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General Information

The International Society of Travel & Tourism Educators (ISTTE) is an international organization of educators in travel, tourism, and related fields representing all levels of educational institutions. Our membership ranges from professional schools and high schools to four year colleges and graduate degree granting universities. Current membership is represented by travel and tourism educators in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Australia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Great Britain, Korea, China, Taiwan, and others.

Our 2016 Conference theme was "Global Strategies in Tourism and Hospitality Education" and several keynote and breakout sessions were devoted to this and a wide range of topics related to education, research, and management in the field of travel, tourism, and hospitality services.

While the overarching conference theme was Global Strategies in Tourism and Hospitality Education, empirical and conceptually based academic research contributions were welcomed in a variety of other areas including the following broad subject themes:

Paper Themes

1. Emerging issues in travel, tourism and hospitality education and training
2. Innovative and creative teaching and learning methodologies
3. International travel and tourism issues and trends
4. Curriculum Design and Development
5. Impacts on the travel and tourism industry

All submitted papers represent original research that had not been presented in other conferences or published in a journal. In addition, each proposal was examined via a blind review process by the Paper Review Committee.

Types of Proceedings Papers:

In these Proceedings, papers are presented in alphabetical order by first author's last name in the following sections:

• Full Research Papers

• Working Papers

Recognition of Review Committee

The following were selected to serve on the ISTTE 2016 review committee because of their expertise and commitment to excellence in the tourism industry and tourism education.

Their service to this 2016 ISTTE conference is sincerely appreciated.

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FULL PAPERS

“BACK TO TRUESELF” AS AN IDENTITY ELEMENT OF RURAL TOURISM BRANDING

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ABSTRACT

This study proposes the concept of “back to trueself” as an identity element of rural tourism branding and presents a conceptual model that is founded on the theories and extant empirical literature in existential authenticity, self-presentation sociology, and rural tourism motivation. The study is contextualized in the growing trends of urbanization and the resultant concerns of its effect on quality of life and suggests that rural destinations branded with the “back to trueself” element meets the need for urban residents to relieve self-presentational concern and at the same time pursue an authentic way of life. The model takes into consideration the primary motivation of rural tourists, rural destination’s attractiveness to urban residents, and their loyalty to the destination brand. The model is illustrated by the case of “Honest-to-Goodness” brand of the State of Indiana in the United States.

KEYWORDS: Existential authenticity, Destination branding, Rural tourism, Quality of life

INTRODUCTION

Pursuing health and better quality of life is one of the oldest and fundamental motives for tourism (Hobson & Dietrich, 1995). Contemporary urbanization and modernization processes raise new issues of quality of life in urban areas. Increased material wealth and advanced life-facilitating technology in this process are not equal to better quality of life, particularly in the aspects of life satisfaction, health, and living environment (Diener & Suh, 1997). Urbanization can negatively influence people’s quality of life due to intensified air and noise pollution, rising social inequality, and stressful competition (Urban-Nexus, 2012)

Rural tourism may provide a fresh perspective to address urban residents’ quality of life concerns. Rural experience, a contrast to urban daily routine, may possess synergistic qualities in improving urbanites' quality of life (Dong et al., 2013; Urry, 2002), particularly with regard to physical and mental wellbeing, life satisfaction, work-life balance, education, and social connection. Pesonen and Komppula (2010) noted that many rural tourists have similar motivations with wellbeing tourists, including seeking relaxation, escaping from busy jobs, peace and quiet, sports, and healthy gastronomy. They argued that wellbeing is one segment of rural tourism. Tourism is also believed to foster existential authenticity (Wang, 1999), a psychological concept that is described as a true self-concept or the subjective feeling of knowing one's true self and behaving in accordance with it (Schlegel et al., 2011). Existential anxiety, as its counterpart, is often linked to symptoms of neurotic anxiety, depression, and mental distress related to identity problems (Berman, Weems, & Stickle, 2006). Tourism can alleviate existential anxiety (Brown, 2013) and thus enhance psychological wellbeing and life satisfaction (McCabe, Joldersma, & Li, 2010; Neal, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2007). Rural tourism can be a ready remedy for fulfilling the need on the part of the urbanites' seeking existential authenticity and releasing existential anxiety at rural destinations.

The current study aims at developing a conceptual model that links rural tourism and tourists' trueself in relation to rural tourism branding. The concept of "back to trueself" is proposed as an identity element of rural tourism branding and examined in terms of urban residents' motivation and loyalty. Brand identity refers to "a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain" (Aaker, 1996:68). Destination brand identity is the source of the desired destination image (Wheeler, Frost, & Weiler, 2011), which is critical to destination loyalty (Qu, Kim, & Im, 2011). This study posits that individuals are motivated to improve their quality of life and will be attracted to destinations that satisfy this motivation. If urban residents perceive that a rural destination can allow them to embrace a sense of trueself and lead to improved quality of life, they will be attracted to that destination. The model is illustrated by the case study of the State of Indiana in its "Honest-to-Goodness" brand with an element that mirrors the "back to trueself" concept. In addition, the study attempts to examine the effect of such brand identity on the attractiveness of rural destinations.

BACK TO TRUESELF AND RURAL TOURISM BRANDING

Wang's (1999) theory of existential authenticity in tourism lays the foundation for explaining tourists' trueself. It is a special state of being in which one is true to oneself and acts this way as opposed to becoming lost in public roles and public sphere (Berger, 1973). Wang (1999) proposed that tourism destination as liminal zones, where social orders and norms are temporarily suspended, can form an environment favorable to liberation and acting out one's authentic self or trueself. Tourism could act as both a catalyst and a context for existential authenticity, influencing tourists' destination activities and personal lives (Brown, 2013). In psychology, Wood et al. (2008) conceptualized existential authenticity as a tripartite construct that includes self-congruence, resisting external influences, and authentic living.

Preserving the trueself and having an authentic lifestyle is critical to subjective well-being. In psychology literature, existential authenticity is often associated with self-esteem (Goldman & Kernis, 2002), life satisfaction (Carmody, 2013), and optimal psychological well-being (Bettencourt & Sheldon, 2001; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Hence, people's fundamental inner force of pursuing psychological well-being motivates them to seek the experience of authentic self. However, acting in an authentic way needs courage to overcome the potential conflict between one's true dispositions and those of peers or authorities that could threaten one's success (Tillich, 1952). Therefore, an environment that relieves the pressure of peers, norms, and authorities may nurture the authentic behavior that reflects one's trueself. Rural tourism can provide the opportunity of authentic behavior for urban residents in that it can affords an experience of returning back to one's trueself. This argument may find its root in Goffman's (1959) sociological theory of self-presentation in social interaction.

Goffman's (1959) theorized that social interaction might be likened to a theater. People in everyday life are actors on a stage, each playing a variety of roles. The audience consists of other individuals who observe the role-playing and react to the performances. In social interaction, like in theatrical performances, there is a front region where the actors are on stage in front of an audience. There is also a back region or backstage, where individuals can be themselves and get rid of their role or identity that they play when they are in front of others. Activities in backstage is partitioned from the audience. Actors practice and gain capabilities at the backstage in order to perform their roles appropriately in the front stage. In backstage, people can behave freely without the constraint of their social roles. The natural and social fabrics of rurality become the backstage setting for urban residents and may possess the potential for them to be themselves. Tourism experience helps tourists approach authentic self by satisfying the following conditions: visiting places associated with the past (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006), exposing to cultures that challenge the common values of home culture (Kirillova & Lehto, 2015), and separating from social norms of usual environment (Wang, 1999). The characteristics of rural destination create an environment that satisfies these conditions for urban residents to approach existential authenticity.

The proposed concept of "back to trueself" draws on the tenets of both existential authenticity and self-presentation sociology as examined above. The concept consists of two components. The first is relieving the pressure of projecting desirable self-image to other people and of following the social norms of urban life (i.e., self-presentational concern). At rural destinations, they feel free to act as they wish and be more authentic to themselves. This first component serves as the condition for the second, which is experiencing authentic self-identity. Upon removal of self-presentational concern needed in urban life, urban residents will be able to play different roles that may not be accepted at urban, home environment. In essence, the first component of "back to trueself" is getting rid of current role defined by society while the second is seeking a different role defined by authentic self. For people whose authentic self is suppressed and never known to the individual, trying different roles may be a way to find out the exact authentic self-identity and authentic lifestyle.

The concept of "back to trueself" as an element of rural destination branding enhances the loyalty of tourists from the urban area to the rural one, as the attractiveness of the latter consists of the contrasting lifestyles between the two areas (Dong et al., 2013; Urry, 2002). Majewski (2010) claimed that rurality is a central idea in the production of rural tourism and in motivating tourists to visit a rural destination. The term "rurality" is used to capture generalized rural features which are then reproduced for tourist consumption (Lane, 1994). A crucial component of rurality is the rural idyll, which can take the form of the "farmscape," the "wildscape," or the "adventurescape." The three forms combine the notions of natural wonders, romanticism, authenticity, and nostalgia (Bell, 2006). Integrating health and wellness tourism into rural destination marketing was suggested in recent studies (Rodrigues et al., 2010), as well as in extant literature on tourist motivation. Escaping from the busy and stressful urban life or seeking the authentic rural feelings has been identified by many as a primary motive for rural tourism (Dong et al., 2013; Park & Yoon, 2009; Pesonen & Komppula, 2010; Rid, Ezeuduji, & Pröbstl-Haider, 2014; Urry, 2002). Royo-Vela's (2009) study showed that the "desire to disconnect" is the most prevailing motive for rural-cultural tourism and excursion.

Figure 1 conceptualizes the model of rural tourism branding with the identity element of "back to trueself" as the linchpin to motivate urban residents to rural destinations and to cultivate their loyalty. The bi-directional linkage between the urban residents and rural destination is indicative of the flow of the former toward the latter, on one hand, and the branding efforts by the latter capitalizing the identity element and targeting the former, on the other hand. Urban residents are motivated by the opportunity of back to trueself at a rural destination. If the destination could deliver to meet their expectation by providing a sense of second life and allowing them to switch between two identities and regularly relieve the burden of their roles in urban society, the loyalty evolves. This effect may be more significant in countries undergoing rapid urbanization where many urban residents were born and raised in rural areas. Rural tourism for them may be associated with childhood when people felt freer, more spontaneous, purer and truer to themselves (Wang, 1999).

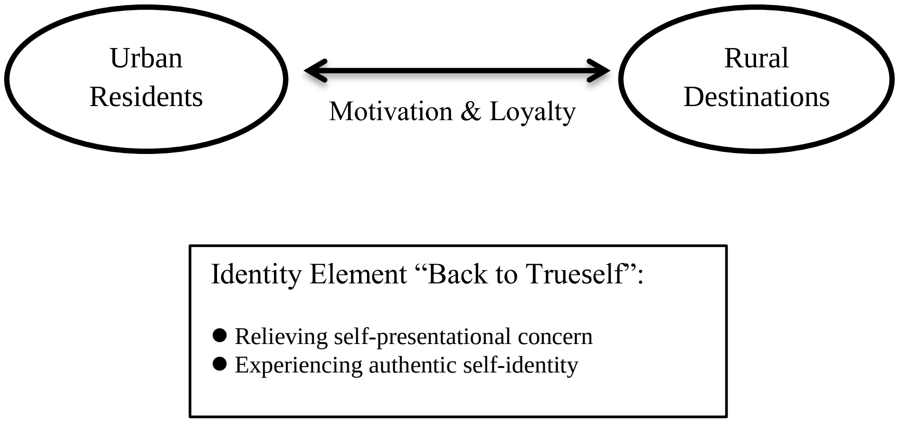

Figure 1. A Model of "Back to Trueself" Rural Tourism Branding

CASE STUDY: "HONEST-TO-GOODNESS" INDIANA

The case of Indiana State's "Honest-to-Goodness" branding campaign illustrates the proposed rural tourism branding model. The slogan "Honest-to-Goodness" was launched by Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD) in 2014 to replace the previous "Restart Your Engine" which mainly focused on the capital city Indianapolis. The new slogan is more inclusive and is an attempt to "represent all areas of the state", according to Mark Newman, executive director of IOTD. The first set of advertisements in this campaign features small towns and picturesque countryside landscapes and highlights places like French Lick, Roanoke, and Brown County. "Honest-to-Goodness" Indiana represents the rural tourism branding that incorporates the identity element "back to trueself".

The textual data for the case study consists of interviews with IOTD staff, contents of visitor guide, official state tourism website (VisitIndiana.com), promotional videos, advertisements, official social media, as well as archival documents provided by IOTD including brand announcements, advertising effectiveness studies, and tourism economic impact reports. The case covers the background information of Indiana tourism, 2) process of developing the new "Honest-to-Goodness" brand including its rationale, 3) interpretation of the slogan and how it represents the identity of Indiana, 4) marketing activities that communicated the brand identity, and 5) relating Indiana's branding to the concept "back to trueself".

Each year Indiana receives over 70 million tourists. The tourism and hospitality industry is the sixth largest industry in the state and is directly responsible for 144,200 jobs, generating over $2.25 billion in tax receipts and contributes $10.7

billion in revenue to Indiana businesses (Rocket Analytics, 2014). IOTD markets the state's tourism destinations and fosters economic development by providing opportunities for statewide tourism partners. Indiana has a strong rural tradition. Most of its jurisdiction areas are rural and most of the tourism destinations are associated with rural communities. The rural lifestyle is considered as a core heritage of Indiana people that can become attractions to tourists. As a result, rural tourism becomes a primary, significant part in Indiana tourism profile. The Fair Oaks Farm in Indiana, for example, has enjoyed the reputation of being the only agriculture theme park in the United States.

According to IOTD, the goal of building the new brand "Honest-to-Goodness" is to create an umbrella brand that can merge seamlessly with branding campaigns by local convention and visitor bureaus, to define the essence of Indiana from the perspective of stakeholders, and to represent the brand experience that focuses on outdoor recreation, sport, agriculture, local dining, and heritage and art. The development of the new brand went through a systematic and research-driven process. IOTD conducted over 6,000 consumer sentiment surveys and conveyed a brand development panel of marketing experts within and outside of the tourism industry. "Honest-to-Goodness" mainly represents the characteristics of rural tourism and Indiana's rural heritage. The essence of "Honest-to-Goodness" speaks to a sense of "genuine" and "authentic" qualities. The identity element "back to trueself" can be found in the narratives of "Honest-to-Goodness" brand:

> "We have undertold stories to tell in Indiana. Stories that inspire visitors to create their own based on memories made here. For in Indiana, our smiles are warm, our handshakes firm and our places have a certain charm. Our people don't put on airs or pretend to be something they're not, because they're proud to simply be who they are. That genuine personality translates into authentic experiences for visitors traveling our state. In Indiana you can spend your days paddling a winding river, fishing an inland lake or browsing the shops on Main Street."

This narrative attests to the connotation of "back to trueself" in the branding model proposed in this study. The environment of Indiana encourages people to have an authentic way of living, to be honest to their trueself, and to reach existential authenticity. It tries to convey the image that Indiana people are genuine, dare to be themselves in all situations, and have welcoming nature. The Indiana hospitality serves as an invitation for tourists to create an authentic experience for themselves that they can be simply as genuine to themselves as their hosts. According to Goffman's (1955) dramaturgical framework, everyone has under-told stories in front of audience due to self-presentational reasons. But the authentic Indiana can become the backstage that inspires each tourist to create a story that only belongs to himself or herself and reflects trueself. IOTD believes that this brand identity is suitable for a destination with strong rural characteristics and that positioning Indiana as a rural destination fits the current trend of the tourism market in the United States. Mark Newman noted that, “As America becomes more and more urbanized, people are looking for things that remind them of those romantic images that they have in their mind, that they want to relieve themselves, so Indiana is the perfect place for that.”

The new brand “Honest-to-Goodness” Indiana has been supported by an aggressive marketing campaign since spring 2014, targeting urban centers in the region including St. Louis, Grand Rapids, Dayton, as well as Indianapolis which is within the state. IOTD spent $1.05 million in 2014 and $1.3 million in 2015 in total marketing expenditures. The multimedia and multichannel efforts included television, radio, outdoor ads, print, and online executions. The goals were to saturate each of the target markets and generate high levels of advertising recall, ultimately generating Indiana travel demands that would not have occurred otherwise. Television advertisements received the largest share of the marketing investment. Rural destinations featured in them included French Lick Resort (a historical resort), Shipshewana (an Amish country), Brown County (for mountain biking), Fair Oaks Farm (an agriculture theme park), and Columbus City (a mecca of architecture).

“Honest-to-Goodness”, with genuine people and authentic experiences as its core element, reflects the idea of Indiana hospitality. In order to convey the essence of the brand, the advertisements highlight that traveling to Indiana is an experience of “back to that simpler time, simple pleasure, that’s Honest-to-Goodness Indiana”. It also emphasizes the rurality feature that “farm meets charm”. Along with these are recommendations of attractions and activities typical in rural spaces such as mountain biking, winery and farm. Boyhood story of President Abraham Lincoln is used to demonstrate how the social environment of Indiana could create a great man with all the good qualities. These marketing messages consistently convey the image that Indiana provides an environment that facilitates back to trueself of the visitors.

The “Honest-to-Goodness” campaign has been conducted for two years. Its long-term effect on increasing the target market’s loyalty is yet to be accounted for. However, the advertising effectiveness research conducted by Strategic Marketing & Research Insights in 2014 and 2015 showed that the campaign successfully improved the awareness and attractiveness of Indiana tourism and conveyed a brand image favored by the target markets. The rating by the audience on Indiana is very positive as the result of this campaign. The awareness of the brand increased from 48% to 60% in St. Louis and increased from 63% to 81% in Indianapolis. Its initial awareness in Grand Rapids and Dayton was 49% and 60%, respectively. The return of advertising increased from $40 to $79 in 2015 for every $1 invested. The number of leisure trips generated by the brand campaign increased from 66,000 to 165,000 in one year. The overall image of Indiana as a rural destination improved, irrespective of actual travel to the state.

CONCLUSION

This study conceptualizes a model for rural tourism branding and introduces the “back to trueself” identity element. The model and the identity element are illustrated by the case of “Honest-to-Goodness” from Indiana. The concept of “back to trueself” is rooted in literature of existential authenticity, self-presentation sociology, and rural tourism. Individuals experiencing inauthenticity have the goal of reaching existential authenticity, being able to embrace an authentic lifestyle, and becoming an authentic self or trueself. In the context of rural tourism, the contrasting environments and lifestyles between rural and urban areas can lend opportunities for urban residents to untangle life's complexity and achieve existential authenticity by virtue of alleviating the self-presentational concerns that are prevalent in urban life. As such, rural tourism branding that is aligned with authentic living can be attractive to urban residents.

"Back to trueself" as an identity element of rural tourism has two dimensions of brand experience: relief of self-presentational concerns and experience of authentic self-identity. Such a brand experience should increase the rural destination attractiveness and tourist loyalty because it satisfies the fundamental motivation for rural tourism and is conducive to tourists' quality of life, which has become a significant issue of urban residents. The case of "Honest-to-Goodness" Indiana demonstrates the applicability of this branding model. The core messages of this Rural Indiana brand "genuine people" and "authentic experience" are illustrative well of the concept of "back to trueself". Genuine people represent the social environment that encourages tourists to rid themselves of the self-presentational facade and simply be who they are. Authentic experience denotes staying true to one's self-identity. The marketing campaign that targets populous urban centers has been successful in improving Indiana's attractiveness in terms of travel intention and actual visitation, precisely because this projected brand identity stays true to the essence of Indiana, and speaks to urban residents' aspiration of staying authentic to one's self.

The proposition that "back to trueself" as an identity element for rural tourism can be effective in increasing urban residents' satisfaction and loyalty to the rural destination has yet to be empirically examined. Even for the illustrative case of "Honest-to-Goodness" Indiana, data has yet to be collected on individual tourists about their perceptions of Indiana as a rural destination that enables them to be "back to trueself" and enjoy the relief of self-presentational concerns and experience of authentic self-identity. Future empirical investigations are warranted to validate, challenge, and improve the proposed "back to trueself" branding model for rural tourism.

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DOES TRAVEL MAKE MARRIED COUPLES HAPPY?: LINKING TRAVEL WITH MARITAL SATISFACTION AND SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

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ABSTRACT

In today's society, love and companionship emerged as important factors that preserve one's marriage. Furthermore, marital relationship greatly influences individuals' wellbeing. While the need to identify factors that improve marital relationship is evident, limited studies explored such issue, specifically the role of travel. Accordingly, this study investigated the linkages among travel, marital satisfaction and subjective wellbeing and studied the underlying explanations of these relationships. Twenty-two semi-structured interviews and subsequent thematic analysis revealed that as the marital relationship is improved through travel, this in turn increases individuals' subjective wellbeing as well. Specifically, some of the characteristics that explain this relationship are benefits acquired from travel, quality of time spent between couples, benefits being disseminated bi-directionally and liminal experience travel offers Next, four major domains of the antecedents to change in marital relationship after travel was identified including devotion, reignited relationship, strengthened bond, and communication. Lastly, three major domains of drivers for change in subjective wellbeing after travel was found including social support, self-esteem, and happiness. This research uncovers fresh insights that are unique to traveler's marital relationship and wellbeing and offers theoretical contributions as well as practical implications for destination marketers.

KEYWORDS: Marital satisfaction; Subjective Wellbeing; Travel experience.

INTRODUCTION

Increasing divorce rate is a worldwide problem (Aghajanian & Thompson, 2013). With lack of love and companionship, marriages are more likely to end in divorce nowadays. The significance of studying marriage quality has connection to the family as well as the larger society. Divorced couples are tearing apart not only their own family, but also the essential unit of a society. Marital satisfaction is important in maintaining marriage and decreasing the divorce rate. It is also a crucial predictor for individuals' wellbeing. According to marital discord model of depression, marital dissatisfaction is a significant predictor of depressive symptoms (Beach, Sandeen, and O'Leary, 1990). The importance of spousal relationship suggests the need to identify factors that could possibly improve spousal relationship. Notwithstanding the importance, there is insufficient knowledge on how marital satisfaction can be enhanced.

One of the possible resolutions for building stronger ties between married couples is travel. As witnessed by the "Second Honeymoon Program" introduced by Malaysian government to help married couples rebuild their relationships, travelling as a couple is indeed influential in helping form greater spousal bond (Petrick & Durko, 2013). While the proposition that family travel strengthens family ties has been well embraced in previous studies (Lehto et al., 2009), relatively less attention has been paid to the linkages between travel and spousal relationships. In fact, shared leisure activities have often been introduced as an effective medium in increasing marital satisfaction (Voorpostel, van der Lippe, & Gershuny, 2010). Yet, most of the studies centered on daily activities, while few studies have attempted to identify the impact of travel on marital satisfaction. Another outcome of studying what happens to married couples when they travel is the possible enhancement of their subjective wellbeing (Aref, 2011), which also deserves more attention.

Climbing divorce rate is particularly serious in China. In recent decades, marriage in China has become unprecedentedly unstable. The divorce rate has been increasing over the last twelve consecutive years (Rich & Xu, 2009). Traditionally, an arranged marriage by families was the norm in China. During the twentieth century, however, there has been a shift from an arranged marriage system to a pattern of freedom in choosing one's spouse. Nowadays, the spousal relationship and marital satisfaction have become the new bedrock of the family and a weakened spousal bond is strongly linked to divorce. However, Chinese society in general values harmonious relationships, especially within one's family. As a country where satisfaction in one's spousal relationship is being increasingly important in maintaining one's marriage, China is selected as a case study to investigate how travel can strengthen spousal relationships and individuals' wellbeing. Since China is following the similar trends as Western countries where love is the main criterion for maintaining a marriage, China should be concerned that their divorce rate could exceed the high level of divorce rate in Western countries.

With this background, this research has three main objectives: (a) to understand the linkages among travel, marital satisfaction and subjective wellbeing for married Chinese individuals; (b) to understand the factors that explain the impact of travel on marital satisfaction for married Chinese individuals; and (c) to explore the antecedents to change in subjective wellbeing as a result of travel for married Chinese individuals. This paper chose Chinese subjects in the U.S. who are visiting scholars, students and their spouses. This is an important group of subjects who represents a demographic profile that holds a combination of values for both West and East cultures, including those about marriage. It is believed that this demographic group will eventually constitute a considerable proportion of future Chinese population that is increasingly exposed to the Western culture (Abelmann & Kang, 2014) in the globalizing process and that at the same time tries to maintain its ingrained cultural identity. As such, the study's findings will have significant implications for other countries facing the similar situation where the culture is becoming increasingly blended.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Marital Satisfaction and its Antecedents

Marital satisfaction is defined as one's subjective and global assessment of their marital relationship (Durodoye, 1997). While some of the previous studies have used the term "marital quality" and "marital satisfaction" interchangeably, the general consensus is that global evaluation of marital quality is referred to as marital satisfaction (Li & Fung, 2011). To be specific, individuals' global feeling about their marriage influences how they judge specific aspects of their marriage, referred to as "sentiment override" (Weiss, 1980). For married couples, marital satisfaction serves as the baseline requirement in maintaining individual and family wellbeing (Stack & Eshleman, 1998). Accordingly, it is important to understand the factors that enhance marital satisfaction. It should be noted that antecedents to marital satisfaction are not the inverse of marital distress; unique factors precede marital satisfaction as outlined below (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000).

Previous studies have explored various factors that influence marital satisfaction (Stutzer & Frey, 2006). First off, couples' communication characteristics are an important predictor of marital satisfaction, in which lack of or difficulty in communication lowers marital satisfaction (Caughlin, 2002). Additionally, emotional Intelligence (EI) has been claimed to play an important role in marital satisfaction (Dehkordi, 2012). EI is defined as "being concerned with effectively understanding oneself and others and relating well to people" (Bar-On, Handley, & Fund ,2006). Another predictor of marital satisfaction is equality (Beach et al., 1990). According to the equity theory, inequity is correlated with lower satisfaction in a close relationship (Oliver & Swan, 1989). Such notion has been argued to be applicable to marriage, where both under-benefited (when one perceives they received less from the other than their own input) and over-benefited (when one regards their input to be less than what they have received) individuals exhibit low marital satisfaction (Walster, Traupmann, & Walster, 1978). Further, similarity between partners is also an important predictor of high marital satisfaction (Gaunt, 2006). While previous studies argued that overall similarity between partners is important, some have identified that similarity in specific aspects is more influential than others (Klohnen & Mendelsohn, 1998). Similarity in relationship standard, such as shared value, was also found to significantly influence marital satisfaction (Chi et al., 2013). Lastly, meeting marital expectations and achieving couple's marital goals have been identified to influence marital satisfaction as well (Li & Fung, 2011). While various antecedents to marital satisfaction have been identified, there is lack of understanding on what efforts can be made to improve marital satisfaction.

2. Leisure and Marital Satisfaction

While limited studies exist in exploring the association between travel and marital relationship, their relationship can be inferred from the influence of leisure on marital satisfaction. The proposition that couple leisure activities enhance their marital satisfaction has been perpetuated for many years (Sharaievska, Kim, & Stodolska, 2013). Couple leisure time increase marital satisfaction as the time spent together helps them to improve communication between the two (Johnson et al., 2006). Shared leisure time allows for increased physical proximity, such as more touching (Finucane & Horvath, 2000). Furthermore, as couples typically have similar interests, they are more likely to exhibit high leisure compatibility (Houts, Robins, & Huston, 1996).

Various determinants have been identified in explaining the link between couple leisure and marital satisfaction. One factor is the amount or frequency of couple leisure time (Lee, 1977). On the other hand, Holman and Jacquart (1988) asserted that the couple leisure influences marital satisfaction when the interaction level is high. Marital satisfaction differs by three types of leisure interaction level between couples: individual leisure, parallel leisure and joint leisure (Orthner, 1975). Joint leisure activities were most effective in increasing marital satisfaction as more communication between the couples were involved than the other two types of interaction (Crawford et al., 2002). Further, the positive relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction exists when the couples mutually like the specific activity that they engage in (Crawford et al., 2002). Spousal support also plays an important role, in which respecting each other's' leisure interest resulted in heightened marital satisfaction (Goff, Fick, & Oppliger, 1997).

As one type of leisure, travel could contribute in enhancing marital satisfaction. Gilbert and Abdullah (2004) found that couples who took holidays together each year showed relatively more increased sense of well-being and enhanced happiness than those couples who did not travel. During travel, couples tend to stay together all the time, while doing all the activities together. In turn, travel allows couples to be more intimate than when they are at home (U.S. Travel Association, 2015). While leisure time has been found to increase marital satisfaction, why such shared activities, especially couple travel, increase marital satisfaction, remains elusive.

3. Marital Satisfaction and Wellbeing

The importance of understanding associations between individuals' perceived level of wellbeing and positive marital relationship is being emphasized recently (Helm, 2013). Individuals' perceived level of wellbeing is measured by "subjective wellbeing." which is comprised of life satisfaction and affect (Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002). The extant literature converges to suggest that married individuals exhibit greater subjective wellbeing than never-married individuals or previously married individuals (Gove, Style, & Hughes, 1990). However, it is commonly argued that it is not the marital status per se that enhances wellbeing; it is the "satisfied marriage" that contributes to increased sense of wellbeing (Proulx, Helms, & Buehler, 2007).

Specifically, it has been suggested that it is the benefits derived from a satisfied marriage that contribute to an enhanced sense of wellbeing (Mastekaasa, 1995). Firstly, the roles that marriage offers enhance individuals' self-esteem (Crosby, 1987). Self-esteem enables individuals to manage any negative influences on mental health better, as it provides rewards, status, and avenues to enrichment (Core & Colten, 1991). Secondly, equality in a marital relationship provides emotional support for couples (Sternberg & Grajek, 1984). Equality is established when partners both give and receive (Van Yperen & Buunk 1990). Additionally, the emotional support gained in a marital relationship tends to lower mental illness (Brown et al., 2003). Lastly, marital satisfaction results in happiness due to interpersonal closeness (Laurenceau, Barrett, & Rovine, 2005). Although relationships between marital satisfaction and wellbeing have been widely studied, scholars have devoted limited attention to the influence of travel on marital satisfaction and wellbeing simultaneously. Therefore, the current study will address the linkage among the three concepts.

4. Marital Satisfaction and Wellbeing in China

While it was earlier reported that there is a gap between China and Western countries in marriage value, with the transformation in Chinese marriage format from arranged marriage to free-choice marriage nowadays, the determinants of martial quality for Chinese are now getting closer to what Westerners value, such as love and mutual respect (Xia & Zhou, 2003). However, Chinese still do have their own cultural value ingrained in their marital dynamics and in turn, the factors that influence marital satisfaction won't entirely equal that of the Westerners. For instance, according to the dyadic adjustment scale developed for American samples, one dimension to measure marital quality is frequency of kissing: however, kissing does not signal marital satisfaction in China (Sheck & Cheung, 2008).

The role of marital quality on individual's wellbeing within Chinese population is also becoming similar to the Western culture as well (Sheck, 2000). As with the Westerners, Shu & Zhu (2009) argued that Chinese married individuals are more likely to experience happiness and accomplishment than the singles. Furthermore, Miller et al., (2013) utilized the marital discord model that has been widely applied in the Western context and they have validated that this model is appropriate to be used for collectivist countries like China as well. While these results signal that the relationship between marital satisfaction and wellbeing in China should be similar to that of Westerners', there is a need to examine the unique characteristic for Chinese in which the Eastern and Western culture is being increasingly blended. Therefore, the current study will study the determinants of marital satisfaction after travel as well as the linkages among travel, wellbeing and marital satisfaction for Chinese sample.

METHODOLOGY

Interviews were conducted with 22 Chinese visiting scholars, students and their spouses in person in a Midwestern region of the U.S. during January and February, 2016. This subject group is an important demographic characteristic that will be informative to understanding the future population of China, with cultural background consisting of a blend of Chinese and Western cultural influences. A convenience snowballing procedure was utilized to identify married respondents who have travelled with their spouse in the past. Respondents were asked questions related to their travel experience and marital relationship before and after the trip. Data analysis was conducted concurrently with data collection until theoretical saturation was reached. A thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used for data analysis. The analysis included several steps of coding and designing the themes, as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The authors collectively discussed and reached consensus on the proposed codes and themes to assure validity and reliability of the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISUCSSION

Most of the respondents were female (61%). Half of the interviewees were in their 30s, 32% in their 20s, and 18% in their 40s. The majority (52%) had at least a Bachelor degree.

1. Linkages among Travel, Marital Satisfaction and Subjective Wellbeing

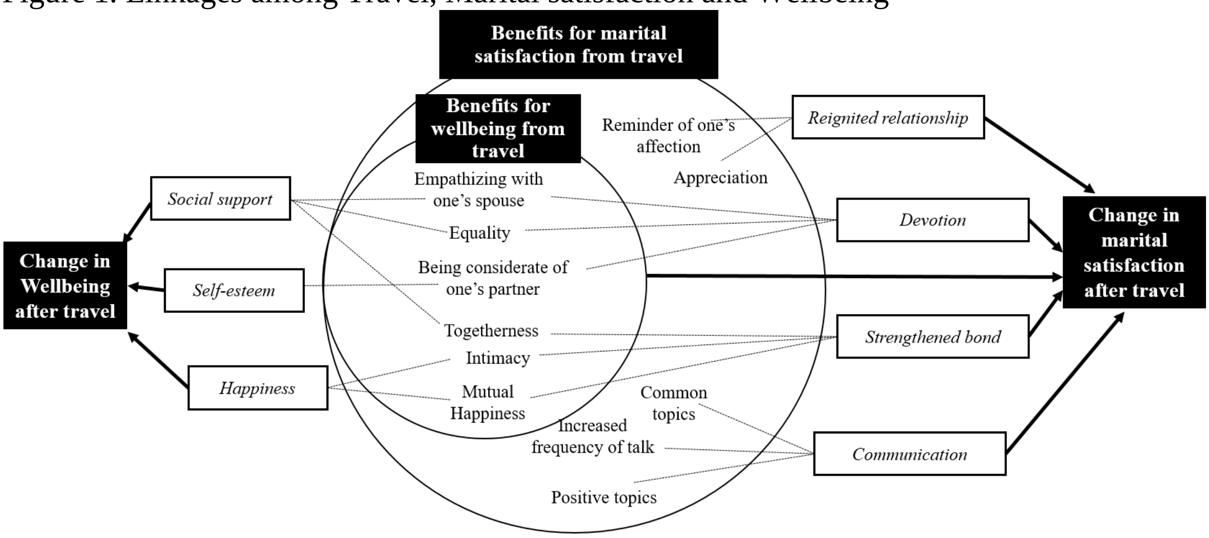
Findings from this research suggest that travelling as a couple results in higher marital relationship and increased subjective wellbeing. Specifically, it is the “benefits acquired from travel” that contributes to the increase. As illustrated in figure 1, the benefits located in the larger circle, categorized into four larger domains including reignited relationship, influences change in marital satisfaction after travel. The smaller circle encompasses benefits for wellbeing from travel and is further classified into three larger domains including social support, which influences change in wellbeing after travel. As demonstrated in figure 1, these antecedents to change marital satisfaction and wellbeing overlaps; some of the determinants that change marital satisfaction also cause change in subjective wellbeing. There are unique factors that solely contributes to change in marital satisfaction after travel, while every factors that give rise to change in subjective wellbeing is encompassed in the antecedents to change in marital satisfaction. After all, enhanced wellbeing per se contributes to improved marital satisfaction. For instance, as exemplified by a 36-year old female, happiness induced from travel made her to be more devoted to her spouse, which in turn contributed to the couple’s marital satisfaction.

The change in marital satisfaction and subjective wellbeing after travel implies the importance of “quality time” between couples. As Berg et al. (2001) what is essential in maintaining good marriage is the high quality time spent with one’s spouse that increases marital satisfaction and wellbeing. Travelling with one’s spouse is an effort that can be made for quality time. As findings from this study show, travel provides various perks for couples. They tend to be more devoted to each other, relationships are reignited, bonds are strengthened and both quality and quantity of communication increases; these eventually enhance their marital satisfaction. Further, subjective wellbeing is enhanced as couples gain social support, self-esteem and happiness. Accordingly, travel serves as a conduit that allows the quality time for couples, which eventually results in increased marital satisfaction and subjective wellbeing. Quality time during travel is not confined to doing something specific, as different couples engage in different activities while travelling. Doing what they mutually prefer to do, which is what most of the respondents admitted that they do in the finding, help couples to enjoy the benefits mentioned above.

Another noticeable characteristic of the influence of travel on change in marital satisfaction and wellbeing is benefits being disseminated bi-directionally. Individuals seek for not only benefiting themselves, but also equally benefitting their partner. When the couple mutually enjoy the benefits, their marital satisfaction is fully enhanced. For instance, in seeking for being empathized by their partner, individuals also take pleasure in empathizing for their spouse. Not only simply being understood better by their partner increases satisfaction about marriage, but such gratification is complemented by themselves being able to empathize their partners. This is in line with the argument that the primary aim in marriage is a communal relationship that meets each other's needs (Clark & Mills, 1994). Further, providing support to one's partner is as important as receiving support from them in enhancing subjective wellbeing (Davis, Morris, & Kraus, 1988).

Lastly, the linkages among travel, marital satisfaction and wellbeing is based on the "liminal experience" travel offers. As tourists are placed in a liminal space, they are freed from distractions from daily life and are more relaxed (Selanniemi, 2003). Such diversion allows couples to be more focused on each other, and therefore become more caring and devoted towards their spouse, which in turn increases marital satisfaction as well as perceived level of wellbeing. As Cohen (1974) argued that liminal experience lead individuals to be more expressive than in everyday life as they engage in nonordinary activities, being more expressive to one's partner facilitates communication, which both contributes to enhanced wellbeing as well as increased marital satisfaction.

Figure 1. Linkages among Travel, Marital satisfaction and Wellbeing



2. Antecedents to Change in Marital Relationship After Travel

Eleven themes of what triggers the change in relationship were identified from the analysis. These themes were further coordinated into four domains: (a) devotion, (b) reignited relationship, (c) strengthened bond, and (d) communication.

(a) Devotion

Respondents' relationships with their spouses was strengthened as the couples tended to be much more devoted and made effort to keep each other happy while travelling. Although keeping relationships stable are a lot of work, couples fail to make the effort or to put in enough energy for each other with everyday stress and work. Travel appeared to be the opportunity for the married couples to compensate for the lack of dedication they make for each other in a daily setting. Specifically, they empathized more with their spouses, tried to be considerate of their partners and their relationship was more equal when travelling together.

The majority of the respondents said that they try to be considerate of their partner primarily to ensure that they have a good trip. As a lot of money and time is spent on a trip usually, they admitted that they did not want to ruin their trip. Further, as a 36-year old female mentioned, individuals are usually in a good mood while travelling and they naturally treat their spouses well. While being caring towards their partner during their trips due to external forces, such as to make the trip a good one or because they themselves are in a good mood, could seem artificial, initiating such "dedicated mood" helps their relationships to be enhanced. Regardless of what the trigger was, what matters the most is being a good partner. Giving and receiving kindness are equally happiness-inducing for the couple.

Further, respondents seemed to be more devoted for their spouse while on their trip in the sense that they try to empathize more with their spouse. This includes acknowledging and indulging one another's interests, enjoying these interests together and sympathizing with their spouse when they express their excitement and joy about what they did. It was revealed that individuals were satisfied with the fact that their spouse was willing to do what they like. Even if their spouse was pretending to like what their partner liked to do, they were happy about their effort and the fact that they were doing what they like together. Not only were the respondents happy to have their spouse acknowledging what they like, the one who makes effort in doing what their spouse enjoy was very delighted to see their spouse happy. This supports the arguments from previous research that Emotional Intelligence, how much couples emotionally understand each other, influence marital satisfaction (Dehkordi, 2012). Testimonies as below attest to how people try to sympathize with their spouse while travelling, which leads to enhanced relationship:

> *Being together just makes me happy. My wife loves art but I have no interest in art. But still, I do go to museum because my wife likes it. When I go to museum together, I can sympathize with her as we talk about what was good …. When I sympathize with my wife, it seems like she likes doing that. When she likes the trip, I feel happier. (Male, 43 years old).*

Moreover, a lot of respondents, especially female respondents felt that they are more equal while on their trip. The majority of the respondents mentioned how their husbands would do a lot of things for them, from trip planning to packing for trip. This was in line with the testimony from male respondents, who admitted that they tried to do more work than their wife while on a trip. They would volunteer in taking more responsibilities while on a trip as they felt that they needed to make up for not being able to help their wife very much in daily life, where female did most of the housework. As a result, women feel that they are treated more equally, while men take pride in themselves being the good husband, leading to a better relationship. This sentiment can be illustrated in a 30-year old female's account.

> *Once, we arrived in the hotel very late. However, we were assigned to an uncleaned room. We were both very frustrated because we were very tired after our long flight. But he told me to just relax, and that he will take care of everything and told me to not worry. I was able to just relax, and he did take care of everything.*

(b) Reignited Relationship

Another keystone to a stronger marital relationship was the reignited relationship toward a more positive light. Two themes comprise this domain: reminder of one's affection and appreciation. Being reminded of their affection and being grateful in having each other made the couples to reignite their relationship, which eventually led them to realize how much they love each other. As shown in the following account of a 40-year old male, specific cues, such as the romantic mood while travelling allow people to realize their affection for their spouse, eventually leading them to resume the expression of love that was forgotten, such as holding hands.

> *When we travel as a family, we like to travel in nature. Once, when our family made a trip to this beautiful park, I was reminded of one of the dates I had with my wife. I remembered how much I loved her by then, and much more now. Walking together we got to naturally hold our hands, just like we used to do so before we had our kids.*

Further, individuals also become fonder of their spouse as they get to appreciate having each other. Travel time is when people are assured that their spouse is still there: that they are caring and loving their partner as much as they have been before. In a stressful daily life, people tend to be negligent of how having each other means a lot to them. As the majority of the respondents mentioned, they tend to take their spouse for granted on a daily basis. However, while having more time to think and to be able to fully appreciate having each other, people tended to realize how much their spouse mean to them. Simply thinking "I am happy to be travelling with my spouse" induced them to appreciate having their spouse by their side. Such reignited relationship can be explained by the spillover effect of "leisure mood enhancement" on couples' relationships. According to Iwasaki and Mannell (2000), leisure time helps individuals to be free from everyday stress, which turn enhances positive mood while reducing the negative mood. Being in a good mood helps couples to be more engaged in a romantic relationship, with no interruptions such as stress.

(c) Strengthened Bond

Through travel, married couples strengthen their marital bond that positively affect their marital relationship such as mutual happiness, intimacy, and togetherness. These sentiments developed while on a trip are passed on to their attitude towards their spouse after returning home. One of the most salient factors that strengthened their bond with their spouse was the sense of mutual happiness. As couples didn't have enough time to spend with their spouse in a daily setting, a lot of the respondents admitted that just being together with their spouse made them happy. Further, some of the respondents felt happy seeing their wife or husband being happy while travelling, and expressing such happiness made the couple to realize how much they care for each other. It seems that being happy together, not just for themselves but for each other, further strengthens their attachment to each other. This is exemplified in the following account of a 33-year old female:

> *In Thailand, we enjoyed everything…but the best moment of the trip for me was seeing how he was enjoying his vacation. I haven't seen him smiling like that for years. At home, he was always stressed from work. We had no worries while we were on vacation. I felt really happy to see him being relaxed.*

Intimacy also contributes in building stronger bond between partners for better relationship as people become fond of their spouse. Such intimacy was salient for women who mentioned that as their husband takes care of problems that arise while travelling, they feel secured and that the can rely on their husbands. They feel being taken care of, which resulted in greater attachment towards their spouse. Lastly, sense of togetherness also helped married couple to form a greater bond. Regardless of what they do while travelling, the joint activities per se made it special for them. Having only themselves in an unfamiliar setting also triggered their sense of togetherness. Sense of togetherness was also salient when they encountered issues that they needed to cooperate and be supportive for each other. The accomplishment of doing something together allowed them to strengthen their marital relationship.

(d) Communication

Enhanced communication with one's spouse helps couples to strengthen their marital relationship. Increased frequency of talk, common topics to talk about and positive topics were what enabled enhanced communication, positively influencing marital satisfaction. Communication is the first step in meeting spouse's marital expectations, which has been argued from previous studies to contribute to marital satisfaction (Fletcher et al., 2000). As couples actively and more explicitly express their thoughts and feelings, this will help couples to know better about what their spouse's marital goals are. Most of the respondents agreed that they were able to talk more with their spouse while travelling. This was evident as the couple would be together the whole day while travelling, which naturally yields them more time to talk. Couples would also be forced to actively communicate in a pre-trip stage, as they had a lot to discuss when planning for their trip. After the trip, they also talked more as they reminisced the trip.

Along with the post trip reminiscence, travel allows the married couples to have more common topics to talk about. Dialogues related to travel tend to be about their happy moments and reminiscing such memories together further strengthens their bond. As similarity between couples appeared to be an important determinant of marital satisfaction in the previous literature (Chi et al., 2013), having the same memory to talk about would increase their similarity in terms of the experience they had, increasing intimacy between couples. Many respondents also admitted that they talk about different topics from daily conversations. At home, most of the couples' talks are occupied by parenting and maintaining the household. However, travel grants them the opportunity to discuss deeper and personal subjects that further connects them to their partner over the long term. They tend to talk more about positive things and about their future plans. It seems that external cues, being in somewhere new and different, trigger them to talk about new and positive things, directed towards more positive side. These good dialogues allowed them to express their feelings more explicitly, which helped them to understand each other better. This notion is explained as below:

> *When I travel, I think I become more expressive. I tell my husband what I want to do …. In a daily life, I am busy in taking care of our kids. This time for just the two of us makes me to be like…in some way like a baby. I expect my husband to do what I demand for. At the same time, we get to talk more about our future. Our plans for us, even what we should do after he retires. (Female, 40 years old)*

3. Drivers for Change in Subjective Wellbeing after Travel

Three domains of wellbeing appeared to be enhanced: (a) social support, (b) self-esteem, and (c) happiness. It should be noted that these drivers of change overlap with antecedents to strengthened marital satisfaction after travel.

(a) Social support

The perception of having support available and being a valued support provider, appears to be developed after one's trip with their spouse. As respondents were empathized by their spouse, they were assured that they have someone by their side who supports them. At the same time, respondents were happy to be the emotional support provider for their spouse during their trip. In fact, previous studies concluded that providing emotional support to one's spouse is strongly related to physical health; for instance, Brown et al.,(2003) found that providing emotional support to one's spouse reduced mortality rate. Further, sense of togetherness developed from travel made individuals to feel that they are part of their own social circle. The sense of togetherness felt during travel fulfills innate human nature's "need to belong", that is, the desire to be attached to a social group (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Respondents also noted that they feel more supported as partners both give and receive equally. A majority of the female respondents admitted that while they do more housework at home, their husband does most of the work while travelling; this makes them to feel that their relationship is more balanced.

(b) Self-esteem

Self-esteem, which is a big contributor to life satisfaction, appears to be enhanced as individuals become more considerate of their partners while travelling. Such enhanced self-esteem especially applies to men, who took pride in managing the overall trip for their spouse. As the husbands worked as the managers of the trip for their wives, they felt a great sense of achievement. As a 38-year old male explained, men highly regarded themselves in being the good husband for their wives. The sense of accomplishment experienced in playing their role as a good husband therefore helped them build self-identity and a positive sense of self-regard. Such a notion confirms the arguments from previous studies that men's wellbeing is enhanced through marriage as they attain role-related benefits (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1993).

(c) Happiness

Intimacy and mutual happiness experienced while travelling not only contribute to an increase in marital satisfaction but also to subjective wellbeing. At the heart of happiness is positive affects, such as intimacy, which makes individuals to feel good. This is aligned with the findings from previous research that personal happiness is most highly influenced by social relationship with the intimate partner

(Fowler & Christakis, 2008). It should be noted that it is not having the social relationship per se that makes individuals happy, but it is the quality of the relationship, such as how close they are to each other (Reis & Gable, 2003). Furthermore, sharing the happiness with one's spouse also enhances their subjective wellbeing in terms of their general happiness. Mutual happiness triggers individuals to be more explicit in expressing their happiness, which maximizes their individual sense of happiness.

CONCLUSION

In today's Chinese society, spousal relationship has become one of the most important determinants for keeping a marriage strong. However, problems or conflicts that arise make it challenging to maintain the strong bond between couples. Travelling together grants a married couple the opportunity to re-establish the bonds that might have eroded in the daily life. In this light, this study uncovers the relationships among travel, marital satisfaction and wellbeing, as well as the factors that influence the relationships. As such, the findings bear both theoretical and practical implications. First, this study contributes to existing literature about benefits of travel for married couples. Specifically, the current study enriches the existing understanding of marital satisfaction and wellbeing as it applies to travel setting. While the connections between family relationships and travel have been extensively studied, the linkages between travel and spousal relationships have been relatively understudied. The findings add to existing literature in terms of the unique contributions travel makes to enhance marital satisfaction and subjective wellbeing. For instance, it was shown that married individuals tend to prioritize their spouse and become more dedicated, which eventually increases the couples' marital satisfaction. Such devotion also results in positive subjective wellbeing, through which individuals receive and give social support.

In practice, the findings highlight the importance of travel in marital relationships and wellbeing for policy makers, travel trade and destinations. Travel for married couples in fortifying their relationship should be promoted as a policy that is conducive to the social stability and societal harmony, as well as a health enhancer. Barriers that hinder married couples from traveling together for leisure should be identified and removed. Hospitality businesses and tourism organizations benefit from considering married couples at different stages of their marriage as unique segments and serve them with corresponding products and services. In addition, understanding the drivers that change marital satisfaction and wellbeing after travel should be practically informative as well.

There are several limitations in this study. Although attempts have been made to diversify the subjects, those interviewed for this study could not be considered representative and sufficient to capture every aspect of change in marital satisfaction and subjective wellbeing. Furthermore, while most of the respondents in this study talked about the positive influence of travel on their marital satisfaction and subjective wellbeing, different influencers could emerge when negative impact becomes the focus of the study.

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THE DISPOSITIONAL FACTORS SURROUNDING THE 'PLURAL TOURIST'. AN ANALYSIS OF TOURISM BY FRENCH SOCIOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Describing and interpreting social tourism activities requires on the one hand cross-referencing tourists' social ownership, their itineraries and their tourism experiences with on the other hand the historical, cultural, geographical and social characteristic contexts within which their activities fit and take place. The purpose of this article is, by using a selection of qualitative resources, to explain the reasons why an individual might get involved in one or more types of tourism activity. We need as such to consider the inclusion of tourism experiences, and to characterize the socialization aspect which is eminently plural and varied, as determining factors in the creation of tourism preferences. The sociological, from french sociology (Bourdieu and Lahire especially) analysis therefore means consolidating the new concept of the 'plural tourist'.

KEYWORDS: Experiences, Objective opportunities, Plural socialization, Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding why individuals, alone, with their family or on an organized trip, in their country or abroad, do what they do when undertaking tourism activities, think what they think in a tourism situation, say what they say when returning from relatively exotic and distant trips etc., is all part of the ambition of sociology when applied to the sector of tourism. Such a scientific exercise involves breaking away from or, at least, avoiding the endless and constantly-renewed number of quantitative studies, surveys and other ministerial- and improvised agency-inquiries on the subject. The danger of theoretical categorizing (such as the popular suggestion that 'the French prefer the beach in the summer') is the result of excessive generalization and over-interpretation which has the effect of overlooking the extraordinary variety of options when it comes to tourism activities.

The precise description of the range of tourism activities is based more on what the tourists actually do (in all situations) rather than, for example, the number of tourists visiting such and such a place or country, the number of tourists based on their economic means or even tourist mobility depending on their place of residence used as a measuring stick for a more essentialist typology (urban, suburban, rural). If the interest in knowledge originating from macro-sociological analysis is necessary and scientifically based[i], the study of socialization processes and the range of tourism activities – by which we mean the 'ways of doing things' (Lahire, 2007) – at an individual scale makes the reasons why people do what they do as tourists more intelligible. Quantitative data makes it possible to determine the main tourist consumption trends.

It identifies statistical regularities depending on the social characteristics of individuals and specifically confirms, simultaneously with a 'massification' of the number of tourists, that 'the divide between social classes remains' (Cousin & Réau, 2009). This global social criticism in a hierarchical society, as a measuring stick for unequal access among certain social classes or fractions of social classes when it comes to tourism, is also expressed through the social help available for those wishing to go on holiday provided by public or semi-public agencies (Fabianno, 2015). According to a CREDOC survey in 2014, the number of French people going on holiday stood at 60%. More specifically: 82% of executives went on holiday compared to just 47% of manual-workers and 86% of those individuals declaring a salary in excess of €3,000 went away compared to only 40% of those earning less than the minimum wage.

This data on the one hand only however partially explains the variations in the range of tourism activities or on the other hand the intensity and other methods of use according to each individual. The essential structures of the social world are expressed as much in the activities and decisions of individuals as in the social classes that they occupy: the result is a subtle and nuanced context of socially differentiated relationships to tourism activities. In fact, 'alongside the quantitative surveys that reveal the recurrence of holiday types, the ethnographic observation helps us to discover a little more' (Cousin & Réau, 2009). Although it is obviously not possible to eliminate the social relationships of class, age or gender, we can take into account the 'tangled complexities' of travel, as explained by John Urry, which we plan to use to explain the specific tourist mobility, i.e. the 'methods of traveling and staying away' (Urry, 2005).

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Describing, understanding and interpreting the social application of tourism on the scale of an individual or a social group in fact requires on the one hand cross-referencing the social ownership of tourists, their itineraries and their tourism experiences with on the other hand the historical, cultural, geographical and social characteristics of the contexts into which their activities fit and take place (Lahire, 2012). The purpose of this article is, by using a selection of qualitative resources, to explain the reasons why an individual might get involved in one or more types of tourism activity as a measure of their social status, understand their experiences (sometimes contingent and impromptu), and their social characteristics.

From a methodological point of view, forty semi-structured interviews, all of which were recorded, were conducted from 2013 to 2015. They took place within the urban area of the city of Angers (west of France), for the purposes of convenience, with a group of adult individuals representing all the basic sectors of society (age, social class). To conclude, a 'ranking' and prioritization process was conducted (Beaud & Weber, 2003). If in the course of a survey the number of interviews needed is typically determined by the variety of situations identified, the risk of 'saturation' did however mean we stopped the collection of empirical data as soon as we found that the interviews were no longer providing new information with regard to our initial hypothesis. A reasoned and limited choice of descriptions, of an in-depth style, was used to compare, problematize and account for the individual variations in tourist behavior in different contexts but also to allow for general interpretation. The description, explanation or even interpretation of social phenomena studied in this text effectively result from 'the exploration and deeper-examination of a singularity accessible to observation' not with the aim of circumscribing the analysis but to 'extract a more general case, the conclusions of which will be reusable' (Passeron & Revel, 2005). From this methodological and epistemological situation, and more than simply isolated examples drawn from their intrinsic properties, explaining the specific cases involves taking into account the contexts and individual itineraries where the particular arrangement of these cases makes them unique. In the light of this methodological and interpretive bias, the goal is not to identify statistical representativeness. In fact, 'in the same way that a "quantitativist" is not expected to use the whole of a database, no one expects a "quantitativist" to use the results of *all* his interviews' (Alber, 2010). Allowing himself to include only four detailed cases in this article ultimately leads to 'a whole range of images' which allow us to 'speak about society' (Becker, 2009).

> If there is obviously no question (let alone in a journal article) of claiming we have attained descriptive completeness - followed by the condemnation of the 'shameful quantitative' (Passeron, op.cit.) - given 'the inexhaustible infinity of the material world' (Weber, 1992), a few empirical cases (see Table 1 in the appendix) will however affirm that we need to 1- consider individual itineraries and experiences and 2- characterize highly pluralistic and varied forms of socialization as factors in the construction of people's tastes when it comes to tourism.

FINDINGS

TAKE THE FAMILY HISTORY OF INDIVIDUALS SERIOUSLY

The incorporated past, that is to say all the methods of thinking and the tangible possibilities for action already experienced that individuals bring to tourist activity scenarios, is characterized by differentiated socializing sources to which tourists are unconsciously exposed right from their first tourism experiences. These multiple process of socializing experiences (family holidays during childhood, teenage summer camps, stays with friends, as a couple or with families during adulthood etc.) contribute to shaping the requirements which then structure tastes in tourism, as in the choice of a destination and its corollary in terms of otherness[ii], accommodation and transportation options, types of tourism activities (cultural and/or rest and/or sporting etc.).

These socially constituted dispositions, acquired throughout a tourist's individual 'career', work as potential-usable capacities depending on configurations and even the contexts of tourism activities. An individual socialized from a young age, within the family sphere[iii], regularly visiting a variety of foreign countries - and needing for example rather unusual methods of transport such as planes - is more likely (in terms of probability) to have acquired a solid '"mobility skills base' (Lévy, 2000), that another could not have accumulated from such experiences. The diverse and multiple socialization with regard to mobility increases in a way 'the space for possibilities' in terms of tourism activity options, without automatically granting a social reproduction of the activities that occurred during childhood. There is no mechanical effect by which the more an individual has traveled repeatedly 'as a tourist', the more they will tend to travel long distances, often in the search for a confirmed cultural otherness, etc. The products of social experience, and of a substantial supply of tourism activities, are in fact only available capacities (and mobilized in variable ways) with the consequence - and only this – that they expand and structure the space of possibilities, of tastes and methods of tourism activities. A cumulative and productive process, the new tourism activities produce in turn the supply and depictions following the principle that 'the aspirations of social subjects adjust to objective opportunities' (Bourdieu, 2015).

All past and therefore included tourism experiences mentally structure the inclination to tourism in general and the propensity to such and such a method of tourist activity in particular. From these repeated and similar experiences to a 'practical tourist idea', the heritage of tourism skills (knowing how to take a taxi in Shanghai, to buy a 'flight only' ticket to a distant destination, or more prosaically prepare a tour itinerary) is available in itself but is only activated in an individual once the tourist situation requires it. The 'individual strategies' and 'logical reasoning' in terms of tourism activities therefore demonstrate in individuals more socially acquired skills unconsciously obtained, within and outwith the tourist activity itself, than propensity or naturally produced tastes (such as the example often confirmed in the evidence: 'I always wanted to visit California'). Tastes in tourism are in fact the product of an individual's history (in the context of a sociologically and historically localized individual itinerary), that is to say, an elastic system of options that is constantly faced with new tourism experiences and therefore affected by them. To this individual perspective it is necessary to add a consideration of the societal and cultural uniqueness of tourists[iv].

Citing, in the analysis, the process of tourism experiences and the inclusion of mental ideas therefore implies taking an individual's past seriously (see empirical cases 1 and 2). The plural socialization, either cumulative or contradictory in the creation of personal tastes, structures mental habits from childhood onwards throughout an individual's social life. Marie-Claude remembers clearly her first holiday with her parents: *'We always went on holiday! I remember being very young, my parents had a tent, a caravan actually...one of those folding tents. And we always went to Fromentine. I was 14 or15 years old.'* These methods of included thinking therefore define, more or less permanently, the different ways of undertaking tourism activities depending on the contexts (historical, cultural, economic etc.) by sociohistorically positioned individuals. If tourism activities are less institutionalized, in terms of learning during childhood, than certain cultural activities (visiting art galleries, playing a classical musical instrument etc.), the fact still remains that tourism with a strong cultural dimension experienced since childhood and adolescence is frequently linked to 'strong parental encouragement' (Coulangeon, 2005). Anne's words (empirical case 2) are explicit on the subject: she confirms her childhood socialization to tourism in the Cévennes region '*probably influences somewhat*' what she '*wishes to visit'*. Transmitted by parents, the options for tourism activities and/or repeated visits to tourism destinations feed, under certain conditions and in certain contexts, the process of social reproduction. As such Capucine (see empirical case 3) lists the international destinations visited with her parents, as a family.

Case 1 – *'I was always going on holiday, all the time!'*

Marie-Claude, aged 57, lives with her husband Michel in Brissac Quincé - a small town in the greater Angers area - in a house which she owns located in a mainly residential neighborhood. Marie-Claude is the mother of three children aged 33, 29 and 25. With a modest level of cultural experience – she has a CAP qualification in cooking and does not speak any foreign languages - her social trajectory, as well as that of her husband (the son of farmers and now an executive in a security company), shows an upward mobility. She is the daughter of service industry workers, her parents owned a restaurant for '*truckers*', she worked in the family business until the age of thirty when her parents sold the business. Not wishing to '*buy them out*', she '*found a job in a school*' in Brissac Quincé where she has been '*a replacement cook for ten years*'. Then the large catering company which had the contract for the school where Marie-Claude worked '*offered her a job in Rochefort-sur-Loire as kitchen manager*' just over ten years ago. She and her husband own a second home in Les Sables d'Olonne in the Vendée region.

Marie-Claude has experienced different socializing experiences at various periods of her life. Since adolescence she has regularly traveled, with friends when young and then when married with her husband and children and now even with her grandchildren. Her personal holiday culture, acquired in her family environment, has also allowed her husband to discover holidays and tourism. Every summer from the age of fifteen, in the late 1960s, Marie-Claude went camping with her parents who owned a caravan and a tent in Fromentine in the Vendée region. Lourdes was also an important destination ('*we went to see the Virgin*'), but they took the opportunity to visit Spain and the Pyrenees. It was when her parents took over the restaurant as managers ('*before that they other jobs but not the money to travel*') and the family income increased, but when her mother also suffered from health problems ('*she has had curative stays*') that Marie-Claude accompanied her parents to various tourist destinations on a regular basis.

'*My parents ran a business, they were restaurant owners so I've always been in the catering industry and um... we were always going on holiday! I remember when I was very young, my parents had a tent, a caravan actually...a folding tent. And we always went to Fromentine. I was 14, 15 years old, um [...] Before that, my parents did not necessarily... before being restaurant owners they had other jobs that were not very well paid ... They did not have the money. Therefore, it was later that they were better off ... it was easier. And so we always, I remember, we went to Lourdes [laughs]. They liked Lourdes, well, we went to see the Virgin that's for sure! But we went to Cauterets, we went to Gavarnie, we went into Spain ... We went there all the time, all the time! And then my mom, she had curative treatments, because she had health problems and we went to Dax. So every year we went to Dax and after that I stopped going, you know when I was 18, 19, I don't recall exactly, the holidays um ... I maybe went with friends, we went to the seaside. But it was different! You know when you're young, you put up a tent, it was just that! But it's true that I was always going on holiday, all the time! It's funny!"*

Case 2 – Structuring childhood memories: '*It probably influences somewhat the sites I want to visit*'

Anne, aged 32, is the editor of an Angevin cultural magazine, lives in the town of Saint Sylvain d'Anjou and works in the city-centre of Angers. Her parents are retired (his father was a photographer and her mother taught SEGPA classes in a small rural town in Loire-Atlantique). Her husband is a music supply-teacher in a school ('*he has more holidays than I do*'). They have a daughter aged one and a half ('*since she was born we no longer go wild camping, we are more careful ... we will wait a little until she is older*').

'*During my holiday periods, I'll usually go away. I like to stay to France and I occasionally go abroad, for example I went to Croatia two years ago but otherwise it's more weekends away, Berlin, Madrid, Budapest* *etc. So I take short weekend breaks. I have an uncle who lives in Brussels, otherwise I go to cottages or find deals with AirBnB. But it's often too short... it's not really a holiday: abroad it's either alone or with a friend when I go away... it's more short relaxing breaks with friends. And then other than that I generally go on holiday more with my family, let's say for a month, but it depends on the holiday, but a quarter of the holiday will be spent in Angers. I'll stay around the area even if it's just for two days, I like to have a little time in Angers to do something different, away from work when I have nothing to do, or when friends come to visit ...to take the time to be in Angers in fact and show friends around.*

With my parents we went to a lot of places in France and visited some European countries. I have fond memories of that and I suppose it must influence a little what I want to visit, what I want to do on holiday. My memories of childhood holidays make me want to go back to these regions and elsewhere, for example, next year we have said: We absolutely must go back to the Cévennes, because often I went to the Cévennes, at least three times with my parents when I was a child, I have vague memories but I really want to go back. I have memories of the landscapes that I liked a lot, characteristic villages and we said that next year we will do it!'

THE MULTIPLICITY OF SOCIALIZATIONS IN THE PRINCIPLE OF THE 'PLURAL TOURIST'

While most statistical surveys highlight the effects of regular and varied sporting, artistic or cultural activities during childhood on the subsequent adult life, there is always a significant proportion of adults undertaking discovery activities as a result of socializing experiences in married life. In other words, tourists in adulthood may very well not have been encouraged by their childhood family environment and have therefore, conversely, been faced with other favorable socializing universes in the course of their adult lives. This late learning phenomenon of tourism activities is mainly seen in agricultural workers and those in manual working professions. Marital or professional influences take over in a way from modest, or the complete absence of, family tourist socializations. Individual cases illustrate configurations 'subject to domestic influence' (Lahire, 2012) and thus the gradual transformation of tastes and inclinations towards tourism when one person in the couple, with few or no cultural resources and tourism experiences, lives with another person who had acquired dispositions during their own childhood/adolescence mainly within the family unit. The case of Michel, the son of a faming couple (empirical case 1) clearly illustrates the process of domestic socialization according to Marie-Claude, his wife: '*I think we were a little better off than Michel's parents for example... Michel never went on holiday, his parents were farmers*'. If Michel has discovered tourist mobility thanks to his wife, both of them now undertake activities which were less accessible (going abroad, taking a plane) at specific times in their lives. Thus, the first foreign trip for Marie-Claude and her husband Michel ('*the first time we had flown*') was an event, that is to say a 'turning point' (Bessin, Bidart, Grossetti, 2010) in their tourist itinerary. This 'turning point' which arrived late for this couple, was organized for their tenth wedding anniversary: '*Yes, and how the years have passed. The first, first trip we took together, we went to the Canary Islands and it was for our tenth wedding anniversary, so that makes it thirty-five years of marriage this year! Yes, it's true, that is the first trip we took and in addition it was the first time we had flown!*' The first time Michel and Marie-Claude flew and went abroad perfectly establishes an irreversible event in their journey as tourists. This event can not, however, be viewed alone: it comes from the unique provisions of these two individuals (one may have influenced the other) and may potentially fuel their future tourist activities.

Case 3 – Multiple and cumulative influences

Capucine, 23, is a speech therapist in private practice and also works at a community mental-health center for children with autism. She states her earnings to be about € 2,000 per month after tax. She has lived in Angers for the last few months after completing studies in Lille. Her father is an electronics engineer in the automotive industry and her mother works as a home-help (despite being qualified as an assistant social worker). Capucine traveled with her parents and on school trips around France and in various foreign countries. Although she now holidays more with her circle of friends, she confesses that her past experiences with her parents - where culture played an important role - or during school trips, have influenced the choice of destinations which she now wishes to discover or rediscover. She recently started her professional career so her economic situation and age mean she can still go on family holidays with her parents.
'I have tried everything really, in France anyway rather than abroad. I have visited most parts of France, the north just as much as the south, the east as much as the west. But I don't have a favorite place, honestly ... oh well, I do perhaps prefer the Atlantic coast, around the Vendée and a little to the south around the Gironde. But really, there is no one city. Until a few years ago I generally went away with my parents, now it doesn't happen so often. It is more often than not with friends, yes, at the moment it's more that way: groups of friends, and during the school holidays in general. The holidays are more focused on the summer usually, sometimes in April too, but not the other holidays. My parents still go away with my sister, she is only 16 years old so she still goes with them. Yes, it's just the three of them now, and sometimes abroad too, for example last summer they went to Ireland. And they still invite me to go with them, sometimes it's tempting but it all depends on my plans, it depends if I have already arranged my next holiday with friends that may be expensive or not and if I have the time or not. But it is true that I have the choice, I still have the opportunity to go away with my parents.

The visit to the United States was with friends who already knew the country, England was always without my parents. However I did Italy with and without my parents, Italy and London too, they were school trips, and then after that I went again without my parents and then with my parents, I have done a bit of everything. However, Germany, Austria, Portugal... they were with my parents... what else have I done with them? I sure I'm forgetting something, we had several trips. In short I have done quite a lot of things with them and it was often in a cultural context: visits to museums, tours of the architectural heritage, etc. as if they really wanted the tourist visits to be culturally useful. I also like to go back and visit those places again, but especially in France. For example I remember such and such a city or place that I liked one year and I say to myself "why not go back there". It's the same for the school trips too, I went back at a later date: yes, London several times. The first time was in the fourth year on a school trip, and then after that I went back two or three times. Each time it's a pleasure to go back and discover new things.'

Friendly socializations and influences also contribute to the structuring and constitution of a desire for discovery, for cultural interests and international mobility, etc. Acquaintances and friends who have a legitimate authority on the subject of tourism activities (traveling 'far', visiting cultural or heritage sites that one should 'be sure to see during your lifetime' etc.) generate advice that is like an injunction, possibly incompatible with the provisions acquired in the family environment, potentially aiming to refine or re-orientate tourism choices and activities. These friendships are not however the only ones to influence tastes and interests. Claudine is, as such, subject to multiple influences (members of her family, her friends, clients and her company travel club, but also the media), a process that reinforces for both her and her husband their composite tastes in terms of different types of tourism activities (see empirical case 4).

All these sources of influence, which vary and are diachronic in their relationships to individuals, increase 'the objective opportunities' (Bourdieu, 1992) to get involved in tourism, in other words from a dispositional view, to be a 'plural tourist'[v]. As such, tourists are potentially 'plural' in the sense that the cultural and symbolic dignity of tourists visiting contemporary art museums in certain European capital cities does not prevent them, when summer comes, from taking part in basic beach-based activities where the question of 'overcrowding' (Boltanski, 1976) is less problematic. Distant and exotic tourist mobility, when traveling as a couple for example, is not inconsistent with local visits undertaken within the family circle, etc. The case of Claudine illustrates well the analysis by which the plurality of activities, depending on the context (with the help of the company travel club, among friends, with the family etc.), is anchored both in cultural legitimacy where the distinctive sense is clearly present and, in contrast, in uses which are less symbolically ordered.

Case 4 – Varied opportunities, composite tastes

Claudine, aged 63, lives with her husband in Bouchemaine, a residential neighborhood a few minutes south of Angers. She and her husband are retired and live in a large 'modern' house which they own. They have a son aged 42 and became grandparents a few months ago (a little girl aged 5 months called Fanny). Claudine, originally from Angers, was an '*assistant in financial wealth management at the Crédit Agricole bank*' and her husband was a shop-keeper in the telephone business. Claudine has '*a BEPC diploma*' and, after '*starting work aged 17 and a half*' and having '*benefited from on-the-job training*', she '*worked for 43 years for the same company*'.

Claudine's definition of tourism can be summarized in two words: 'discover and learn', although in fact with her husband she enjoys more 'relaxing' activities, being lazy: '*So it's always the same, first it's discovery of the country, its people, their culture, gastronomy, wine, etc. For me that's tourism: discovery and learning*'. Claudine has an extensive experience of travel in France and in many foreign countries, whether on organized trips, with friends, or through her company travel club, etc. She lists the destinations easily, aware of the symbolic advantage it provides, a series of countries visited with the emphasis on the number of times she went to each country, '*Spain, Italy, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, England, Algeria , Tunisia, Dubai, the United States (three times), Mauritius (three times) so between fifteen and twenty trips, that's not bad?*'. Over and above the foreign countries, visited mainly with the aim of discovering the local culture, she and her husband have for many years participated in a flat-rental scheme in various French destinations booked through 'Pierre et Vacances' (they own an apartment in La Baule which they 'exchange' for other destinations). Finally they have, in recent years, used the bed and breakfast network allowing Claudine '*to discover a region where the local population tell you: "Don't forget to go there because it is beautiful, go to such and such a restaurant, or avoid another because it's bad*"'

'These past five years we have been abroad, five years ago we went to California, and then we mainly stayed in France and in early 2011 we went to Dubai. So I think for foreign trips that must be it, except a few trips into Spain, things like that. We stayed two weeks in the USA and a week in Dubai. So why these destinations? Because the United States was ... we have been three times in all, we did New York only, then it was Florida, but it is true that the Grand Canyon was a long-held dream. So Las Vegas, San Francisco and Los Angeles a little less good but it was because of all those mythical places. However, the food was not very good at all [laughs], but we didn't go there to eat, just to enjoy the beautiful scenery. In fact we did everything that was really touristy, the real Western landscapes, the Grand Canyon and then ... I can't remember what it was called, but it was typically touristy but we enjoyed it. That was an organized tour. Otherwise we very rarely use tours, but for the United States we did. The other two times we went alone: New York and Florida we did alone, with family let's say. In Dubai it was just the two of us.'

The choice of tourist destinations are, when retired, a trade off between what Claudine and her husband want. However during their respective careers the couple took advantage of the deals offered by their employers. Claudine particularly benefited from the Crédit Agricole travel club, to go to the United States with her husband. Her nephew, an employee at a Tour Operator, advises them and arranges their stays according to their requirements. Their close circle of friends is also a clear source of influence in their choice of destinations.

Tourists are therefore ‘plural’ when their experiences and tastes reflect a kind of ‘mix of genres’ fed by socially and symbolically dissonant options in terms of activities. The plurality of skills and provisions is in the end structured as much by factual elements such as destinations, time periods and frequencies, distances, conditions and methods of transport or accommodation etc. as by the more or less routine ways of being a tourist, the varied options for sightseeing trips, the meaning, intentionality and justification given by tourists to tourist mobility and relations with otherness, etc.

CONCLUSION

The tourist activities undertaken by individuals and tastes with regard to tourism are developed according to social processes which are actually quite similar to those studied in the areas of cultural or sporting activities. The small number of empirical cases referenced in this article illustrate the fact that processes of tourism socialization are highly pluralistic and possess a ‘sequential nature’ (Coulangeon, 2011). If the tourist learning-process usually begins during childhood (within the family or at school) and continues as people age, the cumulative socializing experiences or, conversely, the contradictory socializing experiences reinforce the idea that nothing is in fact linear, thereby limiting the mechanical and essentialist use of family cultural heritage as the only explanatory solution. According to historical contexts, the economic resources of individuals, family configurations, friendly and professional meetings, the supply of tourism products (destinations and the options in terms of suggested activities), etc., tourism activities will then represent a sort of reproduction of past activities or an occasionally dissonant logic of discovery used to generate a sense of otherness. Over and above the statistical regularities corresponding to the effects of social class, age, sex, etc., the inclusion of combinations relating to socialization and to individual tourist experiences then allows us to refine our macro-sociological interpretations of tourist consumption.

If, in the end, nothing is decided in advance and nothing is mechanical, the sociological analysis allows us justify the fact that socially constituted dispositions - in respect of tourism in its general sense - acquired throughout a tourist’s individual ‘career’ in terms of heterogeneous socializing sources, function as potentially exploitable abilities within the framework of future tourism activities.

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APPENDIX

TABLE 1- Synoptic profiles of cases

	First name	Sex / Age	Personal situation	Qualification	Profession or primary activity	Financial situation
Case 1	Marie-Claude	F /57	Married, with three children	CAP in cookery	Restaurant manager in a school cafeteria	Owner of a house in a suburb of Angers and a second home in Sables d'Olonne
Case 2	Anne	F / 32	In a relationship, with one child	High-school diploma + 3 years of further education in communication studies, with a journalism option	Editor in chief for a local cultural magazine	Owner of a house in a suburb of Angers. Her partner is a music teacher in a school. Salary : approx. €1,800 € before tax/month
Case 3	Capucine	F / 23	Single, no children	High-school diploma + 5 years of further education (qualified speech therapist)	Speech therapist	Renting a flat in Angers. Salary : approx. €2,000 € before tax/month
Case 4	Claudine	F / 63	Married, with one child and one grand-daughter	BEPC	Retired (assistant in financial wealth management at Crédit Agricole)	Owner of a villa in a residential district of Angers.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY INTERNSHIPS IN NURTURING MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT (HTM) STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how the development of management competencies occurs within Hospitality and Tourism Management (HTM) education programs at a 4 year higher education institution based in the Midwest. Its purpose is to address concerns raised by industry on how universities can best prepare graduates for success in their careers. As a result, this paper examines internships as a vehicle for identifying both the development of management competencies and conversely is used to ascertain potential deficiencies in students' development and marketability.

The findings suggest that due to the disparate needs of students, educators and employers, discrepancies do exist between stakeholder viewpoints concerning the most beneficial way to facilitate programs.

KEYWORDS: Internships, stakeholder perspectives, management competencies

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is arguably one of the fastest growing segments within our economy (Gailliard, 2010). This multi-trillion dollar industry employs over 284 million people (1 in 11 jobs) globally and generates 9.8% of the world GDP which equates to approximately $7.2 trillion (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2016). As this industry continues to grow at a phenomenal rate, so does the demand for highly trained and qualified people to fill new positions in all sectors of the tourism economy (Gailliard, 2010). While the outlook for the future is continued positivity and growth, recruiters today are looking for employees to demonstrate skills beyond a college diploma. While consensus suggests that most graduates are adequately prepared for a professional career, many are lacking the experience of applied, practical job skills necessary to be successful (Irwin, 2005). To appropriately meet the future demands of this industry, educators must work with employers in providing qualified graduates to lead the hospitality industry into a prosperous future (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2014).

Traditionally, the hospitality industry has few managers who have attained their management competencies through a formal education track (Barron & Gill, 1993: Vujic, Becic, & Crnjar, 2008). As the competition for leadership roles emerges, the hospitality industry is steadily witnessing an increase in positions that demand a minimum of a bachelor's degree. This shift in requirements leads to a smaller pool of qualified employees for upper-level positions within all segments of the industry. Historically, the hospitality industry has a poor reputation for training and developing talent with the skills needed to pursue a professional career in the industry (Irwin, 2005). This lack of training often leads to frustration on the part of employees, and as a result, high turn-over rates are experienced.

However, while these characteristics of the industry present challenges, higher education has the opportunity to play a significant role in the reversal of these trends. Institutions that offer Hospitality and Tourism Management (HTM) programs are on the front-lines of ensuring that graduates are well-trained for senior level positions to lead this dynamic industry. The Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA) (2014) strongly recommends that certain guidelines are used when preparing students for future employment including, sequential development of coursework, flexibility in elective offerings, opportunities for advanced work in specific areas, well-defined and obtainable goals and teaching employees (http://www.acpha-cahm.org/). Indeed, for many years, professionals from every segment of the hospitality industry were questioned about the techniques hospitality educators can best employ to prepare graduates, the number one response was to offer internships and increased hands-on experience (Lefever & Withiam, 1998). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine what perceptions stakeholders have regarding whether HTM undergraduate students actually develop key management competencies while participating in internships. In addition, it will capture the views of university faculty and industry professionals who work with these students and present both the essential competencies and the most beneficial internship hours required to provide a foundation for success in the hospitality industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internships in Higher Education

Too often the higher education learning environment fails to progress beyond attainment of knowledge (Steffes, 2004). Historically, the role of vocationally orientated education programs has been to find ways to fill the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Lee (2007) suggests that an internship experience may be able to accomplish this. He finds that internships benefit students in such a way that the student leaves the experience with a much "deeper understanding of the soft skills employers in today's market so desperately seek" (p. 39). With an internship opportunity, students are not only able to apply theory learned in the classroom and enhance their technical skills, but they also learn to work with a multitude of people, personality types, and deal with issues on the "human" side of the business.

According to Irwin (2005), the ability to interact with people, the desire to take initiative, and even learn about punctuality, all represent job skills that students may lack. By combining the internship work experience and routine coursework, students gain the ability to fully grasp job expectations, enrich their resumes with industry experience, gain self-confidence and improve their social skills when pursuing post-graduation employment (Lee, 2007; Walmsley, Thomas, & Jameson, 2006, and Spowart, 2011, Stansbie et al., 2013). As a result, employers are hoping to find students who can put classroom theory into practice, communicate effectively with clients and co-workers, complete tasks with little supervision and have the ambition to go beyond what is asked (Daugherty, 2002).

Internships as a Component of Hospitality Programs

The hospitality industry has a primary goal of servicing guests. This involves a wide range of businesses dedicated to the service of guests away from their place of residence. Often the hospitality "product" is an experience, and the guest walks away with nothing more than a memory. Due to the intangibility of the hospitality product, employees within the realm of this industry must be able to put a value on that product. Excellent communication, problem solving skills, managing diversity as well as the technical skills necessary to properly run a successful business are key. Oftentimes, these skills are difficult to teach in a classroom environment. Therefore, experts recommend students have hands-on experience within the industry along with the coursework at a university (Kennedy, 1994, and Yiu & Law, 2012).

Typical classroom learning comes about by educators transferring information to students (Lambert, 1980). The role of the student is to process the information given and at a later point in time and accurately apply that information. This application may be in the form of an exam or other action that demonstrates competence. The student first attains knowledge and then acts in some form (ibid). Learning through an internship experience is essentially the opposite. The intern first acts and the results of this action come to light. Secondly, the student considers the results of the action and reapplies them to a new situation (ibid). The difference is that most people remember action and concrete events more so than general information. According to Wolff (1997), students must develop conceptual skills and relate these skills to theory. However, if this is not combined with adequate hands-on experience, students will not develop the professional skills the industry is looking for.

The aforementioned study by Lee (2007) focused on a population of students at a university in Florida where hospitality majors completed surveys to assess and compare their perceptions of their internship and classroom learning outcomes. The results indicated that students perceived the learning had improved to some degree based on their classroom experiences and moderately improved, based on their internship experiences. Nine areas on the survey indicated that students were learning more as a result of their internship assignments including such things as; understanding how organizations function, career expectations, ability to adapt to change and self-confidence. Five areas indicated students learning increased as a result of classroom experience including, writing skills, oral presentation skills and awareness of civic responsibility. The results of this study indicate the need for hospitality programs to not only offer comprehensive academic experiences, but also provide opportunities to complement these with an internship requirement to allow students the opportunity to try out their new skills in a real-world environment.

Management Competencies

There are many different ways to define management competency. Nath and Raheja (2001) propose a management competency as “a combination of observable and applied knowledge, skill and behavior that create a competitive advantage for an organization, focusing on how an employee creates value and what is actually accomplished” (p. 26). Furthermore, they believe that those who possess these competencies will perform within positions at a much higher level than those who do not. Tas, LaBrecque and Clayton (1996) define competencies as “those activities and skills judged essential to perform the duties of a specific position” (p. 52). Brophy and Kiely (2002) state that competencies are “the skills, knowledge, behaviors and attitudes required to perform a role effectively” (p. 52). Finally, Boyatzis (1982) defines competencies as “skills, types of behavior, knowledge or traits that are employed successfully by managers in discharging their duties” (p. 8).

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study sought to discover the role internships play in the development of management competencies, so educators can better understand student and employer needs, and be able to respond accordingly. In addition, the research discovered what current students and industry professionals consider to be characteristics of successful internships.

The study surveyed three groups: (1) HTM students at one Midwest University who have completed internship requirements, (2) faculty from Midwest institutions who oversee such programs, and (3) industry professionals who hire these students. Each stakeholder was asked to share their perspective regarding their individual experiences with internships and how they are used to develop management competencies. Student participants were asked to reflect on past internship experiences and what management skills they acquired, while faculty and industry professionals were asked to share their viewpoints on the most ideal internship requirements and how well such experiences prepare HTM students for managerial positions within the hospitality industry. In order to offer some clarity and direction to the research, the following research questions will be addressed in this paper:

1. What are the perceptions of HTM educators and industry professionals in reference to:
    a. Essential components of internships (i.e., number of hours, types of experiences) including the overall importance of such internship experiences; and
    b. The key management competencies HTM students should attain as a result of their internship placement?
2. What are the perceptions of HTM educators, industry professionals, and undergraduate students in reference to: The extent to which such students are

actually attaining management competencies through these internship experiences? Additionally, what are the similarities and differences amongst the three groups regarding competency attainment? And finally, how do the actual hours students have completed on internships compare with the recommendations by faculty and industry.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A quantitative methodological approach was used for this study, whereby surveys were used to collect perceptions from students, faculty, and industry professionals. The survey was cross-sectional (information collected at one point in time), and distributed via an online platform to participants. The data gathered was quantified for analysis using a variety of statistical tests.

Instrumentation

The Self-Assessment of Managerial Skills (SAMS) instrument was initially considered for the student segment of this study. The original instrument consists of 113 competency statements and asks the participant to rate on a Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The assessment instrument utilizes management competencies found within the "Competing Values Framework" (CFV) (Quinn, Faerman, Thompson, & McGrath, 1990). The framework focuses on generic management skills that can be applied to a variety of organizations and positions within them. Although there were some statements that made sense for the purpose of this study, it was not useful in its entirety. Therefore, 15 questions were adapted from the SAMS instrument. Additionally, the authors looked at surveys used in the work of Tas (1988) which surveyed hotel managers on management competencies; Getty et al., (1991) whose survey asked hospitality graduates to rate their competencies; and Tas et al., (1996) which discussed competencies for management trainees. Although these surveys were useful in generating ideas for creating a survey, none of them were adequate for the use of this study. Therefore, the authors determined the remainder of the 42 statements using said competency works. Finally, using Sandwith's (1993) Competency Domain Model, survey questions were grouped into the following domains (1) Conceptual/Creative, (2) Leadership, (3) Interpersonal, (4) Administrative and (5) Technical. As students enter various employment levels upon graduation, a variety of skills needed were measured.

Data Collection

The 42 competency statements were identical within all three surveys. The instrument asked the student participants to what degree experiential learning contributed to their development of the skills listed. The faculty members and industry professionals were asked two-fold questions for each statement. First, to what degree the skill is necessary for students to attain prior to graduation, and second to what degree they have seen the skill nurtured by the internship process. In addition to competency statements, participants were asked to expand on their viewpoints through open-ended questions, and also provided demographic data.

Population and Sample

The population for the student segment of this study was a convenience sample of HTM students at Grand Valley State University (GVSU). The students within this program are required to complete three separate internship experiences along with coursework as part of their degree requirements. The students must complete a minimum of 1000 internship hours working in a variety of hospitality settings. Of the 153 students asked to participate, 122 (79.7%) completed the survey and had completed at least one internship, and were enrolled in an internship course during the 2013/2014 academic year. These internship courses were selected in an effort to capture data from students who were both at the beginning and end of their required curriculum.

The population for the faculty segment of this study consisted of members of Hospitality and/or Tourism programs at institutions in the Midwest, including the states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. From a list of all hospitality programs in the United States, institutions were selected in an effort to capture data from institutions that were similar in both region of the country and type of program offered. Of the 206 faculty members asked to participate in this study, 39 (19.3%) completed the survey.

The population for the industry segment of this study consisted of 197 professionals throughout the United States who currently work with undergraduate HTM interns. Of those asked to participate, 98 (49.7%) completed the survey. These professionals are currently on file with the GVSU HTM department as working with hospitality student interns and represent all segments of the hospitality industry, including hotels and resorts, meeting and event planning organizations, food and beverage operations, and tourism segments.

RESULTS

Responses obtained were entered in the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) and all subsequent analysis was conducted using the SPSS.

Research *Question 1*

Research question 1 (parts a and b) sought to address the perceptions of HTM educators and industry professionals in reference to: (a) How many hours of internship(s) should undergraduate HTM students work prior to graduation; and (b) the key management competencies HTM students should attain as a result of their internship placement.
The T-test results in table 1 show there was a significant difference between industry professionals and faculty ($F = .677$, $p = .021$). The range of recommended total hours from faculty and industry was from 300 to 2,496. There were outliers within the data with a respondent recommending the lowest number of 300, and a respondent recommending the highest number of 2,496, but in general the industry professionals reported a larger number of hours being needed with a mean of 991, while the average recommended by faculty was 750 for successful internships.

Table 1 ***Independent Samples t-test: Faculty and Industry Ideal Total Hours for Internships***

Occupation	N	Mean Hours	Std. Dev.	T	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)
Faculty	35	749.63	453.171	-2.347	123	.021*
Industry	90	991.24	539.251			

Note: $p < .05$

For part b of question 1, educators and industry professionals were asked to rate their perceptions of 42 statements regarding management competencies as related to the importance of the skill being attained prior to graduation. The questions were broken down by competency heading. The results for faculty and industry responses are outlined in Table 2 (see appendix 1). For easy comparison, they are listed in rank order for each competency heading with the faculty and industry response tables next to each other.

When rank ordered, the top skills include three skills within the leadership competency, (1) the ability to interact effectively in a crisis situation, (2) understanding other's reactions during a conversation and (3) the ability to "take charge" of situations fall within the often important ranking. Several other skills, including, (1) effectively listening to what others have to say, (2) interacting smoothly with a wide variety of people, and (3) being comfortable communicating with a wide variety of people, from the interpersonal category ranked fairly high. Within the administrative and technical categories, all skills fell within these categories with two, (1) effectively managing time to prioritize and complete tasks and (2) being organized in record keeping from administrative and all technical skills falling into the almost always important category.

Research Question 2

Research question 2 examined the perceptions of HTM educators, industry professionals, and undergraduate students regarding the extent to which HTM students are actually attaining management competencies through these internship experiences. Additionally, the similarities and differences amongst the three groups regarding competency attainment was also explored.

Faculty and industry professionals were asked to indicate their perceptions of whether students attain these skills during internship experiences. The 42 items were identical to those used in the first research question, but the context was changed.

Overall, mean scores regarding student's skill attainment between the three groups indicate student's perceptions are that they are achieving all conceptual creative skills to some extent. In the leadership competency category students are perceived to (1) take charge of situations, (2) be in touch with other's reactions, (3) use participative decision making, (4) interact effectively in a crisis situation, (5) motivate others, (6) use formal authority, and (7) delegate tasks to others to some extent, while the remaining two skills are developed only in limited cases. Again, in the interpersonal category, seven skills appear to be learned to some extent including effective communication and training techniques, while the rest are developed only in limited cases. Within the administrative competency, only (1) managing time effectively to complete and prioritize tasks, and (2) being organized in record keeping are seen to some extent while the rest fall into limited cases or not at all. The highest overall mean scores were found in the technical competency, with four scores falling into the large extent level, and only (1) managing guest problems and (2) communicating effectively both written and orally falling into the some extent category.

In order to examine this data for differences in perceptions, an analysis of the variance (ANOVA) was performed. Cronbach's Alpha, which measures internal consistency, was used to first test the reliability of the data after collapsing the questions into the five over-arching categories of management competencies; conceptual creative, interpersonal, administrative, leadership, and technical.

The ANOVA compared faculty, industry, and student perceptions of attainment of management competencies through internships. The findings showed there was a significant effect in conceptual/creative ($F = 15.797$, $p < .05$), leadership ($F = 30.788$, $p < .05$), interpersonal ($F = 55.810$, $p < .05$) and technical ($F = 7.684$, $p < .05$).

A closer look at the mean scores reported higher means for students than for faculty or industry in the following categories. In the conceptual/creative category, faculty reported a mean score of 3.33, industry reported a mean score of 3.37, and students reported a mean score of 3.88. In the leadership category, the faculty mean was 2.75, the industry mean was 2.95 and the student mean was 3.59. In the interpersonal category, the faculty mean score was 2.90, the industry mean score was 3.13 and the student mean score was 3.77. In the administrative category, the faculty mean was 2.42, the industry mean was 2.60, and the student mean was 2.35. Technical mean scores were 3.69 for faculty, 3.94 for industry, and 4.19 for students.

Faculty and industry professionals also submitted written comments, when asked to what extent they believe students are currently being prepared for management positions via their undergraduate internship experiences. Three key areas showed similar comments by 67 individuals in both groups, while an additional comment was mentioned multiple times by industry respondents.

Student's choice and effort came through as the most significant indicator of preparedness within the written comments. While many respondents found students to be well prepared, or prepared to some extent, many reiterated that the level of preparedness ultimately depends on what internship positions the student chooses, how well they seek out opportunities in the work place, and how seriously they take the potential learning environment available to them. In addition, several industry professionals noted the level of student preparedness fluctuated depending on the school the student attends, mentioning a lack of consistency in requirements of internships and/or curricular content.

DISCUSSION

A significant area of disagreement was found between faculty and industry respondents around the concept of the ideal number of total recommended hours students should complete prior to graduation. Though these findings indicate that educators and industry professionals agree that students benefit from experiential learning, they do not agree on the amount of time students should spend on these experiences (Downey & DeVeau, 1988). The faculty respondents in this study recommended, on average, 750 hours of experiential learning, while industry respondents recommended an average of 991 hours of experiential learning. Interestingly, the lowest amount of recommended hours came from a faculty respondent stating 300 as an ideal number of hours, and the largest amount of hours was 2,496 by an industry respondent.

Although there may be a slight fluctuation in which respondent has the slightly higher or slightly lower overall mean score, both industry and faculty appear to agree that overall skills in the technical competency are the most important to attain prior to graduation, followed by administrative, interpersonal, leadership, and finally conceptual/creative. While skill attainment during internships fall most heavily within the technical competency, followed by the conceptual/creative competency, interpersonal competency, leadership competency and administrative competencies respectively.

Conceptual Creative Competency **–** Prior studies by Beggs, Ross, and Goodwin (2008), Lee, Lu, Jiao, and Yeh (2006), and Strauss (1999), repeatedly point to practical experience as the most beneficial way for students to fully understand the issues and challenges of the hospitality industry. This is evident in the responses related to understanding the unique characteristics of the hospitality industry, how to adapt to unexpected changes in the work place and how the various roles within the establishment fit together. Over 50% of faculty and industry, and over 80% of student respondents, found this to be true to a large or very large extent.

Leadership Competency - According to Cichy and Sciarini (1990) the skill most needed in the hospitality industry is leadership. The most successful recent graduates will have a variety of leadership skills, including communication, listening to others at all levels of the organization, followed by candor and discussion. In this study, communication skills such as reading and understanding other’s reactions during a conversation were seen to some extent by 38% and to a large or very large extent by 35% of faculty and to some extent by 44% and to a large or very large extent by 33% of industry respondents. Effective and calm interaction under pressure was seen, to some extent, by 52% of faculty and to a large or very large extent by 29%. 31% of industry respondents saw this skill develop to some extent while 52% saw this to a large or very large extent. Over 70% of students perceived themselves to have learned these skills fairly to very well. While leadership is an important component of management competence, it appears to begin development during the undergraduate internship experience, but takes perhaps years to develop in a mature fashion.

Interpersonal Competency – As previously mentioned, Lee (2007) suggests that experiential learning benefits students as they leave the experience with a much “deeper understanding of the soft skills employers in today’s market so desperately seek” (p. 39). Students learn to work with multitudes of people, personality types, and deal with issues on the “human” side of the business. According to Ladkin (2000) and Spowart (2011), employers within the hospitality industry are looking for students with strong operational and human relations skills. There is a general perception that skill development in dealing with the “human” side of the business or effective interaction and communication with others, occurs in the majority of these internship experiences. An overwhelming 80-85% of students believe they have learned these skills ranging from fairly to very well. It is interesting that industry responded more positively to skill attainments reaching the large or very large extent in several categories than faculty did. 68% of industry respondents believe students interact smoothly with a wide variety of people, versus 55% of faculty. 61% of industry professionals see students as effective in listening to what others have to say, whereas only 38% of faculty felt the same, and 53% of industry respondents, compared to 27% of faculty respondents, found students to be comfortable communicating with a wide variety of people.

Administrative Competency - According to Tsai, Goh, Huffman and Wu (2006), and Huang & Lin (2011) there was a distinct difference between hospitality educators and industry professionals. They found that educators focus on administrative and technical skills, identifying, motivating employees, managing administrative tasks, developing procedures, and analyzing financial reports as significant. Industry professionals on the other hand, identified managing guests with understanding and sensitivity, handling pressure with grace, professional appearance and behavior, demonstrating knowledge of diverse cultures, and the ability to supervise staff, as significant. In this study, there was general consensus amongst the three groups that administrative skills are not strongly developed during the internship process. However, effectively managing time to prioritize and complete tasks was a skill that overwhelmingly came through as being developed during the internship process.

Technical Competency - Employers are finding students who are often knowledgeable in their fields, but lack the qualities desired on the job (Irwin 2005). Daugherty (2002) found that employers are looking for students who can communicate effectively, have ambition to go above and beyond what is asked, and can complete tasks with little or no supervision. In this category, Competency attainment had the highest levels of any, with the majority of responses being seen as developed to a large or very large extent.

Higher education has the opportunity to play a significant role in the future of the hospitality industry by ensuring graduates are well-trained for top level positions. Clearly faculty are responsible for ensuring that students are prepared to be as effective in the hospitality industry as possible upon graduation. Research by Tas (1988), Tas, et al., (1996), Ricci and Kaufman (2007), Johanson (2011), and Wang & Tsai (2014) found that in addition to educators not adapting curriculum to meet the changing needs of industry, there is a wide variation of curriculum styles and graduation requirements between university programs. Because of such concerns, recruiters are often frustrated with the variation in knowledge and skills of students coming out of these HTM university programs. Although the data in its aggregate form shows faculty and industry close together in viewpoint, individual skills did show some strong fluctuations in opinion of importance, such as, the ability to take charge of situations, the use of participative decision making, interacting effectively with a variety of people, and the ability to read a profit and loss statement. Such outcomes may encourage faculty to have discussions with each other, as well as, industry stakeholders to ensure students are maximizing the undergraduate experience in preparation for a career in the hospitality industry.

Conclusions

At a glance, combining coursework and experience seems relatively easy. However, in order to provide students with the most beneficial experience, careful consideration must be given to the course parameters. According to O'Halloran and Deale (2003) and Zopiatis and Constanti (2012) collaboration among the student, company, and academic institution are vital. The benefits to each should be clearly outlined and desired outcomes planned in advance. While Stansbie et al., (2013) offer some insights to designing internships, currently there is no universal standard outlining the best practices for delivery, as each institution has its own requirements and partners in industry. Therefore, it is imperative for program administrators to determine how many hours of internship are adequate as well as what types of experiences recruiters find most beneficial (Huang & Lin, 2011 and Gursoy, Rahman & Swanger, 2012). If educators build a curriculum without adequate input from industry leaders, there is the potential for deficiencies in students' skill and marketability upon graduation. By knowing potential employers expectations and the perceived preparedness of the students themselves, educators will have the ability to adjust academic programs accordingly. This will allow for the most effective program for students, as well as, enhance the labor pool upon graduation.

Although the number of hospitality programs within higher education has grown considerably over the last three decades, there is no standardization of curriculum to date (Crockett, 2002). A strong relationship between faculty, industry practitioners, and students is seemingly the best way to assess what should be required within individual programs. Most programs require some form of experiential learning, but program parameters vary from school to school. Getty et al. (1990) recommend periodic reviews of the curriculum as a whole. Equally important is a continued evaluation process of internship requirements through advisor boards and industry partnerships. A sound framework outlining desired outcomes should be in place prior to students undertaking internship positions (O'Halloran & Deale, 2003).

Overall, the literature clearly supports the need for internships within undergraduate programs. Although the benefits are outlined, little research has been done regarding hospitality and tourism programs specifically. The current research points to discrepancies between the views of educators and the views of industry leaders regarding the most beneficial program for students. In addition, little research has been done to establish the management competencies students should seek to attain upon graduation and if these competencies being attained during internships. Due to these discrepancies, this study offers a useful first step toward evaluating current program structures but further research is recommended.

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Appendix # 1:

Table 2 *Summary Rank Orders of Essential Skills Needed Prior to Graduation*

Skill	Faculty			Industry			Total		
	Rank	M	N	Rank	M	N	Rank	M	N
Conceptual/Creative Student must understand…		***2.38***			***2.30***			***2.33***	
-How to adapt to unexpected changes	2	2.43	37	1	2.52	83	1	2.49	120
-“Unique” characteristics of the hospitality industry	3	2.41	37	3	2.29	85	2	2.33	122
-How roles fit together	4	2.24	37	2	2.34	83	3	2.31	120
-Interaction w/ larger environment	1	2.59	37	5	2.14	84	4	2.28	121
-Understands the steps of effective career planning	4	2.24	37	4	2.22	83	5	2.23	120
Leadership: Student must be able to…		***2.71***			***2.99***			***2.91***	
-Interact in “crisis” situation	1	3.18	34	1	3.57	79	1	3.45	113
-Understand other’s reactions during conversation	2	3.12	34	2	3.28	79	2	3.23	113
-“Take charge” of situations	4	2.66	35	3	3.16	79	3	3.01	114
-Use participative decision making	7	2.53	34	3	3.16	79	4	2.97	113
-Motivate other people	5	2.60	35	5	2.91	79	5	2.82	114
-Delegate tasks	7	2.53	34	6	2.90	79	6	2.79	113
-Mentor people	3	2.74	34	8	2.66	79	7	2.68	113
-Use formal authority	9	2.49	35	7	2.77	79	7	2.68	114
-Act as an Advisor	6	2.59	34	9	2.49	79	9	2.52	113
Interpersonal: Student must…		***2.98***			***3.14***			***3.10***	
-Interact smoothly with people	1	3.47	30	1	3.78	77	1	3.69	107
-Use effective listening skills	1	3.47	30	2	3.68	77	2	3.62	107
-Be comfortable communicating	3	3.30	30	3	3.66	77	3	3.56	107
-Know how to turn individuals into a team	7	2.73	30	4	2.99	77	4	2.92	107
-Be skilled in team building techniques	5	2.87	30	5	2.91	77	5	2.90	107
-Apply adult learning to training	6	2.83	30	6	2.90	77	6	2.88	107
-Be knowledgeable of diverse cultures	4	3.13	30	9	2.65	77	7	2.79	107
-Know how to create win-win outcomes when negotiating	8	2.63	30	8	2.86	77	7	2.79	107
-Be comfortable acting as an advisor to people	9	2.43	29	7	2.88	77	9	2.75	106

Continued…	Rank	M	N	Rank	M	N	Rank	M	N
Administrative: Student must be able to…		***3.74***			***3.66***			***3.69***	
-Manage their time	1	4.48	27	1	4.63	70	1	4.59	97
-Be organized in record-keeping	2	4.11	27	2	4.10	70	2	4.10	97
-Organize a business document	4	4.07	27	5	3.84	70	3	3.91	97
-Write a schedule	6	3.85	27	3	3.91	70	4	3.90	97
-Budget labor costs	5	3.93	27	4	3.86	70	5	3.88	97
-Understand P&L statements	3	4.15	27	8	3.69	70	6	3.81	97
-Budget food costs	7	3.70	27	6	3.80	70	7	3.77	97

-Properly forecast business	7	3.70	27	7	3.79	70	8	3.76	97
-Price products proficiently	7	3.70	27	9	3.67	70	9	3.68	97
-Understand employee documents	10	3.59	27	10	3.49	70	10	3.52	97
-Conduct employee reviews	11	3.56	27	12	3.20	70	11	3.30	97
-Interview employees	12	3.33	27	11	3.23	70	12	3.26	97
-Explain employment documents to new hires	13	3.19	27	13	3.14	70	13	3.15	97
-Comfortably terminate employees	14	3.04	27	14	2.96	70	14	3.00	97
Technical: Student must be able to…		***4.48***			***4.57***			***4.54***	
-Maintain professional & ethical standards	2	4.74	27	1	4.76	70	1	4.75	97
-Communicate effectively written & orally	1	4.78	27	2	4.71	70	2	4.73	97
-Manage guest problems	2	4.74	27	3	4.70	70	3	4.71	97
-Understand the product and effectively sell it	4	4.37	27	4	4.41	70	4	4.40	97
-Use the technology specific to the establishment	5	3.78	27	5	4.26	70	5	4.12	97

INTRODUCTION OF TOURIST BEHAVIORAL INVESTMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study introduces the concept of tourist behavioral investment and elaborates how it influences decision-making. Behavioral investment, like financial investment, is regarded as a source of sunk cost effect on individual decision. It makes individuals stick to the interim choice in which they have already invested. The study synthesizes literature in sunk cost effect and behavioral investment and examines the situations where tourist behavioral investment and seemingly-irrational decision-making take place. Four propositions have been developed with regard to the effect of tourist behavioral investment, which should stimulate empirical investigations.

KEYWORDS**:** Behavioral investment, Irrational decision, Sunk cost effect, Tourist decision behavior

INTRODUCTION

This study derives the concept "behavioral investment" from the psychology literature of sunk cost effect, and applies it to research of tourist decision behavior. A sunk cost cannot be recovered after it has been incurred. Its effect refers to the fact that people are more likely to continue an endeavor once an investment (i.e., money, effort, or time) has been made (Arkes & Blumer, 1985). The sunk cost makes individuals stick to the interim choice in which they have invested time and money since the beginning, instead of making more rational decisions by carefully comparing all the available options (Arkes & Blumer, 1985) available at the decision-making. Theoretically, the sunk cost effect is associated with cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) and asymmetric valuation of loss and gain (Kahneman, 2011). The investment becomes sunk cost and falls into the mental account of loss if it doesn't generate expected return. Fear of loss motivates individuals to continue the investment until achieving the goal (Friedman et al., 2007).

Although the sunk cost effect has been recognized in various aspects of decision-making (Freedman et al., 2007; Kahneman, 2011; Roth, Robbert, & Straus, 2015), its function in tourism has only been investigated in a handful of studies (Gourville & Soman, 2001; Park & Jung, 2014). However, tourists can experience various types of sunk cost in a series of decisions before, during, and after a trip. For example, the money spent on the air tickets and lodging to fulfill the trip can be perceived as sunk cost for buying and activity decisions at the destination. Traveling to the destination itself is an investment of time and effort. The time spent with this destination is an opportunity cost since it can be used for other recreation activities or with other destinations that probably provide more benefits (Shaw, 1992). Thus, tourists will feel a waste of money and time if the tourism experience cannot bring more values than the costs or is perceived as less valuable than other recreational options. Arkes and Blumer's (1985) experiment showed that if tourists already book a nonrefundable ski package, they will stick to this choice even though they later find out a cheaper and more attractive ski package. This finding suggests that if tourists invest on a tourism product, they would rather obtain benefits from this investment than accept the loss and switch to a better deal.

Sunk cost effect in tourist behavior has been demonstrated by Gourville and Soman (2001), Park and Jung (2014), and Peteraf (1995). In the study by Gourville and Soman (2001), paying for a tourism product in advance creates sunk cost that makes tourists more likely to consume that product (i.e., head on to booked skiing in a poor whether condition). However, the sunk cost may be disguised by product bundling. Examples of bundling include all-inclusive resort vacation package, one-week pass tickets, seasonal tickets and fixed-price dinner. Calculating individual product cost in a bundled transaction is more difficult (Gourville & Soman, 2001). In addition, Park and Jung (2014) identified that tourists experience higher temporal sunk cost if they book a trip earlier and will be less likely to cancel the trip. The waiting time between the date of booking and the date of actual travel is accounted as investment that could be wasted if the trip is canceled.

The knowledge of sunk cost effect in tourist decision-making is still very limited. More academic attention should be paid to this domain, because sunk cost is identified as a primary contributor to irrational consumer decision (Roth et al., 2015) and is utilized in some practices of tourism marketing (Park & Jung, 2014). For example, questions regarding how tourists account for investment of effort would be essential. As indicated in an article published in Science, psychologists began to emphasize the irrationality of individual decision decades ago (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981); and the irrational aspect of decision is now widely recognized as a prominent domain in consumer research

(Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013). However, as reflected in the review of Cohen, Prayag, and Motal (2014) most of the studies in tourist behavior are still reliant on the research paradigm that tries to address the inquiries from a rational perspective. Moreover, the fundamental rationality assumption widely accepted in consumer studies is rarely examined in tourism context, leading to the debate about the irrationality of tourist decision (Jung & Kim, in press). Therefore, expanding research effort in sunk cost effect is beneficial to the development of knowledge about tourist irrational decision.

The concept of behavioral investment can be observed in different types of tourist decision-making, such as destination information search, effort spent in trip planning and evaluation of alternatives, effort of pursuing the best tourism experience, and repeated purchase. This study attempts to conceptualize behavioral investment and its effect in tourist decision-making by drawing on the theories of behavioral investment outside of the tourism field. The study also examines behavioral investment of tourists in various types and contexts of decisions. Propositions for future studies are suggested in tourist selection of tourism product, commitment to a trip, and commitment to a brand.

TOURIST BEHAVIORAL INVESTMENT AND ITS SUNK COST

Behavioral Investment as Social Psychological Concept

The term "sunk cost effect" was first proposed in a social psychology study by Arkes and Blumer (1985) to explain an irrational economic behavior. It is manifested in a greater tendency of continuing an endeavor caused by prior investment of money, time or effort, although the prior investment objectively should not have such influence. According to traditional economic theories, which are based on the assumption of rational individual, only incremental cost should influence decision, not sunk cost. The psychological mechanism, as demonstrated by consequential experiments (e.g., Arkes & Blumer, 1985; Arkes, 1996), is the desire to avoid waste. The sunk cost effect was then verified as robust by a series of studies (Roth, Robbert, & Straus, 2015). A variety of explanation for sunk cost effects were proposed, including the commitment to and the need to justify prior choices (Brockener, 1992), the tendency of risk seeking under previous loss (Garland & Newport, 1991), and the desire to avoid waste (Arkes & Blumer, 1985). These explanations have been related to prospect theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979) and cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957).

According to Kahneman and Tversky's (1979) prospect theory, individuals evaluate decision outcomes as gains and losses from a reference point. The prior investment in the absence of returns is likely to be viewed as a loss. Withdrawal from the course of action is viewed as certain loss while continuation of action may recover all the investment. Therefore, the utility resulted from possible gain is greater than that of further investment, resulting in tendency to choose further investment. Cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) suggested that people tend to justify their previous decisions if the outcome is inconsistent with expectation or beliefs. Decision makers' unwillingness to admit the incorrectness of prior resources allocation makes them committed to the initial choice (Brockener, 1992).

Although Arkes and Blumer's (1985) work only demonstrated the sunk cost effect caused by monetary investment, they pointed out the existence of nonmonetary sunk cost. For example, people often feel difficult to decide whether to continue an unhappy relationship or a terrible job after devoting great effort into it. As suggested by Teger (1980), people feel that they have too much invested to quit. Other psychologists also recognized the effects of investments that involve time and effort in real life. To differentiate these investments from financial investments, psychologists refer to these types of sunk cost as behavioral sunk costs (e.g., Cunha & Caldieraro, 2009; Heath, 1995; Zeelenberg & van Dijk, 1997). Although behavioral investment involves both time and effort, this concept is restricted to the investment of effort resource rather than temporal resource. One can incur temporal cost (i.e., waiting) without paying any effort (Park & Jung, 2014) so investment of time is not necessarily behavioral investment. But behavioral investment can be operationalized as the amount of time spent in pursing the target as long as effort resource is devoted along with the time.

Mental accounting principle (Thaler, 1985) has been widely applied in studies predicting behavioral sunk cost effect. Soleman (2001) argued that people used different mental accounting rules for effort resource and money. His study demonstrated that past investment of effort (measured by how much time spent in working) did not lead to the sunk cost effect observed for monetary investment. However, if the participants were facilitated to associate time unit with value of money (i.e., reminding them hourly wage), the sunk cost effect reappeared. He concluded that people lack ability to account time in the same way that they account money. Zeelenberg and van Dijk (1997) examined the relationship between behavioral investment and risk aversion/seeking, a basic argument in sunk cost literature. Their experiments demonstrated that because participants don't want their prior work result in nothing, which can be caused by the risky option, they tend to accept the certain gain or loss (Zeelenberg & van Dijk, 1997). However, behavioral sunk cost in this study was also examined in relation to monetary award/loss.

Contrary to these findings, studies of Cunha and Caldieraro (2009, 2010) demonstrated that pure behavioral investment without linkage to monetary equivalent can also cause sunk cost effect through effort-justification mechanism (Aronson & Mills, 1959). In the context of product choice, their experiments observed that consumers are more likely to stick to the prior choice if they spent greater effort in determining the choice. However, this effect is dependent on the magnitude of sunk cost value relative to the opportunity cost. For example, if the available alternative is much more valuable than the prior choice, consumers will be less likely to stick to the prior choice than if the alternative is only slightly superior.

Moreover, investment of effort can lead to escalation of commitment to a course of action if the goal of investment has not been achieved (Staw, 1981). Escalation of commitment describes the situation that people tend to commit greater resources to the failing course of action. This tendency becomes more robust with the increase of resources committed to the action and times of failure (Brockener, 1992). This may be a result of increase of outcome desirability after prior investment. Dissonance arises when people engage in cognitively demanding tasks which are undesirable (Axsom, 1989). People are motivated to reduce dissonance through a compensation process in which they exaggerate the desirability of the outcome of the action by adding consonant cognitions to it. Therefore, the same outcome should be perceived as more desirable by people who invest more effort than by those who invest less into the decision making (Cunha & Caldieraro, 2009).

Behavioral Investment and Tourism Product Choice

Experiments conducted by Cunha and Caldieraro (2009, 2010) operationalized behavioral investment as the effort participants spend in searching for the best option among given alternatives. Participants were asked to add the ratings of a set of product attributes to decide which product is the best. In the condition of greater behavioral investment, participants need to compare more choices or evaluate larger numbers of product attributes than participants in less behavioral investment condition. Their study showed that sunk cost can be induced by the effort spent in choosing the target. And the behavioral investment sunk cost in this type enlarged the perceived value of the choice, resulting in less likelihood to switch to higher value alternatives.

In the experiments, after participants decided which product to purchase, the experimenter told them that there is an additional option and directly provide them the overall attribute rating which is slightly higher than the prior choice (e.g., score of 31 for the additional option vs. score of 30 for the prior best choice). The result showed that if the participants spend more effort in deciding the best choice, the more likely the participants will refuse to switch to the better offer. The behavioral sunk cost effect identified in this lab experiment is totally applicable to real situation. Consumers need to evaluate product attributes and compare with others each time they encounter a new option. However, the information available for evaluation in reality is not as straightforward as in lab because it is not a simple math of adding given attribute scores. For unfamiliar and costly product categories, the evaluation process can be said as very cognitively demanding (Garbarino & Edell, 1997) which may even prevent the consumers from spending extra effort to evaluate a new option if a choice has been made. Therefore, the lab experiment result strongly supported the argument that the more effort a consumer invests in making the choice the more likely the consumer will stick to this choice.

In the same vein, behavioral investment in tourism decision can be operationalized as the effort spent in choosing the destination by evaluating and comparing the values of alternatives. Greater effort spent in the process leads to larger sunk cost attributed to the choice. The results of Cunha and Caldieraro's (2009, 2010) studies implied that tourists may stick to the destination they chose after spending great effort in comparing alternatives. The perceived value of the chosen destination increases with amount of effort invested in making the choice. And the effect of behavioral investment may be more significant in destination decision because in lab experiments of Cunha and Caldieraro (2009, 2010), the values of alternatives are obvious to participants but in real situations the value of an additional choice is usually uncertain to tourists. The initial behavioral investment may inhibit tourists to spend extra effort to identify the value of the additional choice.

Behavioral Investment in Information Search

Literature of tourist information search behavior supports that information search effort can become investment or sunk cost. A conventional view about tourist information search relies on the assumption that the majority of tourism decision is risky decision because of high uncertainty of the outcome (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005) and large cost of time and money (Mill & Morrison, 2012). Because more information means less risk, external information search for tourism decision is generally longer than tangible consumer goods (Mill & Morrison, 2012), implying that significant behavioral investment in the process is possible.

Information search starts with internal search such as using previous knowledge and experience as the basis for travel planning. Tourists begin external information search (i.e., acquiring information from the market place) when internal information is insufficient to make the decision (Gursoy & McCleary, 2004). "The economics of information" theory (Stigler, 1961) indicates that information search is perceived as a cost that can be divided into three separate components: time spent, monetary cost, and effort required (Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998). People would continue searching until the perceived benefit of additional information outweighs the cost (Stigler, 1961). Therefore, sunk cost effect may occur if the cost of information search behavior cannot be covered by benefit received. External search is associated with the cost of time and money while internal search is related to cognitive effort required (Gursoy & McCleary, 2004). Time invested in information search is usually regarded as the most important external cost (Stigler, 1961) and it should be treated as part of the behavioral investment.

Proposition 1: If a tourist spends more time in destination information search, he/she will be more likely to travel to the selected destination than to switch to potentially better alternatives.

The cost of internal search is determined by cognitive effort required. Efforts include evaluation, integration, and retrieval of information regarding global evaluations and attribute information (Beach & Mitchell, 1978). Cognitive effort is also involved after external search for product evaluation. All in all, the time and cognitive effort spent in searching tourism information in the purpose of making satisfactory travel decision such as destination choice, trip planning and service provider selection can produce sunk cost effect if expected outcome has not been achieved.

Proposition 2: If a tourist spends more cognitive effort in destination information search, he/she will be more likely to travel to the selected destination than to switch to potentially better alternatives.

In addition to selecting destination, tourists may also face the choice between taking a trip and staying at home. According to conventional views of economists, rational individuals allocate to objects that bring the highest utility and involves the least risk (Coleman & Fararo, 1992; Peter & Tarpey, 1975). The expected benefits and total cost of a trip are more difficult to estimate than that of entertaining and recreational products at home environment (Mill & Morrison, 2012; Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). Therefore, rational individuals are more likely to choose familiar local entertainment rather than taking a trip unless they have sufficient tourism information that reduces decision risk.

However, global-wise popularity of leisure travel during vacations demonstrates that tourists may be making irrational decisions caused by contextual factors like sunk cost (Park & Jung, 2014). There are two types of information search behavior involved in this process. One is general tourism information search in order to decide whether taking tourism is worthy or not. For example, consumers may surf online to check if there is any attractive vacation package in promotion at the moment or to learn if any vacation destination is becoming popular. The other one is more specific and involves making a trip plan and evaluating if this particular trip worth taking in comparison with staying at home. In determining if a tourism experience is more valuable than enjoying local recreation facilities, individuals need to collect information to estimate cost, benefit and risk. Although individuals may not realize, when they spend more time in collecting tourism information they are actually investing more resources in actualizing a trip. Finally, to justify the significant effort they spent, and to avoid wasting the information they obtained, they will be more likely to take a trip than to stay at home during the vacation. Park & Jung's (2014) finding on temporal sunk cost supports that if tourists perceived higher behavioral sunk cost relating to a planned trip, the possibility of taking the trip will be higher.

Proposition 3: If a tourist spends more time and cognitive effort in searching tourism information for a vacation or in planning a particular trip, he/she will be more likely to take a trip during the vacation rather than stay at home.

Behavioral Investment and Brand Commitment

Sunk cost effect on consumers' brand commitment has been examined under the frame work of investment model developed by Rusbult (1980). This model was initially developed for predicting individual's satisfaction and commitment to a romantic relationship. It was later applied to the understanding of consumer's brand commitment (Geyer, Dotson & King, 1991; Sung & Campbell, 2007; Sung & Choi, 2010) and tourists' brand loyalty (Li & Petrick, 2008, 2010). Mathematically, commitment to a relationship can be defined as

Commitment = Satisfaction – Quality of Alternatives + Investment Size

Applying investment model to consumer's brand commitment, researchers identified positive correlation between consumer's investment size and brand commitment (Geyer, Dotson & King, 1991; Sung & Campbell, 2009; Sung & Choi, 2010). For example, Sung and Campbell (2009) posited that the psychological process underling consumer-brand relationship building and maintaining is similar to that of romantic relationship. In their study, the investment size was operationalized as the amount of money consumers spent in purchasing products of certain brands and the time of using these products. The result showed the more money the consumer spent in previous purchase and the longer the consumer has stayed with the brands, the more committed the consumer is to the brands. The investment model was also examined in the context of tourist behavior by Li and Petrick (2008, 2010). Their studies examined the influence of cruise passengers' investment size on their attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. Size of behavioral investment was operationalized as the amount of time and effort spent before getting used to a new cruise line, patronage with a cruise brand, and perceived emotional investment on a cruise brand. The results showed that larger investment on a brand often leads to more positive brand attitude, higher brand preference, and higher brand performance evaluation as compared with other brands.

Findings based on investment model validated arguments in both the marketing and tourism literature that sunk costs have a positive and direct effect on customer loyalty (Backman & Crompton, 1991; Beerli, Martin, & Quintana, 2004). Common characteristics of these studies are that behavioral investment is measured in terms of length of using the product or staying with the brand, which is related to direct experience with the object. Behavioral investment on a tangible product brands may be reasonably measured as how long or how often the consumer uses the products of certain brands. But people who visit a place frequently may not perceive this behavior as an investment. Many business travelers visit the same destination many times because this is their job. Moreover, traveling to the same resort destination each year for vacation itself can be considered as commitment or loyalty to the destination. Treating this behavior as a predictor in the investment model is akin to using loyalty to predict loyalty.

Therefore, other indicators of behavioral investment on the brand should be considered in addition to previous purchase/visit. For instance, the effort spent in searching for the best ways to maximize the benefit from this vacation while controlling the total cost is a valid indicator of investment. If tourists invest in pursuit of certain benefits from the vacation, they will be more likely to stick to the travel plan until expected benefits are received. In addition, paying effort to justify the trip plans or previous visit to the destination is also an important investment that may lead to commitment. Justifying prior investment or choice has been believed as a fundamental cause for sunk cost effect (Arkes & Blumer, 1985; Brockener, 1992).

Proposition 4: Tourists' behavioral investment in forms of purchase frequency, pursuit of benefit or trip justification can enhance commitment to destination brands and tourism service brands.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

By combining the literature of sunk cost effect in psychology and literature of tourist decision making, the authors propose that behavioral investment exist in tourist decision process which can generate sunk cost effect. Behavioral investment of tourists has been defined in this study as the effort resource spent in the process of tourism decision making in order to make the optimal choice or to obtain expected benefit. It includes the cognitive resource required in the process, the time spent along with the action, and the effort of justification. Behavioral investment occurs in both internal and external information search in purpose of selecting tourism destinations/tourism products, deciding whether to take tourism during vacation, and making a trip plan. Traveling to a place, experiencing the destination, purchasing and consuming a product are forms of behavioral investment according to the investment model (Li & Petrick, 2008).

Situations that behavioral investment produces sunk cost effect in tourist decision are summarized as the following. First, before a choice is made, the effort spent in collecting information and conducing evaluation becomes behavioral sunk cost that relates to the interim choice. Second, when a person begins to invest in collecting tourism information for a vacation, either in deciding whether to travel or in planning a trip, the more effort the person invests, the more sunk cost will be produced if the trip has not been fulfilled. Therefore, to justify the investment, the person is more likely to take tourism or implement the travel plan. Third, if a person invests on a particular brand, either destination brand or tourism product brand, this investment will enhance his/her commitment to the brand. People tend to be more committed to their prior choice in order to justify the previous decision (Brockner, 1992) to avoid cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

This conceptual work has important theoretical and practical implications on tourist decision study and practical implications on tourism marketing. Theoretically, a conceptual framework of tourist behavioral investment in decision making is developed based on theories of sunk cost effect (e.g., Arkes & Blumer, 1985; Kahneman, 2011), especially those relates to behavioral investment (e.g., Cunha & Caldieraro, 2009, 2010). Although theoretical models regarding tourist decision making and relevant empirical studies are prevailing, the knowledge about the irrational aspect of tourist decision is still very limited. The authors appeal to more academic effort on the irrationality of tourist behavior to enrich tourism literature in an under-explored but prominent direction. Practically, destination marketers should recognize the power of sunk cost effect in tourist decision making. According to the proposition about brand commitment, designing marketing programs that induce more behavioral investment on the destination brand may improve customer loyalty. On the other hand, reducing behavioral investment in information search and alternative evaluation is beneficial to emerging brands.

This study develops four propositions that have not been tested. One limitation of these propositions is that the scope of literature reviewed in this study is limited a by the personal knowledge of the authors. The findings of studies reviewed may also have limitation in applying to other situations and supporting a sound proposition. Future studies can examine the propositions in certain contexts and further develop them into hypotheses.

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MAKING YOUR BOOTH A MAGNET: SCALE DEVELOPMENT FOR BOOTH ATTRACTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT

The market of exhibitions is a rising market in the tourism and hospitality industry. Although former studies have addressed factors to assist exhibitors' success at trade shows, knowledge gap exists in systematically proposing the concept of booth attractiveness. Therefore, this purpose of this study is to develop a scale for booth attractiveness. Through literature review, focus group, and experts' comments, this study generates 30 items for booth attractiveness. Then, 122 samples from attendees at a tourism exhibition are collected for exploratory factor analysis, resulting in one 18-item six-dimensional scale. For re-evaluating items, 129 samples from attendees at five trade shows in different industries are collected for confirmatory factor analysis. Finally, this study develops a scale of booth attractiveness based on six dimensions: booth decoration (3 items), booth staff (5 items), booth advertising materials (3 items), booth released psychological stimuli (3 items), booth layout (2 items), and booth location (2 items).

KEYWORDS: Booth attractiveness; Environmental stimuli; Psychological stimuli; Trade show

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been to a trade show? Let us recall the moment when you walk into a convention center, especially when hard to decide which to take a look at first among many booths. Will you check the one offering special brochures? Or, visit the booth providing a great discount? Or, just look at the nearest booth? Attending trade shows are like walking at shopping malls. We have the tendency to look at the attractive things first. Shops and booths that have special "magnets" could efficiently catch our motivation to visit. This study focuses on attractiveness of booths at trade shows.

Trade shows are considered to be the influential marketing activities and the best ways to improve a company's profit, promote its new products, and detect emerging market trends (Rodriguez Oromendía, Reina Paz, & Rufín, 2015). Trade shows that open to the public usually have more exhibitors, lower entry fees, and a larger volume of attendees with a more liberal and friendly atmosphere (Ferrier, Gottlieb, & Brown, 2014). With fixed time period in a trade show, firms in the same industry are competing with each other to display products and services. Visitors seldom set targeting booths to visit before attending a trade show (Blythe, 1999), and seldom plan to buy a specific product in advance (Trade Show Bureau, 1986). Thus, booth attractiveness is crucial.

In the three-stage model of industrial trade show performance built by Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995) , it define “attraction efficiency” of booths by how efficient a booth is in attracting target audiences. Other researches that concerned booth attraction have mentioned ways to improve booth attraction, such as booth layout, physical surroundings, appreciate signature, product display, gifts, and booth staffing (Jung, 2005; Milner, 2009). However, current literature lacks knowledge to systematically explain the concept of booth attractiveness, especially in validating measures of booth attractiveness cross different types of trade shows. The absence of suitable measures for booth attraction causes a knowledge gap which needs to be fulfilled. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to conceptualize and develop a scale for booth attractiveness. The valid and reliable scale would be valuable for both academy and practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Trade shows

After Dr. Weber and Dr. Chon argued the lack of knowledge on trade shows in 1987, the related literature has increased considerably in recent years (Milner, 2009). Many studies concerns attendees’ feelings toward trade shows. For example, Jung (2008) explored visitors’ perceived exhibition service quality, Milner (2009) analyzed consumer behavior at industrial travel shows, Rittichainuwat and Mair (2011) concerned visitor attendance motivations at consumer travel exhibitions, Lim (2013) analyzed visitor perceived time pressure and value perception toward travel shows, and Gottlieb, Brown and Ferrier (2012) developed and examined a model to measure consumer perceptions of trade show effectiveness within a business-to-consumer context.

On the other hand, inquiry/leads, competition analysis, audience survey, cost per inquiry were listed as measures for exhibitors’ success (Pizam, 1985). Rosson and Seringhaus (1995) presented a model of visitor-exhibitor interaction, and pointed out the necessary to emphasize service delivery of exhibitors. Gopalakrishna, Lilien and Bulte (1996) explained differences in trade show effectiveness across industries, companies, and two countries. A 16-item scale was developed for assessing exhibitors’ perceptions of their performance (Hansen, 2002). Oromendia, Paz and Rufin (2015) proposed the approach to measure exhibitor’s performance through combining comments from trade organizers, exhibitors and customers. There are also a group of studies discussing how to select the right trade show to attend (e.g., Bonoma, 1983; Gopalakrishna & Williams, 1992; Kijewski et al., 1993; Rinallo, Borghini, & Golfetto, 2010; Shoham, 1992).

In terms of booths, Bitner (1992) proposed that booth layout and physical surroundings are extremely significant for improving attractiveness. Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995) pointed that attention-getting techniques, booth size, strategic booth location are beneficial to exhibitors. Also, booth design and booth staffing are important elements to better serve consumers (Jung, 2005). Apart from that, giveaways like t-shirts, roses, umbrellas are effective incentives to attract attendees (Milner, 2009).

Attractiveness of environmental stimuli

The Mehrabian– Russell (M–R) model, first proposed in 1974, suggested that the combined effects of pleasure, arousal, and dominance could influence people's behavior in particular environments. People would want to remain in environments that were both pleasant and arousing. According to Berlyne (1971), the attractiveness of environmental stimuli is a function of showing complexity. Stimuli that are characterized by an optimal level of complexity are assumed to gain maximum attractiveness, whereas stimuli deviating from this optimal level towards a higher or lower complexity are considered less attractive. Important characteristics of environmental stimuli that determine their complexity are information rate and layout. Information rate relates to the number of information units that are presented within a certain time interval, which is usually higher for new. Also, easy perceptibility can decrease the information rate. With respect to a store, a better lighting can increase its perceptibility. Customers will feel overloaded if the information rate is too high, while they will become bored if the information rate is too low. People will benefit from careful layout of an environment which helps to orientate, to find the way and learn to understand signs, to get the feeling of personal control and mastery (Bitner, 1992). In a store, signs and information tables can improve the layout. The layout should be clear but not too simple, so that there is the possibility of surprise and unexpectedness.

Attractiveness can be understood as the capacity of an environment to be perceived in a way that induces positive emotions, positive cognitive appraisal, and capacity to encourage people to approach or enter. In fact, many studies have shown that emotional evaluation of the environment is a key determinant of one's approach behavior towards the environment (e.g., Baker et al., 1992, Spies et al., 1997; Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Sweeney & Wyber, 2002; Yalch & Spangenberg, 2000).

Store attractiveness

Booth attractiveness at the exhibitions is similar to store attractiveness at malls. With limited literature in booth attractiveness, although differences exist between booths and stores, it would still be beneficial to review former studies in store attractiveness. Kotler (1973) argued atmosphere is among the most important and usable marketing tools in point of sale. The store itself can influence the consumer's patronage decision by its unique atmosphere in an environment. Darden, Ordem, and Darden (1983) found that consumers' beliefs about the physical attractiveness of a store had a higher correlation with patronage intentions compared to selection variety, merchandise quality and general price level. Specific types of in-store stimulus, such as store layouts, noise levels, color arrangement, lighting, in-store promotions, evoke different emotional responses thus lead to approach or avoidance behaviors (Darden, Ordem, & Darden, 1983).

Atmosphere is defined as a holistic cognitive-emotional impression and multisensory judgment, immediate experience of many factors (material architectural qualities such as materials, proportions, rhythms, coloring as well as temperature, light, scent, sound, harmony, other people being present, etc.), which result to a specific mood (Havik et al., 2013). Ambient factors include invisible background conditions in the environment, temperature, lighting, music, and scent. In-store elements such as color, lighting, style, or music may have more immediate effects on consumers' shopping decision making than other marketing inputs that are not present such as advertising (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982).

In addition, there are another two factors, design factor and social factor, which have significant influences to store patronage behavior. Design factors are store environmental elements that are more visual in nature than ambient factors. These elements may be functional and/or aesthetic in nature (Marans & Spreckelmeyer, 1982). Functional store elements include layout, comfort, and privacy while aesthetic elements include factors such as architecture, color, materials, and style (Marans & Spreckelmeyer, 1982). The social factor refer to the people who are within a store's environment, its elements include number, type, and behavior of other customers and sales personnel (Marans & Spreckelmeyer, 1982).

Dimensions of booth attractiveness

Through literature review, this study proposes four dimensions of booth attractiveness. These four dimensions are introduced in the following sections.

Booth layout

Layout is related to a visitor's mental reflection of general clarity: legibility, spatial order, and overall spatial design quality (Dębek, 2015). In view of the above considerations, more effort is needed to understand the influence of booth layout on potential buyers' attractions in booth settings. The emphasis for location in hotel properties also works in booth layout too. Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995) indicated that firms can use strategic location and size of booth to enhance booth attraction efficiency. The location and the size of the booth, as well as the products displayed and demonstrated play a significant role in booth attraction (Salem, Lino, & Rauterberg, 2010). Milner (2009) conducted a study on consumer behavior at an industrial trade show, and found that visitors can be lured to a booth because the booth simply looked interesting; moreover, design, arrangement and appearances of the booth are shared by visitors as factors to catch their eyes.

Booth staff

Nicely dressed and cooperative salespeople are symbols for a prestige-image store (Baker & Parasuraman, 1994). Dębek (2015) pointed out that friendly staff can make a store attractive. Besides, in the studies of trade show, Milner (2009) pointed that positive comments of booth personnel includes politeness and advice; the latter comment can be deduced as the quality of staffs' introduction of their products. In addition, the number of booth staff, as well as their training and background plays a vital role for booth contact (Gopalakrishna & Lilien, 1995; Williams, Gopalakrishna, & Cox, 1993). Therefore, to create an attractive booth, exhibitors should think about booth staff as well.

Booth decoration

Arousal theory posits that pleasure is related to the observer's level of arousal, which is influenced by the uncertainty posed by the environmental stimulus. Berlyne pointed out that stimulus uncertainty is defined by the "collative properties" of novelty, complexity, and various ordering characteristics. According to the information theory, environmental stimulation can be measured by the information rate or "load" of an environment. The load of an environment also refers to its level of novelty and complexity. Novelty means the unexpected, the surprising, the new, the unfamiliar. Complexity relates to the number of elements or features and to the extent of motion or change in an environment (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982). Some intermediate degree of environmental complexity seems to be preferred; it is likely that optimal levels of arousal are affected by individual differences as well as temporal and contextual issues (Wohlwill, 1976, p. 50). Thus, attendees are likely to be attracted by the booth which makes them feel special and exhibitors can use different materials to decorate.

Even though there are many atmospheric variables that can affect the entire experience, lighting has been the focus of many studies because of the myriad ways in which it can be manipulated to create different moods within a space (Baker et al., 1992; Roush, 1994). Summers and Hebert (2001) proved that display lighting has effect on approach-avoidance behavior according to responses it brings. Thus, the lighting is an important element of retail environmental stimulus. Additionally, color is a strong visual component of a physical setting (Eiseman, 1998) and has a strong impact on consumers' affective states (Crowley, 1993; Gorn et al., 1997). Prior studies have shown that colors have a psychophysiological effect on the human organism (Bellizzi et al., 1983). With respect to a store, color, lighting and other in-store elements can have significant impact on consumers' patronage intention (Baker, Grewal, & Parasuraman, 1994). Therefore, exhibitors should make full use of color arrangement and lighting to improve the booth attractiveness.

Booth released psychological stimuli

Lim (2013) conducted a research in a consumer travel fair and found that visitors can be influenced by time pressure because of time-limited promotions which are made available for a short period of time. In addition, there are various studies in the consumer behavior literature indicating that time pressure can increase consumers' perceptions of value so as to change their behavior (e.g., Aggarwal & Vaidyanathan, 2002; Lim, 2013; Lin & Wu, 2005). Thus, this study inferred that visitors can be attracted to the booth because of "time-limited promotions", which is a common attention-getting technique used by exhibitors and a feature of the trade show. Special discounts offered only at trade shows are also forms of time-limited promotions to cause visitors' psychological stimuli. Furthermore, due to bandwagon effect (Aronson & Aronson, 2012; Gifford, 2007), exhibit attendees' psychological stimuli toward a booth could also be aroused by seeing many people visiting the booth.

SCALE DEVELOPMENT

Step 1: Item generation

This study conducted multiple steps to generate items for booth attractiveness. First of all, the authors extracted 30 items from former literature and sorted the items into four dimensions (booth layout, booth staff, booth decoration, and booth released psychological stimuli) based on mutual agreement. For booth layout, the authors reviewed literature in environmental psychology and exhibition management (Dębek, 2015; Gopalakrishna & Lilien, 1995; Milner, 2009; Salem, Lino, & Rauterberg, 2010). For booth staff, the authors reviewed literature in exhibition management and service management (Baker & Parasuraman, 1994; Dębek, 2015; Gopalakrishna & Lilien 1995; Milner, 2009; Williams, Gopalakrishna & Cox, 1993). For booth decoration, the authors literature in environmental appraisal, arousal theory and information theory (Baker et al., 1992; Baker, Grewal, & Parasuraman, 1994; Bellizzi et al., 1983; Bilotta & Evans, 2010; Crowley, 1993; Dębek, 2015; Eiseman, 1998; Gorn et al., 1997; Roush, 1994; Summers & Hebert, 2001; Wooten & Reed, 1998; Mehta et al., 2013; Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Wohlwill, 1976). For booth released psychological stimuli, the authors reviewed literature about time pressure and environmental psychology (Aggarwal & Vaidyanathan, 2002; Aronson & Aronson, 2012; Gifford, 2007; Lim, 2013; Lin & Wu, 2005).

Then, the authors consulted with a focus group consisted by five experts (including one professor, one senior tour guide, two tourism doctoral students, and one tourism master student) to assess the preliminary list of items extracted from literature review, and seek their comments on revising, deleting, or adding items. Six items were deleted in this step, resulting in 24 items. After the focus group, the authors sent scale items via email to another three experts who have rich work experiences in exhibitions. Then, two items were deleted, resulting in 22 items in total. Finally, this study proposes 22 items to measure booth attractiveness based on the following four dimensions: booth layout (9 items), booth staff (5 items), booth decoration (5 items), and booth released psychological stimuli (3 items). Then, a total of 33 tour guides were invited to revise wordings of our survey items.

Step 2: Item purification

After generation of initial items, the 22 items were turned into a survey questionnaire. A five-point scale (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree) was used to assess the 22 items of booth attractiveness. In the first round of data collection, this study collected a total of 122 usable responses from a tourism exhibition in Xiamen, China. The subjects to item ratio was 5.55:1, which is better than 5:1, passing the criteria suggested by Gorsuch (1974). An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with a principle component and varimax rotation was then performed. We retained items with eigenvalues greater than one, as well as with factor loadings more than 0.4 on one factor and less than 0.4 on other factors. At this step, four items were deleted.

Table 1 presents results of EFA. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity were used to ensure that the data had sufficient inherent correlations to run EFA. The KMO index was 0.755 and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at the level of 0.001, which justified the use of EFA. The screen plot showed that a six-factor solution with 18 items was the optimal solution. The combined factor loadings accounted for 62.72% of the total variance. These six factors were named as: booth decoration, booth staff, booth advertising materials, booth released psychological stimuli, booth layout, and booth location.

Table 1. Results of EFA (Sample 1, *N* =122)

Items	Mean	Factor loading	% of variance	Cronbach's α
Factor 1: Booth decoration			24.22	.74
18. The booth has suitable lighting design	3.25	.77		
17. The booth is well decorated	3.25	.76		
19. Color usage of the booth looks great	3.47	.72		
Factor 2: Booth staff			9.60	.76
13. I feel comfortable to talk with the booth staff	3.83	.81		
10. The booth staff delivers polite gestures	3.93	.78		
14. The booth staff provides professional introductions	3.65	.65		
11. Clothing of the booth staff nicely fits with the work	3.80	.64		
12. Clothing of the booth staff has unique features	3.39	.47		
Factor 3: Booth advertising materials			8.64	.82
8. Advertising materials provided by the booth are special	3.26	.83		
7. Content of advertising materials provided by the booth are useful	3.47	.79		
9. The booth provides detail advertising materials	3.34	.72		
Factor 4: Booth released psychological stimuli			7.60	.77
21. Special discounts promoted by the booth motivate my interest to take it a look	3.30	.85		
22. The shopping crowd of the booth stimulates my visit of it	3.28	.82		
20. The booth's time-limited promotions make me want to check them	3.18	.67		
Factor 5: Booth layout			6.71	.61
3. I think the size of the booth is suitable	3.66	.75		
4. Signs of the booth directly catch my eyes	3.37	.72		
Factor 6: Booth location			5.94	.64
2. I think the location of the booth is easy for attendees to find it	3.53	.80		
1. I think it is easy to arrive the booth in this trade show	3.53	.76		

Step 3: Re-evaluating items

The next stage in the scale development was to re-evaluate the factor structure of the scale using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The CFA model is a first-order six-factor oblique model produced from the EFA in step 2 and was re-verified with a confirmatory analysis model. The scale's convergent and discriminant validities were also determined. In order to increase the generalizability to a wide range for any destination, the settings for the second round of data collection was five trade shows in different industries in China. Through convenience sampling onsite, this study distributed survey questionnaires. A total of 129 valid responses were collected. The subjects to item ratio was 7.17:1, which is better than 5:1, passing the criteria suggested by Gorsuch (1974).

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with maximum-likelihood estimation in Mplus 7 was applied to examine the factor structure of the booth attractiveness. The initial estimation of the 18-item 6-factor model generated a satisfactory result (χ^2=198.31, *df*=116, χ^2/*df*=1.71, *p*<0.01; CFI=0.93, TLI=.91, SRMR=0.07, RMSEA=0.07). Table 2 lists the results of CFA. All items were significant (*p*<0.01) with factor loading of 0.46-0.91. The t-values of factor loading in all measurement items were significant (*p*< 0.01). The composite reliabilities of constructs were above 0.68, while the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct was larger than 0.61. To achieve discriminant validity, the coefficient for a correlation between a pair of constructs should be lower than the squared root of AVE of each construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Every construct in the model achieves this requirement, indicating adequate discriminant validity (Table 3). Composite reliability (CR) of all constructs was 0.68-0.86, and almost all were above the, indicating adequate internal consistency (Hair et al., 1998). On the basis of these results, the 18-item six-dimensional scale of booth attractiveness was reliable and valid (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

Table 2. Results of CFA (Sample 2, *N* =129)

Items	Mean	Factor loading	Composite reliability	AVE
Factor 1: Booth decoration			.86	.78
17. The booth is well decorated	3.50	.79		
18. The booth has suitable lighting design	3.57	.87		
19. Color usage of the booth looks great	3.50	.82		
Factor 2: Booth staff			.82	.61
10. The booth staff delivers polite gestures	3.95	.80		
11. Clothing of the booth staff nicely fits with the work	3.93	.88		
12. Clothing of the booth staff has unique features	3.53	.46		
13. I feel comfortable to talk with the booth staff	3.98	.86		
14. The booth staff provides professional introductions	3.93	.65		
Factor 3: Booth advertising materials			.85	.77
7. Content of advertising materials provided by the booth are useful	3.62	.81		
8. Advertising materials provided by the booth are special	3.55	.77		
9. The booth provides detail advertising materials	3.64	.81		
Factor 4: Booth released psychological stimuli			.81	.73
20. The booth's time-limited promotions make me want to check them	3.26	.68		
21. Special discounts promoted by the booth motivate my interest to take it a look	3.32	.88		
22. The shopping crowd of the booth stimulates my visit of it	3.24	.75		
Factor 5: Booth layout			.68	.76
3. I think the size of the booth is suitable	3.57	.81		
4. Signs of the booth directly catch my eyes	3.58	.64		

Factor 6: Booth location			.73	.79
1. I think it is easy to arrive the booth in this trade show	3.46	.64		
2. I think the location of the booth is easy for attendees to find it	3.55	.91		

Table 3. Correlations and squared roots of AVE (Sample 2, *N*=129)

	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5	Factor6
Factor 1	*0.88*					
Factor 2	.45	*0.78*				
Factor 3	.40	.67	*0.88*			
Factor 4	.23	.24	.34	*0.85*		
Factor 5	.36	.43	.64	.37	*0.87*	
Factor 6	.23	.39	.45	.32	.60	*0.89*

Notes: 1. The diagonal elements are the squared root of the average variance extracted.
2. The off-diagonal elements are the correlations between the constructs ($p<0.05$).

CONCLUSION

This study develops a scale of booth attractiveness based on six dimensions: booth decoration (3 items), booth staff (5 items), booth advertising materials (3 items), booth released psychological stimuli (3 items), booth layout (2 items), and booth location (2 items). Compared to previous studies in trade shows (e.g., Gottlieb, Brown, & Ferrier, 2012; Hansen, 2002; Oromendia, Paz, & Rufin, 2015; Rosson & Seringhaus, 1995), this scale provides a systematic measurement for attractiveness of booths. In addition to the formerly addressed concerns of booth decoration, staff, layout and location (Bitner, 1992; Gopalakrishna & Lilien, 1995; Jung, 2005; Milner, 2009), this scale contributes insightful knowledge to the academy by proposing booth advertising materials and booth released psychological stimuli as dimensions of booth attractiveness. In terms of practical implications, exhibitors could utilize the scale to evaluate attractiveness of their booths. Exhibition organizers could also apply the scale to provide valuable assistance and guidance to exhibitors. The limit of this study is that samples were all collected in China. As in the collectivism culture, Chinese attendees' perceived psychological stimuli of shopping crowd might be more positive than in the individualism culture. Therefore, future studies are recommended to explore cultural differences in attendees' perceived booth attractiveness.

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DESTINATION IMAGE AND PERCEIVED RISK OF VISITING UKRAINE: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF CHINESE MALE OUTBOUND TOURISTS

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ABSTRACT

Despite increasing research in destination image, few attempts have been made to explore the link between destination image and perceived risk. This paper addresses this significant gap in the literature. The paper examines the destination image and perceived risk by exploring Chinese tourists visiting Ukraine. Due to the country's 2013 crisis, political instability is still notable there. The paper reports the findings derived from 17 in-depth interviews with Chinese respondents who recently visited Ukraine. While television news and Internet provide the main sources of information, it was found that these tourists had little knowledge about Ukraine prior to their visit. In terms of destination image, the most important perceived destination images relating to Ukraine for Chinese tourists were its being a risky country and the beauty of Ukrainian women. The two main perceived risks of visiting Ukraine are political instability and language barrier. Some respondents, however, argued that the perceived risk actually increased their willingness to visit Ukraine.

KEYWORDS: Destination image, Perceived risk, Chinese outbound tourists, Ukraine

INTRODUCTION

The dramatic growth of the international tourism market has played an important role in economic development recently. According to Statista (2016), the number of international tourist arrivals reached 1.09 billion by the end of 2014, contributing US$7.17 trillion to the global economy. By 2030, international tourist arrivals are expected to exceed 1.8 billion. In terms of international tourist expenditure, the rapid development of the international tourist market has created US$1159 billion global international tourism revenue. Despite its economic significance, the tourism industry is highly vulnerable to natural and human-caused disasters and crisis events (Faulkner, 2001). Political instability as one of the most common forms of crisis events has been widely examined by recent studies (Causevic & Lynch, 2013; Steiner, 2007; Yap & Saha, 2013). According to Hall and O'Sullivan's (1996) working definition, political instability is usually understood as a condition under which political legitimacy, social order, and governance are challenged. Though the adverse effects of political instability have been identified, a review of the literature reveals that there is a notable lack of understanding of tourists' perceptions of political instability. To fill this gap in the literature, this study attempts to examine Chinese outbound tourists' perceptions of political instability in Ukraine. In so doing, special attention was given to destination image and the perceived risk of visiting Ukraine.

Ukraine has suffered from political instability as a result of the Ukraine crisis and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea's entry into the Russian Federation. International tourist numbers to Ukraine have experienced a steep drop due to this political instability, falling from 24.7 million in 2013 to 12.4 million in 2015 (Visit Kiev Ukraine, 2013). Given that the tourism industry provides crucial support for Ukraine's economy, the country is facing financial difficulties due to its shrinking inbound tourism market. In order to restore its inbound tourism market and promote economic development, the Ukrainian government is taking measures to attract more foreign visitors. Given fast-growing Chinese outbound tourist numbers and tourist expenditure, the Ukrainian government is attempting to attract more Chinese outbound tourists. For example, between 20 June and 30 September 2016, Chinese citizens can obtain a visa on arrival at Boryspil International Airport that allows them to stay for up to 15 days (Xinhua, 2016). Given the close link between destination image and behavioural intentions identified by Chen and Tsai (2007), it is extremely important for Ukraine tourism marketers to understand Chinese outbound tourists' perceived image of Ukraine in order to better market the country and to service these tourists. As the conflict in the east of Ukraine is still ongoing, visiting Ukraine is possibly more risky than visiting other Eastern European countries. Thus, it is important to ask: How do Chinese tourists perceive the risk of visiting a politically unstable Ukraine? The purpose of this study is, therefore, twofold: 1) to identify Chinese tourists' destination image of Ukraine, and 2) to identify Chinese tourists' perceived risk of visiting Ukraine.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination Image

Destination image is generally defined as "the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination" among the different definitional constructions (Crompton, 1979, p. 18). Destination image is found to be a critical factor influencing tourists' selection of tourism destinations (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Given the significance of destination image for tourism marketers, various studies have focused on the factors influencing the destination image formation process to better manage destination image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004). The two primary components of the destination image identified by tourism scholars are cognitive image and affective image (Crompton, 1979). Cognitive image refers to tourists' beliefs about the destination attributes, while affective image refers to tourists' feelings toward the destination (Berrli & Martin, 2004). Though destination image is a complex phenomenon, the majority of destination image studies have focused on the cognitive image (Pike & Ryan, 2004). According to Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1986), image is the consumer's subjective perceptions, which refer to how an alternative performs on important evaluative criteria. Baloglu and McCleary (1999) further argued that cognitive image is also influenced by environmental and psychological elements. However, Russell and Snodgrass (1987, p. 246) argued that "behaviour may be influenced by the (estimated, perceived, or remembered) affective quality of an environment rather than by its objective properties directly." There are three types of affective destination images: favourable, unfavourable, and neutral. Gartner (1993) suggested that the components of affective destination image are important for evaluating different travel alternatives. Furthermore, emotion was found to be an important indicator when evaluating affective destination image (Yu & Dean, 2001). Despite its obvious significance, affective destination image is underresearched. According to Pike (2002), only 6 out of 142 previous studies examined affective destination image. However, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) have argued that the two-dimensional approach (cognitive image and affective image) makes it possible to overlook the overall evaluation of a destination. Consequently, some tourism scholars have attempted to propose a third construct of destination image. For example, in order to have a comprehensive understanding of destination image, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) proposed overall image as the third component of destination image. Moreover, scholars such as Gartner (1993), and Pike and Ryan (2004) have proposed conative destination image as a third element in the destination image construct. The conation dimension reflects a likelihood of destination selection, or brand purchase, and can be interpreted as a propensity to visit a destination within a certain time frame (Pike & Ryan, 2004). In fact, both the cognitive and affective components of destination image influence the conative elements of destination image. According to Baloglu (2001), the conative components of destination image play an important role in segmenting and targeting potential tourists.

Perceived Risk

Perceived risk has been widely examined by existing tourism studies (Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Lepp, Gibson, & Lane, 2011). According to Sönmez and Graefe (1998), for instance, the increasing number of crisis events such as terrorism, political instability and crime has raised awareness of understanding tourists' perceptions of risk associated with a tourism destination. As Sirakaya, Sheppard, and McLellan (1997, p. 2) prophesised, "the security and safety concerns of potential tourists can create serious management problems which can have long-lasting, disastrous economic effects on host communities if those concerns cannot be forecasted, planned, controlled and properly managed." They further pointed out that a safe destination image leads to a higher likelihood of visitation, while a risky destination image leads to lower likelihood to visit. Their finding was supported by Sönmez and Graefe (1998) who found that perceived risk was a strong predictor of avoiding visiting a particular destination. For example, tourists who perceive terrorism as a risky activity may be unlikely to visit the Middle East. Therefore, countries which are perceived as risky need to understand and manage tourists' perceptions of risk. Previous studies have identified a variety of factors which influence perceived risk. For example, Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992) identified seven factors influencing perceived risk; they include equipment, financial factors, physical factors, health factors, satisfaction, social factors, and time. Sönmez and Graefe (1998) extended this list and proposed three additional risk factors: health, political instability, and terrorism. Furthermore, Reisinger and Mavondo (2005) examined tourists' perceptions of risk related to sociocultural differences. Lepp and Gibson (2003) used Cohen's (1972) typology to examine perceptions of risk associated with seven factors: political instability, terrorism, health, strange food, cultural differences, the political and religious dogma of a country, and crime. Lepp and Gibson (2008) later found that tourists' perceptions of risk are related to specific regions of the world.

Previous studies have also identified the link between tourists' characteristics and perceived risk. Roehl and Fesenmaier's (1992) study identified three groups of tourists based on their perceptions of risk; these included risk neutral, functional risk, and place risk. The risk neutral group believed that tourism, or their selected destination, was not risky at all. The functional risk group thought tourism, or their selected destination, might contain risky factors. The possibility of mechanical, equipment, or organisational problems were regarded as the main sources of tourism-related risk. The place risk group tends to perceive the holiday destination as a fairly risky place. The risk neutral group tends to be able to frame risk as part of the excitement of tourism. Lepp and Gibson (2003) also proposed that tourists' perceptions of risk associated with international tourism are influenced by previous travel experience, age, gender, and nationality. In terms of previous travel experience, it was found that novelty seekers were more likely to visit risky destinations than familiarity seekers (Lepp & Gibson, 2008). In terms of age, Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) found that tourists' preference for risk-related tourism tended to decrease with age. In terms of gender, Lepp and Gibson (2003) found that female tourists tended to perceive greater risks related to health and food. Carr (2001) found that female tourists associated being in cities at night with greater perceived risk. Qi, Gibson, and Zhang (2009) found that women perceived more risk associated with violence in China. Pizam et al. (2004) found that males are more likely than females to select riskier types of vacations. By examining tourists from six Western European countries, Seddighi, Nuttall, and Theocharous (2001) demonstrated that levels of perceived risk associated with international tourism vary by nationality.

RESEARCH METHODS

Given the limitations of quantitative research methods and the exploratory nature of this study, semistructured interviews were adopted as the most appropriate methodology to achieve the purposes of this research for three reasons. First, little information about Chinese tourists to Ukraine was actually found in the literature; consequently, it was hard to design suitable questionnaire items. Unlike questionnaire surveys, interviews are a way to find out what is on the researched respondent's mind (Patton, 1990). Secondly, semistructured interviews enable the researcher to facilitate both the interaction and the depth of discussion on the research topic (Sandiford & Seymour, 2007). Moreover, semistructured interviews offer flexibility by allowing interviews to be fluid in nature and to follow the thinking process of the Chinese tourist respondents' perceived image of Ukraine and their perceived risk of visiting Ukraine within the framework of the research objectives.

The first author of this paper conducted the study's interviews between 1 July 2016 and 13 July 2016. All respondents were clients of Chinese travel agencies providing tours to Ukraine. Purposive sampling was employed to recruit participants for this study. The researcher initially contacted the potential respondents using email and mobile phone information provided by the agencies. Subsequently, the researcher first introduced himself and then the research project and its purpose to potential respondents. Informing respondents that all data would be confidential was deemed the most effective way to secure potential respondents willing to participate in this research. A total of 17 respondents participated in the telephone interviews voluntarily. The interviews were recorded and each lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. The interview questions covered two broad themes relevant to the research objectives, namely, the participants' perceived destination image of Ukraine, and the perceived risk of visiting Ukraine. The data were translated into English at the transcription stage. The recordings and transcripts were checked by a Chinese-English linguist to ensure the accuracy of the translation. The process of data analysis involved two stages. The first was to become familiar with the text through repeatedly reading the transcripts. The data were then manually coded and subjected to thematic analysis.

RESEARCH OUTCOMES

Profile of Respondents

Table 1 shows the respondents' profile. All the participants are males, aged from 25 to 36; they represent a variety of occupations such as civil servants, school teachers, bank staff, businessmen, doctors, and HR managers. All of the respondents who participated in this study stayed in Ukraine for 7 nights. All the respondents visited Ukraine on guided tours and so their 7-night stay represents the most popular types of Chinese tours Chinese tourists take to Ukraine.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Participant No.	Age	Gender	Occuptation	Nights in Ukraine
1	26	Male	Unemployed	7
2	29	Male	Businessman	7
3	36	Male	Doctor	7
4	29	Male	HR Manager	7
5	27	Male	Computer Programmer	7
6	28	Male	Freelancer	7
7	33	Male	Bank Staff	7
8	32	Male	Civil Servant	7
9	25	Male	Investment Company Staff	7
10	27	Male	Office Clerk	7
11	28	Male	Journalist	7
12	36	Male	Adminstrator	7
13	35	Male	Civil Servant	7
14	32	Male	School Teacher	7
15	33	Male	Civil Servant	7
16	32	Male	Civil Servant	7
17	34	Male	Project Manager	7

Sources of Information

In order to gauge the respondents' knowledge of Ukraine, they were asked what they knew about Ukraine and how they had gained that knowledge. Nine of the 17 participants in this study stated that they had very little knowledge in relation to Ukraine prior their visit. They had just learned something related to the Ukraine crisis from the television news, Internet, blogs, and Wechat:

> Ukraine is an unfamiliar country to me. I did not find any tourism-related information about it prior to my visit. I just got some tourism information from the tour guide prior to the visit (Participant 1).
>
> When the Ukraine crisis happened, I started to hear something about this country on the television news. However, I still had got only limited knowledge about this country. From my perspective, the Ukraine crisis has helped more people across the world pay attention to this European country (Participant 2).

Four respondents argued that they did a lot of research prior their visit. They knew that there was a possibility that there could be a war in Ukraine and so they tried to ensure that Ukraine was still a safe destination for them prior to their visit. They searched online and contacted the Chinese Embassy in Ukraine prior their visit:

> Honestly speaking, I did a lot of research about Ukraine before this trip. I read blogs written by tourists who had been to Ukraine before. I wanted to know more about this country, such as the food and tourist attractions. I also knew that the current political situation in Ukraine is unstable. Therefore, in order to make sure of the safety of visiting Ukraine, I also consulted the Chinese Embassy in Ukraine to figure out the current political situation of Ukraine. I did prepare a lot for this trip (Participant 17).

Other respondents mentioned that they knew Ukraine from a very specific angle, mentioning the local women of Ukraine:

> I read some profiles of beautiful Ukraine girls on the Internet and Wechat. The beautiful local women of Ukraine really attracted me to visit this country. They are described as tall, with a sexy body, good personality, easy-going, and friendly to Chinese, and some of them have married Chinese men (Participant 5).

In summary, the majority of Chinese tourists had minimal knowledge about Ukraine prior to visiting the country. Although four participants had undertaken in-depth research about Ukraine to make sure it was safe to visit, it was found that overall Ukraine is an unfamiliar outbound destination for Chinese outbound tourists, with their main sources of information coming from the Internet, blogs, Wechat, and tour operators.

Chinese Tourists’ Destination Image of Ukraine

In order to explore Chinese outbound tourists’ destination image of Ukraine, respondents were asked how they perceive Ukraine as a tourist destination. Not surprisingly, given its current political situation, Ukraine was perceived as a more risky destination compared to other European destinations:

> Safety is a big concern for tourists. I think that some parts of Ukraine are still at war. Compared to other European countries such as England, France, and Germany, visiting Ukraine is more risky (Participant 7).

Nine respondents mentioned beautiful local women as one dimension of Ukraine's destination image. More importantly, some respondents regarded the possibility of having a romantic experience with local women as an important motivation for travelling to Ukraine. They also mentioned that this particular motivation arose from the complicated process of starting relationships between Chinese men and women in China's current society:

> I knew about Ukraine and its local women from other travellers' blogs online. These other travellers usually remarked that Ukrainian women tend to be more easy-going and that they find it simpler to build a relationship with men than Chinese women do. Comparatively, Chinese women tend to be more materialistic when seeking a mate. In this sense, Ukrainian women left a good impression on these travellers who were seeking a simple and purely romantic relationship (Participant 12).

The reasons why Chinese outbound tourists perceived Ukrainian women as a strong motivation factor in Ukraine's destination's image is of noteworthy relevance to the research, in particular, because of the perceived ease of seeking a romantic relationship with a Ukrainian woman as opposed to a Chinese woman. On this topic, one respondent remarked:

> In current Chinese society, Chinese women tend to seek mates who own properties, cars, and other luxury goods in order to secure a rich and stable life. This phenomenon results in an increasing number of Chinese women requiring more from men; hence, proper relationships are rarely found between Chinese people. However, the news Chinese men have married Ukrainian women has gradually been revealed to more Chinese people. Therefore, as I see it, social media have played an important role in making more Chinese people understand Ukraine, as well as Ukrainian women (Participant 13).

In summary, this study identifies two perceived destination images that draw Chinese tourists to Ukraine; these images include not only a perceived risk caused by political instability but also the allure of beautiful Ukrainian women which was found to be an important motivator for male Chinese tourists to Ukraine.

Perceived Risk of Visiting Ukraine

As discussed above, most of the participants perceived Ukraine as a riskier destination compared to other European outbound destinations. This finding confirms previous studies which support the idea that political instability increases the perceived risk of visiting tourist destinations:

> There is no doubt that the Ukraine crisis hinders inbound tourism to Ukraine. Political instability in Ukraine increases the 'uncertainty' of visiting Ukraine. Tourists may be concerned about safety when visiting Ukraine (Participant 3).

Another perceived risk mentioned by some respondents is the language barrier. English is not very important in Ukraine's educational system; therefore, some respondents argued that it might be hard for them to communicate with local people:

> I know that the majority of Ukrainian people cannot speak English. I wanted to have more contact with local people, especially beautiful local women. However, that might be a problem for me due to the language barrier (Participant 8).

Despite political instability increasing the perceived risk of visiting Ukraine, some respondents mentioned that the Ukraine's crisis actually increased their willingness to visit the country:

> I did not regard political instability as a risk issue for me to visit Ukraine. I regarded visiting Ukraine as an adventure. It really increased my willingness to visit Ukraine (Participant 17).

Two respondents mentioned that as Ukraine could potentially find itself at war, the supply of sufficient daily necessities could be unstable during the war period. One respondent remarked:

> As I know, human daily necessities such as food, water, petrol etc. are normally under government control or in shortage, which is a major potential risk, in particular, for foreign tourists. Therefore, just after I arrived in Ukraine, I spent half day buying enough food and water in case a bad situation might occur (Respondent 10).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study conducted 17 in-depth interviews with Chinese outbound tourists who had previously visited Ukraine in order to understand the destination image and perceived risk of travelling to Ukraine. As shown in Table 1, all 17 respondents involved in this study were randomly selected and all of them were male. The respondents' answers in relation to Ukraine's destination image show that they had limited knowledge regarding Ukraine as a whole; however, the attraction of Ukrainian local women could be regarded as one of the most important destination image factors, from Chinese male tourists' perspective. Furthermore, uncovering the important role of Ukrainian women in the process of Chinese male tourists' making their decision to visit Ukraine revealed the importance of that motivation.

As the respondents stated, they were strongly motivated to pursue the building up of a romantic relationship which was simple and pure and which was more focused on the 'relationship' itself rather than on the seeking of a mate with other attractions such as assets, properties, luxury cars, or consumption capability. Some respondents mentioned that some Chinese women have become materialistic because of the huge and consistent pressure from life and work. Consequently, finding 'Mr. Right' is no longer their first criterion when considering starting a new relationship. Some respondents had searched out information regarding Ukrainian women on issues such as their personality, lifestyle, and their perceptions of finding a mate. These Chinese male outbound tourists, therefore, possibly viewed travelling to Ukraine as a smart way to date the local women. In light of the limited destination images of Ukraine as a tourist destination, seeking romantic dates could, as a result, be regarded, from the perspective of male Chinese tourists, as one important motivation for visiting Ukraine.

The perceived risks of visiting a tourist destination are another important factor involved in the decision-making process of tourists. For Chinese tourists visiting Ukraine, especially in times of political instability and potential war, these factors are of great significance when it comes to understanding these tourists' behaviours. Obviously, most of the study's respondents were concerned about the potential for war in Ukraine, and they mentioned that they had made some preparations for this eventuality. By undertaking prior research on their destination, the Chinese tourists showed how they offset potential risks. From the perspective of Chinese tourists, the language barrier was perceived as another risk. As Tayler (1991) noted, the language barrier is one of the main issues that can pose major challenges to tourism destinations and hotels catering to international markets when it comes to providing satisfactory experiences. The language gap in overseas travel has been studied as a constraining factor for intercultural communication (Cohen, 2004), and as an obstacle in learning the local culture (Gmelch, 1997). Researchers have found that the lack of language fluency contributes to tourists' experience in terms of role conflicts, diffidence, and defensiveness when travelling overseas (Hottola, 2004). In particular, the language barrier issue has been seen to play a significant role in Chinese outbound tourists' overseas travel and hotel experiences (Xu & McGehee, 2012). Despite the fact that almost one third of the Chinese population (approximately 400 million) have learnt English, merely 7% report that they 'often' use the language, compared with 23% who use it 'sometimes', and 69% who use it 'seldom' (China Daily, 2010, as cited in Bolton & Graddol, 2012). Thus the majority of Mainland Chinese still lack sufficient language skills for effective communication in English (Bolton & Graddol, 2012), and this deficiency could prove a significant issue when these people become outbound tourists. However, despite English being used as an international language, it is seldom spoken by Ukrainian people because Ukrainian people do not have the chance to learn English as a second language during their schooling. So, in the absence of English as a *lingua franca*, finding a way to communicate with each other is a major problem for both Chinese tourists and local Ukrainian people especially when they have no translators on hand.

Interestingly, despite Ukraine still being in a state of political instability and potential war, Chinese male outbound tourists remain willing to travel to this country. As the interview data reveal, while some respondents hint that there are comparatively high perceived risks in travelling to Ukraine, other equally important factors support their decision to visit this country. As this study demonstrates, seeking an authentic romantic relationship with local women should be emphasised as one major finding of this research. This finding could offer a special angle from which to understand Chinese male outbound tourists more comprehensively and deeply.

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RELATIONAL ORIENTATION AND FUN CLIMATE: CHINESE HOTEL EMPLOYEES' PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

With the expansion of hotel properties in China, cultural differences in management are started to gain attention in the hospitality academy. Based on Chinese hotel employees' perspective, this study focuses on effects of relational orientation and fun climate, and the effects of fun climate in reducing work-family conflict. Following Chinese psychology, relational orientation in this study includes two constructs: face and renqing. The concept of fun climate is classified into three types: socializing with coworkers, celebrating at work, and global fun at work. A total of 451 usable responses are collected from employees at six five-star hotels and one four-star hotel in China. Findings reveal that face improves all three types of employees' fun climate; on the contrary, renqing reduces employees' celebrating at work and global fun at work. Moreover, employee's global fun at work could significantly weaken their work-family conflict. Such findings contribute meaningful theoretical and practical implications.

KEYWORDS: Fun climate; Guanxi; Relational orientation; Renqing

INTRODUCTION

Workplace fun referred to "any social, interpersonal, or task activities at work of a playful or humorous nature which provide an individual with amusement, enjoyment, or pleasure" (p.15) (Fluegge, 2008). The history of workplace fun can be traced back to the work of Peters and Waterman (1982) and Deal and Kennedy (1982), which support company's organizational culture fill with fun, humor and play (Tews, Michel, & Allen, 2014). Actually, some businesses infused fun into their organizational culture and finally achieved great success (Tews, Michel, & Stafford, 2013), including Google, IBM, Pike Fish Market and Southwest Airlines (Collinson, 2002; Karl et al., 2005; Sunoo, 1995).

Follow-up studies have found that workplace fun has a positive impact on employees' job satisfaction, retention and service quality, and creativity (Abner, 1997; Abramis, 1989; Hemsath et al., 1997; Karl, Harland, Peluchette, & Rodie, 2010; Lundin et al., 2000; Peluchette & Karl, 2005; Yerkes, 2007).

Tews (2014) noted that "workplace fun is a broad construct" (p.925). Different types of fun may have different outcomes. Although there are some scholars have studied different types of workplace fun, these researches are most on western context. However, different culture contexts may have different attitude toward fun. And fun may generate from the person or the work climate. So, one of the purposes of this article is to research different dimensions of fun climate in Chinese relational orientation context. To explain the role of fun climate and its outcomes, this paper chooses three types of fun climate as focal constructs. The three types of fun climates includes: socializing with coworkers, celebrating at work, and global fun at work (McDowell, 2004).

China is a relational orientation country. Chinese is attaching importance to face and renqing. Relational orientation and its related conceptual guanxi significantly affected the Chinese behavior at work (Leung, Chen, Zhou, & Lim, 2011). According to Thai (2009), organizational members often need to make use of their interpersonal relationships to improve job performance. Numerous studies have pay attention to face and renqing (Leung et al., 2011). However, there are few literature take a deep look into face and renqing in Chinese hospitality context. It should also be noticed that fun at work may also impact the employee's family life. Especially in a country attaches great importance to the family ethics. According to Frone (1992), work and family are the most important two facets of adult life. In hospitality industry, employees work and family may produce more conflict. Therefore, this study selects work-family conflict as one of the outcomes of fun climate.

Taken together, the goals of the present study are two aspects: first, the study will test the fun climate in Chinese relational orientation context. In such context, we focus three types of fun climate (socializing with coworkers, celebrating at work, and global fun at work) and twofold of relational orientation (face and renqing). Second, we focus work-family conflict as the outcome of fun climate.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workplace fun and fun climate

Fun at work was firstly defined by McDowell (2004) as "engaging in activities not specifically related to the job that are enjoyable, amusing, or playful" (p.9). On the basis of McDowell's research, Fluegge (2008) defined fun at work as "social, interpersonal, or task activities at work of a playful or humorous nature which provide an individual with amusement, enjoyment, or pleasure" (p. 15). Lamm and Meeks (2009) defined workplace fun as "playful social, interpersonal, recreational, or task activities intended to provide amusement, enjoyment, or pleasure" (p.614).

Previous researches on workplace fun could be sorted into three aspects. First, some studies focus on the perceptions or attitudes of workplace fun. For example, issues about health care employees' attitudes toward workplace fun, as well as their perceptions of whether different types of activities are fun or not (Karl, Peluchette, Hallindiana, & Harland, 2005; Karl & Peluchette, 2006a; Karl, Peluchette, & Hall, 2008; Karl, Peluchette, & Harland, 2007; Peluchette & Karl, 2005). Second, some scholars kept eyes on individual's differences and personality on perceived workplace fun. For example, Karl et al. (2007) examined the influence of personality (Big five dimensions) on attitude toward fun and experienced fun. Tews et al. (2014) focused on the Millennials' four aspects of fun and job embeddedness. Lamm and Meeks (2009) researched generation differences as a moderator variable on the relationship between workplace fun and individuals outcomes.

Third, some areas of inquiry focus on the impact or outcome of fun. Other than the literatures described above, the previous research about the impact of fun on work context are two folds. On one hand, a series of studies concerned employees' attitudes and behaviors influenced by workplace fun, such as job satisfaction (Peluchette & Karl, 2005), satisfaction and turnover intentions (Karl et al., 2008), perceptions of service quality (Karl, Harland, Peluchette, & Rodie, 2010), and experienced fun as a moderator between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction (Karl & Peluchette, 2006a). On the other hand, some researches focused on different dimensions of fun and its outcomes. For example, Tews and his colleagues examined different dimensions of workplace fun: fun coworker interactions, fun job responsibilities, and formal fun activities on applicant attraction (Tews, Michel, & Bartlett, 2012). Another study examined two facet of fun (fun activities and manager support for fun) on employee performance and turnover (Tews, Michel, & Stafford, 2013). Furthermore, they put coworker socializing as the third aspect of fun into their study on the basis of previous study (Tews et al., 2014). Plester (2015) divided workplace fun into three categories: organic fun, managed fun and task fun. And on this basis, Plester and Hutchison (2016) used these three dimensions of workplace fun to research the relationship of fun and workplace engagement.

In the issue of workplace fun, this study focuses on fun climate. McDowell (2004) argued that both individual attitudes and organizational climate are important in fun at work. Therefore, McDowell (2004) divided fun at work into two dimensions, fun climate and fun person, and defined fun climate as "An organizational climate that supports fun at work, including management support of fun, socializing with coworkers, celebrating at work, and personal freedom at work" (p.9) (McDowell, 2004).

Relational orientation as the antecedent

Leung, Chen, Zhou, and Lim (2011) summarized previous researches and argued that "Relationalism emphasizes positive, long-term relationships with other people, and provides an important framework to understand Chinese social behavior and interactional patterns" (p.108). The construct of relational orientation can reflect the essence of Chinese social psychology and may use this construct to depict Chinese social behaviors (Hwang, 2001). Cheung et al. (1996) developed the Chinese Personality Assessment Inventory (CPAI) for the Chinese people. According to Cheung et al. (2001), they selected constructs like harmony, renqing, face and flexibility from CPAI interpersonal relatedness to measure Chinese personality. Leung et al. (2011) argued that face and renqing are two core facets of relational orientation. According to Hwang (1987), who developed a face and favor theoretical model in Chinese society, and his study supported the face and renqing are two central role of relational orientation. Therefore, we use face and renqing represent relational orientation.

Cheung et al. (2001) conceptualized face (mianzi) as “Face, which depicts the pattern of orientations in an interpersonal and hierarchical connection and social behaviors to enhance one’s face and to avoid losing one’s face” (p.408). Hwang (1987) and Leung et al. (2011) both argued that face is related to a condition, which one want to keep a “positive self and public image” (p.108). Leung and Chan (2003) defined face as “the respect, pride, and dignity of an individual as a consequence of his/her social achievement and the practice of it” (p.1575). And on the basis of previous researches, they proposed the construct of face work, which means “the use of a complex package of social skills to protect his/her face and the face of others in Chinese relational settings” (p.1575). Based on the above definition, they further identified four dimensions of face work: reciprocity, response, respect and reputation. Liu, Friedman, and Chi (2005) further demonstrated that face influences outcomes of negotiations in the Chinese context. Graham and Lam (2003) argued that the Chinese are attached importance to face and thought that “face, like money can be earned, lost, given, or taken away” (p.9).

On the other hand, Cheung et al. (2001) regarded renqing as “which covers adherence to cultural norms of interaction based on reciprocity, exchange of social favors, and exchange of affection according to implicit rules” (p.408). The word, renqing, refers to three dimensions: (1) emotional responses to individuals in daily life; (2) resources that can present to others as a gift in social exchange; (3) one must observe social norms to get along well with others (Hwang, 1987; Leung et al., 2011). Many scholars have studied renqing in the Chinese work context. Liu et al. (2005) demonstrated that harmony, face and renqing were matters in negotiation in Chinese society. Tsai, Chi, and Hu (2009) studied the relationship of renqing orientation, self-esteem and selling behavior in salespeople in Asia.

Face and fun climate

Some scholars have demonstrated that if the workplace is fun, it will have some positive effects on employees (McDowell, 2004; Tews, Michel, Xu, & Drost, 2015; Tews et al., 2012). However, there were some scholar argued that workplace fun have both positive and negative on employees (Plester, B. 2015; Tews et al., 2013). China is a relational orientation society. People’s face represents reputation, prestige, respect, pride, dignity and public image (Leung & Chan, 2003). According to social identity theory, Stets and Burke (2000) argued that “a social identity is a person's knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group” (p.225). And “a social group is a set of individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category” (p.225). Furthermore, the Chinese culture characteristic is highly collectivism. One of the features of collectivism is that Chinese may specially care about face and Guanxi (Graham & Lam, 2003; Liu et al., 2005).

According to McDowell (2004) and Tews et al. (2014), socializing refers to "friendly social interaction among coworkers" (p.926). China is a collectivist society. Liu et al. (2005) argued that "Collectivism is characterized by tight social networks in which people strongly distinguish between in-groups, such as relatives and clans, and other groups" (p.227). Graham and Lam (2003) argued that face (mianzi) represents a person's place in his/her social network and it's a crucial measurement about social worth. If an employee has more face among his/her coworkers, he/she may have more social interactions with coworkers. Therefore we make the following hypothesis:

H1: Face is positively related to employee's socializing with coworkers.

The word of 'face' in China has two meanings, one is "saving face" and another is "giving face" (Graham & Lam, 2003). In a work context, when coworkers have accomplishments or on a special day (coworker's birthday; festival; holiday), for the purpose of giving face to others, employees may join the celebration at work together. The following is therefore hypothesized:

H2: Face is positively related to employee's celebrating at work.

According to the social identity theory, as discussed above, when a person in his/her workplace gains more face, he/she may perceive more identification and therefore has a sense of belongingness with the workplace. Working at such workplace, people may think the overall work climate as fun. Thus, the following is hypothesized:

H3: Face is positively related to global fun at work.

Renqing and fun climate

China is a collectivism society, in which people pay more attention to renqing, face and harmony (Graham & Lam, 2003; Liu et al., 2005). Guo (2001) argued that "In order to maintain a harmonious working environment, a member of the company needs to follow the etiquette (*Limao* or *keqi*) and maintain harmonious relations with those coworkers" (p.75). Hwang (1987) argued that renqing "emphasizes the value of maintaining personal harmony and social order among persons situated in hierarchically structured relationships" (p.946). Renqing is a resource that one can give it to another as a gift, and a series of social norms that "one should follow to get along well with others" (p.82) (Hwang, 1987; Wang, 2007). Renqing can be understood on the basis of reciprocity and empathy, depending on the role between recipient and benefactor (Wang, 2007; Wang, Siu, & Barnes, 2008). Besides, Chinese relationships are long-term oriented, everyone in the social network are tied together by the mechanism of "reciprocity" (Wang et al., 2008). Liu et al. (2005) argued that "individuals with high levels of renqing believe that long-term relationships are more important than those who have low levels of renqing" (p.230).

Taken together, the cultural norms in renqing in Chinese culture could be considered as owing others something. The mechanism of reciprocity reminds Chinese people to pay back others' favor in the future. In such context, the high renqing awareness a people possess, the heavy mental loading be concerned to return others' favor, and the less likely to naturally enjoy fun in Chinese social settings. Therefore, we propose the followings:

H4: Renqing is negatively related to socializing with coworkers.
H5: Renqing is negatively related to celebrating at work.
H6: Renqing is negatively related to global fun at work.

Work-family conflict (WFC)

Netemeyer, Boles, and Mcmurrian (1996) defined work-family conflict as "a form of inter-role conflict in which the general demands of, time devoted to, and strain created by the job interfere with performing family-related responsibilities" (p.401). Lin and Powell (2001) argued that WFC was researched primarily in western context. WFC can be divided two forms: time based or stain based conflict (Lin & Powell, 2001; Netemeyer et al., 1996). No matter what types of conflict, the work-family conflict is resulted from the multiple roles in someone's life (Lin & Powell, 2001). Employees in collectivism society need spend lots of time on handling interpersonal relationships. When the workplace is fun, employees may interact with coworkers in a harmony environment, celebrating with coworkers happily. Through the harmony social interactions among coworkers, the overall climate of the company may become fun. When employees work in such atmosphere, they can spend less effort on the interpersonal relationship. Then, they can have more time and energy to fulfill their obligations in family. Therefore, the followings are hypothesized:

H7: Socializing with coworkers is negatively related to work-family conflict.
H8: Celebrating at work is negatively related to work-family conflict.
H9: Global fun at work is negatively related to work-family conflict.

METHOD

Data collection and sampling

In order to understand how fun climate influences the hospitality employees' attitudes toward family life and work in Chinese relational orientation context. Two survey approaches were used to collect data. One is online questionnaire and another is papery self-report survey. The perceptual measure of workplace fun climate and its outcomes to the employees can be only measured by employees' self-report measures.

The sample of this study included 570 hospitality employees who come from seven hotels in Xiamen, Fujian province (six hotels) and Shenzhen, Guangdong (one hotel). The seven hotels include six five-star hotels (Le Meridien, Westin, Sheraton, JAL hotels Company Ltd, Jingmin hotel and Baixiang hotel) and one four-star hotel (Inzone hotel). We fist by contacting the hotel HR supervisors, asking them for help to distribute the questionnaires to the hotel staffs. We distribute 470 papery questionnaires in total, and we distributed electronic questionnaires via Weixin (a popular social network in China), we fist send the electronic survey to the HR supervisor of Inzone hotel, then through the HR sending the questionnaire to their hotel's staffs(about 100 staffs). The procedure of data collection was last from March to May in 2016. Of the 570 surveys distributed, 511 were returned and 451 with useable data, the valid response rate are 79% (451 out of 570).

Measures

All the items in the workplace fun survey were used by a five-point Likert scale. Ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. Six graduate students and one expert in hospitality and tourism major were asked to evaluate the validation of the questionnaire. The relational orientation was measured via a two-dimension scale developed by Cheung et al. (2001). This scale has both four items for renqing and face. The hospitality fun climate was measured via three-dimension scale by the work of McDowell (2004). This scale has both five items for socializing with coworkers, celebrating at work and global fun at work. In total, fifteen items were revised in order to adapt to Chinese context. Work-family conflict was measured by using five items from the research conducted by Netemeyer, Boles, and Mcmurrian (1996). In addition, the demographics and work-related questions of subjects are also involved at the end of the questionnaire. Including gender, age, department and the number of department employees, the number of employees interact with, marital status, working year (industry, being measured hospitality and department), education status and monthly income.

Analysis

For data analysis and examining the proposed hypotheses, this study used SPSS and Mplus to run descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling.

RESULTS

Of the 451 participants, 56.5% were female, 69.8% were aged from 18 to 30, 18.6% worked at the Food and Beverage Department, 54.5% were single, 35.5% earned a junior college degree, and 35.7% earned monthly income of RMB 2500-3500. These participants averagely had 38 employees in their department, and frequently contact with 11 employees in the department. These participants had average tenure of 4.6 years in the hotel industry, 2.3 years in the current hotel, and 2.1 years in the current department. Data reliability was ensured by assessing the Cronbach's alphas for all constructs, which were in the range of .60–.88. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with maximum likelihood estimation in Mplus was applied to determine whether the measurement model was an adequate fit to the data. The CFA results indicate that the fit to the data were acceptable (χ^2= 714.69, df = 309, $p \leq .000$; RMSEA = .05; SRMR = .05; CFI = .93; TLI = .92), and all indicators had statistically significant loadings ($p \leq .05$) for appropriate constructs. Additionally, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to assess the discriminant validity of all constructs. The AVE of all constructs was .53–.67, demonstrating acceptable discriminant validity. Thus, all constructs had adequate reliability and validity.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was applied to test the hypotheses. Both the chi-square statistic and the fit indices indicate the structural model is reasonable to explain the proposed relationships (χ^2/df = 1.89, $p \leq .000$; RMSEA = .05; SRMR = .05; CFI = .96; TLI = .95). As predicted, face significantly improved employee's socializing with coworkers (H1, β = .93, p < .01), celebrating at work (H2, β = .99, p < .01), and global fun at work (H3, β = .94, p < .01). Meanwhile, renqing significantly reduced improved employee's celebrating at work (H5, β = -.18, p < .05) and global fun at work (H6, β = -.23, p < .05). The proposed negative effect of renqing on employees' socializing with coworkers was not supported (β = -.01, p = .91). Additionally, employee's global fun at work significantly reduced their work-family conflict (H9, β = .74, p < .01). No significant effects of socializing with coworkers (β = -.08, p = .49) and celebrating at work (β = .14, p = .17) were found to reduce work-family conflict.

CONCLUSION

This study contributes insightful knowledge into hotel workplace fun examining the issue in the Chinese context based on Chinese psychological perspective. Findings of this study revealed that face and renqing exert opposite effects on fun climate. This study proved face could improve three types of employees' fun climate: socializing with coworkers, celebrating at work, and global fun at work. In contrast, renqing reduces employees' celebrating at work and global fun at work. These evidences should be applied by hotel managers to concern employees' face while weaken employees' awareness of renqing in internal communications in the Chinese context. Moreover, employee's global fun at work was found to significantly reduce their work-family conflict, confirming the necessary for hotel managers to support the growth of fun climate in the workplace.

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THE SEPARATION OF *WE* AND *OTHERS* BY FOOD: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE CULINARY FOOTPRINTS OF CHINESE AND WESTERN TOURISTS

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ABSTRACT

Food in tourism has gained attention in academia lately. Food consumption behaviors of tourists is yet to be extensively investigated. This exploratory study examines restaurant choice and food consumption patterns of Chinese and Western tourists in three metropolitan cities, London, New York and Tokyo, with data obtained from online review websites. Through analyzing restaurant types and visualizing restaurant locations, the study aims to examine the differences between Chinese and Western tourists in spending on food, cuisine preference, and restaurant choice in geographical contexts. The results show that food choice by Chinese tourists at a foreign destination is largely influenced by their perennial view of their own culture. Their identity is constructed and enhanced by choosing their own ethnic cuisine abroad. Such actions ultimately separate them geographically from other tourists and prevent them from engaging with the local culture.

KEYWORDS: Chinese outbound; Food consumption in tourism; Japan; Spatial analysis.

INTRODUCTION

The globalization of food has changed the way humans discover, love or reject new food. Along with technology advancement and worldwide human migration, cuisines of different cultures are introduced to the foreign land and given an unprecedented opportunity to co-exist and market to almost same customer crowds. Although the human palate is determined by biological, psychological and cultural factors to appreciate certain food (Rozin, 2002), it has been suggested that humans are likely to develop a “global palate” and “global cuisine”, for example the

McDonaldization (Ritzer, 1983), as the boundaries between food cultures deconstruct in the process of globalization. While the prediction implies a positive phenomenon of cultural exchange on a universal scale, it may also pose a challenge to the notions of "local food" and "local culture", which ultimately define who *we* and *others* are.

Under the idea that food consumption has become homogenized, the study intends to explore 1) how similar or different people from distinct cultural backgrounds are in consuming food, and 2) whether food choices disconnect people of distinct cultural backgrounds. Because food consumption is broad and complex, and involves various aspects of food intake, the study specifically targets restaurant choices by tourists at international destinations to approximate food preferences by people of different ethnic backgrounds. This exploratory study examines culinary footprints of Chinese and Western tourists in three metropolitan cities, London, New York and Tokyo, with data obtained from online review websites. The study sees tourists choosing and ranking restaurants in these cities as a pseudo-experiment on how people make food-related decisions in a restaurant-congested environment. Through analyzing restaurant types and visualizing restaurant locations, the study aims to examine the differences between Chinese and Western tourists in: 1) spending on food, 2) cuisine preference, and 3) restaurant choice in geographical contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Food Consumption in Tourism

Food is essential for the human survival, but is not only about survival. Selecting and consuming food in most cultures exhibits a way of ritual, tradition, and belief. Eating, a daily function of the human body, expresses the communication between humans and the earthly environment. At the same time, it resembles a collection of contextual and evolving social practices (Mak, Lumbers, & Eves, 2012) that connects the biological needs with leisure, society and spirituality. This connection is continuous in the human life as one mobilizes around the globe. On one hand, food in the daily routine, such as a bowl of breakfast cereal or red wine steak for dinner, manifests in general a Westerner's belongingness to the native land. On the other, a culinary expedition in the local market in Bangkok shows his or her acceptance of the new environment and food culture. So eating, while an "obligatory" activity for humans (Richards, Hjalager, & Richards, 2002), also challenges one's willingness and ability to eat at different occasions.

Food defines who we are and how we are related to others. Through daily consumption, food provides the site where the relationship between the self and the Other is contested (Bardhi, Ostberg, and Bengtsson 2010). Travel, on the other hand, has been associated with experiencing "Otherness" (Mak, Lumbers, and Eves 2012) as well. Therefore, essentially food and travel are similar notions of physical and cultural exchanges. When tourists cross the border and engage in the consumption of a new food, the boundary between the self and the Other is broken by the sensual engagement with the local produce. Consuming the indigenous food may be one of the most intimate activities tourists can participate on a trip. Smelling, tasting, biting and digesting go beyond biological processes. They are ways for tourists to closely communicate with the foreign environment. But such bodily involvement, as Cohen (2004) describes, may pose a potential risk because the new food outside one's daily routine may cause strange feelings that are unsatisfactory. At the same time, one cannot avoid eating because food serves the purpose of survival. Hence, food consumption, amongst all tourism activities, is necessary, risky, and influential for the overall quality of a trip (Cohen and Avieli 2004).

Food Consumption of the Chinese Outbound Market

Rozin (2005) points out that humans are basically adapted to their ancestral environment rather than the contemporary environment. In the general sense, biology plays a key role in facilitating people's food choices. However, a meal is also a memory (Pliner and Rozin 2000). It is a psychological and emotional construct based on one's culture. Culture leads the behavior of a particular group in all life affairs and standardizes activities of its people (Mak, Lumbers, Eves, and Chang 2012). Therefore, it is almost impossible for one to disassociate the self from his or her culture and the cultural cuisine. Chinese cuisine is the longest continuous culture in the world (Newman, 2002). It has influenced the gastronomy types in the pan-Asian region. Tsu (2010) investigated the development of Chinese restaurants in Japan in the postwar era. Henderson (2014) in his study recognizes the Chinese cooking has constructed an important part of the Singaporean cuisine.

Globalization has popularized Chinese cuisine beyond Asia. While Chinese food has become an export and localized globally, researchers have gradually developed interests in the Chinese food culture. Not only has the Chinese geography been articulated through Chinese cuisine (Lipman 2010), the use of food as medicine in China has also been documented (Koo 1984). While Chinese cuisine has become an object of research and evaluation, the Chinese people's reaction to foreign gastronomies have rarely been recorded. Chang, Kivela and Mak (2010) studied the food preferences of tourists from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan through qualitative analysis. While providing important findings from motivational and attitudinal perspectives, there still lacks baseline information that can be operationalized in tourism marketing. To advance the culinary preferences of Chinese tourists in a foreign environment, the study adopts a comparative approach using social media review data to further explicate Chinese tourists' food consumption behaviors.

METHODOLOGY

The study consisted of two stages. The first stage of the research focused on quantitatively differentiating cuisine preferences, spending, and online-sharing patterns of Chinese and Western tourists, based on data from two social media websites. Through multiple baseline analyses, this stage provides general insights on both online and offline activities of two distinct tourist groups.

The second stage aimed at spatially visualizing Chinese and Western tourists' culinary footprints at global metropolitan destinations. Tokyo, London and New York City (NYC), three global cities, were selected from continental Asia, Europe and North America, respectively. The cities were chosen due to two reasons. First, they are major tourist destinations with extensive transportation networks and world-class culinary options. They fit the primary goals of the present research. Second, the three cities together express socio-economic significance on a global scale as recognized by sociologist Saskia Sassen (1991) in her work *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Researches relevant to the three cities may provide generalizable findings for urban tourism studies.

Data Sources

In the first stage of the study, the study attempted to understand the culinary preferences and online sharing patterns of two groups of tourists. As a proxy, a total of 300 top-ranked restaurants in Tokyo, London and NYC were selected from two review websites. For Western tourists, the top 50 restaurants in each city (150 in total) on TripAdvisor.com were used. TripAdvisor is recognized as a credible source (Filieri, Alguezaui, and McLeay 2015) of ratings on travel-related products, including attractions, hotels and restaurants. Data from TripAdvisor have been used for researches because its popular platform facilitates academic inquiries that generate practical significance (Banerjee and Chua 2016). TripAdvisor currently operates fifty-one sub-sites in four continents because of language and regional differences. For example, it has two sub-sites for Canada in English and French. But the ratings and opinions remain uniform for all sub-sites. TripAdvisor to a large extent represents non-Chinese voices because of the low participation of Chinese users. For its Chinese sub-site (called daodao.com), English reviews are directly translated to Chinese, showing a lack of original Chinese voice on the site. Due to the lack of demographic data of TripAdvisor users, the study estimates that the website predominantly has reviews by Non-Chinese users, thus its data were used to approximate the preferences of Western tourists.

Dianping.com (大众点评 in Chinese) was used to demonstrate the culinary preferences of Chinese tourists. Dianping is "China's leading O2O (online to offline) platform for urban and lifestyle services" (www.dianping.com). For domestic cities, it provides ratings on restaurants, movie theaters, hospitals, hair salons, and other life-related service businesses. For international cities, the focus shifts to travel-related products, including hotels, restaurants, shopping and tourism attractions. Similar to TripAdvisor, Dianping acts as a third party that hosts reviews by Chinese users. Given that no study has been conducted on the trustworthiness of Chinese review websites, the current research employs Dianping as the best substitute.

Both TripAdvisor and Dianping record comprehensive information for each business being reviewed, providing the study with key variables in the first stage analysis. For each restaurant, **cuisine type**, **operation style** (chain or independent), **average check amount**, **number of reviews**, **number of reviewer photos,** and **neighborhood** were collected. Average check amount is Neighborhoods in Tokyo were recorded by *ward*, London by *district* or *county*, and NYC by *borough*. The neighborhood information also corresponded to the above mentioned GIS data.

For the second stage, the **addresses** of the 300 selected restaurants were collected for data visualization. GIS data for each city were downloaded from various data portals to set the administrative boundaries and transportation networks for each city. All of the portals are administered by government agencies or major research institutes, hence enhancing reliability of the data. Due to each city's unique administrative layout, different boundary data were used: *ward* for Tokyo, *county* for London, and *borough* for NYC. The transportation data included railway, subway, bus lines and road network. Table 1 presents an overview of the GIS data sources used for this research.

Table 1. Map Data Source by City.

<table>
<tr><th>City</th><th>Map Content</th><th>Data Source</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">London, UK</td><td>UK County Boundary</td><td>Office for National Statistics</td></tr>
<tr><td>UK Bus Network
UK Railway Network</td><td>Ordnance Survey of UK</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">New York City, USA</td><td>Administrative and Political Districts</td><td>NYC Department of City Planning</td></tr>
<tr><td>NYC Subway Network
NYC Bus Lines</td><td>CUNY Mapping Service at the Center for Urban Research</td></tr>
</table>

Tokyo, Japan	Tokyo Administrative Map Tokyo Railway and Roads	Geospatial Information Authority of Japan

Data Analysis

Comparison tests of means were performed with STATA on average check amount, number of reviews, number of reviewer photos for both restaurants on both websites and by each city. The Shapiro-Wilk test (e.g. z = 11.185, P-value = 0.0000 for average check) revealed that data was non-Normally distributed. But because of the size of the sample, the two-sample T-test was still performed. Lumley, Diehr, Emerson and Chen (2002) suggest that the T-test is valid for non-Normal distributions for sufficiently large sample size, which is often below 100. So the two-sample T-test is still applicable in this research. The study also conducted the non-parametric Wilcox test for comparison with the T-test. Both results are provided in the next section.

Spatial visualization with GIS data were performed on Esri ArcGIS software. Restaurant addresses were geocoded into longitude-latitude values and entered into ArcGIS as point data according to their respective GIS coordination system. For each city, administrative boundary and transportation maps were imported as vector data, then layered with existing restaurant point data. Last, various symbology features were applied to differentiate restaurants from each review website, administrative boundaries and transportation networks.

RESULTS

The sample profile is illustrated in Table 2 by city and review website. The overview demonstrates distinct situations on TripAdvisor and Dianping. TripAdvisor users prefer independent restaurants over chains in all three cities. The proportion of chain restaurants in Tokyo is slightly higher than London and NYC. In comparison, Dianping users favor more chained restaurants than their TripAdvisor counterparts. 42% of the top restaurants in Tokyo are chained properties. It is worth noting that the majority top restaurants in Tokyo on both websites offer Japanese cuisine. However, Dianping users are likely to opt for chained noodle shops, whereas TripAdvisor users may prefer to experience different variations of the Japanese cuisine. In fact, a few branches of the same chained noodle shop simultaneously appear on the top list on Dianping. It suggests a relatively uniform appetite of Dianping reviewers. Another important highlight is that Dianping reviewers are likely to favor Chinese restaurants when traveling to London (44%) and NYC (40%). Although both below 50% of the top restaurants, they are still relatively high proportions for the case of international travel.

Table 2. Profile of Top Restaurants.

City	Variable	Review Website	
		TripAdvisor (N=50 / City)	Dianping (N=50 / City)
London, UK	Average Check ($)	15.63	6.4
	Ave. #. of Reviews	474	22
	Ave. # of Photos	123	38
	Chains | Independent	0 (0%) | 50 (100%)	**16 (32%) | 34 (68%)**
	Chinese | Non-Chinese	0 (0%) | 50 (100%)	**22 (44%) | 28 (56%)**
New York City, USA	Average Check ($)	10.90	43.31
	Ave. #. of Reviews	927	24
	Ave. # of Photos	223	48
	Chains | Independent	4 (8%) | 46 (92%)	**20 (40%) | 30 (60%)**
	Chinese | Non-Chinese	1 | 49	**20 (40%) | 30 (60%)**
Tokyo, Japan	Average Check ($)	12.99	10.75
	Ave. #. of Reviews	100	96
	Ave. # of Photos	144	241
	Chains | Independent	6 (12%) | 44 (88%)	**21 (42%) | 29 (58%)**
	Chinese | Non-Chinese	1(2%) | 49 (98%)	**0 (0%) | 50 (100%)**

Figures 1 - 3 below compare cuisine types by city and website. For all three cities, TripAdvisor restaurants offer more diverse cuisine types than Dianping. For London and NYC, Chinese restaurants are frequented the most by Chinese reviewers, followed by American, British and French restaurants.

Table 3. Two-Sample Comparisons: TripAdvisor vs. Dianping

Table 3. Two-Sample Comparisons: TripAdvisor vs. Dianping

Variable	Tokyo		London		NYC		All-Inclusive	
	t	P-value	t	P-value	t	P-value	t	P-value
Average Check ($)	0.4950	[1]**0.6217**	2.3007	0.0118*	-2.4440	**0.0082****	-1.3914	0.1651

		[2]**0.0019****		0.0002***		**0.1246**		0.5222
# of Reviews	-2.4470	[1]0.0081** 0.0296*	6.3368	0.0000*** 0.0000***	7.7234	0.0000*** 0.0000***	2.7070	0.0036** 0.0000***
# of Photos	0.1854	0.8533 0.1441	4.5577	0.0000*** 0.0000***	6.7139	0.0000*** 0.0000***	8.6251	0.0000*** 0.0000***

*Significance level: * = 0.05, ** = 0.01, *** = 0.001*
[1]*One-tailed T-test result*
[2]*Wilcox test result (nonparametric)*

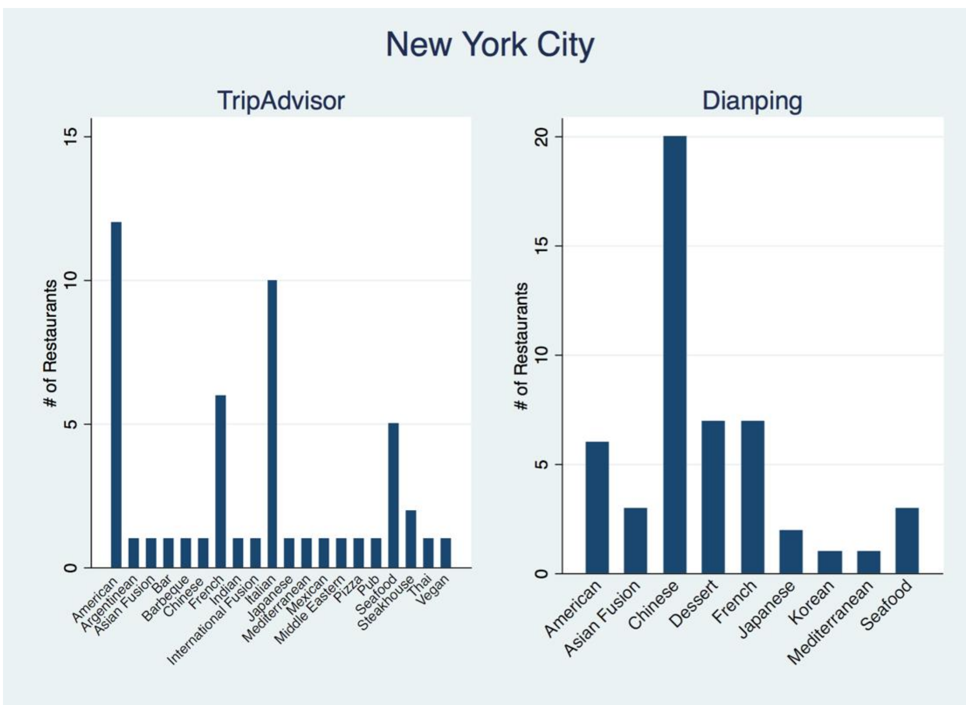


Figure 1. Cuisine Types by Website, NYC.

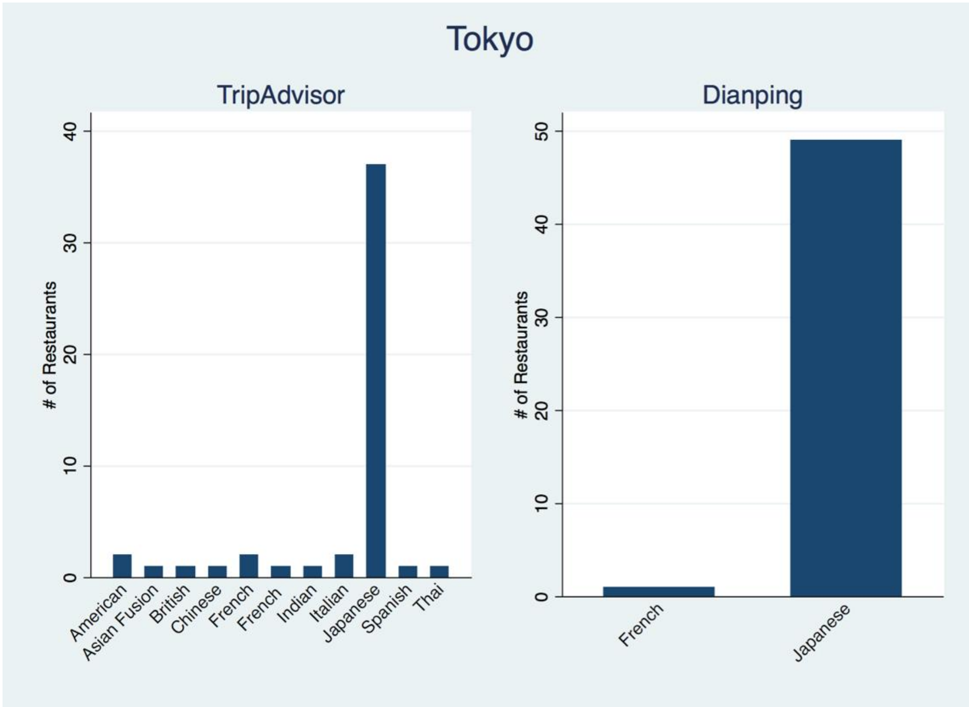


Figure 2. Cuisine Types by Website, Tokyo.

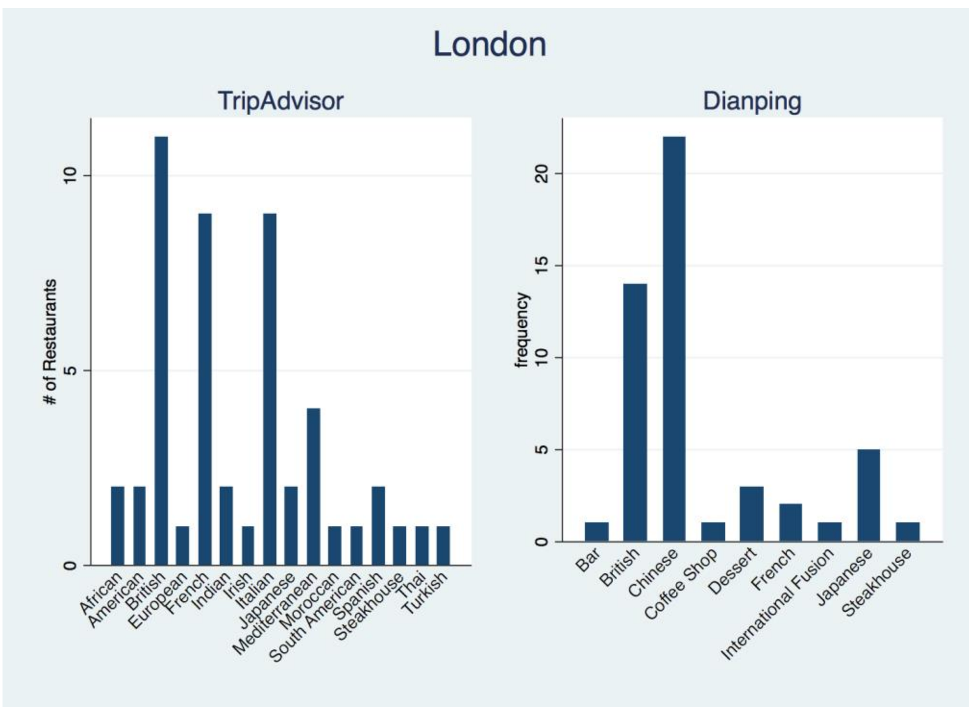


Figure 3. Cuisine Types by Website, London.

Behavior Patterns

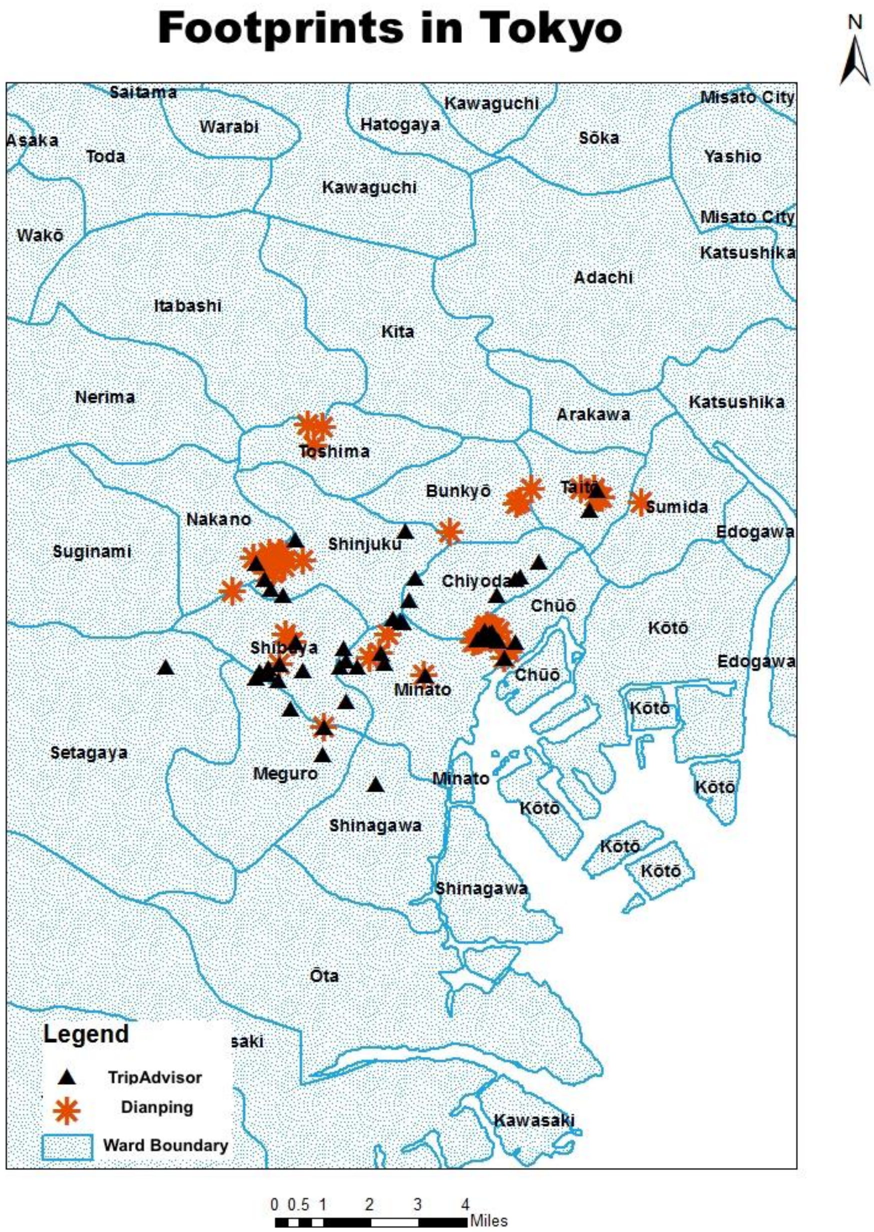
Firstly, the average check or spending for TripAdvisor restaurants stay below \$150, where as the upper-bound limit for Dianping restaurant is around \$400. The average check for TripAdvisor restaurants is distributed within a wider range of values than Dianping. It indicates that its ranking includes various tiers of F&B businesses. The most reviews and photos are shared for mid-priced restaurants. In comparison, Dianping restaurants present a dichotomous distribution of average check, with most reviews and photos on the low-end and only a few on the high-end. At the same time, the numbers of reviews and photos shared stay relatively small.

Table 3 shows the mean comparison from the two-sample T-test and Wilcox test. The two tests provide similar results, besides for the average check amount in Tokyo and NYC. According to the T-test, there is no significant difference in average check in Tokyo. This is consistent with the means from Table 2 – \$12.99 (TripAdvisor) and \$10.75 (Dianping), but relatively contrary to the Wilcox test result. In NYC, the mean check amounts are evidently different – \$10.90 (TripAdvisor) and \$43.31 (Dianping), hence coherent with the T-test (P-value = 0.0082) but not the Wilcox result. In both cases the non-parametric test reported questionable result. Therefore, the T-test will be used for interpretation.

The two groups overall (t = -1.3914, P-value = 0.1651) do not have significant differences in average check amount. It suggests that the purchasing power of Chinese diners are nearly as strong as that of Western diners. Individually, TripAdvisor diners frequent more expensive restaurants in London (t = 2.3007, P-value = 0.0118) than Dianping diners, but the case is opposite in NYC (t = -2.4440, P-value = 0.0082). For London and NYC, TripAdvisor users have posted more reviews and photos on their dining experiences. Again, it may be due to the relatively large user base of the website. Nevertheless, Tokyo again shows a unique situation, in which Dianping users have shared more reviews, suggesting a higher chance for Chinese people to reflect on their dining experiences in Japan. Although TripAdvisor have fewer reviews on average (t = -2.4470, P-value = 0.0081) for each Japanese restaurant, it hosts almost the same amount (t = 0.1854, P-value = 0.8533) of photos as Dianping.

Geo-Visualization: Maps

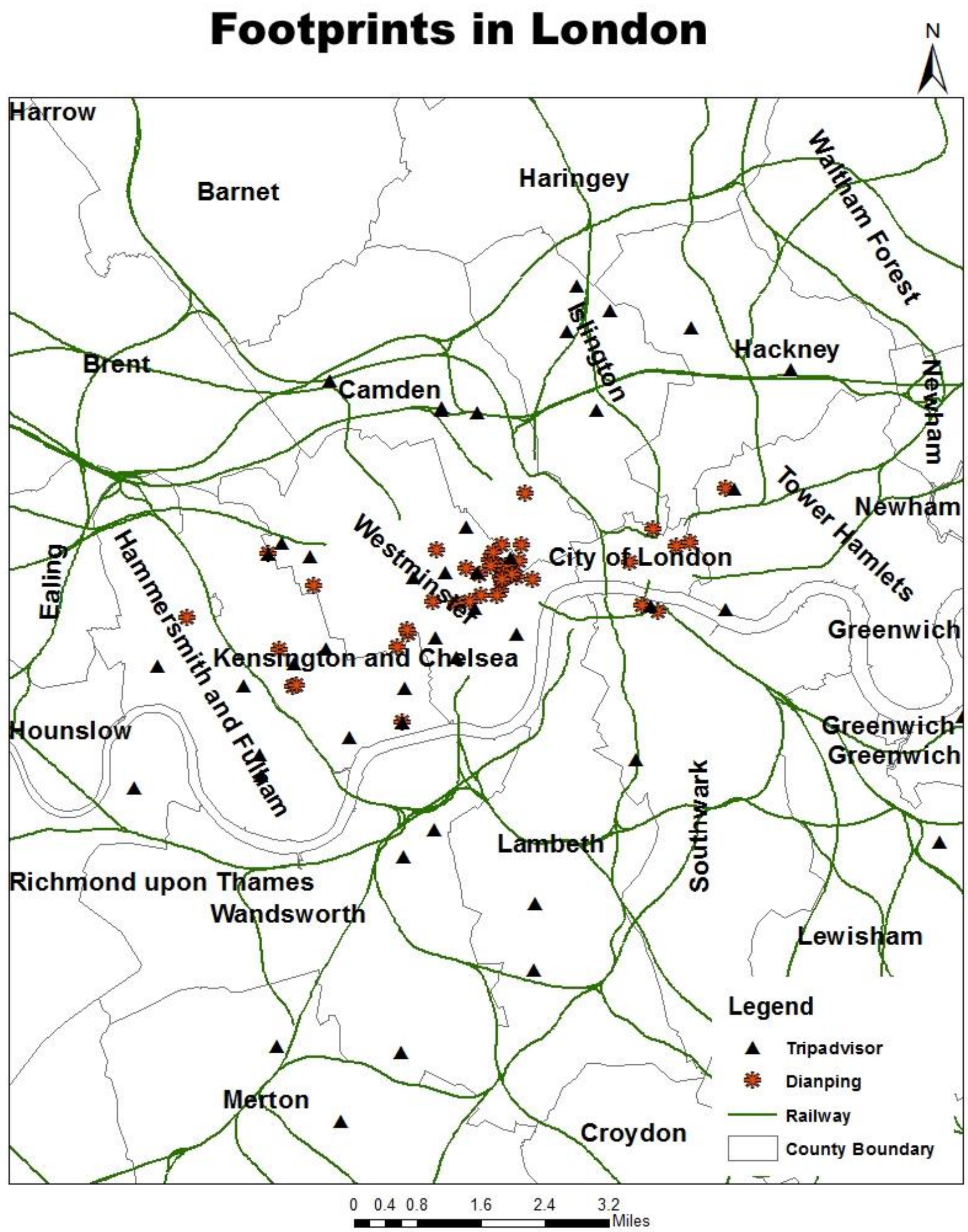
Three footprint maps were generated for the three destinations to visualize the restaurant locations in relation to each city's administrative boundaries and transportation system. As a general rule for map symbology, black triangles represent TripAdvisor restaurants and orange snowflakes Dianping restaurants. In Tokyo (Map 1), most of Dianping's top restaurants are located in Chuo and Shinjuku wards. The former hosts major tourist attractions in Tokyo, such as Ginza business district, Nihonbashi and the Tsukiji Market. The later, Shinjuku, is one of the major shopping districts in Tokyo. The top restaurants on TripAdvisor are more dispersed around central Tokyo, not necessarily within major tourist areas. In relation to transportation, many of the TripAdvisor restaurants are away from major railway stations, scattering around the local road network. Comparatively, Dianping diners are likely to stay close to major transportation hubs or along the railway lines for their favorite food. This suggests that Western diners may be more willing to explore culinary options off the "tourist path".



Map 1. Top Restaurants Distribution, Tokyo.

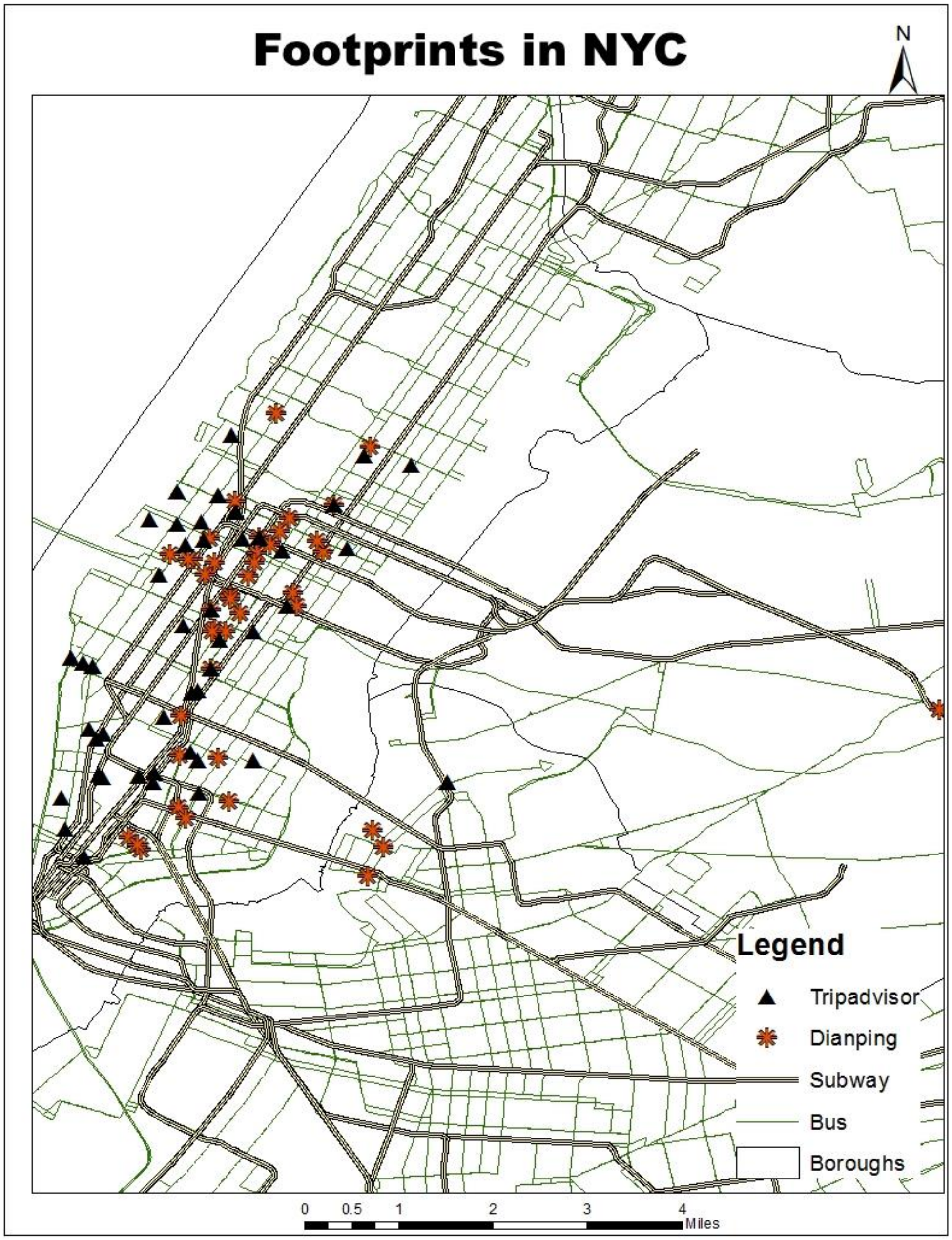
The London footprint map (Map 2) seems to show a similar result to Map 1. Although London's railway may be less evidently related to the top restaurants' distributions, the administrative districts do have a relation with the locations of Dianping's top restaurants. Most of the top 50 restaurants are along River Thames, clustering around the City of London and Westminster District, where London's historical and cultural attractions are also located. In contrast, TripAdvisor's top restaurants widely distribute in many districts of London. Many are away from River

Thames and the city center. Such a difference indicates that Chinese diners in London are likely to frequent restaurants close to major tourist attractions.



Map 2. Top Restaurants Distribution, London.

Unlike the previous two maps, the top restaurants in NYC seem close to each other, with most within Manhattan. But differences still remain between the two groups of diners. TripAdvisor users have rated restaurants in 13 neighborhoods, such as Midtown (38%), Chelsea (14%), Upper East Side (4%) and SoHo (4%). Dianping's top restaurants are distributed in 7 neighborhoods, with Midtown hosting the most (32%), and followed by Lower Manhattan (9%). The ranking also consists of multiple branches of the same restaurant brands, including a well-known pastry shop.



Map 3. Top Restaurants Distribution, NYC.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research shows that Chinese and Western tourists have systematic differences in selecting restaurants during travel in each of the cities investigated. Such differences are perhaps rooted in their biological and cultural traits. Despite the reasons behind, the most important observation is the ***culinary exclusiveness*** of Chinese tourists when the world's food cultures continue to merge and bond. The meaning of *exclusiveness* here is twofold. First, Chinese tourists may already possess a different value system in tourism economic exchanges, such as in their dining experiences. The system has certain benchmarks that dictate what goods and services are worth for purchase, not necessarily based on the conventional thinking of "good value". For example, they are willing to visit high-end French restaurants in NYC, as well as low-cost fast food chains. While in Tokyo, they are determined to frequent noodle shops even in the same chain. Sushi or tampanyaki, which may be considered "must-have" items in Japan, are not as popular for Chinese tourists. Their understanding of a destination and its culture may not be exactly the same as other world tourists. Their restaurant choices may not be constrained by their income levels or other demographic characters. They seem to have a particular agenda that determines the way they engage with a destination. Hence, their expectations are unique, but may be perceived by others as unexplainable.

The most unexplainable observation may be Chinese tourists' constant search for Chinese food abroad, especially in a Western environment as in the cases of London and NYC. This may seem counterintuitive, but does indicate the second meaning of their *culinary exclusiveness* – that Chinese food is exclusive to their identity, and enhancing their identity abroad through food is essential for presenting themselves in a foreign environment. Dining in Chinese restaurants may be a channel through which they differentiate themselves from the *others*, and from which they can feel the true *self*. This is consistent with the study by Bardhi, Ostberg, and Bengtsson (2010), which suggests that food consumption abroad is a "symbolic project of maintaining boundaries with the *Other,* and sustaining a sense of home". In the case of Chinese tourists, the conservatism in making food choices abroad is presumably due to their strong loyalty to and belief in the Chinese food culture. As Rozin (2007) suggests, culture is probably the most influential factor affecting people's choice of foods. People from civilizations with long-standing food cultures are likely to have a perennial attitude towards their own ethnic cuisine. And whether this factor plays a moderating role in tourist food consumption may be an important question for future research.

Two implications can be drawn for industry professionals. First, Chinese consumers have almost equal purchasing power as their Western counterparts for food consumptions at metropolitan destinations. However, their food engagement at destinations is not all with indigenous cuisines. For example, they are likely to select Chinese restaurants in NYC and London. In the case of NYC, multiple chained Chinese restaurants are highly ranked. At the same time, their selection of Western cuisines is limited to Italian, American and British, leaving many other options untouched. The situation is alarming for restaurateurs in urban settings, as they are losing revenue opportunities due to Chinese consumers' reluctance in venturing into new food cultures. However, the question is not easily solvable likely because of Chinese tourists' low engagement level at destinations. Second, Chinese tourists favor chained F&B businesses more than their Western counterparts. This is evident in all three cities, where chained dessert shops, noodle shops, seafood restaurants, and fast food outlets are all top rated on Dianping. It implies that brand names are highly recognizable for and valued by Chinese consumers. Systematically marketing chained restaurants to the Chinese market may attract higher attention than branding boutique restaurants.

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WORKING PAPERS

COMMITMENT THEORY: DO BEHAVIORS ENHANCE ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTION?

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ABSTRACT

A general point of commitment theory is that the more individuals behave in a certain way towards an entity, the more attractive they feel toward the entity. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether an individual's perceived attractiveness and/or uniqueness toward a destination is enhanced by the number of actual visits to each different attraction within the destination. The sample was 613 travelers in Daejeon, South Korea. The study found that there is a statistically significant relationship between the number of visits to different attractions and perceived attractiveness and uniqueness toward a destination.

KEYWORDS: Attitudes; Behaviors; Commitment; Perception

INTRODUCTION

The theories of reasoned action and planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) assuming that attitudes lead behaviors have been widely supported by empirical studies in the tourism field (Hsu & Huang, 2012; Lee & Choi, 2009). However, commitment theory underlying the effect of behaviors on perception and attitudes (Aronson, 1968; Gerard, 1968) has shed little light on its empirical account in tourism studies. A general point of commitment theory is that the more they behave and the more attractive they feel toward the objects (Cialdini, 2001). More recently, distinguishing commitment from involvement, loyalty and habit, Chang and Gibson (2015) postulated that the key attribute of commitment refers to creating relevant perceptions and attitudes consistent with initial actions to minimize post decision regrets due to irrevocability of behavior that occurs from engaging in a specific action and found that the main components of commitment significantly influenced future attitudes. The purpose of this study is to investigate if an individual's perceived attractiveness and uniqueness toward a destination are enhanced by the number of actual visit to each different attraction at a destination. In other words, this study is not to examine the revisiting of the same place but to explore the relationship between different places visited and the perception of attractiveness and uniqueness toward the destination on the basis of commitment theory.

COMMITMENT THEORY

Commitment involves the impact of behaviors on attitudes, while involvement shows the impact of beliefs on attitudes, loyalty has the impact of attitudes on behaviors, and habit shows the impact of behaviors on behaviors (Chang & Gibson, 2015). Originally, commitment stemmed from cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) in which an individual strives to decrease dissonant or negative drive states that occur when people hold two or more inconsistent thoughts simultaneously. For example, the free-choice paradigm refers to a dissonance relevant situation in which people are forced to choose between two attractive alternatives with the same qualities (Brehm, 1956), and the effort-justification paradigm describes a situation in which an individual thinks a particular goal is useless but as they work hard to achieve the goal they gradually change their mind and begin to value it (Aronson & Mills, 1959).

Later, Brehm and Cohen (1962) began using the concept of commitment as a parameter to study this type of dissonance. In the commitment process, an individual's action itself produces attitudes (Gerard, 1965). Kiesler and Sakumura (1966) defined commitment as a "pledging or binding of the individual to behavioral acts" (p.349). Kiesler (1968) suggested that commitment has a linear relationship with resistance to change the cognitions consistent with the behavior, and attitudes may be evoked to be consistent with a behavior. For example, individuals seek to make their current attitudes consistent with their past behavior, or people rationalize their behavior through retrieving some attitudes to support their behavior (Bem, 1965, 1972). Kiesler, Zanna and DeSalvo (1966) found that even though an individual disagrees with in group opinions and feels uncomfortable within a group, commitment to interacting with this group forces him/her to deal with this situation to maintain a relationship with them. Commitment should be observed as emphasizing post-decision regret in the cost-reward system instead of a motivational desire to make a decision to behave (Gerard, 1968). Therefore, commitment is a binding of individuals to their behavioral action to reduce their internal dissonance related to costs or regrets.

The first person who solidified commitment in the leisure and tourism context was Buchanan (1985). Taking into account conceptual definitions and theories from both sociology (e.g., Becker, 1960) and psychology (e.g., Kiesler, 1968), Buchanan used Becker's idea of side bets (e.g., financial, related activities, other), derived from the main bet (i.e., the main activity), inducing future attitudes, and defined commitment as a binding of individuals to a specific leisure and tourism behavior producing emotional attachment, relevant roles and behaviors, and benefits. Buchanan suggested that the amount of past experience in the activity, the centrality of participation to an individual's lifestyle and the degree of investment in the activity be critical in commitment. Buchanan's notion that commitment should not be thought of as a motivational attribute to explain why people take part in leisure activities seems to be a very important point for further understanding the core nature of commitment distinguished from other similar concepts. As already indicated by many psychologists (Aronson, 1968; Gerard, 1968; Kiesler, 1968) and Buchanan (1985), the commitment construct itself is not a motivational construct to explain leisure participation and tourism. Indeed, the concept of commitment originates from its own theory that is different from that of involvement, loyalty or habit.

METHOD

To examine the central research question in this paper of whether the frequency of visits to different attractions in Daejeon results in more attractive and unique feelings generated, the data was collected from 840 individuals at major tourism attractions and important traffic centers in Daejeon. Upon examination, only 838 completed surveys were usable for data analysis. However, for the purpose of this paper, the sample analyzed consisted of 613 people who identified themselves as tourists. Along with individuals who had traveled from a city or a state outside Daejeon Metropolitan City in the past three years, those who had traveled away from a county in which they reside to another county in Daejeon Metropolitan City were also included in the domain of tourists (the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of South Korea, 2014). Of the 613, approximately 56% respondents reported they live in Daejeon Metropolitan City while 44% indicated they lived in other cities and states within South Korea. Respondents were asked to answer if they had ever visited the 24 major attractions (including other) recommended by Daejeon Metropolitan City, using ‘Yes/No’ dichotomous question (multiple responses) per each attraction. In addition, the respondents were asked to agree or disagree (on a 5 point-Likert scale) with their perception of attractiveness and uniqueness of Daejeon as a tourist destination. The relationship between the actual visits and perceived attractiveness and uniqueness was then analyzed using regression.

RESULT

Approximately 58% of the respondents were female and nearly 70% of the respondents were in their 20s and 30s. Visits to 24 attractions including other ranged from 1 to 21with an average of 6.4 attractions. The results revealed that those who visited more attractions are more likely to perceive Daejeon as an attractive destination (β=.018, t=2.252, p=.025) as well as a unique destination (β=.016, t=1.980, p=.048). More detailed information is presented in the following Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. The Effect of the Number of Visits to Different Attractions on Perceived Attractiveness

	B	SE	*β*	*p*
The number of visits to different attractions	.018	.008	.091	.025*

*p<.05

Table 2. The Effect of the Number of Visits to Different Attractions on Perceived Uniqueness

	B	SE	*β*	*p*
The number of visits to different attractions	.016	.008	.080	.048*

*p<.05

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

This study set out to apply commitment theory to the perceptions and experiences of visitors to Daejeon Metropolitan City, South Korea. Specifically, its purpose was to investigate whether visits to multiple attractions within that destination have relationships with an individual's perceived attractiveness and uniqueness toward that destination. The findings showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the number of visits to different attractions and perceived attractiveness and uniqueness toward that destination. Prior studies examining commitment theory support these findings (Gerard, 1965; Kiesler, 1968) where the authors determined that attitudes and perceptions do evolve from an individual's behavior. This study has several limitations. Approximately 50% of the respondents who participated in the study resided in Daejeon Metropolitan City region even though they were considered tourists who traveled from their county to other neighboring counties. Perhaps, there may have been different results with a greater number of respondents who visited from further afield. In addition, this study did not examine if those who visited a particular attraction already had attractive and unique feelings toward it before their initial encounter. However, to reduce the possibility that those individuals commenced their experience with prior feelings of attractiveness and/or uniqueness to an attraction, the study focused on whether respondents visited a number of different attractions which ultimately developed a perception of the entire destination instead of repeat visits. Recommendations for further research would include advising authors to investigate specific visitor motivations and the perception of attractiveness associated with each attraction, followed by the overall perception of a destination so as to examine more informative causal relationships.

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ANALYSING AND IMPROVING THE LEARNING EFFECT OF STUDY TRIPS IN TOURISM EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of international study trips in tourism education with the goal to identify how to improve students' learning effects through international study trips. The theoretical framework for the study is based on Dale's Cone of Experience and Kent, Gilbertson and Hunt's study trip learning stages. Study trips are useful to enhance students learning beyond the potential of traditional lecturing. Research on international study trips is needed to allow tourism scholars to improve the quality and to prove the necessity of study trips as part of the curriculum. The proposed methodology is to conduct qualitative in-depth interviews with students before and after the study trip. This enables the researcher to compare the students' expectations with the perceived outcome and satisfaction. A total of 10 students joining two Cologne Business School study trips in January will be randomly selected for the interviews. A pre-test was conducted in the beginning of 2016. 11 students that returned from 4 different international study trips were interviewed for 5 to 8 minutes each. The answers given in the pre-test indicate a lack of connection between theory in lectures and experiences during the trip, as well as a strong impact of the intercultural experience on the students.

KEYWORDS

Study Trip, Field Trip, Tourism Education, Three-Phase Modell

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a relatively new segment of university education around the world. Tribe and Airey (2005) mention strong growth of tourism as a subject in higher education to have occurred since the mid-1980s. According to Weaver and Lawton (2006) the University of Queensland was the first to introduce a tourism management study programme in Australia in 1974. Tourism education on a university level though did not become popular in Australia until the late 1980s and the early 1990s when multiple universities around the country began to establish tourism education programmes. In Germany this development occurred around the same time period. However, tourism studies in Germany were and are still today mostly included within other disciplines such as geography or economics (Freyer et al., 2005). Accordingly, Freyer et al. (2005) write about tourism-related programmes in higher education, as opposed to tourism programmes in higher education.

A review showed that study trips are usually not part of tourism studies curricula in Germany. Some universities offer semesters abroad, include excursions as possible learning and teaching methods, or offer mandatory excursions as extra-curricular activity. In contrast, Xie (2004) sees tourism studies, compared to other disciplines, to require an even closer connection between the courses offered and practical real world experiences.

According to Carr (2003) experiential learning through field trips showing tourism students the links between the theoretical learning and reality lead to an overall higher quality of learning. Hence, especially in vocational tourism education field trips or study trips are very important. This working paper outlines the first steps of research on the learning effect of study trips in tourism education exemplified on the researchers' university of applied sciences, the Cologne Business School. The first steps comprise of a literature analysis, a pre-test and an introduction to the methodology and theoretical framework. The purpose of the whole study is to bring empirical evidence on the importance of study trips in tourism education, to show if they improve students learning and how they are best designed and interrelated with the tourism management studies curriculum. The following to research questions currently guide the study:

1. How do students participating in a CBS study trip perceive this study trip to have influenced their overall and specific learning?
2. What can be improved on CBS study trips to enhance the learning effect of students?

In educational travel literature the differentiation between excursion, study trip and field trip is not clarified. Based on a review of publications by Goh (2011), Sanders and Armstrong (2008) and the definition of field trips from Cambridge Dictionary (2016) and field work from Boyle et al. (2007) the following understanding is proposed: Excursions very often also have a pleasure purpose, thus not all excursions are part of educational tourism. Field trips and study trips are excursions. Study trips and field trips always have an educational purpose. However, study trips must not have a connection to vocational or school education. Study trips include all tours booked for an educational purpose. Thus, field trips are those study trips with a direct connection to the current education of the trip participant.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The learning effect of educational trips can be separated into three stages. Initially this separation was suggested by Porth (1997) as the Three-Phase Model. Amongst others, Xie (2004), Wong and Wong (2009) and Goh (2011) used this approach as their theoretical framework for studies on field trips. Figure 1 shows the Three-Phase Model from the pre-trip to the on-trip and the post-trip stage. During the pre-trip stage the lecturer or academic staff plan the field trip using their experience (Kent et al., 1997) with the purpose to provide enhanced learning to students or other participants. Usually students conduct secondary research and attend introductory sessions during the pre-trip stage (Goh, 2011). According to Porth (1997) pre-trip teaching needs to depend on prior knowledge of students. Hence in master programmes less classroom teaching is required before a study trip, compared to a bachelor programme.

During the field trip students, accompanied by academic staff, are given expert presentations, tours of facilities and the region, seminars and the opportunity for question and answer sessions (Porth, 1997; Goh, 2011). Sanders and Armstrong (2008) designed their field trip for students to experience the tourism destination, to apply their knowledge from class and to collect data for a report. Further, they identified their field trip programme to be "too full of activities for a group of students unfamiliar with this style of learning at the tertiary level" (Sanders and Armstrong, 2008: 36). Thus the prior field trip experience of students also needs to be considered for the on-trip stage. Additionally, group dynamics are an important factor influencing field trips (Gretzel et al., 2009). For many students international field trips can also be a new cultural experience that cannot be met in the classroom (Porth, 1997).

Sanders and Armstrong (2008) highlight the importance of a guided reflection stage for students after field trips. This can occur during the trip back or in sessions after the trip. Students can present their experiences and submit a report on the field trip (Goh, 2011). Students at a higher educational level reflect more critically about their experiences (Gretzel et al., 2009). In the post-trip phase lecturers need to focus on the key learnings of students, collect feedback from students and also give students feedback on their performance (Porth, 1997). In general research found students to highly value field trips as an educational tool (Sanders and Armstrong, 2008).

Figure 4: Three-Phase Model

Source: Own Illustration based on Porth (1997)

The intentions of study tour courses or field trips are to give students first-hand experience and learning opportunities outside the classroom. Students can learn how theory and practice interlink (Porth, 1997). Dale (1946) included field trips in his Cone of Experience. He mentions field trips to be observational but also that field trips can be set up for a more direct and interactive learning experience. However, the Cone of Experience and Dale's categories are not based on any empirical research.

Positionality, Pre-Test and Proposed Methodology

For the proposed study the positionality of the researcher is important. The author is a lecturer for the Tourism Management faculty of Cologne Business School (CBS). This is a private German university of applied sciences with a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts programme in International Tourism Management. The author has joined RWTH Aachen field trips during his Bachelor studies as well as CBS study trips as participant during his Master studies at CBS, and as a co-organiser during his time as lecturer at CBS. Here the terminology study trips is chosen for CBS trips as the considered multiple-day tours do not have any connection to the curriculum. The author intends to analyse the study trips critically in co-creation with the student participants with the intention to improve the learning effect of these study trips for students. Further intentions are to support the overall improvement of CBS study trips and to develop strategies and approaches to improve tourism study or field trips in higher education.

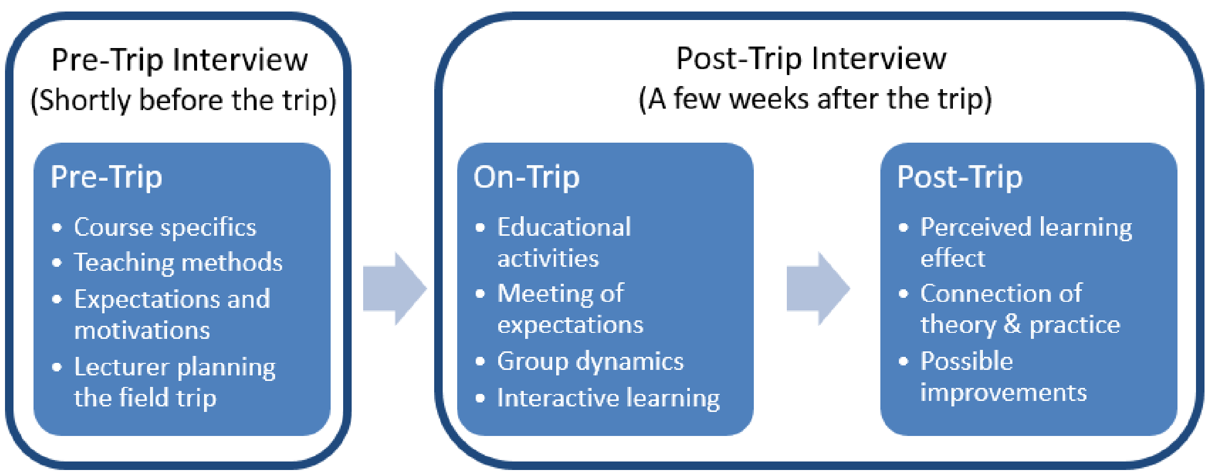
In 2015 a pre-test with 10 students joining international study trips to Malaysia (January 2014), Dubai (January 2015), South Africa (June 2015) and Bangkok (August

2015) was conducted through semi-structured interviews. The interview outline was developed based on the review of literature from Christie et al. (2015), Goh (2011), Haukeland (2013), Morgan (2010), Ritchie (2003), Tilden (1957) and Xie (2004). The pre-test yielded three main results: Firstly, students had difficulties expressing their experiences and learnings. Possibly this was observed because no reflection was done in class. Further it could be that students avoided speaking to the researcher openly as he is also known as their lecturer and partly involved in organising the trip. Secondly, students could not identify connections between the theory learned in their lectures and the learnings from the study trips. Thirdly, the overall experience and cultural learning was perceived as very positive.

To avoid the personal interaction of the researcher with his students a journal writing task was considered for the trip participants. However, the motivation of students to do this is expected to be very low as this would be mandatory and not connected to any grading. Further a journal writing task does not allow the researcher to ask specific questions and it remains unclear how much feelings and emotions students will share in their journals as well.

Figure 2 shows the theoretical framework of the study separated into the three trip phases. The intended data collection is integrated into the framework. A pre-trip interview will be conducted as close as possible before the trip to gain information on students' expectations and preparations. The on-trip and the post-trip stage are assessed through a post-trip interview within a few weeks after the trip. The pre-test indicated that the best time for post-trip interviews is within 2-4 months after the study or field trip. Students have time for reflecting on their experiences but the trip is not too far back in time that experiences and learning effects are forgotten or confused with other experiences.

Figure 5: Theoretical Framework and Methodology



Source: Own Illustration based on Porth (1997)

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GLOBAL SUCCESS ASSURED THROUGH CREATION OF A MEDICAL TOURISM COALITION CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

Faculty of a historically black university has developed curriculum that would meet medical tourism industry talent needs. Students and faculty formed a Medical Tourism Coalition of globally renowned Metroplex hospitals, businesses, community leaders and governments to increase domestic and international health visitors. Five action steps were accomplished. 1. Hospital visionaries were identified and interviewed. 2. The Medical Tourism Association (MTA) continued to guide the coalition with advice including management and organization policies and procedures. 3. An interstate university partnership expanded global research and presentations; in addition to improving medical tourism education in Hospitality and Tourism, Social Work and Healthcare. 4. Tourism opinion and healthcare leaders convened and a coalition was formed. 5. MTA chapter certification is in process. Consequently, coalition members are developing integrated, standardized processes to assure satisfactory outcomes for the medical tourism patients, caregivers and providers throughout their experience. As a result, students will be equipped for the medical tourism industry.

KEYWORDS: Coalition, Curriculum, Healthcare, Medical Tourism, Marketing, Research

INTRODUCTION

Faculty and students of Harris-Stowe State University (HSSU), a Historically Black College (HBCU) located in St. Louis, Missouri formed a Medical Tourism Coalition of hospitals, businesses, community stakeholders and government organizations to increase both domestic and international visitors to the Missouri/Illinois (Metroplex). It was decided that the coalition would serve to provide world renowned medical care, increase patients, and would add to hotel and restaurant revenue.

Since St. Louis area hospitals are globally renowned for their medical specialties, it stood to reason that a medical tourism working group could increase the number of patient referrals into the area. For example, according to the U.S. News and World Report, Best Hospitals Honor Roll 2016, Barnes Jewish Hospital/Washington University Medical Center was recognized in the top ten of all hospitals in the nation Number Ten national ranking in fourteen adult specialties. In addition, St. Louis Children's Hospital-Washington University is nationally ranked in ten specialties and SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital is nationally ranked in two specialties. ("Best Hospitals," 2015).

To accomplish the goals and objectives set by the Medical Tourism Association, in concurrence with the coalition, it was decided to recommend that the University develop a Medical Tourism Curriculum which would be housed in the HSSU School of Business. This program would assure that Certified Medical Tourism Facilitators would provide expertise and therefore assure success and sustainability of the coalition. To assure a grounded curriculum, action steps taken included a review of literature, similar programs, and industry best practices. In addition, medical tourism concepts and procedures have been added to Health Care Management courses; such as, Healthcare Systems, International Health Care Management and Strategic Healthcare Policy and Planning.

As part of the Medical Tourism Curriculum Strategic Plan, five steps were accomplished.

1. Faculty and undergraduate students identified hospital administrators to ascertain the perceived need for a regional healthcare hub and identify those with a vision for change. A list of questions was composed by the students that would be used during the interview process. (See Exhibit 1) Students were divided into pairs and each team chose a hospital in the Metroplex. Administrators were identified, appointments were made and interview conducted.

   Exhibit 1 Medical Tourism Hospital Questionnaire, St Louis, Missouri

   - How do you attract potential customers?
   - Do you market outside of the St. Louis Metro area? If so, what strategies are in place? Do your strategies include incentives?
   - Do you offer special amenities to visitors?
   - What are the most common services that you provide to those not from the area? Do they receive special treatment?
   - Are there any patients who do not have insurance who are considered a medical tourist? If so, how do they pay for their care?
   - Do you assist the families of the patients with extended stay locations; such as, hotels or apartments?
   - Do you actively participate in the Medical Tourism Association? If "Yes", have you experienced an increase in potential patients? If "No", have you considered membership in the association?

- How could your hospital help with a medical tourism effort in the St. Louis, Metroplex?

  Source: Harris-Stowe State University Health Care Administration Students

2. Consultant advice and guidance including management and organization policies and procedures were received from the Medical Tourism Association which furthered the Chapter creation process. (Rodriquez, 2015). According to the MTA membership coordinator, a coalition would not only serve to increase international and domestic medical tourist patients, but also would add to hotel and restaurant revenue. Data indicates that medical tourists spend between $7,475 and $15,833 per medical trip. (Medical Tourism Association: Research/Surveys/Statistics, 2013)

3. Organizational meetings were planned and convened with agendas including member introductions, general discussion of medical tourism definitions, discussion of the project, potential advantages for St. Louis hospitals and the Metroplex. Question topics included possible funding sources, hospital stake-holders involvement and planning for the future.

The group agreed that although medical tourist patients and their families/caregivers were coming to St. Louis from both the United States and foreign countries, the effort should be expanded and coordinated. It was agreed that although hospitals could not always offer competitive pricing, working as a group the ability to market quality and service could result in increased revenue and profits. St. Louis is already a tourist destination, the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce and St. Louis Visitors and Convention Commission could add medical tourism to the current marketing mix. Subsequently, a coalition was formed with representatives from hospitals including St. Louis University Hospital and Barnes Jewish Hospital/Washington University Medical Center and the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce.

To further the coalition's goal to increase medical tourism in the Metroplex, HSSU faculty met with faculty from Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) during an ISTTE Conference. A joint decision was made to create a partnership within the coalition to increase academic research opportunities. By sharing research data, medical tourism curriculum could be enhanced through additional course offerings in Hospitality and Tourism Management, Social Work and Healthcare Management. There was a consensus that the newly formed Medical Tourism Coalition could provide practical perspectives and necessary logistics to an academic partnership between HSSU and SIUC.

Course curriculum ideas were proposed which included International Patient Marketing, International Insurance Company Relationships, Global Patient Services, Social Support Networks, Patient Safety and Quality, Medical Tourism Site Visit Design, and Service and Design for Medical Travelers. Logistic discussions included hotel and restaurant services, excursion tours, patient cultural sensitivities and resources exchange information.

To advance the coalition's goal,

- Additional opinion leaders from organizations; such as, the St. Louis Convention and Visitors Commission and the St. Louis Area Hotel Association were recruited as members.
- Harris-Stowe faculty delivered "Global Healthcare Management Emerges as a Multinational Business/Clinical Model at the 7th Annual World Medical Tourism and Global Healthcare Congress and faculty attended the 8th World Medical Tourism and Global Health Care Congress 2015 -2016 and discussed Chapter formation with MTA representatives
- SIU-C faculty continued membership in the St. Louis Area Hotel Association and an HSSU student was provided the opportunity to accompany a Hospitality and Tourism faculty member to a Travel Professionals of Color Conference at Sea. The conference included a session about expanding your business into niche markets. Medical Tourism is a specialty market.

SUMMARY

As a result, medical tourism coalition members are developing integrated, standardized processes to assure satisfactory outcomes and experiences for the medical tourism patient, caregiver and provider by completing the planned action steps. Hospital visionaries were identified and interviewed; the Medical Tourism Association (MTA) continued to guide the coalition with advice including management and organization policies and procedures; an interstate university partnership expanded global research and presentations plus medical tourism education in Hospitality and Tourism, Social Work and Healthcare; tourism opinion and healthcare leaders convened and a coalition was formed and MTA chapter certification progressed. In addition, a Medical Tourism Industry Management course was written, approved and added to the course catalog. As a result, students will be equipped for the medical tourism industry.

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Appendix Four

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www.stlhotels.com

Haven House St. Louis
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MEASURING THE ACCUMULATIVE TRANSFORMATIVE EFFECTS OF FIELD RENOVATION OF TOURISM ENGLISH TEACHING: THE INTRODUCTION OF EXPERT SPEAKERS

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ABSTRACT

Tourism English is a course aiming to deepen students' tourism knowledge with English as the medium, which requires students' interest in tourism and a relatively good command of English. Though the teacher has achieved a high score in students' course evaluation, there is still an urgent need to renovate the teaching method used in the current teaching to further improve the teaching effect. After literature analysis, the invitation of expert speakers seems to be among the best choices. To carry out the teaching renovation successfully, a pre-renovation survey is a must to understand students' learning needs and expectation towards this method. With the implementation of the online questionnaire, students' actual needs and expectation are derived, which will shed some light on the classroom teaching and facilitates the teacher to achieve a better teaching effect.

KEY WORDS: Course Renovation; Expert Speaker; Tourism English.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism English is either a compulsory course in tourism-related majors or an elective course for college students in China. *Tourism English* greatly differs across universities in terms of its contents, which mainly depend on the teaching ideology of instructors. Some teachers attempt to perfect the English of their students by honing their ability to travel, whereas others deepen students' understanding of how tourism is operated, with English as the medium. The former focuses on English, whereas the latter emphasizes the business of tourism. Either of these approaches may be employed. The second approach is often adopted because the emergence of the Internet provides students with many options to improve their English level on one hand. On the other hand, tourism is a promising industry that creates many job opportunities for students that can help them to expand their outlook.

On the basis of the aforementioned ideology, *Tourism English* must integrate theory, operation, and practice in tourism. Teachers should improve the theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and comprehensive ability of their students during class. Naturally, teachers must adopt English as their major medium of instruction. One of the researchers used this approach in teaching the course for almost six years. Despite the satisfaction of his students toward the course, *Tourism English* was not ranked among the most satisfactory courses in the university. By exploring the education literature, the researcher found numerous ways to change how he teaches the course in the classroom. After comparing the applicability of the methods, he decided to introduce industry experts to his class as an exploratory method for revolutionizing the classroom teaching of *Tourism English*.

Many courses that require strong practice, such as accounting, have adopted the same method and achieved satisfactory results (Metrejean, Pittman, & Zarzeski, 2010). Lowman (1995) suggests that the constant adoption of various teaching methods in the classroom can enrich the learning experience of students, and inviting guest speakers from the industry has been proven as one of the most effective methods for promoting class engagement of students. Inviting experts with professional knowledge or practical experience in the related industry is also recommended as an alternative to conventional lectures (Davis, 1993). Therefore, this empirical study investigates (1) the expectations of students toward this method, (2) the type of experts they want to listen to, and (3) the abilities they are likely to improve after attending the lectures of the industry experts.

METHOD

A questionnaire survey was performed to solicit the opinions of students with regard to the introduction of industry experts to classroom teaching. The questionnaire comprised two parts. The first part collected the basic information of students (e.g., gender, highest English level, and major), and the second part asked about their expectations toward this teaching method (e.g., degree of expectation, experts they tend to learn from, and abilities they want to improve through this method). The *Tourism English* students of one of the researchers were invited to answer an online survey in a China-based online investigation website (www.diaochapai.com) between June 20 and July 5, 2016. The cover page clearly stated that the survey was purely voluntary and that all the collected data would only be employed for the research. A total of 165 students participated in the online survey, and 155 questionnaires were valid for analysis.

FINDINGS

Among the 155 participants with valid responses, 100 (64.52%) are females and the rest are males, indicating an apparent gender difference among the students in terms of their interest to learn English and tourism. Around 47 (30.33%) and 55 (35.48%) respondents scored over 100 in China's College Entrance English Examination (with the highest score being 150) and passed at least Band 4 of the College English Test, respectively. Forty-six (29.68%) participants did not reach any of the provided English levels in the questionnaire. The majority of the students have good English level. In terms of their purpose of taking *Tourism English*, 68 (43.87%) and 44 (28.39%) students show interest in travel and English, respectively. Few (8.39%) intend to improve their tourism knowledge (which is inconsistent with the teaching objective of the course). From the remaining students, 13.55% take the course for the academic credits, 3.23% wish to study together with their friends, and 2.58% want to receive high scores. These four types of students may not greatly benefit from the course. The majority of the respondents (64.52%) are art majors. A total of 115 (74.19%) respondents have finished at least three electives.

Around 41.94% and 43.23% of these students hold high and fair expectations of the speaker, respectively (Fig. 1), suggesting their high comprehensive expectancy toward this novel teaching method. Around 96.77% of the respondents expect to listen to managers, common staff members, and teachers with rich industry experience (Fig. 2). Slightly over one-third of the respondents have previously listened to expert speakers during class, which suggests that most courses in the university have yet to adopt this teaching method. Although most students choose to study *Tourism English* because of their interests in travel and English, their survey responses reveal their desire to improve their general knowledge before their travel and English abilities. Another exploratory research is conducted to determine which of the investigated dimensions significantly affects the expectations of students. The one-way ANOVA test identifies "purpose for learning" as the only dimension influencing the expectation levels of students. This dimension has a significance level of 0.009, which is smaller than the threshold (Table 1). Therefore, classroom teachers should consider purpose for learning when adopting this teaching approach.

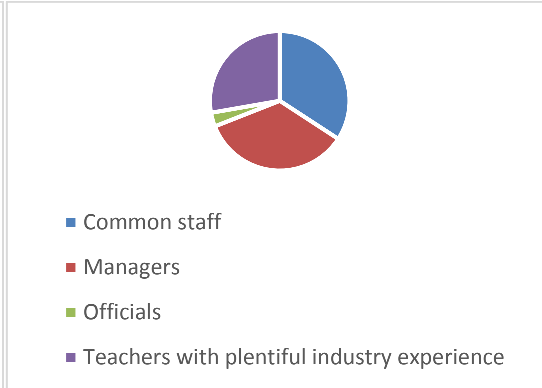

Figure. 1 Expectation Levels of Students   Figure. 2 Types of Expected Experts

Table 1 Influence of Learning Purpose on Expectation Level

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.694	5	2.139	3.188	0.009
Within Groups	101.989	152	0.671		
Total	112.684	157			

IMPLICATIONS

Given the high expectations of students, the approach of inviting industry experts into classrooms can help improve the teaching effect of *Tourism English*. To obtain the best teaching effect, teachers must carefully analyze the needs of their students, especially their purpose of choosing this course. This factor acts as a vital mediator influencing the final renovation effect. Teachers must invite experts who are most desired by their students to help their students learn what they are anxious to know. Teachers should adjust their teaching content and their degree of teaching renovation because their students are highly experienced learners who have successfully completed many elective courses and attended classes in which they listened to expert speakers. After introducing this method, teachers must periodically evaluate the performance of their students to identify avenues for improvement. Given that many students want to improve their English and travel knowledge, experts in these fields, such as English tour guides, are preferred. These experts can provide students with the knowledge they need when traveling and share English learning strategies. This method can shed light on the renovation of *Tourism English* teaching and improve its learning effect.

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APPLYING MODERATED DUMMY VARIABLE RIDGE REGRESSION METHOD FOR IDENTIFYING ZOO'S QUALITY COMPONENTS

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ABSTRACT

The current study applies a novel approach that accounts for non-linear relationship between attribute-level performance and satisfaction and helps to optimize organizational efforts and improve components of a zoo. For that purpose, a three-factor model of customer satisfaction and approach suggested by Chen (2012) will be applied and tested in zoo settings. Basic, performance, and excitement attributes will be identified based on the way they affect visitors' assessment of a zoo visit. Consequently, managerial implications of the research findings will be presented.

KEYWORDS: Kano's Model, three-factor theory, performance optimization, importance-performance analysis, customer satisfaction, quality components

INTRODUCTION

In a highly competitive tourism and recreation industry customer satisfaction (CS) is one of the most critical factors of company's survival and success. CS depends on a number of determinants – product or service attributes or quality components, which are often called factor structure of CS (Ahmad et al., 2012; Mittal, Ross, & Baldasare, 1998). Customer experiences are often reflected through factor structure of CS at attribute-level (Slevitch & Oh, 2010). Knowing what customers enjoyed or disliked permits managers to improve their offerings and allocate organizational resources in a way that maximizes satisfaction and brings customers back. With this idea in mind, numerous attempts have been made to identify critical quality components that generate customer satisfaction and loyalty in order to stay abreast of competitors (Deng, Chen, & Pei, 2008).

Customer satisfaction determinants at an attribute level are generally operationalized through Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA). In this prevailing approach, a list of attributes is generated first and, then, customers are asked to rate a product or service on the degree of how each of the attributes is delivered. Also, consumers are asked to rate importance of each attribute. Finally, an overall score is computed as a sum of individual attribute scores weighed by the level of their importance (Martilla & James, 1977).

In spite of its popularity, IPA approach has multiple limitations that have been only partially addressed through modified versions of IPA (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2012). Recently, however, several attempts have been made to overcome shortcomings of traditional IPA approach based on Kano et al.'s model (1984) and moderated dummy variable regression method to determine optimal factor structure of CS (Chen, 2012). The goal of the current study is to test novel moderated dummy variable regression method (MDVR) proposed by Chen (2012) in zoo settings. In particular, basic, performance, and excitement attributes will be identified based on the way they affect zoo visitors' CS. Consequently, managerial implications of the research findings will be presented.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) has been a dominating approach of identifying CS determinants at an attribute level (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2011). In original IPA, a list of attributes is generated first and, then, customers are asked to assess a product or service on the degree of how each of the attributes was performed. Consequently, consumers are asked to evaluate importance of each attribute. Finally, an overall score is calculated as a sum of individual attribute scores weighed by the level of their importance (Martilla & James, 1977).

In spite of its simplicity and popularity, IPA method has numerous flaws and can be misleading in attempts to identify optimal set of product or service features (Deng, 2007; Oh, 2001; Matzler, Sauerwein, & Heischmidt, 2003). Major IPA's deficiencies are:

(1) IPA does not provide clear definition for the concept of importance and does not take into account whether the attribute is important for its presence or its absence (Deng et al., 2008);

(2) IPA is based on the assumption that importance and performance are two independent things, however, abundant empirical evidence confirmed that the relationship between attribute performance and attribute importance is causal and attribute importance changes as attribute performance does (Oh, 2001; Oliver, 1997; Matzleret al., 2003);

(3) IPA implies that CS function is linear and additive in nature, though it was proven otherwise (Bartikowski & Llosa, 2003; Hui et al., 2005; Matzler et al., 2004; Slevitch & Oh, 2010). Therefore, IPA approach allows for performance *maximization*, not *optimization*, consequently leaving the problem of optimal deployment of resources unaddressed (Mittal et al., 1998; Chen, 2012). Both academics and practitioners report that equally investing in greater performance along all attributes in order to increase CS would not be effective and not validate additional investments (Busacca & Padula, 2005; Lin et al., 2010; Mittal et al., 1998).

As Oh (2001), summizes, academics and practitioners continue to use IPA without giving critical concerns to its conceptual and practical validities. Oh further states that though simplicity and convenience are always desirable, they should not be the predominant criteria when choosing and applying a research method. Oh concludes that a thorough reassessment of IPA as a tool is necessary.

Multiple attempts have been made to develop a better method of identifying a critical set of quality attributes (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2011). Some studies have modified IPA with the basic framework remaining largely the same; however, several researchers presented a framework that rectifies the flaws of the original IPA model (Bartikowski & Llosa, 2003; Matzler et al., 2003). Methods that embrace performance-importance dependence and asymmetric nature of customer satisfaction function stem from Kano's Theory of Attractive Quality, which is often referred as Kano's model (Kano et al., 1984). In turn, Kano's theory is grounded into Herzberg's work on job satisfaction where Herzberg introduced two categories of factors, hygiene and motivators, based on their dissimilar effect on satisfaction (Herzberg, 1967).

The original Kano's model distinguishes between five different quality attribute types: *attractive*, *one-dimensional*, *basic (must-be)*, *indifference*, and *reverse*. Each category influences customer satisfaction differently (see Figure 1). Inadequate performance on must-be attributes lead to dissatisfaction while adequate performances on these attributes has minimal or no effect on satisfaction. One-dimensional attributes have equal impact on customer satisfaction in cases of over- and under-fulfillment. Attractive attributes produce satisfaction in fulfilled state, but result in minimal or no impact when performance is low.

Kano-s model is often called a three-factor model because following studies of customer satisfaction condensed the original number of attributes into three categories: basic factors, performance factors, and excitement factors (Anderson & Mittal, 2000; Busacca & Padula, 2005; Matzler & Hinterhuber, 1998; Matzler & Sauerwein, 2002; Vavra, 1997). The basic factors are similar to must-be quality elements. The performance factors are similar to one-dimensional quality elements. The excitement factors are similar to attractive quality elements.

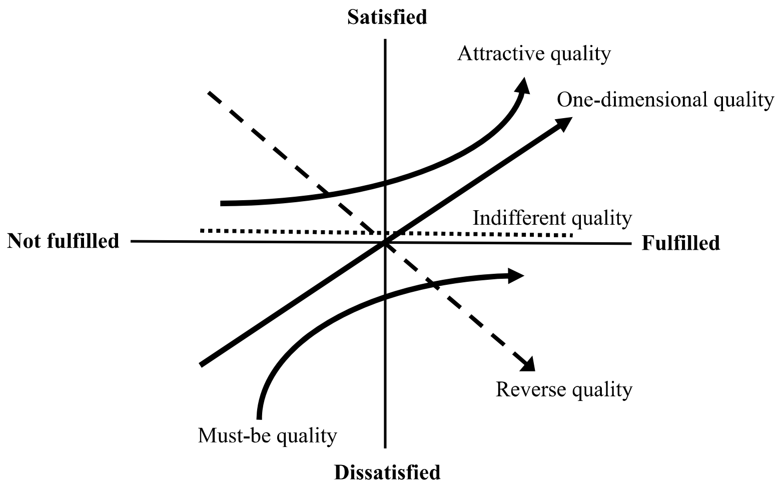

Fig. 1. Kano's two-dimensional quality model.

Figure 1. Kano's model

According to Kano, two assumptions should be followed: First, importance of a basic or excitement attributes is based on its performance. Basic attributes are crucial when performance is low and are unimportant when performance is high. Excitement factors are critical when performance is high and are unimportant when performance is low (Matzler et al., 2004; Ting & Chen, 2002). Second, the relationship between attribute performance and overall customer satisfaction is asymmetrical.

To categorize quality attributes, Kano et al. (1984) developed a special questionnaire based on Critical Incident Technique (CIT). The questionnaire contains pairs of questions for each attribute of a given product or service. Each pair contains a question about respondent's feelings in the case of performance fulfillment (functional question- how would you feel if food tastes good?) and another question for a situation of under-fulfillment (dysfunctional question- how would you feel if food doe not taste good?). Then, a special evaluation table is used to categorize attributes based on response frequencies.

Though, Kano questionnaire remains the most appropriate approach to identify original Kano categories, it is also found too complex and difficult to implement in real world situations (Chen, 2015; Mikuliċ & Prebežac, 2011). As Mikuliċ and Prebežac (2011) state it takes much longer to respond to the Kano's questionnaire than typical IPA questionnaires, because two questions are asked for each attribute and that tend to decrease the willingness of respondents to complete the questionnaire. Additionally, respondents are easily confused when required to envision opposite, functional and dysfunctional, conditions.

In attempts to overcome this problem, several researchers found that regression methods provided a better fit for attribute categorization (Busacca & Padula, 2005, Lin et al., 2010; Matzler et al, 2003; Ting & Chen, 2002; Vavra, 1997). The biggest operational advantage of these regression methods is that they apply data from attribute-level performance and customer satisfaction measurement, which are far easier to collect than answers to functional and dysfunctional questions suggested by Kano et al. (1984).

Penalty-Reward Contrast Analysis (PRCA) is the most commonly used regression technique to categorize quality attributes based on the Kano's framework (Chen, 2012; Mikulić & Prebežac, 2011). It was originally developed by Brandt (1988) to find value-enhancing attributes in transportation services but was later adopted to classify attributes using Kano's model. PRCA technique assesses the effect of high and low attribute performance on overall CS using regression with two sets of dummy variables for each attribute. Low attribute performance is coded as "1", whereas all other ratings of attribute performance are coded as "0" in one set. In the other set, the high attribute performance is coded as "1", whereas all other ratings of attribute performance are coded as "0." The two dummy sets are then regressed against a measure of overall CS, resulting in two regression coefficients for each attribute. The first regression coefficient is called an attribute's *penalty* or the attribute's negative impact on overall satisfaction when performing very poorly. The second regression coefficient represents an attribute's *reward* or the attribute's positive impact on overall CS when performing very well. A comparison of the two regression coefficients shows whether an attribute has a positive or negative impact on overall satisfaction. If penalty coefficient is not significant, while reward coefficient is positive and significant, then the attribute is classified as an attractive/excitement factor. When penalty coefficient is negative and significant, while reward coefficient is not significant, then it is classified as must-be/basic factor. Consequently, if the penalty coefficient is negative and significant, while reward coefficient is positive and significant, then the attribute is classified as a one-dimensional/performance factor.

It should be noted that the validity of using PRCA to classify Kano categories have been questioned (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2011). It was argued that ignoring the moderating effects in dummy variable regression could fail to produce accurate classifications (Lin et al., 2010). Additionally, empirical evidence shows that basic factors moderate effect of excitement and performance factors on customer satisfaction (Hui et al, 2005; Slevitch & Oh, 2010). Often times, customer responses and CS data distributions are skewed resulting in high multicollinearity among CS attributes and biased regression coefficients in traditional PRCA (Garver, 2003). To address skeweness issues, Lin et al. (2010) proposed moderated regression method and to avoid potential multicollineraity problems Chen (2012) proposed to use ridge regression as an alternative to the least squares regression. The suggested moderated regression is shown in the following equation:

$$CS_{i} = \alpha_j + \beta_j X_{ij} + \delta_{1j} D_{1ij} + \delta_{2j} D_{2ij} + \delta_{3j} X_{ij} \times D_{1ij} + \delta_{4j} X_{ij} \times D_{2ij},$$

where CS_i represents the overall satisfaction of the ith customer. Overall satisfaction (CS_i) and the performance level of the jth attribute rated by the ith customer (X_{ij}) are measured using a scale rating, such as a Likert-type scale. Two dummy variables estimate the effects of attribute performance on CS. D_{1ij} is set to ‘‘1’’ if the jth attribute rated by the ith customer is low (X_{ij}<midpoint) and set to ‘‘0’’ if rated otherwise. D_{2ij} is set to ‘‘1’’ if the jth attribute rated by the ith customer is high (X_{ij} > midpoint) and set to ‘‘0’’ if else. Accordingly, a common performance level (X_{ij} = midpoint) is then coded as (0, 0), and used as a reference group. The coefficients δ_{1j} and δ_{2j} represent the moderators in the non-fulfilled and the fulfilled conditions, respectively. In addition, two cross product terms, X_{ij} x D_{1ij} and X_{ij} x D_{2ij}, are introduced to detect the inter- action effect of fulfillment on the relationship between attribute performance and customer satisfaction. Consequently, the coefficients, δ_{3j} and δ_{4j}, signify the effect of interaction on the relationship between attribute performance and CS in the non-fulfilled and the fulfilled conditions.

According to Chen (2012), if the coefficients of both the predictor and moderator are of the same sign, an increase in performance raises CS because of the fulfilled condition ($\beta_j\ \delta_{2j} > 0$), and a decrease in performance reduces customer satisfaction ($\beta_j\ \delta_{1j} > 0$) due to the non-fulfilled condition. However, when a strict and positive moderation effect is not supported, indicating that an improved performance will not result in higher CS, or that a decline in performance will not result in lower CS, the following rules should be used to categorize quality attributes:

Rule 1. The predictor and moderator of opposite signs: $\beta_j\ \delta_{1j} < 0$ or $\beta_j\ \delta_{2j} < 0$ (buffering interaction).

Rule 2. The coefficients of the predictor and cross-product term of opposite signs: $\beta_j\ \delta_{3j} < 0$or $\beta_j\ \delta_{4j} < 0$ (interference or antagonistic interaction).

Chen’s (2012) classification approach is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Classification of quality attributes

In the fulfilled conditions (high performance)	In the non-fulfilled conditions (low performance) A decrease in performance will reduce customer satisfaction		
	No	Yes	No Conclusion
An increase in performance will increase CS			
No	I	M	X (I or M)
Yes	A	O	X (A or O)
No Conclusion	X (I or A)	X (M or O)	X (totally mixed)

* M: must-be/basic, O: one-dimensional/performance, A: attractive/excitement, I: indifferent, X: mixed-class.

The described above method of Kano categorization remains a novel approach requiring additional empirical examination. Though showed promising results, the method requires testing in other industries to confirm its validity (Chen, 2012). The present study seeks to test Chen's method in relation to such competitive tourism and recreation setting as a zoo. No attempts of that sort have been done so far, thus, determining zoo's quality structure seems noteworthy from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The obtained results will point on key satisfaction drivers and provide insights on how to optimize resource distribution in a zoo. Additionally, the current study will contribute empirical evidence to the MDVR validity in the existing theory on the subject.

METHODS

The data used in the current study was the result of on-site questionnaires collected at a large public zoo located in the Southeaster US for an entire calendar year (January 2011 – December 2011). A modified probability sample was employed, which utilized a systematic quota sampling plan where every n^{th} adult visitor (determined by traffic flow and number of interviewers) was approached and asked to complete the questionnaire at various locations throughout the zoo.

Based on discussions with Zoo management, a target of 4,000 usable surveys was established. Historical attendance data was utilized to develop a sampling strategy. Monthly and daily data collection goals were established to be proportional to historical attendance data. At the conclusion of each sampling day, a log was kept in order to record the dates, times of intercepts, weather conditions, interviewers, number of intercepts, number of refusals, and number of completed surveys. A total of 4,016 completed usable surveys were obtained, with a response rate of 75.5%.

To assess respondents' perceptions of service performance on various attributes, they were asked to rate the zoo's performance on 27 attributes using a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (extremely poor) to 7 (extremely good). The attributes were chosen based on previous research (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1994; and Baker and Crompton, 2002) and modified based on discussions with zoo management. To assess respondents' perceptions of the zoo's image, the Store Image Scale (SIS) developed by Manolis, Keep, Joyce, and Lambert (1994) was used. The SIS is composed of 10 different items covering three dimensions: (a) general store attributes; (b) appearance, and (c) service. The items were measured with a 7-point semantic differential scale.

Two sets of dummy variables were obtained as recommended by Chen (2012). Ridge regression will be to determine unstandardized regression coefficients for each attribute. Attribute categorization will be based on rules specified in Table 1.

IMPLICATIONS

Several implications are expected to emerge from the findings of this study. Generally, zoo managers must work with limited resources in a highly competitive environment where improvements must be prioritized to sustain competitive advantage. Knowledge of how different attribute performance affects CS will enable zoo practitioners to control their resource distribution activities more effectively. Identified must-be/basic requirements should deserve the closest attention, however, for them it is sufficient to only fulfill customers' expectations, whereas their over-fulfillment is unnecessary. One-dimensional/performance requirements will constitute the second priority and attractive/excitement requirements the third. Additionally, the present study helps to extend the quality factor structure literature with empirical evidence for the validity of MDVR approach for Kano categorization.

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PROPOSED CURRICULUM IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The managing of sustainable tourism development within the southern African landscape is becoming essential and needs to follow an interdisciplinary approach. In this field managers need to be trained to inform impoverished communities to become more sustainable, responsible and economically competitive.

The proposed coursework masters curriculum in Sustainable Tourism Development seeks to deliver graduates with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to identify and address the challenges of sustainable tourism development in Africa, in particular southern Africa. This curriculum will present an opportunity to transform the quality of life of persons across the region and continent.

Focus is on education in sustainable tourism development (including the natural and cultural resource base) following eco-principles and guidelines to provide a framework for sustainable/responsible tourism development in response to (rural) community needs.

The conceptual framework includes underlying theoretical fundamentals and addresses issues such as the planning, design and sustainable development of eco-facilities and spaces; co-creation of tourism products; pro-poor, township and community tourism, entrepreneurial skills to apply sustainable practices, greening the environment; managing sustainable events; all against the backdrop of climate change using local, national and international case studies, with fields such as development practice, geography, natural sciences and cultural studies providing input.

Keywords: Curriculum, Master’s program, Sustainable tourism development.

INTRODUCTION

The design and development of a relevant and innovative curriculum in Sustainable Tourism Development is currently in process. This curriculum is a two-year MPhil in Sustainable Tourism Development (STD) and seeks to deliver graduates with the knowledge and skills to identify and address the challenges of sustainable tourism development in Africa, in particular southern Africa. This curriculum aims to present an opportunity to transform the quality of life of persons across the region and continent. In the recent regional report for Africa the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) states that tourism is one of the key industries driving change on the continent of Africa and that it provides multiple opportunities for economic growth and improved livelihoods (UNWTO 2015:12).

Although there have been positive contributions of tourism to socio-economic development in Africa, negative impacts of tourism activities on people, cultural heritage and ecosystems call for appropriate management solutions according to the principles of sustainability. The integration of sustainability issues in tourism education curriculums is essential for the qualification of African scholars who aspire to become future tourism leaders such as managers, policymakers or researchers.

Whereas most African countries are potential or emerging tourism destinations, some others like South Africa, Namibia and Kenya have relatively mature tourism markets focusing on safari tourism (Christie et al. 2014). Target group-oriented marketing and innovative product development gain in significance. As European countries are important source markets for these countries (Statistics South Africa 2016: 13; MET Namibia 2014: 10), strategic knowledge concerning specific tourism demand patterns and marketing challenges is of interest to scholars and professionals working in the southern African tourism sector. Due to the rising number of socially and environmentally conscious European tourists the creation of appropriate responsible tourism products is required (George 2014: 582).

A curriculum in Sustainable Tourism Development is in the stages of development at the Division of Tourism Managment at the University of Pretoria (UP) in conjunction with the Centre for Sustainable Tourism Development (ZENAT) at the Eberswald University for Sustainable Development in Germany and the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Windhoek, Namibia. The major intention is the promotion of sustainable tourism management education in southern Africa and Germany by establishing and expanding appropriate joint teaching curriculums. Thus the project aims to strengthen development cooperation links between southern Africa and Germany. In addition this curriculum aims to leverage the University of Pretoria’s significant scholarly resources in an appropriate way to respond to the changing African tourism development landscape.

The curriculum is a two year program that consists of a total of 180 credits, of which the mini-dissertation holds 60 credits (that may be co-supervised by the above-mentioned parties). The course-work component holds 120 credits that will currently be split (60/60) between UP and ZENAT (since NUST still needs to develop modules as electives for the curriculum).

The content and sequence of the modules were chosen for the following reasons. Since sustainable tourism development as depicted (in figure 1) has a natural/ environmental resource base, a socio-cultural resource base, an economic resource base and a political (governmental) resource base, the core modules were based on these components. According to Wight (2004:48) there are five interrelated elements of sustainable development on which the curriculum is based, namely:

- *Economic*: The generation of wealth and employment opportunities and the enhancement of material life.
- *Political*: The political stability of a destination, safety and security and human rights.
- *Social*: The well-being of the local community in terms of education, health, nourishment and shelter.
- *Cultural*: The acknowledgment of and respect for heritage and traditions, as well as the support of cultural identity.
- *Ecological/Environmental*: The recognition of the importance of conservation of all natural resources and environmental enlightenment and understanding.

For purposes of the curriculum the dimensions of social and cultural have been incorporated into one module (module 3). Therefore sustainable development is seen, in this case, as having a political, economic, socio-cultural and environmental dimension is concerned with the protection of the environment, the well-being of the local community and respect for their culture, and the long term creation of economic benefits for all stakeholders involved.

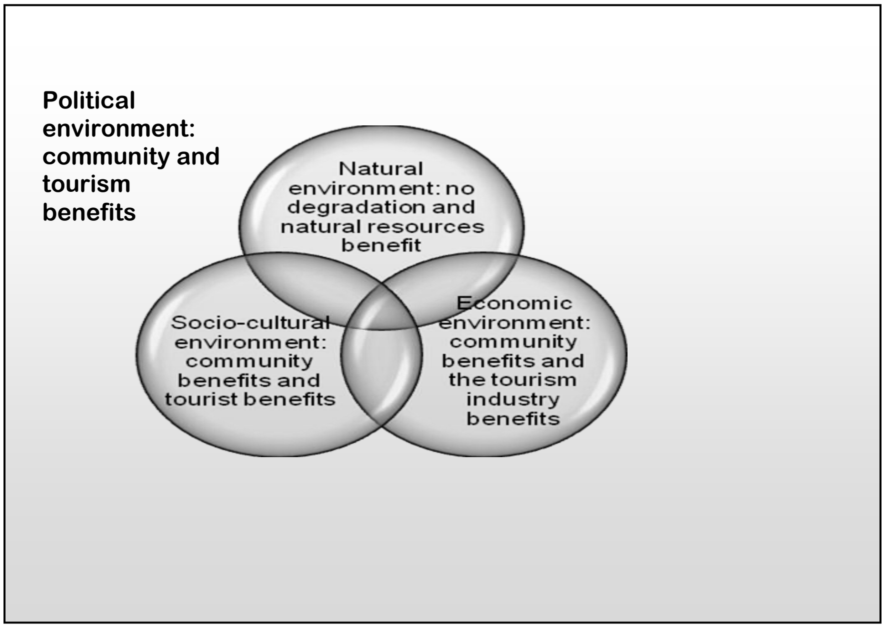

Figure 1. The components of sustainable tourism.

The proposed modules, although not complete, for the course-work are:

Module 1 (20 credits): Foundation of sustainable (tourism) development practice (UP: University of Pretoria)
This module includes the theory of the Sustainable Development Goals, poverty, peace and security, food, water, infrastructure and development, governance, private sector, government and development, tourism development.

Module 2 (20 credits): Sustainable tourism development and the natural resource base (UP)
This module integrates elements that are central to development practice in Africa, namely rural development, urban development, greening the environment, socio-ecological systems, climate change, agricultural livelihoods, protected area management, sustainable wildlife management; including practical case studies within the tourism context.

Module 3 (20 credits): Sustainable tourism development and the socio-cultural resource base (UP)
This module includes issues of culture and gender, education and training, oral information dissemination, indigenous knowledge, governance, participative management, and co-management within the tourism context.

Module 4 (20 credits): Sustainable tourism development and economic resources (UP)

This module includes entrepreneurial skills and training, theory and practice of social entrepreneurship, co-creation of tourism products and route development, eco-labeling and eco-facilities, Fair trade, and practical case studies, etc.

Module 5 (20 credits): Sustainable tourism development and the government (UP) (compulsory for South African students).
This module includes the South African National tourism policy, National regulation on ecotourism, Ecotourism development policy (White paper), National Tourism Sector Strategy, Municipal laws and by-laws in terms of tourism, and tourism legislation that impacts on sustainable tourism development.

Module 6 (20 credits): Sustainable tourism development and international policy
This module includes UNESCO policy, Kyoto protocol, Millennium Development Goals, Ramsar sites, World Heritage Sites, Icomos, Protected Areas, Geoparks, etc.

Additional elective modules are in process of being developed.

Module 9: (60 credits): mini-dissertation
Students will be equipped with the relevant research skills to document and interpret a case study/research project. Students will be required to reach a number of milestones to complete their research proposals before embarking on the fieldwork component. Ethical clearance for empirical work will be required by the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria.

Presentation method of modules:

The duration of the program is two years and is presented every year.
The modules are presented on a weekly basis for the duration of the year. Each of the modules will require in-depth discussion and oral presentations of certain identified case studies. Written reports will also be required to evaluate the performance of the students to obtain the necessary credits for a module.

During the second year of the program the students will be required to identify a research project to undertake and complete, with an empirical/fieldwork component, by November of that year.

The above curriculum will be tested during the first year of presentation by students, fellow colleagues and experts from industry. However, Modules 2, 3 4 and 5 have been presented on honours level to ecotourism students for the past five years and will be scaled up to master's level for this curriculum. For the mini dissertation (Module 9), a module on Research methodology exists within the Faculty at the University of Pretoria that can be adapted if necessary and implemented.

The aim of this curriculum is twofold: to better prepare students to integrate and assimilate academic literature and to present concepts and narratives in written form; and to prepare students to be able to work successfully within a practical context in the field of sustainable tourism development within the southern African context.

In conclusion, education in sustainable tourism development within the southern African landscape (and in other less developed regions and countries globally) is becoming essential and needs to follow an interdisciplinary approach. Managers in this field need to be educated to inform impoverished communities in particularly rural areas to become more sustainable and competitive in terms of their general livelihoods.

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[i] There is obviously no question of considering quantitative methodologies to be inoperative. But with tourism in particular, the many types of tourist profile, some of which are difficult to survey by questionnaire (for example tourists staying in un-registered accommodation, in second homes or with their families) make the general understanding limited and approximate for this complex phenomenon. This finding is reinforced by the problems of conceptual boundaries of what 'tourism' is: each agency, institution, ministry, country, etc. has its own definition.

[ii]. Constitutive of tourism activities, the process of otherness involves a meeting, 'a confrontation' (Equipe MIT, 2002) between the tourist and other places, other people, other times, etc. thanks to travel to 'extra-ordinary' places, by which we mean those outside daily life.

[iii] Sociology, unlike social geography or management sciences, was very late in accepting a nevertheless fundamental element of French society as is evidenced by the level of direct and indirect employment, the existence of a Secretary of State, the political aims of local government, regional development, the tourism business sector, the social uses of tourism, etc. If the number of books and special-edition journals have increased since the 2000s (for example in *Ethnologie française, Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, etc.), the level of sociological research in the field still allows for false interpretations (Mark Boyer for example illustrates the weakness of some sociological analysis: 'We do not have the data to enable us to say what proportion rationality represents in the decision of where to go, we just know from IFOP surveys that the majority of those who don't go away did not ask themselves the question' (Boyer, 2011).

[iv] The relationship which connects the Chinese to the beach (and the tourist and leisure uses linked to it) shows clearly, for example, the need to include the social uses of the body in the analysis of the cultural and normative dimension (and particularly the relationship with tanning). See Guibert, Coeffé, Taunay (2012) for their work on this subject.

[v] On this point the details provided by Bernard Lahire about the principle of plurality dispositions (Lahire, 2012).