospitality degree

Views on the value of a hospitality degree were surprisingly divergent, with industry placing considerably less emphasis on a degree than did the students.

Table 1: The perceived value of a hospitality degree

Views on the comparative value of experience and education			
Students (n = 137)	**Agree**	**No opinion**	**Disagree**
More important than experience for new employees	19.0%	30.0%	51%
Contributes more to a hotel than three years' experience	67%	12%	21%
Managers (n = 74)			
More important than experience for new employees	18%	12%	70%
Contributes more to a hotel than three years' experience	31%	20%	49%
Views on the benefits of a hospitality degree			
Students (n = 137)	**Agree**	**No opinion**	**Disagree**
Earns a higher salary	61%	23%	16%
Brings benefits to a company	91%	6%	3%
Affects promotion prospects	55%	24%	21%
Managers (n = 74)			
Earns a higher salary	35%	14%	51%
Brings benefits to a company	82%	14%	4%
Affects promotion prospects	20%	16%	64%
Criterion for employee selection	46%	18%	36%

Around half the student respondents thought that a degree was less important than experience when commencing a job (Table 1). However, most (67%) believed that a three year degree would enable an employee to make more of a contribution to a workplace than would experience accrued over the same period. Industry respondents however, perceived a degree as less important than experience for new employees. These responses suggest that students perceived experience to be of more value when seeking work, but once in a job, a degree would prove more valuable, not so much as a

qualification, but because of the learning it entailed. However, industry respondents believed that three years of experience were more valuable than a vocational education of the same length (i.e. a degree).

Views on attributes required by new employees

Knowledge and experience of hospitality was perceived by students as the most important attribute, and more important than a qualification. Industry respondents however, sought personality ahead of other attributes, but rated qualifications similarly poorly. This shown in

Communication skills were considered those most important by students for career development and initiative, and second most important by industry respondents after initiative. Again, neither rated qualifications as important (Table 2 and Figure 1).

Table 2: Views on industry's criteria for new employees and promotion

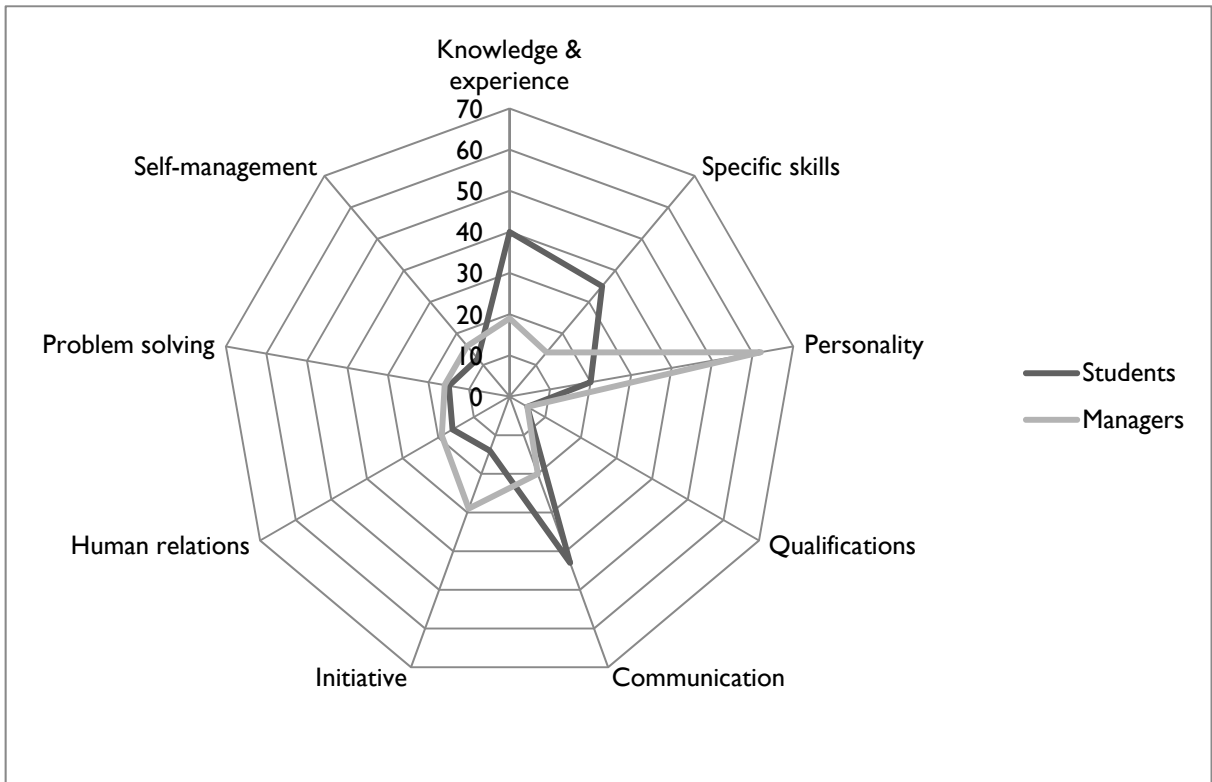| INDUSTRY'S CRITERIA FOR NEW EMPLOYEES				
	Knowledge and experience	Specific skills	Personality	Qualifications
Students (137)	40%	35%	20%	5%
Industry (74)	19%	14%	62%	5%
INDUSTRY'S CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION				
	Commun-ication	Initiative	Human relations	Problem solving	Self-mgmt
Students (137)	43%	14%	16%	15%	12%
Managers (74)	20%	29%	19%	16%	16%

Figure 1: Views on industry's criteria for new employees and promotion by students and managers

DISCUSSION

Experience or education?

Most students (67%) thought that once a graduate was employed, he or she would have more to offer than an unqualified but experienced employee. That is, they were not convinced that a degree would help them get work, but once they were employed, they expected that their education would help them make a greater contribution than someone who had acquired work skills, but had no knowledge of research that could enhance the application of those skills. Certainly, it would be possible to work in a management role for many years without understanding (for example) organisational behaviour theory, but this understanding would need to develop in order to be effective. If this kind of learning takes place on the job instead of in a classroom, it is likely to be through trial and error, with the possible consequences of ineffective change management, employee dissatifaction, staff turnover and unnecessary costs. Industry itself seems unclear about what constitutes a qualified manager, perhaps because most general managers are themselves not formally qualified. In New Zealand, this is largely attributable to the late introduction of tertiary hospitality qualifications; the first hospitality degree in New Zealand commenced in just 1993 but was a commence degree majoring in hospitality management, so (assuming a ten year gap between graduation and general management) the first few home grown graduates are just reaching senior positions now. While these managers may be more inclined to seek degree qualified employees, others may argue

that graduates are over qualified and under experienced, and are likely to expect them to progress through various staff positions on their way, just as they did.

Views on essential skills

The divergence in views between students and industry appears to be considerable. Students thought knowledge and skills were important for new employees, but industry was far more interested in personality. To get promoted, students thought they would have to become good communicators, but industry was more interested in initiative. Industry's views suggest that managers value attitudinal attributes over skills, and therefore claim to be prepared to help employees gain the skills needed for their roles. However, this was not upheld in their responses on the criteria for new employees.

Valuing practical skills over the benefit of degree education in an industry that typically spends over 30% of its revenue on labour (e.g. Davis *et al.*, 2008) seems short-sighted, as this effectively disregards research on employee issues such as motivation, group behaviour, and empowerment, which should be able to provide ways of reducing staff costs by maintaining a motivated and happy workforce. Education can also reduce attrition by developing career pathways for hospitality employees who in turn can promote a professional and sustainable industry (O'Mahony and Sillitoe, 2001). Indeed, the high staff turnover experienced in the neither Auckland hospitality industry suggests that some staff are neither motivated nor happy, and research-based interventions may be helpful in stabilising the workforce (Poulston, 2009).

CONCLUSION

Students have high expectations of their careers especially after graduating with a degree in hospitality. Whereas industries expectations are to employ work ready graduates complete with relevant experience and to be trained in the basic skills but they disregard the value of a hospitality degree a graduate brings. After conducting initial research, results indicate that a vocational education is a waste of time and money, but industry's view may change as more graduates enter senior management, bringing with them an understanding of the value of formal education, and the application of theory to industry's problems such as employee selection and productivity.

One aspect is clear; there are some real opportunities for both industry and educators to make a difference. Because gaining hospitality degrees in New Zealand is relativity new concept we are in the best position to not only learn but grow with industry, to meet them half way in order to produce graduates that both sides agree on. This is only the beginning and further research would have to be conducted to meet the needs of students, educators and industry.

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MEASURING SENSE OF COMMUNITY USING FACEBOOK IN TOURISM AND RECREATION CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

Previous research demonstrates that belonging to a classroom community provides a series of benefits to students within that community; however, there is a lack of empirical research that correlates the formation of community with social media tools (e.g. Facebook). The purpose of this study is to investigate to what extent, if any, does the inclusion of the social networking tool Facebook create a sense of community for students enrolled in tourism and recreation classes at a 4-year public university in Michigan. This study is framed around social learning, constructionism, and connectivism. A quantitative approach is taken through an experimental design. During this research investigation, students in the treatment group will be invited to add the instructor as a friend on Facebook and join a group page granting permissions to upload photos, videos, post links, and contribute to commentary. Students in the second group will receive the same invitations, but with no permissions. Both groups will complete the SCI-2, an online survey that measures sense of community (Chavis, Lee & Acosta, 2008).

KEYWORDS: Facebook; Tourism; Curriculum; Millennial; Sense of Community

INTRODUCTION

The current generation of students is wired, connected, and mobile. This generation is fundamentally different than any other previous generational cohort (Taylor, 2006). They expect more (Taylor) and they represent an emerging stereotype that sees themselves as consumers (Durden, 2005). Students born between the years 1981-2000 are referred to as *millenials* and they have very specific characteristics that separate them from other generations.

Millennials are marked by an increased use and familiarization with technology (Howe & Strauss, 2000). They extend and direct personal attention on demand (Durden, 2005) and rely on social networking platforms such as Facebook and MySpace to communicate with friends and manage the complexities of their lives. Technology has had a profound effect on the millennial student's understanding of self and social space (Frechette, 2008). They casually exchange photographs and videos without concern (DeMello, 2008) and they frequently post status updates of their activities, all in an effort to form *community* (Hiemstra, 2010).

There are few formal definitions of a community or a consensus on its structure (Reich, 2010). A community is defined as a group of people who share social structures,

geographical locations, or resources (Reich) and demonstrate certain traits that are defining. The traits included in the research of McMillan & Chavis (1986) include membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. In their conversations regarding the measurement of these traits, McMillan & Chavis offer the following definition:

> "Sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together (p. 6)."

Measuring sense of community might be important to creators and planners of programs that might normally unfold in a one-on-one context, or in a classroom filled with students who influence each other and fulfill each other's needs and their connection during the learning process (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Measuring sense of community might also be important to an instructor in a college classroom whose members do not use traditional methods of communicating with each other. This applies to millennials who use technology to communicate with friends, online social networks (OSN) to build their own communities, and have little time or desire to use traditional face-to-face conversation.

Most of the conversations millenials have with each other during the formation of community take place on Facebook, the most popular online social network in the world (Facebook, 2010). The posts to walls, direct messages, and chats serve as a precursor to many of the memberships, opinions, and shared emotional connections between each other. In this capacity, it would appear Facebook serves as the vehicle to the formation of community for the millennial generation.

Mark Wesch, an anthropologist at Kansas State University, together with his students created a video in 2008 entitled, "A Vision of Students Today." In the video, millennial students provide testimonials describing the details and characteristics of their lives and their relationship to Facebook. Their statements are as follows:

- My average class size is 115,
- 18% of my teachers know my name,
- I complete 48% of the readings assigned to me; only 26% are relative to my life,
- I will read 8 books this year, 2,300 web pages, and 1,281 Facebook profiles,
- I will write 42 pages for this class this semester, and over 500 pages of email,
- I get 7 hours of sleep each night,
- I spend 1 ½ hours watching TV each night,
- I spend 3 ½ hours a day online,
- I listen to music 2 ½ hours a day,
- I spend 2 hours on my cell phone, 3 hours in class, and 3 hours studying,
- I am a multi-tasker, I have to be, and
- I Facebook through most of my classes.

The formation of community within the classroom is important because without it, students run the risk of engaging in group-think behavior (Sarason, 1974) and sameness (Wiesenfeld, 1996). Building community in the classroom also helps students connect to each other. It is through dialogue, classroom activities, and group discussion that students have opportunities to become more cohesive.

The purpose of this research study is to examine to what extent, if any, the inclusion of the social networking tool Facebook creates a sense of community for students enrolled in tourism and recreation classes at a 4-year public university in Michigan. This study uses the concept of social learning, constructionism, and connectivism as pedagogical constructs through which experiential learning is achieved for the millennial student. The treatment consists of 7 weeks exposure to an instructor's profile and access to a closed group on Facebook.

Measuring sense of community as a result of the treatment will require that the researcher ask members of the classroom community to describe how they think, feel, and connect to their group. The instrument selected to measure community is the Sense of Community Index (SCI-2) designed by Chavis, Lee, and Acosta (2008). This survey consists of 24 questions that measure individual feelings specific to a traditional community. The researcher has also included an additional six questions that are demographic in nature.

This study was developed in response to an increased use of Facebook by tourism and recreation students at the university level. The use of online social networking and Web 2.0 tools are cited by Crook & Harrison (2008) as a modern educational practice aligned with policy initiatives. Research studies have contemplated the role of social media during instruction and cited the integration of social media as having significant implications for learning and the formation of community (Charnigo & Barnett-Ellis, 2007; Hewitt & Forte, 2006; Mathews, 2006; Mazer, Murphy & Simonds, 2007; Selwyn, 2007; Towner & VanHorn, 2007), however there is yet to be a study conducted on the integration of social media as a catalyst to create or enhance sense of community.

The implications for instructors to maintain an online presence may be a contributing factor to this lack of research. Instructors have concerns regarding how much personal information they should provide students with and they worry about how this information will affect their credibility in the classroom (Mazer, Murphy, & Simonds, 2007). Therefore, results of this study will be forwarded to the university's center for teaching improvement and in this capacity there may be additional opportunities for the center to build upon the results. The findings, as they directly relate to the integration of online social networks, will be available to instructors from all departments on campus. Results of the study may also contribute to the theory proposed by McMillan & Chavis (1986) and the revised Sense of Community Index 2 (SCI-2) instrument in 2008.

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MODELLING TOURISTS' EMOTIONS, SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

This working paper examines the role of consumers' emotions in the tourism marketplace. The objectives of this study are to identify the influence of motive on tourists' emotions, to measure the strength of emotion obtained from service encounter, to explore the relationship between consumption emotion and satisfaction, and to examine the effect of emotions on the word-of-mouth transmissions. The study presents a conceptual model based on literature review. Data to test the model will come from survey at selected destinations and data will be analyzed by both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Most researchers in consumer behavior did not include emotion in their service quality and satisfaction models due to the claim that service quality and satisfaction are highly cognitive-based. This study argues that the concept of emotion also arises from cognitive appraisals of one's own thought. The conceptual analysis in this current working paper and next phase of empirical investigations will be useful for tourism destinations in enriching understanding of their consumers and developing strategies that can improve tourist satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth transmissions.
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KEYWORDS: Consumer Behavior; Consumption Emotion; Destination; Motivation; Satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

The study of consumption emotion shows that it has a significant connection with consumers' behavior as it will lead to satisfaction and customer's loyalty (Wong, 2004). In most previous studies, emotion was not included in service quality and satisfaction models due to the claim that service quality and satisfaction are highly cognitive-based. However, Liljander and Strandvik (1996) suggested that these three concepts should be incorporated together to get a fuller understanding of consumers' behavior. This suggestion was strengthened by Bagozzi, Gopinath and Nyer (1999), who believed that in tourism industry, both cognitive and affective dimensions involved. Moreover, cognitive

dimension include the motivation element that is related to emotion (Zikmund and D'Amico, 1996).

Thus, this study will focus on the role of emotions in tourism industry. The objectives of this study are to identify the influence of motive on tourists' emotions, to measure the strength of emotion obtained from service encounter, to explore the relationship between consumption emotion and satisfaction, and to examine the effect of emotions on the word-of-mouth transmissions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of emotions in marketing is gaining a great attention from many service-based industries. Bagozzi et. al (1999) defined emotion as mental states of readiness that arise from cognitive appraisals of events or one's own thoughts. In other words, emotions can be regard as states involving subjectively experienced feelings of attraction or repulsion (Zikmund and d'Amico, 1996). In consumer behavior, emotion is often expressed in terms of feeling towards the product. The emotional responses that may develop from the interaction can be categorized as positive and negative. As a service-based industry, tourism involves interaction between tourists and destination environment and it is expected that cognitive and affective dimension involved.

The decisionmaking process in tourism is usually based on cognitive information processing, lifestyle and motivation. Cognitive information process involves various emotions that initiate goal-directed behavior that include the affective dimension. Zikmund and d'Amico (1996) believed that there is a close interrelationship between emotion and motivation. Among emotions that can be related to motivation are romantic love, joy, fear and anger. In the perspective of experience in consumer behavior, consumers normally buy certain products or services for fun, to enjoy the experience and to achieve increased levels of arousal. These are the motivation that affected by emotions. While according to Pizam and Mansfeld (1999), the experience seek by tourists is very much related to fantasy, feeling and fun. Tourists normally tend to choose a destination that offers various playful activities, sensory pleasures, daydreams, esthetic enjoyment and emotional responses. There are eight emotions identified by Plutchik (1980, as cited in Pizam and Mansfeld, 1999) that can be related to tourist experience which are acceptance, disgust, fear, anger, joy, sadness, surprise and expectancy. The strength of these emotions are believed to have implications on tourist satisfaction and future behavioral intentions. Tourism services and destination are parts of that phenomenon that provide tourists with such emotional experience.

According to Ibrahim and Gill (2005), the factors contributed to tourist satisfaction are the experience with destination features and services. In addition, emotions as a cognitive process often lead to certain coping behavior. It is the psychological and behavioral actions in managing the demand of the emotion-evoking situation. Nyer (1997) believed that customers can control the coping behavior in certain situations to reduce the level of unhappiness. For example, some unhappy customers may decide to make complain, while some decide not to after thinking about the hassle he has

to go through to complain. These customers may comfort themselves and thus try to reduce the level of unhappiness. Coping potential has implications to marketers as it would affect future behaviors such as product return, complaint behavior, word-of-mouth and repurchase intention.

THEORETICAL MODEL

Many researches in consumer behavior explored about relationship between emotion and satisfaction, but little is known about the relationship between emotion gained by tourist and their travel motivation and how emotions affect their satisfaction level and future behavioral intention. Destination is an important element in tourism as it is a place where tourists seek experience of fantasy, feeling and fun. The experience while traveling is very much influenced by various emotions. The ability of the destination in providing wonderful experience would generate positive emotions among the tourists. These positive emotions are believed to have implication on tourist satisfaction and further influence positive future behavior in terms of word of mouth transmission.

In view of the fact that there is a significant interrelationship between emotion and motivation (Zikmund and d'Amico, 1996), it is understood that motivation also has implications on emotion. For example, honeymooners may have different emotion on tourism product and services compared to family vacationers. Each tourist may also have different level of emotion and coping behavior depending on internal and external situation. These conditions may lead to tourist satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Since many previous researches mentioned that satisfaction leads to positive future behavior, it is crucial to measure how the strength of emotion affects tourist satisfaction. It is also important to measure their reaction in coping with such emotions and the effects on word of mouth transmissions.

As it is believed that emotions have a significant influence on consumer behavior, it is important to determine how much travel motivations affect tourists' emotions. Nyer (1997) explained appraisals of goal relevance and goal congruence as determinants of consumption emotions that include anger, sadness and joy/satisfaction. Goal relevance explains how strong the outcome personally relevant to the individual. It causes the emotions to be experienced more intensely when the situation is more relevant. While goal congruence is the extent the outcome is congruent or incongruent with the wants or desire. In normal situation, goal congruent situations will lead to positive emotions while goal incongruent situations will lead to negative emotions.

The study of satisfaction is crucial in the field of consumer behavior as the satisfaction towards certain destination features will lead to destination loyalty (Chen and Gursoy, 2001). Many researchers found the interrelationship between consumption emotion and satisfaction in various service-based industries (Westbrook, 1987; Wong, 2004). According to White and Yu (2005), consumers with positive emotions are likely to say positive things about the firm, more willing to pay more for the service and less likely to switch to other brands. However, negative emotions are believed to have a

stronger effect on satisfaction compared to positive emotions (Liljander and Strandvik, 1997).

These conditions may lead to tourist satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Since many previous researches mentioned that satisfaction leads to positive future behavior, it is crucial to measure how the strength of emotion affects tourist satisfaction. It is also important to measure their reaction in coping with such emotions and the effects on word of mouth transmissions. Figure 1 explains the connection among important variables discussed in this section.

This research intends to enrich understanding on tourist consumption emotion and behavior that would be helpful for destination marketers. The result can be utilized in developing strategies that can improve tourist satisfaction and positive word of mouth transmissions.
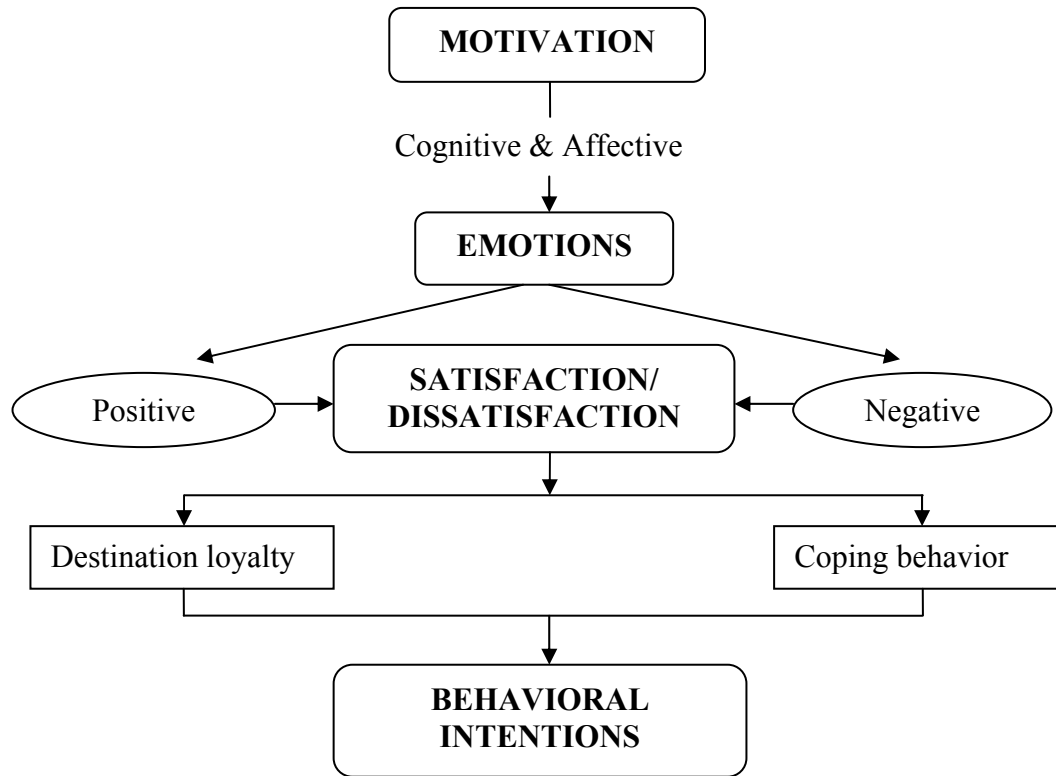
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                    │   MOTIVATION    │
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         │ Positive │──▶│ SATISFACTION/   │◀──│ Negative │
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    │ Destination loyalty│               │  Coping behavior │
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                     │   BEHAVIORAL     │
                     │   INTENTIONS     │
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Figure 1. Tourist Emotions, Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study will involve a two-stage research design. The first stage would involve a series of interviews about tourist experience. The result of the interviews would help

the researcher to develop a list of cognitive and affective attributes of tourist emotions. Furthermore, the interviews would contribute to terminologies used by tourist in expressing their emotional feeling, their satisfaction level and future behavior. The information gathered would be helpful in the creating the questionnaire.

The second step is the main survey at selected tourist destination. It involves a series of visit and self-administered survey with tourists in understanding their emotions while encounter with destination services and features. The destination chosen for this study is a famous metropolitan tourist attraction, downtown Chicago in Illinois. It is chosen due to its popularity among domestic and international tourists.

The population of this study is all tourists at the destination during the time of study, including both domestic and international. It will use the convenience sampling based on tourists' willingness to participate and their availability. According to Veal (2006), for the unknown population size, the minimum sample size for confidence interval of +-5% is 384, while many behavioral studies used more than 100 respondents. Thus, the appropriate sample size chosen for this study is 500. It is believed to be sufficient to represent the population at the destination. Few main tourists' attractions will be selected as study locations to distribute the survey, such as Sears Tower, Navy Pier, parks and museums. All data will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Both descriptive and inferential statistics will be used in data analysis.

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LEGISLATIVE BASIS FOR TOURISM PLANNING: THE AUSTRALIAN CASE

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ABSTRACT

Planning is vital to facilitate an informed and strategic decision making process regarding the appropriate nature and scale of tourism related developments within a destination. However, while planning is an essential aspect of tourism development and tourism planning has been extensively addressed in the academic literature, the legislative frameworks which provide for, control and regulate many aspects of tourism development have gone largely unnoticed in tourism research. In Australia, the legislative frameworks that impinge upon tourism planning are almost as broad, diverse and complicated as the sector itself. It is within this context that this study sought to examine the legal basis for tourism planning in Australia. The study identified 222 current Acts that support, or otherwise, the development and implementation of tourism management plans. Additionally, interviews with a sample of government agency and tourism organization representatives highlighted a myriad of issues and challenges facing the sector. Given the scope and breadth of legislative frameworks in Australia and the fact that a study of this nature has never been carried out to this extent before, this study makes an important contribution to tourism planning research and provides opportunities and direction for future investigation in this area.

KEYWORDS: Australia, Law and Legislation, Tourism Planning

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has the ability to impact on the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of communities. In Australia, for instance, approximately one in twenty jobs are within the tourism industry, many of them located outside the main employment centers, in small businesses employing fewer than five people (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009). However, "tourism has been dominantly driven by

private sector interests, rather than government regulatory policies..." (Miller & Auyong, 1991, p.75). Often tourism planning is considered an unnecessary interference in market driven development (Gunn, 2004) with investors focused on their singular development and the returns of this, failing to look beyond their own boundaries and individual interests.

The complex multi-tiered government structure of local, state and national authorities in Australia provides a challenge to ensure the appropriate statutory and legal basis for tourism planning is adopted. Different levels of government tend to have different sets of objectives to achieve through tourism development, making the study of tourism policy and decision making even more complex because the aims of regional and local government may diverge from those of central government (Hall & Lew, 2009). Local governments provide funding for tourism marketing and visitor information services and also manage many of the natural resources that tourism is dependent upon, including infrastructure and facilities, and influence tourism development decision making. However, the statutory control of many development and planning decisions in local areas is often retained under the ultimate regulatory control of State governments. State governments also have a role in managing natural resources including infrastructure and facilities with local governments. This can create tension and conflict as power is shared between differing levels of government.

Further compounding the issue is the complex nature of tourism and the range of agencies that influence its development. Tourism draws on the expertise of public agencies for land use, water supply, sewerage, parks and recreation, environmental protection, and tourism marketing to name but a few. Therefore, inter-governmental and inter-organizational relations exert a major influence on the development of national policy, including areas such as tourism (Hall, Jenkins & Kearsley, 1997). There is a need for agencies to communicate; often times consider impacts beyond their mandate, for effective tourism planning to occur (Gunn, 2004). Indeed, a recent review identified approximately 270 national, state, regional and local tourism destination plans and strategies in Australia (McLennan & Ruhanen, 2008). Despite the quantity, past attempts at tourism planning, while generally well documented, have often failed at the implementation stage because there is limited, or poorly understood, statutory bases to ensure the resourcing and integration of implementation actions. It is important, therefore, to understand the specific legal bases for tourism planning in Australia that affects tourism planning and identify the facilitators for implementation. Therefore, this paper aims to: 1) identify the relevant legislation and regulatory agencies within each state and territory in Australia that supports, or otherwise, the development and implementation of local tourism destination management plans, and 2) develop a strategy to educate the industry and government agencies of the legal basis for tourism planning to ensure tourism plans are implemented and supported.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Planning refers to the process of thinking about, and making decisions for, current and future activities. In a tourism context planning is difficult to define and some even

consider it an oxymoron – that is, planning for an unplanned phenomenon (Gunn & Var, 2002). Hall and Page (2006, p. 321) note, "planning for tourism occurs in a number of forms (development, infrastructure, promotion and marketing), structures (different government and non-governmental organizations), scales (international, national, regional, local, sectoral) and times (different time scales for development, implementation and evaluation)". Physical planning, for instance, is a practice that has taken place for centuries (Gunn, 1994). Mason and Leberman (2000) claim that modern physical or urban planning can be traced back at least two hundred years to the United Kingdom, where town planning emerged as the population became increasingly urbanized and industrialized, and the associated environmental and social problems escalated. However, contemporary planning is increasingly encompassing a wider range of considerations, including environmental protection, commercial and corporate interests and public opinion, which have previously been considered outside a physical planner's domain (Dredge, 1999). This shift can also be seen in approaches to tourism planning where a holistic systems approach has evolved (Gunn & Var, 2002), attributed to the fact that tourism planning activities are undertaken for destinations which are in fact complex systems of public and sector interests coupled with host communities, the natural and built environment and broader socio-political frameworks.

Planning for tourism has been advocated by many in response to the negative impacts that can arise from tourism activity for host destinations. Certainly, the rapid and ad hoc development of early tourism destinations with their inadvertent laissez-faire approaches to tourism growth led to many incidences where the resource base upon which tourism depended was compromised. As Riddell (2004, p.178) notes, "unplanned and under-regulated tourism expansion, with little thought or heed for the wellbeing of the actual environment, the actual heritage, the actual communities being visited, or indeed the actual tourist's enjoyment, will wear down the very attractions on which the industry is predicated". Sentiments echoed by many authors who note that the failure to proactively plan for the nature and scope of tourism development has left many destinations with a legacy of social and environmental problems (Murphy & Murphy, 2004; Ruhanen, 2006). The experience of such destinations has shown it is often too late to reverse or redirect unwanted development once it has become established in a destination and these destinations will always suffer from environmental and social problems that are both detrimental to tourists and residents (Gunn, 1994; Ruhanen, 2006). Against this background it was recognized that tourism activity and development should be planned for in a coordinated and strategic way to ensure the destination sustains tourist satisfaction, positive economic benefits, and minimal negative impacts on the local social and physical environments. Edgell et al. (2008, p. 298) claim that, "most studies have found that a well-planned and well-managed tourism program that considers the natural and cultural environment has a good chance of improving the local economy and enhancing the quality of life of residents".

Significant challenges arise at the implementation stage of tourism plans as they "are nuanced and have to balance idealism [what ought to happen by and for society] with pragmatism [what can happen with private sector investment]" (Burns, 2004, p. 27). Studies addressing the tourism plan implementation gap have highlighted a lack of

analytical details or miscalculations regarding the control of land usage (Cooper, Gilbert, Fletcher & Wanhill, 1993; Lai, Li & Feng 2006; Shepherd, 1998), the failure of central planning caused by lack of community involvement (Tosun & Jenkins, 1996), as well as a mismatch between central planning and local possibilities (Burns & Sancho, 2003). For instance, Lai et al's (2006) study identified that more than half of sampling elements within a three year master plan for Anhui, China were not implemented due to barriers relating to planning constraints, finances, lack of market demand, loss of management staff and insufficient implementation instructions. This has resulted in many authors concurring that the tourism plan is a "perfunctory or bureaucratic exercise" (Gunn & Var, 2002, p. 28), "theoretical exercise" (Baidal, 2004, p. 322) and "sitting on government shelves to collect dust" (Burns, 2004, p. 29). The futility of undertaking such exercises in the absence of implementation strategies has been recognized in planning practice.

The structure of the Australian government system and the statutory status of federal and state/territory tourism organizations mean that tourism has little to no involvement in developing the laws and regulations that affect the sector. Further, government agencies overlook the issue of tourism when addressing their own industry-related matters and developing policies (Gunn & Var, 2002; Edgell et al., 2008). This may intentionally or inadvertently occur for a number of reasons. For example, an agency may have differing political agendas and priorities, or a lack of awareness for tourism and the impact the activity may have on the tourism sector (Dickman, 1998; Edgell et al., 2008). Due to the lack of definitive powers at a national level, the sector is therefore heavily reliant on coordination mechanisms which are typically voluntary in nature and therefore not enforceable (Dickman, 1998). As such, Timothy and Tosun (2003) assert that tourism planning is often only done at a conceptual or strategic level in an attempt to help direct and manage tourism growth within a destination (Dickman, 1998).

Much of the responsibility for regulating the many areas which impact upon tourism in Australia is with the state governments. State government is responsible for a number of tourism planning activities such as facility development and major infrastructure; and like the federal government, tourism marketing and promotion (Jenkins & Hall, 1997; Ruhanen, 2006). Each state and territory also has a state tourism organization which is primarily responsible for marketing and promotion at a state or territory level. However, state governments can divest specific legislative powers to local governments, namely for activities such as local land-use planning and development activities, such as the provision of local infrastructure and facilities. As such, local governments play a key role in the regulation of tourism-related land-uses and have considerable influence over the growth and management of tourism at a destination level (Dredge & Jenkins, 2007). Local government is therefore responsible for the approval of tourism development applications (Ruhanen, 2006; Thompson, 2007), although such approvals are still subject to any regulations which require a state referral agency to approve. Indeed, Hall et al. (1997) asserts that local governments have the most direct and immediate control over tourism development and therefore plays a fundamental role in the planning and development of tourism. Furthermore, as local government plays a "potentially important role in negotiating and mediating among business, community and government interests they can provide leadership in tourism development" (UNEP, 2003

cited in Dredge & Jenkins, 2007, p. 303). Despite their important role Hall (2003) notes that the role of local government is often overlooked by State and Commonwealth governments. Furthermore, the state and federal governments have the power to review and overrule planning decisions made by local governments (Dickman, 1998; Thompson, 2007) thus illustrating the lack of coordination between levels of government and supporting the argument put forward by Dredge and Jenkins (2007, p. 227) that, "there is no clear divide between the roles and responsibilities of the Commonwealth, state and territory governments".

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted an interpretive research approach and a two stage data collection process was developed for the research design. Firstly, secondary data collection of pertinent legislation was undertaken. Searches of government (federal and state) websites and direct contact with government representatives informed the collection of this data. The first stage of data collection resulted in a matrix of federal and state Acts which impact upon, or affect, tourism planning. It should be noted that the Acts included in this research were current as at the 1st March 2010.

Secondly, key informants were interviewed regarding the legislative basis for tourism planning within their respective jurisdictions and their perceptions of the key enablers or facilitators for tourism strategy implementation. Key informants were identified from referral agencies identified in the matrix of Acts developed in stage one and in consultation with the project's Industry Reference Group (IRG) and the funding body, the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre. Informants were purposively sampled to ensure representation from: a) each of the eight Australian states and territories; b) across the range of tourism planning authorities; c) in key agencies which impact upon tourism planning and development, and d) from key industry representatives. In total 16 respondents participated in a 30-45 minute telephone interview. The respondents represented state tourism organizations, state government departments of environment, planning and transport, federal government departments of tourism and the environment, local council representatives and tourism industry representatives. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Respondents were emailed a copy of the transcript to allow for member cross checking and were invited to make any changes before returning to the researchers. Data was analyzed using iterative thematic content analysis to determine key issues emanating from the interviews.

The research project has a number of limitations. The study was limited by time. Therefore, the audit of legislation is limited to Commonwealth and State legislation impacting upon tourism planning and while reference is made to business operation and management, health, taxation and financial legislation a comprehensive review of this legislation is not included in this study. In seeking respondents to participate in the research many potential respondents were unaware of what they could contribution to the research. The 'siloed' approach to governmental agencies, and roles within these

agencies, also impeded upon potential respondents willingness to participate in the research.

RESULTS

Federal, state and local regulations provide the mechanisms for which most tourism related developments, activities and services can be implemented. These regulations as well as departmental policies can facilitate tourism planning by identifying the types of development and uses which are allowable or in need of control or protection within specific regions or locations. The results of the Acts were categorized into four broad categories - land use and development; nature based tourism; tourism organizations; and miscellaneous tourism operations and services, with a number of subcategories as depicted in Table 1. In total 222 legislative Acts were identified in this research. However, due to the length limitations of this paper only the land use planning and nature based tourism are discussed in further detail.

Table 1. Federal and State/Territory Legislation Impacting/Affecting Tourism Planning

	Federal	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
Land Use Planning									
Land Use Planning	1	2	2	2	8	2	1	6	5
Coastal Management			2		2	2		1	
Building Works & Use	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2
Infrastructure	1		1						
Transport (General)			1		5		1	1	1
Air	1								
Sea (Navigation & Ports)	1		2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Nature Based Tourism									
Nature Conservation (National/State Parks, Forests & Wildlife)	1	2	3	3	9	4	4	5	3
Marine (Parks, lakes & other waterway) activities	2	1	3	5	3	1	1	2	2
Fisheries	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2
Crown & State Land			2	2	2	2	2	3	3
Heritage (Indigenous & non-indigenous)	2	1	1	3	3	2	2	2	2
Shipwrecks	1								
Tourism Organizations									
Statutory bodies / authorities	1		1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Miscellaneous Tourism Operations & Services									
Casino & Gaming		1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
Liquor supply & licensing		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4
Major Events			1		2				
Tourist Services					2				

Land Use Planning

'Land use planning' is as the phrase suggests the planning for the use of land (Priemus, Button & Nijkamp, 2007). Each Australian state and territory has established a system of planning under their respective planning regulations. The research identified 29 Acts which govern land use planning at a Federal and State level in Australia.

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Amongst other things, planning regulations provide for the creation of planning instruments (schemes, policies and strategies) and development assessment processes. Planning instruments may apply to the whole or part of a state or territory, the whole or part of a local government area or to a specific parcel of land. Some states have enacted additional legislation which impacts upon land use planning for prescribed areas, for example, the *Sanctuary Cove Resort Act 1985* (QLD), the *Docklands Act 1991* (VIC) and the *Subiaco Redevelopment Act 1994* (WA).

The States of New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and South Australia have enacted specific legislations (total of 14) providing for the management and protection of their respective coasts and beaches. Generally, these states have developed an integrated planning approach to protect and preserve the coast environment. Coastal management plans and coastal management districts or zones have been declared ensuring that both appropriate development controls are applied and that development is ecologically sustainable. Other States and Territories may provide for the protection and preservation of their respective coasts through planning or other legislation.

Each state and territory has also implemented regulations in order to control the design, construction and use of buildings (total of 14). Tourism accommodation and premises constructed to operate tourism operations and activities are, as are all buildings and structures, subject to the provisions of the requisite state and territory building laws. Regulatory requirements for buildings and building works, licensing for the building industry, the facilitation of efficient buildings and the adoption and application of the Building Code of Australia (BCA) are covered in the respective state and territory building, planning, development or local government laws. The BCA contains technical provisions for the design and construction of buildings and other structures in order to achieve nationally consistent minimum building standards. The code covers such matters as structure, fire resistance, access and egress, services and equipment, and certain aspects of health and amenity.

Transport and transport infrastructure are another integral component for tourism planning. Infrastructure needs to facilitate forecast population growth, as well as increasing growth for touristic purposes. There are numerous regulations (27) which relate, directly and indirectly, to transport and the implementation of transport infrastructure. These regulations can be categorized as follows:
- Transport services – providing a transport service (bus, rail, air, sea etc);
- Transport safety – including registration and licensing requirements;
- Transport planning – establishment of transport authorities and commissions (and their powers and functions); or regulations which coordinate and integrate transport modes; and
- General infrastructure - whereby transportation is incorporated into general planning.

Nature based tourism

More than 104 regulations impact upon nature based tourism activities. Generally, the applicable regulations are dependent upon the location of the activity. Clustered under this heading are regulations relating to the care, control, management and protection of national and state parks, reserves, forests, wildlife, wilderness areas, botanic gardens and recreation areas. The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) ensures that an assessment process is undertaken for proposed actions that will or are likely to significantly impact upon the values of world heritage properties. Each of the states and territories also has approximately 33 legislations that protect parks, reserves, forests and wildlife. Marine environments provide a significant source of tourism activities and commercial venture opportunities within Australia, resulting in a further 35 Acts which impact upon marine parks, lakes, other waterways and fishery activities. These acts have significant limitations upon the development which encroaches upon these environmentally sensitive areas.

Crown or State land is land generally reserved for public and community purposes, which is owned and managed by the respective state and territory governments. Vast areas of land in Australia are dedicated as Crown or State land. Subject to the limitations provided for in the relevant regulations, Crown or State land can be used for a variety of purposes including caravan and camping grounds, walking tracks, canoe and kayak trails, racecourses, gardens, local parks, sporting fields, and industry development (tourism, industrial, residential etc). Some state and territory regulations however preclude reserved lands and state forests from applying to these specific regulations. Land allocated in this way can, amongst other things, be managed, reserved, licensed and leased. Most state and territory regulations relating to crown and state land provide for the implementation of management plans, which can be viewed by contacting the relevant crown land agencies and departments.

There are federal, state and territory laws which provide for the management and protection of Australian heritage (19 in total). Australia's heritage and the regulations which aim to protect it can be grouped in the following six categories:
- World heritage (17 places are currently listed on the world heritage list);
- National heritage (comprises natural and cultural places of outstanding heritage value to the nation);
- Indigenous heritage (comprises places associated with Dreaming stories, places associated with spirituality etc);
- Commonwealth heritage (comprises natural, Indigenous and historic heritage places on Commonwealth lands and waters or under Australian Government control);
- Historic Shipwrecks (More than 6500 historic shipwrecks lie beyond Australia's shores); and
- Overseas heritage (Overseas sites that have a special place in Australia's history are symbolically recognized – e.g. Anzac Cove, Gallipoli and Kokoda Track, PNG).

DISCUSSION

Tourism encompasses a range of different industry sectors and activities that have the potential to impact upon communities, economies and environments. Complexity arises due to the scope and range of legislation that impact upon tourism planning. This research found that there were approximately 222 enactments that impact upon or facilitate tourism planning within Australia, with a plethora of additional legislation that has an ancillary effect on tourism planning.

Australian states and territories, with the exception of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), all have specific legislation enabling their state tourism organization. However, as Dredge and Jenkins (2007) note the main goals of the state tourism organization's (STO's) are marketing and visioning for the growth of the tourism industry in each of these states. Consequently the strategic tourism planning that is undertaken by these organizations tends to focus on strategic marketing with the objective of economic growth. As one respondent stated "legislation, it doesn't really underpin the direction at all…certainly legislation may be an important issue or consideration (e.g. airport regulation, issue of visas, etc) but it normally would not 'underpin' a strategic tourism planning direction" [I7]. Unquestionably sentiments such as this go some way into explaining the problems associated with tourism planning and the reason that so many tourism plans are not successfully implemented.

A further challenge is that most state tourism organizations are statutory, with no "…weight of the law or legislation behind them, so all they can do is try to influence outcomes" [I15]. This is a challenge for government agencies responsible for the development of tourism and the tourism industry. Edgell et al. (2008) noted that often these industry and policy areas may overlook the issues of tourism in pursuit of their own agendas. Legislation enables ownership and power. As one respondent stated:

> …the biggest challenge is that we don't have the power to actually deliver the tourism product, our big challenge is to get those agencies to change that legislation to take account of the need for tourism. So the two challenges are the constraints in existing legislation and getting that legislation changed because it's not our legislation, its other agencies [I3].

Competing government agendas and goals influence the willingness of cooperation. As identified above, the range and scope of the legislation that impacts upon tourism planning adds another layer of complexity.

The nature of tourism predicates that discussions about legislation impacting upon tourism planning would need to be undertaken with a range of differing government departments at both a local, state and national level (Dickman, 1998; Murphy & Murphy, 2004; Dredge & Jenkins, 2007). Being engaged with and aware of the legislative and policy movements within these different government departments is a significant challenge facing STO's, industry associations and lobbyists. The diverse nature of the tourism industry has further impacted upon the ability of the industry to respond to legislative constraints or changes. One respondent summed this up by stating:

…you've got an industry which is large but very diverse, composed mostly of small operators who are not very vocal or well organized. In other words it is appallingly arranged for the business of lobbying. It's a situation where tourism has low ministerial ranking, no legislative powers, a poorly organized industry presence and (aside from TTF) almost no lobbying capacity. That makes it very hard to influence legislative outcomes or to push through legislative change. [I7]

The industry is heavily reliant on co-ordination mechanisms, which are typified by voluntary and unenforceable directives (Dickman, 1998). With no power over legislation impacting upon tourism planning the only way that tourism issues can be considered is through consultation, engagement with other departments and educating government departments of the impact legislation has upon tourism.

Tourism, tourism related activities and tourism development should be considered when drafting and implementing state, regional and local planning instruments, especially in key tourism locations. "Tourism requires systematic planning so that it is developed properly, responsive to market demands, and integrated into the total development pattern of an area" (Inskeep, 1988, p. 361). Consideration of the tourism market, visitor numbers, visitor interests, accommodation requirements and the like are factors that need to be considered by land use planning policy makers. It is apparent that very few planning instruments dedicate (or zone) land or land masses for tourism purposes only.

CONCLUSION

For tourism in Australia to develop in a systemic way the industry and its participants need to be aware of their legal obligations. The finding from this research draws together the range of legislation, in each of the states and territories, that impact upon tourism planning. Understanding the legal basis for tourism planning can assist industry practitioners and governments in developing plans that are implemented, monitored and adhered to. To date, the tourism planning activities undertaken by state tourism organizations do not sufficiently address, or in many cases even acknowledge, the variety of legislation impeding on the sector. As such, a primary recommendation from this research is that tourism planning processes give due consideration to the broader legal frameworks that will underpin any development decisions or directions identified in a tourism planning exercise.

Communication between government agencies and statutory tourism bodies was identified as a challenge by a number of respondents in the study. Government agencies noted that tourism representatives do not engage at the consultation phase and tourism bodies claimed that government agencies do not provide sufficient opportunities to meaningfully engage in the development of legislation. Although tourism industry councils (such as the Queensland Tourism Industry Council) and Tourism Transport Forum do much in the way of lobbying government agencies on the importance of tourism, there is still scope to improve and open the communication channels between government agencies and statutory tourism bodies to address much of the ambiguity

identified in this research. Statutory bodies and the industry more generally need to be educated as to the extent to which tourism is impacted upon by various Acts and regulations. This will help ensure that the directions identified in tourism planning exercises have a basis in current legal frameworks which may go some way towards overcoming the challenges that tend to arise when implementing the plan. To address this, opportunity exists within undergraduate and postgraduate tourism degrees, as well as professional development and management programs, to incorporate such concepts within the curriculum to better prepare those entering the public and private sectors of the industry to understand, and respond to, the impacts of legislation on the sector.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TOURISM INDUSTRY-ACADEME PARTNERSHIPS: INDUSTRY'S EXPECTATIONS, EXPERIENCES AND SATISFACTION WITH A TOURISM DESTINATION INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

Internships, among other strategies, have previously been identified as a strategy by which universities can meaningfully engage and partner with industry (Prigge, 2005). For tourism and hospitality, internships have been mooted as a strategy in bridging the gap between industry and academe (Harris, 1994) and generating the tripartite relationship among the student, academic institution, and industry (Leslie, 1994; Vong, 2005). It is within this context that in 2009 an innovative internship program was implemented at the School of Tourism, The University of Queensland, Australia. The Tourism Regional Internship Program (TRIP) centered on a 'destination immersion experience' comprising both work and research experience objectives. The project was conceptualized to establish and strengthen collaborations between local tourism destinations and communities and the higher education sector to enhance destination competitiveness and sustainability through workforce development and community engagement. This paper overviews the internship program implemented at the University of Queensland and explores the industry participants' expectations, experiences and satisfaction with the program. Based on semi-structured interviews undertaken with 30 industry participants in the program it was found that while industry participants had few expectations of the program prior to commencement they were most satisfied with the research component of the program. The 'destination' focus of the program, as opposed to individual business focus of traditional internships, meant that recruitment opportunities were less important but promotion and awareness of the destination was an unexpected benefit.

KEYWORDS: Internships, Tourism destination, Tourism industry

INTRODUCTION

Internships have a long history with the first applications in the higher education sector dating back to the early 1900s in the United States. Although typically used in

fields such as medicine, law and education, internships have gained prominence in a variety of disciplines in the social sciences. Indeed, internships are now generally commonplace within tourism and hospitality tertiary degree programs (Van Hoof, 2000). Like other disciplinary studies, internships have been identified as a means of enhancing tourism and hospitality student's learning (Busby, 2003; Lam & Ching, 2007; Moscardo & Pearce, 2007). Indeed, a large body of literature supports the considerable benefits of internship programs for students (e.g., Busby, 2003; Cho, 2006; Ju, Emenheiser, Clayton, Sue & Reynolds, 1998; Lam & Ching, 2007; Walo, 2001; Waryszak, 1997). Students can gain valuable practical experiences, enhance theoretical knowledge with practice, and improve their ability to enter the workforce 'industry ready'. For the educator, they can leverage off industry resources to augment theoretical classroom learning and for the industry participants they can benefit in terms of corporate and social responsibility objectives (Jackson, Dinkar & DeFranco, 2005), reduced recruitment costs and getting a 'sneak-peek' at a potential future workforce (Solnet, Robinson & Cooper, 2007). Further, internships have the potential to contribute to business development, through accessing and applying cutting-edge research, and they provide opportunities to facilitate academe/industry linkages (Prigge, 2005; Vong, 2005). In the contemporary university environment, internship programs can also be leveraged to gain strategic advantage in the relationship between the academy and industry.

In 2009 an innovative internship program was introduced at the University of Queensland, Australia. The Tourism Regional Internship Program (TRIP) centered on a 'destination immersion experience' comprising both work and research experience objectives. Conducted over the second semester of 2009, 16 students were competitively selected and placed in one of two host destinations over the semester break for 10 days. Students undertook placements with a variety of industry operators and also worked on a strategic research project nominated by the host region. The findings of the research project were presented at a Knowledge Exchange Workshop several weeks after the internship period concluded. These dual components of TRIP were specifically designed to fulfill the objectives of:
- providing student participants with a 'real world' and integrated learning experience through the medium of an internship; and,
- facilitating applied research outcomes for industry and enhancing academic-industry partnerships and engagement through knowledge exchange.

The project was conceptualized to establish and strengthen collaborations between local tourism destinations and communities and the higher education sector to enhance destination competitiveness and sustainability through workforce development and community engagement. Two regional tourism destinations partnered in the program which was also supported by the State Tourism Minister, the State and Regional Tourism Organizations and leading tourism industry bodies.

This paper explores the expectations, experiences and satisfaction of the tourism industry organizations and operators who participated in the program. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 participants across the two host destinations and respondents divulged a range of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities with the

program. Recommendations for other educators considering a 'destination immersion experience' such as TRIP are also shared.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internships form an important transitional element in a student's coursework and are often seen to provide the bridge from academia to the workplace (Collins, 2002; Rehling, 2000). Some conceive this in terms of experiential learning whereby students are provided with an experience that provides an opportunity to apply, and reflect on, learned theories in a real world context (Petrillose & Montgomery, 1997; Ryan & Krapels, 1997). Importantly, it can provide an opportunity for students to integrate and consolidate thinking and action (Lam & Ching, 2007). Yet for other authors the experience, namely the practical experience, is the primary factor in undertaking an internship (Chang & Chu, 2009; Zopiatis, 2007). As Harris & Zhao (2004, p.429) note, "a student is working as an apprentice in order to gain some practical experience. That is why it is considered that interning is a kind of opportunity to step out of the theoretical based zone and enter into a different learning paradigm". Essentially though, the purpose of an internship is to help students integrate classroom materials with real world experiences prior to graduation and entering the workforce with the intention of preparing students for their future jobs so that they have a better chance to succeed in their career (Chang & Chu, 2009).

Importantly, internships, among other strategies, have previously been identified as a strategy by which universities can meaningfully engage and partner with industry (Prigge, 2005). In tourism and hospitality, internships have been mooted as a strategy in bridging the gap between industry and academe (Harris, 1994) and generating the tripartite relationship among the student, academic institution, and industry (Leslie, 1994; Vong, 2005). Certainly much of the literature supports the notion that students are the main beneficiaries of internships; they gain valuable practical experiences, enhance theoretical knowledge with practice, and improve their ability to enter the workforce 'industry ready' (Busby, 2003; Cho, 2006; Lam & Ching, 2007). Yet, the benefits to industry participants can also be considerable.

One of the most commonly recognized benefits for industry participants is that internships can be a valuable option for recruiting staff (Gault, Redington & Schlager, 2000; Kay & DeVeau, 2003; Kierulff, 1974; Knemeyer & Murphy, 2002; Somerick, 1993; Thompson, 1950) and there are several reasons for this. Firstly, businesses have access to a pool of workers, who require potentially less on-the-job training and are thus more cost effective in terms of training costs as businesses will have already made some form of training investment in the intern (Alpert, Heaney, & Kuhn, 2009). Roever (2000) for example refers to organizations in the manufacturing sector deliberately seeking to participate in internship programs with the specific objective of creating a pool of interns that could be developed into supervisory and management employees. This was seen as a cost effective strategy as the interns were already trained and understood the company's management philosophy and the University internship placement officer had already conducted the initial screening of candidates (Roever, 2000). Collins (2002) found that

62% of participating organizations chose to hire their interns, upon successful completion of their experience. In times of labor shortage such a strategy can be particularly beneficial (Alpert et al, 2009; Van Hoof, 2000); particularly for the tourism and hospitality sector with its acknowledged challenges in terms of skilled labor shortages (Ruhanen & Cooper, 2009).

Secondly, the opportunity for both the intern and company to learn about each other can be valuable for reducing turnover among new employees (Knemeyer & Murphy, 2002; Busby, 2003; Kurtz, 1983); another key concern for the tourism and hospitality sector in particular (Ruhanen & Cooper, 2009). Further, studies have shown that employees that have a previous internship experience tend to exhibit lower job dissatisfaction than employees who lack internship experience (Knemeyer & Murphy, 2002; Bailey, Hughes & Barr, 2000). As such, the hiring of students from internships can reduce uncertainty in the hiring process (Ju et al, 1998; Lam & Ching, 2007). Somerick (1993) claims that because employers and staff are already acquainted with the interns and their work some of the risk and uncertainty in the hiring process is reduced. Certainly, it is attractive for employers because if an intern does not meet their expectations, there is no requirement to hire them; thus, the firm is presented with an opportunity to screen and recruit talented students without making a long-term commitment (Kaupins, 1990; Petrillose & Montgomery, 1998; Ryan & Krapels, 1997; Walo, 2001; Zopiatis, 2007).

Access to discounted and sometimes free labor is another popular aspect of internship programs for employers (Alpert et al, 2009; Bailey et al, 2000; Collins, 2002; Gunlu & Usta, 2009; Kaupins, 1990; Kierulff, 1974; Somerick, 1993; Toncar & Cudmore, 2000; Zopiatis, 2007). This can be particularly attractive for non-profit organizations (Rehling, 2000). Arguably, the abundance of SMEs in the tourism and hospitality industries also benefit from subsidizing their small pool of labor with additional staff at little or often no cost. The seasonality of the industry also means that employers can obtain additional help to assist them in a busy season or during periods when regular employees are on vacation. For hospitality organizations they can "enjoy the advantages of having an easy access to seasonal and inexpensive labor markets, and the opportunity to employ someone without any long-term employment obligations and legal commitments" (Chang & Chu, 2009, p.8).

While there is an array of benefits from hosting interns there are of course challenges. For instance, there are costs associated with the running of an internship program which may include developing and administering the program, the time of supervisors and mentors who work with the students, intern salaries (where applicable), and miscellaneous costs such as tools (Bailey et al, 2000). Certainly there is a significant investment in time on the part of the host. For instance, Rehling (2000) notes that organizations must provide appropriate work, mentoring supervision, and adequate tools for production. The sponsors also need to accommodate student schedules and to provide evaluative feedback to the academics who partner with them in designing the internship experience for the students' academic credit. Importantly, developing an internship program that is beneficial to the students is necessary so as to avoid either the student or

employer becoming unproductive or frustrated with the arrangement. Certainly, conflict and tension can be an issue (Scott, 2007) with Tabacchi & Stoner (1986), noting that "employees may resent the presence of an 'outsider' in their domain". Further conflict can arise over remuneration with interns sometimes resentful of the work they are expected to undertake for little or often no financial return. As Gunlu & Usta (2009) note, interns don't want to be accepted as gratuitous labor force.

Mindful of the importance of internships for student learning and the opportunities for industry and the institution, a re-designed professional development course for final year undergraduate tourism, hospitality and event students undertaking UQSoT's Bachelor of International Hotel and Tourism Management (BIHTM) was introduced in 2009. TRIP is one of four work-integrated learning (WIL) options in the professional development course and is innovative in terms of providing an alternative to traditional internship or work experience programs where students are placed with a single host business for a specified period of time. TRIP provides both tourism and hospitality students with the opportunity to be immersed in a destination experience which provides the unique opportunity to live, work and interact with the broader community in a regional tourism destination for a 10 day period.

TRIP has two discrete components. Firstly, students who were competitively selected by UQSoT undertook their internship placement in one of the host destinations over the mid-semester break for a total of 10 days. Students were placed with a rotation of industry operators in the respective destinations and during this time participated in the more 'traditional' internship or work experience. Secondly, the students in each of the destinations undertook a strategic research project nominated by the host region which was delivered at a Knowledge Exchange Workshop several weeks after the internship period.

Importantly, the immersion-style model was utilized to assist in the development of relationships, both between students and the interaction with the local community of their host destination. This was considered an important aspect if the knowledge exchange component of the program was to be successful. The internship program employed a rotation design, which ensured the students had experiences with the local tourism body, the visitor information centre(s), main attractions and a variety of accommodation providers, as well as operators of various other tourism products. To support the learning outcomes of the internship, the students were required to complete a journal-style workbook, detailing reflective entries on their experiences in the region.

A key aspect of the program, students were involved in undertaking the destination research project which had been previously identified and agreed upon with the two host destinations. The student's research, data collection, analysis and interpretation culminated in the presentation of their findings to their respective industry hosts and destination stakeholders at the Knowledge Exchange Workshops held in each destination at the end of the semester. At this time key industry hosts were asked to form a judging panel to complete a brief evaluation form to assess the student's performance which enabled the TRIP team to provide formal feedback to students and ensure future

TRIP projects remain responsive to both student and industry needs. This feedback also informed the student's compilation and finalization of their reflective journal submission, which was the main piece of assessment for the previously mentioned professional development course.

METHODS

The research sought to explore industry participant's expectations, satisfaction and experience with the inaugural TRIP in 2009. Interviews were held with a total of 30 industry operators from both Ipswich and the Scenic Rim. The semi-structured interviews explored a range of issues including the participant's expectations, experiences and satisfaction with the program.

Interviews were undertaken by a research officer not associated with TRIP and who had no previous involvement with the industry participants. The interviews ranged from 45 minutes to an hour, depending on respondents' willingness to discuss and delve into the issues under investigation. Interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the respondent and transcripts provided to the participants for member checking. Interviews were conducted both face-to-face or by telephone depending on the participant's preference. Sampling was not employed due to the relatively small number of participants and instead attempts were made to survey the population. A cumulative response rate of 100% was achieved. Participants included representatives of the local government authorities and local tourism organizations for each of the destinations and the organizations and other businesses that hosted the interns.

Qualitative research generally results in large amounts of rich data, and this was certainly the case in this research with 30 in-depth interview transcripts. To reduce and transform the data into an accessible and understandable form, and to draw out various themes and patterns associated with the participants being studied (Berg, 2001; Dey, 1993; Neuendorf, 2002), the transcripts were analyzed and organized utilizing the principles of content analysis where the many words of the text are classified into much fewer content categories, which may consist of one, several or many words (Swift, 1996; Weber, 1990). The researchers analyzed the data in accordance with the content analysis method referred to as the thematic framework approach. This approach involves organizing the data into categories on the basis of themes, concepts or similar features, from which new concepts are developed, conceptual definitions, are formulated and relationships among concepts are examined (Berg, 2001; Jennings, 2001; Neuman, 2000). Identified themes, concepts and patterns are then considered in light of previous research and theories, so that generalizations can be established (Berg, 2001).

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

From the School's perspective, overall, TRIP was a success. Student feedback was overwhelmingly positive both in terms of a learning experience, as well as gaining the much sought after industry experience. Indeed, several students have gained further work with participating operators as a result of their placements and all students report

feeling better prepared to join the industry on graduation. For industry participants the vast majority were overwhelmingly satisfied and supportive of the initiative with only one of the 30 interview respondents not wishing to be involved with TRIP again in the future. Similarly the vast majority of respondents claimed that they would recommend to other businesses and destinations to participate in the program. Further, few changes were recommended to the program and all suggested changes related to the organizational and logistical aspects of the program.

Given that it was a new program industry participants had few prior expectations of the program or the students; *"the expectations on our part were not high"*. Indeed, most of the participating businesses and organizations had no previous experience of hosting interns. For many respondents, the lack of expectations or previous experience with internship programs did mean that most participants were highly satisfied with the program, *"I thought the TRIP program was excellent because it really gave the students an opportunity to have some practical experience, get some job skills"*.

A perceived lack of communication between the university, host destination organizers and individual business participants was a criticism from some participants and an issue that the TRIP team has addressed for future iterations of the program; *"didn't really understand the whole project until the end, so developing expectations was a bit out of the question"*. As another respondent noted; *I did not know what to expect...I probably had some initial misgiving"*, which reflects the sentiments of the majority of participants. However, for some respondents they had quite specific expectations, and indeed motivations, for becoming involved in the program. Some were expecting contributions in terms of the research component of TRIP; *"we were looking for...how they would come up with something that would link the attractions in a way that might increase the number of visitors to the area"*. Others expected to contribute to student learning and student experiences, *"I could see the value in having these young people come out and assess our businesses"* and *"we want to support up and young coming people, talented people"*. While approximately half of respondents expected enhanced networking opportunities, both within the destination and with the University; *"it's brought those businesses together for that short time because sometimes some of the local businesses have a fear of each other and I think it gave them the opportunity to work together and put that behind them"* and *"it's the first step of a collaborative relationship with the university. Could lead to something bigger and better in the future"*.

While not a component of most participants' original expectations, in terms of the benefits for industry participants, the most commonly cited benefit was the promotion and awareness opportunities for their business; an interesting finding and something which has not been acknowledged in the literature. As respondents noted, *"it opened their eyes to what's here and we would hope that they would pass that on to other people; friends, family and other people in the business, that sort of thing"*. Certainly this can be attributed again to the nature of TRIP with its focus on the destination as opposed to just an individual business host as is the case with most internship programs. Similarly, it was the promotional and awareness aspects facilitated by TRIP that were seen by respondents to be one of the key benefits for the destination, *"we sent away 10 or 12 ambassadors for*

the [destination] at the conclusion of the project" and *"hopefully in the long run some of those parents and children will come back when they're on holidays or visiting their kids as students over here…if they do work in tourism overseas, there might be a spin off for us here".*

Interestingly though, the 'traditional' benefits of internships, such as recruitment, which have been a focus of the literature to date, were not so prevalent for the organizations participating in TRIP. Only 13% of participants claimed that potential recruitment opportunities were a factor in their decision to participate in the program; *"I suppose we really contribute to the future success of the students. And hopefully one day we would be able to I suppose pick them up".* Half of the respondents maintain that it was not a factor in their decision at all while the remaining participants hadn't considered this option at all; *"I really hadn't thought it through that far"* but were not averse to the potential, *"no, no, just a happy accident at the end maybe".* While recruitment may be a motivating factor for larger or more labor intensive operators such as those in the hotel and hospitality sectors, the dominance of smaller scale tourism businesses participating in the program is also a factor; *"a lot of our operators are sole operators and small businesses, and I wouldn't have thought that recruitment was something that they would be looking to follow up on".* Further, the nature of TRIP, where students rotated through the host businesses in the destination and spent no more than two or three days with any one individual operator, meant that industry participants had varyinh 'work' expectations of the students. While some respondents had no expectations others *"…expected more traditional work experience models…".*

Yet, it was the research component of the internship that played a major factor in participants' overall satisfaction with the program, *"myself and the operators that were involved in the TRIP program decided on what that project would be and so it was something that we felt that we needed to know and find out and so that was definitely the win for us".* The research project is certainly one of the unique features of TRIP vis-à-vis other internship programs. The objective is to deliver benefits to both students and the destination. For students, it provides an opportunity to undertake a real world project that is identified by the destination as important. Students develop their research skills through collection of relevant literature and statistics, primary data collection, data analysis, write up of results and a final report and presentation. For the destination the research project is one that they have identified as important. Certainly few small regional tourism destination authorities have the surplus funds to undertake research projects such as those that were completed by the TRIP students. For example in one of the destinations a visitor survey was undertaken with over 500 respondents.

Arguably the research focus of TRIP did lead to dissatisfaction for some participants as some had an expectation that students would undertake research and analysis of their particular business while the student was undertaking the rota of business placements. *"I don't think we gained knowledge from the students…the knowledge that we gained from the students were in the outcomes of the report"* and *"…not through the work placements; it was more through the project".* However, responsibility for the mismatch in the expectations of some participants rests with the

TRIP team and destination coordinators who should have addressed this prior to the commencement of the program. Yet that was not to say that some participants were not happy with what the students did during their business placement, *"they came up with some innovative stuff on their own, you know without being asked about it particularly"* and *"I wouldn't have been able to find that myself so I need someone younger with that perspective to be able to do that"*. Some students undertook very specific projects at the direction of more proactive industry participants who realized the opportunities and leveraged off them, *"they constructively dissected my website very nicely and given us a lot of new ideas...how we can change some of our branding as well"*.

Certainly, from the perspective of the industry participants, the TRIP model has both strengths and weaknesses. However, due to the nature of this particular internship model most of the traditional benefits, generally associated with recruitment, were not raised by the participants in this program. Indeed, for most respondents the research component of the program was one of the major benefits and largely met or exceeded expectations. Again, the TRIP model where students spent less time in situ with businesses and completed a research project identified by the destination meant that the focus and/or interest for some participants was more aligned with the research than the actual work placement. Indeed, less emphasis was placed on the work experience component, particularly as students rotated through the participating businesses spending no more than 2 or 3 days with any one organization. An unexpected strength of the program, from the perspective of the industry participants, was the promotion and awareness of the destination. While 'immersion' in a destination was a key learning objective from the educator's perspective it was interesting that participants saw this as a means of raising awareness of their destination. However, given that both destinations are regional areas without large and sophisticated tourism sectors, the opportunities to leverage awareness are understandable.

In terms of weaknesses there are opportunities to improve communication amongst the network, both in terms of the communication between the university and the host destination organizer and also between the host destination organizer and individual industry participants. However, in future years there will be a greater understanding of the program and so expectations of the program will be more clearly defined at commencement. This is also important in terms of the scope of the research project and what can realistically be achieved by a team of 10 students over a 10 day period in conjunction with undertaking work placements for a considerable proportion of the time.

CONCLUSION

TRIP was initially designed to fulfill two quite specific objectives, that is, (1) providing student participants with a 'real world' and integrated learning experience and (2) facilitating applied research outcomes for industry and enhancing academic-industry partnerships and engagement through knowledge exchange. While industry-academe collaboration is a noted feature of internship programs (Bailey et al, 2000; Calloway & Beckstead, 1995; Kaupins, 1990) TRIP offers an innovative approach through both the 'destination immersion' experience and the destination identified research project.

Arguably, much of TRIP's success can be attributed to the strong industry partnership strategy that has been established within the School. Recognizing the need to grow, and importantly maintain, industry partnerships, the School has developed a dedicated industry partnerships team (Solnet et al., 2007). TRIP leveraged off, but also value-added to this industry partnership philosophy and practice. TRIP provided new opportunities to engage a range of industry, peak association and government bodies. With two tourism destination partners a wide array of new stakeholders were engaged with the School from local council mayors, office bearers and tourism development managers, regional and local tourism association presidents and members and, critically a myriad of regional, predominantly small, tourism operators.

While on the whole industry participants had high levels of satisfaction with the program there are broader lessons that can be learnt for educators considering similar style immersion programs, or indeed, WIL experiences such as internships. For instance, TRIP required a significant time commitment for both the academic staff involved as well as the students and industry partners. Mature, broad-ranging and flexible existing academe/industry partnerships assisted immeasurably in the delivery of the program. Findings indicate that several student issues need closer attention. For example domestic and international students had contrasting expectations from their internship period, which needed to be managed. Students were vulnerable to manipulation by the local press. The fact this course was scheduled in the final semester before graduation required academic staff to be resourceful in the motivation of students as many were experiencing 'study fatigue'. Finally, caution needs to be exercised in negotiating with multiple stakeholders' in-region as often there are competing interests which might not align with the overall program objectives.

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