

10th ADVANCES IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT

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Dogan Gursoy & Fabiola Sfodera

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PREFACE

Sapienza University of Rome and Fondazione Roma Sapienza were pleased to host the 10th Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Marketing and Management Conference in Rome, Italy. Over one hundred and forty scholars and researchers from forty-one countries participated in the five-day meetings and events.

The conference aimed to discuss and explore contemporary issues involving Hospitality and Tourism, stimulate dialogue among stakeholders in the tourism ecosystem, and develop new perspectives on the analysis and implications for the governance and management of tourism and hospitality in a globalized environment. Following the Covid-19 pandemic, this conference provided a crucial platform for international scientific discussions on present and future tourism issues. The studies and research presented covered a wide range of topics, incorporating both tourist and industry perspectives, as well as destination-related aspects. They addressed economic, social, psychological, and environmental issues, focusing on marketing and management orientations and, in some cases, adopting a multidisciplinary approach. The conference shed light on areas such as tourist behavior, tourist experience, digital technologies, AI and digital transformation, resilience, sustainability, happiness, and well-being in hospitality organizations and businesses. Ethical, equality, and safety dimensions were also explored.

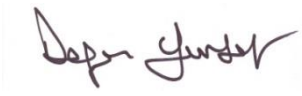
The conference has provided an opportunity to demonstrate the importance of marketing and management perspectives for the growth and sustainability of hospitality and tourism industry as well as the advancement and development of people, businesses, and the planet. With the publication of the proceedings, we extend our thanks to all conference participants whose presentations enriched the knowledge base in the field.

We express our sincere gratitude to Prof. Eugenio Gaudio, president of Fondazione Sapienza, without whose support it would not have been possible to host the conference, and to the Municipality of Rome and the Alessandro Onorato, Councilor for Major Events, Sports, and Tourism for granting their patronage to our event. Special thanks to all organizing committee members for their dedicated efforts and constant willingness to organize this extraordinary conference. We are also grateful to the sponsors who supported our conference.

Furthermore, we extend our appreciation and sincere gratitude to the members of the international scientific committee for their work in ensuring the quality of the papers and presentations. Without them, this conference would not exist.

We hope you enjoyed the hospitality and beauty of Rome while attending the conference and had an unforgettable stay.

Dogan Gursoy



Fabiola Sfodera



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Part I - FULL PAPERS

THE IMPACT OF SUCCESSIVE CRISES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF GREEK HOTELS AND THE WELL-BEING OF THEIR EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of the financial crisis and the "Covid-19" coronavirus pandemic on the performance of hotels and the well-being of their employees. From the literature review and the empirical research in hotels throughout Greece, data emerges, which is examined through confirmatory factor analysis with the application of Structural Equation Models (SEM). From the data analysis, key conclusions emerge about the effects of the above crises on Greek hospitality and the well-being of employees, neither of which had been studied in the past. The scientific contribution of the present paper is thus highlighted, as different concepts of the sciences of economics and human resource management are interpreted in a complementary manner.

Key Words: financial crisis, Covid-19, human resource management, employee well-being, hotels, Greece

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to investigate the impact of the financial crisis and the "Covid-19" coronavirus pandemic on Greek hotels and their employees. The literature review explores the concepts of Human Resource Management (HRM) and hospitality management and examines the effects of the financial crisis and the "Covid-19" coronavirus pandemic on the performance of Greek hotels and employees' well-being. Important conclusions are drawn about the content of the above concepts and events through extensive research in Greek hotels and data processing with confirmatory factor analysis and the application of Structural Equation Models (SEM). The international financial crisis of 2007-2008 is considered the most severe economic crisis since the "Great Depression" in the 1930s (Temin, 2010), while the health crisis of the "Covid-19" coronavirus that broke out in early 2020 had significant effects on the societies of countries worldwide (Gossling, 2021). In the literature review, research gaps are identified regarding the impact of the above crises on hotel business performance (Alonso-Almeida and Bremser, 2013; Kimes, 2009; Chen, 2021; Enz et al., 2011) and employee well-being (Markovits et al., 2014; Jones and Comfort, 2020; Bericat and Camarero, 2017; Demirovic et al., 2021; Manchin, 2013), as the specific analyses are carried out individually, rather than in combination with each other. This paper attempts to bridge this gap. Through the literature review and empirical research, for the first time, the effects of the financial crisis and the "Covid-19" coronavirus pandemic on the performance of Greek hotels and the well-being of their employees are analyzed and interpreted in a complementary way, creating an organized set of data regarding the specific issues.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Due to the financial crisis that began on a global level in 2008, some member countries of the European Union, and specifically of the Eurozone, were unable to repay or refinance their public debt, thus asking for assistance from third parties (Campos-Soria et al., 2015). More specifically, during the financial crisis Greece was the first country to request financing assistance from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund to organize a

financing program, which required the application of strict measures to reduce the country's budget deficit and strengthen its economy (Karafolas and Alexandrakis, 2015). The crisis harmed the hospitality industry, as the significant drops in prices and overall sales ultimately limited profits, resulting in mass layoffs, bankruptcy, and the permanent closure of businesses (Alonso-Almeida and Bremser, 2013). As a result, the demand for tourism services was limited, highlighting the need to organize strategies to counter the effects of the economic recession (Papatheodorou et al., 2010), especially in Greece and other Mediterranean countries that attract millions of tourists (Dogru and Bulut, 2018). The financial crisis affected the hospitality industry without distinguishing between different hotel categories because most hotels worldwide faced a drop in room occupancy and decreased prices and revenue (Kimes, 2009).

In the wake of the financial crisis in Greece, and specifically at the end of 2019, an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus was reported to the World Health Organization, and in the following weeks, it spread rapidly throughout the world, resulting in the pandemic of "Covid-19", which on March 11, 2020, was declared global (Jones and Comfort, 2020). The governments of the respective countries, wanting to limit its outbreak, developed a series of strict strategies that included several measures (Kraemer et al., 2020), such as the shutdown of enterprises, orders for citizens to stay at home and mandatory quarantines, border closures and travel restrictions (Gossling, 2021). The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic greatly affected tourism and the performance of hotels throughout the world (Chen, 2021), as well as in Greece (Stavrinoudis and Kakarougkas, 2021). The tourism sector has resilience and can also recover after catastrophic events, but in this case, it was challenging to have a stable forecast for a return to the pro-pandemic conditions (Navarro Jurado et al., 2020), while the future of tourism and hospitality industry, in particular, was considered unknown (Jones and Comfort, 2020).

The corresponding research carried out on the financial crisis, and its effects on the performance of hotel enterprises were investigated. More specifically, Alonso-Almeida and Bremser (2013) describe the negative impact of the financial crisis on hotels in Spain, while Enz et al. (2011) pointed out that the financial crisis, combined with the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, harmed the US hospitality industry, Kimes (2009) also highlighted the adverse effects of the recession on hotel revenue per available room worldwide. Based on the above findings at an international level, similar research needs to be conducted in the Greek hospitality sector, given that the effects of the financial crisis were strongly adverse (Gialis and Leontidou, 2016; Ghallab and Papadakis, 2011; Ozturk and Sozdemir, 2015; Horemans et al., 2016; Karafolas and Alexandrakis, 2015), especially when combined with "Covid-19" pandemic. For this reason, it is necessary to simultaneously investigate the impact of both crises through hypothesis (H1): *The successive crises of recent years negatively impacted hotel businesses' performance.*

Regarding the consequences of the financial crisis on the well-being of employees, Kentikelenis et al. (2014) state that in Greece, there have been reductions in incomes, increased unemployment, but also cuts in the funding of public health systems, while Ghellab and Papadakis (2011) add that cutbacks in public spending, pensions and wages negatively affected a set of parameters of the economy. Greece, among other countries, recorded a rise in informal employment, and an increase in low-paying jobs, while part-time employment expanded involuntarily (Horemans et al., 2016). Drydakis (2015) points out that unemployment and the austerity measures that accompanied the financial crisis negatively affected the physical and mental health of Greeks, confirming the research of Economou et al. (2008), who link unemployment with depression, poor nutrition, high alcohol consumption, and smoking, which subsequently lead to the dysfunction of the human body. Potential unemployment in the future significantly affects the psychology and stress of employees (Kawachi and Wamala, 2006; Anagnostopoulos and Soumaki, 2013), a fact that was confirmed in the case of Greece as an increase in cases of severe depression among employees was observed in the country (Antonakakis and Collins, 2014).

In addition to the effect of the financial crisis, it is crucial to study the effects of the "Covid-19" pandemic on the hospitality industry, as it is an economic sector that is greatly affected due to mandatory travel restrictions and the cessation of travel (Burhan et al., 2021). The drastic changes and measures adopted during the crisis even led to a temporary stoppage of hotel operations (Gossling, 2021), so millions of people, directly or indirectly employed in the hospitality industry, temporarily or permanently lost their jobs (Jones and Comfort, 2020). In addition, hotels that remained open faced several challenges to the health and safety of employees and guests (Bagnera and Steinberg, 2020). Based on the above facts, Martins et al. (2020) highlight the devastating impact of the pandemic on the hotel industry, with negative consequences for supply and demand and employee well-being. Hotel employees were put on leave or suspended from work, while the changing conditions forced them to adopt flexibility in performing their tasks (Hogberg, 2021). Hotels tried to reduce labor costs to cope with the impact of

the "Covid-19" pandemic and meet the rules of the imposed health protocols. However, these initiatives caused problems in labor relations (Kakarougkas and Stavrinoudis, 2021), and at the same time, job insecurity increased due to the difficulty of predicting the duration of this pandemic crisis. This led to a substantial employee turnover in the hospitality industry, with many employees looking for a new job in another sector because they considered their work environment (i.e., in hotels) posed a greater risk to their health. This also reduced employees' job satisfaction (Demirovic et al., 2021).

Halkos and Bousinakis (2017) emphasize that the increase or lack of employee satisfaction has a negative effect on their behavior. This research also suggests that in addition to the influence of the financial crisis on the hotels of Greece, its consequences on their employees should also be investigated. The papers by Markovits et al. (2014), Halkos and Bousinakis (2017), Bericat and Camarero (2017), as well as Manchin (2013) highlight the effects that the financial crisis had on the employees in Greece. Therefore, there is a need to contact more specialized research on the impact of the crises on the employees of Greek hotels with the hypothesis (H2): *The successive crises of recent years have impacted the well-being of hotel employee*s. The analysis will also give additional conclusions about the role of the "Covid-19" pandemic in the personal life of the employees.

In summary, the topic of employment today and during the "Covid-19" pandemic is still unexplored due to its uniqueness. More importantly, questioning well-established working practices and the diversity of employee preferences and needs offers an important research opportunity for further investigation (Tagliaro and Migliore, 2021). However, during this health crisis, it is becoming clear that with international financial crises, inequalities in income and wealth, and the threat of future pandemics, economies need to focus on any systemic changes, such as those carried out in the context of the "Covid-19" pandemic (Michie, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

Participants and Sample

HR Managers or General Managers of five-, four- and three-star hotels with 150 rooms and more from the 13 Regions of Greece participated in the survey. The main reason that led to these participants was that Greek two-star and one-star hotels are usually small and medium-sized family businesses, and it is possible that the composition of the questionnaire created ambiguities for these respondents, who might not be able to fill it in correctly. In addition, these hotels haven't an HR department, so the associated procedures are not performed or are not fully understood. The research began on October 1st, 2020, and ended on January 31st, 2021, when - with very few exceptions - a ban on the movement of citizens was imposed all around Greece due to the outbreak of the "Covid-19" pandemic. Questionnaires were sent via email in a personalized Google form, while reminders were sent to executives from hotels and regions showing reduced participation. This way, the stratified proportionality of the sample was achieved since the questionnaires were gathered to represent the total population of Greek hotels proportionally for all the Greek regions. Two hundred twenty-three valid questionnaires were collected from the four hundred eighty hotels of the above categories and sizes registered in the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels electronic database. This number of collected questionnaires was considered satisfactory since it represents a response rate of 92.15% compared to the desired two hundred forty-two questionnaires that the researchers aimed to gather initially. Additionally, it meets the threshold of two hundred responses necessary for analysis with Structural Equation Models (Kline, 2015).

Instrument and Measures

The questionnaire consisted of seventy-nine questions, with six additional queries concerning demographic data. All questionnaire items had the form of Likert scales (from 1: Strongly disagree to 5: Strongly agree), which measured respondents' opinions and perceptions. The data were appropriately formatted and registered in the statistical program SPSS version 25, where the primary statistical analysis was done. In contrast, the analysis of the Structural Equation Models was performed using "R" (R Statistics Software, Version: 4.0. 3) using the lavaan package, an open-source for latent variable modeling. (Rosseel, 2012). The level of statistical significance was set at 5%. Qualitative data were described using absolute (n) and relative frequency (%).

RESULTS

Factor analysis of the first research hypothesis through Principal Component Analysis showed that all factors had MSA above 0.7, their loading was above the value of 0.4, and the associations were not low. The Bartlett's Test of

Sphericity rejects the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix (Table 1). The resulting KMO value was 0.804, indicating that factor analysis can be applied. There are special titles based on their content for all the factors. Two factors were extracted since, up to one factor, the eigenvalues were greater than one (>1). In the two factors, the percentage of variance explained by the model was over 70%. More specifically, the two-factor model explained 70.80% of the variance. The two factors that emerged after rotation were:

Impact of the crises on the hotel's revenue (Impact on revenue). This factor had an eigenvalue of 2.203, explained 36.72% of the variance, and its reliability index was equal to a=0.823.
Strategies and measures of the hotels to deal with crises (Measures & Consequences). This factor had an eigenvalue of 2.045, explained 34.08% of the variance, and its reliability index was equal to a=0.756.

In terms of model fit indices, the p-value of the $\chi 2$ test was found to be greater than 5% (acceptable), CFI equal to 0.988 (acceptable), TLI equal to 0.978 (acceptable), and RMSEA equal to 0.057 (acceptable). All model parameters are statistically significant, as is the covariance of the Measures & Consequences factor with the Impact on Revenue factor. According to these data, the first research hypothesis (H1) is confirmed: *The successive crises of recent years negatively impacted hotel businesses' performance*, while the data prove the connection between the effects of the crises with the reduction of tourism demand, the revenue loss, but also the cessation of future investments of hotels.

Table 1:
Results of Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Model Analysis of the First Research Hypothesis

Results of Factor Analysis of the first research hypothesis						
		Factor: Impact on revenue		Factor: Measures & Consequences		
There were losses in the hotel's profits		**.774**		.235		
The rooms' occupancy was reduced		**.888**		.233		
Tourist demand for the hotel was low		**.800**		.292		
The hotel management reduced costs		.231		**.811**		
Investments in the hotel business were limited or stopped		.241		**.772**		
Paying off business debts becomes more difficult		.250		**.772**		
Eigenvalues		2.203		2.045		
% Variance		36.72		34.08		
Cronbach's alpha		.823		.756		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.804				
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		515.401, *p*-value<001				
Structural Equation Model results of the first research hypothesis						
	Latent Variables	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	*p*	Std.
Impact on revenue	Q18 (There were losses in the hotel's profits)	0.495	0.046	10.860	<.001	0.680
	Q19 (The rooms' occupancy was reduced)	0.760	0.049	15.644	<.001	0.899
	Q20 (Tourist demand for the hotel was low)	0.697	0.053	13.135	<.001	0.789
Measures & Consequences	Q24 (The hotel management reduced costs)	0.603	0.052	11.531	<.001	0.755
	Q25 (Investments in the hotel business were limited or stopped)	0.627	0.060	10.457	<.001	0.694
	Q26 (Paying off business debts becomes more difficult)	0.547	0.052	10.568	<.001	0.701
Covariances		0.666	0.054	12.229	<.001	0.666
Chi-square		13.884				
Df		8				
P		0.085				
CFI		0.988				

TLI	0.978
RMSEA [95%CI]	0.057 [0.000, 0.107]
SRMR	0.031
AIC	2783.881
BIC	2828.174
SSABIC	2786.975

Abbreviations; df, degrees of freedom; CFI, Comparative Fit Index; TLI, Ticker-Lewis Index; RMSEA; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; 95% CI, 95% Confidence Interval; SRMR, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; AIC, Akaike Information Criteria; BIC, Bayesian Information Criteria; SSABIC, sample size adjusted Bayesian Information Criteria.

Factor analysis of the second research hypothesis through Principal Component Analysis showed that all factors had MSA above 0.7, their loading was above the value of 0.4, and the associations were not low. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity rejects the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix (Table 2). The resulting KMO value was 0.850, indicating that factor analysis can be applied. Two factors were extracted since, up to one factor, the eigenvalues were greater than one (>1). In the two factors, the percentage of variance explained by the model was over 70%. More specifically, the two-factor model explained 70.23% of the variance. The two factors that emerged after rotation were:

The adoption of measures by the hotel to reduce labor costs due to the negative consequences of the crises (Business Measures). This factor had an eigenvalue of 2.181 and explained 36.34% of the variance, while its reliability index was equal to a=0.752.
The effects of crises on the hotel's employees (Consequences due to the conditions). This factor had an eigenvalue of 2.033, explained 33.89% of the variance, and its reliability index was equal to a=0.794.

In terms of model fit indices, the p-value of the $\chi 2$ test was found to be greater than 5% (acceptable), CFI equal to 1.000 (acceptable), TLI equal to 1.002 (acceptable), RMSEA equal to 0.000 (acceptable). All model parameters are statistically significant, as is the covariance of the "Business Measures" factor with the "Consequences due to Conditions" factor. Based on the above data, the second research hypothesis (H2) is **verified**: *The successive crises of recent years have impacted the well-being of hotel employees*, describing the significant changes in the labor regimes of Greek hotels to the detriment of employees as a result of the crises.

Table 2:
Results of Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Model Analysis of the Second Research Hypothesis

Results of Factor Analysis of the second research hypothesis						
		Factor: Business Measures		Factor: Consequences due to the conditions		
The hotels introduced flexible forms of employment		**.776**		.094		
Employees were laid off		**.795**		.286		
Employees' wages were reduced		**.722**		.391		
The job insecurity of the hotel's employees increased		.063		**.887**		
Employee creativity decreased		.439		**.684**		
Working conditions worsened		.477		**.732**		
Eigenvalues		2.181		2.033		
%Variance		36.34		33.89		
Cronbach's alpha		0.752		0.794		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.850				
BartlettsTestofSphericity		517.470, *p*-value<.001				
Structural Equation Model results of the second research hypothesis						
	Latent Variables	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	*p*	Std.
Business Measures	Q21 (The hotels introduced flexible forms of employment)	0.401	0.049	8.261	<.001	0.555

	Q22 (Employees were laid off)	0.633	0.050	12.749	<.001	0.785
	Q23 (Employees' wages were reduced)	0.636	0.049	13.097	<.001	0.802
Consequences due to the conditions	Q27 (The job insecurity of the hotel's employees increased)	0.531	0.055	9.621	<.001	0.620
	Q28 (Employee creativity decreased)	0.677	0.055	12.350	<.001	0.755
	Q29 (Working conditions worsened)	0.780	0.051	15.173	<.001	0.881
Covariances		0.812	0.042	19.457	<.001	0.812
Chi-square		7.546				
Df		8				
P		0.479				
CFI		1.000				
TLI		1.002				
RMSEA [95%CI]		0.000 [0.000, 0.076]				
SRMR		0.024				
AIC		2787.856				
BIC		2832.149				
SSABIC		2790.950				

Abbreviations; df, degrees of freedom; CFI, Comparative Fit Index; TLI, Ticker-Lewis Index; RMSEA; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; 95% CI, 95% Confidence Interval; SRMR, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; AIC, Akaike Information Criteria; BIC, Bayesian Information Criteria; SSABIC, sample size adjusted Bayesian Information Criteria.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the research findings, a key characteristic of crisis periods is the lack of liquidity, which leads a) to hotels' difficulty in repaying their debts and b) to the limitation of their basic expenses to ensure their viability. The research findings of this paper are in agreement with Okumus et al. (2005), pointing out that the financial crisis results in a reduction in tourism demand, a “freeze” in investments, and an increase in costs, with Kimes (2009) reporting that during the recession hotels experienced declines in prices, occupancy, and profits, but also with Enz et al. (2011) who conclude that the financial crisis had negative consequences for the US hotel industry. More specifically, the data extracted by the empirical research confirm that the financial crisis has a negative impact on the operation of hotels. At the same time, the changes in their external environment seem to affect them significantly as they demonstrate a decrease in revenues and difficulty settling their financial obligations. Additionally, the results indicate that Greek hotels have reduced or stopped their investments, but at the organizational level, it is necessary to adapt to the conditions caused by the "Covid-19" pandemic (Stavrinoudis and Kakarougkas, 2021); thus, new investments are now needed to improve the visitor experience and increase their revenue in the future. Also, hotels' investments should focus on implementing integrated management strategies and policies to get the businesses out of the crisis and strengthen their overall performance. All these initiatives should also focus on their employees.

The financial crisis has a negative impact on the well-being of Greek employees, as was also found in the literature review. The rapid increase in unemployment and the significant salary reductions created adverse conditions for the majority of the country's employees, with the findings of the research in Greece confirming those of Matsaganis (2013), Horemans et al. (2016) and Gialis and Leontidou (2016). In conclusion, it is worth noting that the financial crisis has a negative effect on the lives of employees, and its prevalence introduces a system with burdensome working conditions, which cause them negative thoughts and feelings, with the final consequence of worsening their mental state. However, the management of hotel businesses should take care of the well-being and mental health of the employees, as in this way, they gain pleasure, security, and motivation to be productive and perform more. This research confirms the increase in job insecurity and employee layoffs as the economic recession and the “Covid-19” pandemic caused mass layoffs of employees (Alonso-Almeida and Bremser, 2013; Paslakis et al., 2020). Layoffs magnify employee insecurity, a fact that hotel executives surveyed agree on. As it turns out, employees accept the preservation of jobs at any price, but this does not ensure it. Therefore, the existing situation makes hotel employees feel insecure about their employment, reducing work motivation and satisfaction. Based on the above, it is concluded that job security represents an essential common motivation for the financial and health crises of the "Covid-19" examined.

Scientific and practical implications

This paper examines the effects of the financial crisis and the "Covid-19" pandemic on the performance of Greek hotels and the well-being of their employees. The scientific contribution of this paper is highlighted, as it simultaneously examines the role of successive crises in the sustainability of hotels and the personal lives of their employees at a national level. Furthermore, it examines the aftermath of the two crises in the last decades of Greece, which until now had yet to be examined simultaneously in the country's hospitality industry, so this paper is the first attempt in this field.

Regarding the practical implications, the main objective of Greek hotels is to limit the impact of crises on their performance and the well-being of their employees. It is proven that the financial crisis has adverse effects on the well-being of employees, but as long as they do not have the same scope and the level of their influence differs, the need for hotel executives to constantly identify the effects of the crisis on their employees is highlighted. In addition, by studying the impact of the health crisis on employees, hotels' executives can discover the subsequent difficulties it causes so that the appropriate HRM strategies will be implemented, focusing on enhancing employees' performance and supporting the hotels' viability and competitiveness.

Further Research

Further research should focus on relevant research on hotels of the same categories in countries that have a similar tourism product to that of Greece and have faced the same crises, as the comparison of data will help draw critical conclusions regarding the effects of the specific crises on an international level. Along the same lines, individual findings that may not appear in a geographical area will be studied, achieving a comprehensive investigation of the subject. In terms of research methodology, Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (Fs/QCA) is proposed based on obtaining summaries from data related to cases (Korjani and Mendel, 2012). The above research methodologies are presented as alternatives to data analysis with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as they might reveal more complex findings.

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ELEVATED EXPERIENCES: HOW TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY CAN USE CANNABIS TO ENCOURAGE SOCIAL CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

Cannabis has long been associated with counterculture and illegal activities as a result of prohibition around the world. Over the years, societal perception of cannabis has changed, ranging from cautious acceptance of using cannabis as a medical intervention, to outright legalization for recreational use. This paper analyzes how cannabis legalization in the United States has created a growing niche for hospitality and tourism businesses and how these cannabis-related businesses contribute to social change, both directly and indirectly.

Key Words: Cannabis; Social Impact; Cannabusiness; Cannabis Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Cannabis has long been associated with counterculture and illegal activities as a result of prohibition around the world. Prohibition and its enforcement have led to negative impacts on society, including increased incarceration rates and limited economic mobility. In the last 20 years, a number of countries around the world have legalized the consumption of cannabis for both medical and recreational purposes. Uruguay was the first to legalize at a national level in 2013, Canada legalized cannabis in 2018, and today, over 30 states in the United States have created regulatory frameworks for cannabis use. As a result, many new cannabis-based businesses have opened, and existing businesses have either integrated cannabis directly into their business model or have partnered with businesses in the cannabis industry.

An Introduction to Cannabis

According to the U.S Department of Health and Human Services' National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), "cannabis" refers to all products derived from the *Cannabis sativa* plant. The plant itself has been cultivated throughout history as a source of fiber, seed oil, food, and recreation, as well as religious and spiritual medicine. Each part of the plant is harvested differently, depending on its intended use. While people use a variety of words to describe different cannabis products, often using the words "cannabis" and "marijuana" interchangeably, it is critical to use the appropriate terminology when discussing policy and business-enabling environments.

The NCCIH states that the *Cannabis sativa* plant contains about 540 chemical substances, of which the main psychoactive compound is tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC. The term "marijuana" should be used when referring to parts of or products derived from the *Cannabis sativa* plant that contain enough levels of THC that can affect a person's psychological state. Another chemical compound produced in large quantities in the *Cannabis sativa* plant is cannabidiol, or CBD. While there is insufficient evidence to confirm that CBD is an effective and replicable treatment, there is research that demonstrates the positive impact CBD has had on anxiety, cognition, mobility issues, and pain (Black, Stockings, Campbell, Tran, Zagic, Hall, Farrell, & Degenhardt, 2019). As such, many people use CBD as a dietary supplement and/or topical agent to alleviate symptoms. In fact, CBD is so popular that its global market size is expected to exceed US$47 billion by 2028 (Research, 2022).

As previously mentioned, the harvest and consumption of cannabis depends on its intended use, whether medicinal or recreational. Historically, especially considering its religious and medicinal purposes, cannabis was prepared as tinctures, teas, and ointments. Today, cannabis is most often consumed by smoking, oral ingestion, and given advances in technology, vaporizing.

Cannabis Regulation in the United States: A Case Study

The U.S. is an interesting case study in the development of innovative regulatory approaches to cannabis given its highly federalized system of government. While there is still federal cannabis prohibition, individual states have been able to implement cannabis policies, mainly through citizen referendums.

Prior to 1913, cannabis and the consumption of marijuana was legal at both the federal and state level. Despite its extensive history of immigration, anti-immigrant sentiment was at a significant high in the early 20th century as Americans reacted to a wave of "new immigrants" from countries in Eastern and Southern Europe, as well as from Mexico (Garcia, 2018). Mexican migrant workers faced particular racial prejudice and were often associated with the use of marijuana. According to the Cato Institute, this anti-immigrant sentiment and racial prejudice were the main motivators in pushing states, like California and Utah, to start prohibiting cannabis in 1914 (Dills, Goffard, Miron, & Partin, 2021). By 1937, Congress passed the Marijuana Tax Act, effectively prohibiting marijuana on a national level. Advocates for prohibition argued that the consumption of marijuana promoted increased criminality and moral decline. Popular discourse, including films like *Reefer Madness*, suggested that consuming marijuana could lead to insanity, death, and even homicidal tendencies, further stirring anti-cannabis sentiment in society. Throughout the rest of the 20th century, the U.S. passed a number of anti-cannabis laws, like the 1952 Boggs Act and the 1956 Narcotics Act, which expanded mandatory drug sentences and increased penalties, even for first-time offenses (Dills, Goffard, Miron, & Partin, 2021).

The prohibition of cannabis and its enforcement in the U.S. have taken a significant financial, psychological, and social toll on American society. For example, a study found that policing for cannabis possession, a controversial approach, actually increased the rate of crime rather than reduced it, as previously anticipated in the Broken Windows theory (Beckett & Herbert, n.d.). As more research is conducted on this topic, the prevailing theory is that public resources, like law enforcement, are already limited; by shifting said resources to drug law enforcement, law enforcement officials have less time to dedicate to investigating and solving crimes with victims, thereby causing an increase in the number of non-drug-related crimes (Beckett & Herbert, n.d.). Additionally, research demonstrates that people of color have disproportionately felt the burden of drug law enforcement, often facing direct repercussions like harsher sentencing and longer terms of imprisonment. It has also had indirect consequences like economic insecurity and prolonged poverty ("RELEASE: Nearly Half of U.S. Children Have at Least 1 Parent With a Criminal Record, According to New Data From the Center for American Progress," 2015). In fact, The Hill reports that "discriminatory enforcement of marijuana laws is one reason that black and Latino Americans make up two-thirds of the U.S. prison population despite only comprising 12 percent and 17 percent of the U.S. population, respectively" (Dinenberg, 2017). These effects put into question the effectiveness of strict cannabis policing and the purpose of funneling limited resources to victimless crimes, in which the victims end up being overpoliced minority groups.

Despite this history of increasing federal prohibition, individual states began reversing anti-cannabis policies in the 1970s. Given the relaxing state legislation, scientists were able to conduct more research on the effects of cannabis over the course of the next 20 years. By the mid-1990s, continued research provided significant evidence on cannabis's potential medicinal benefits including treating chronic pain, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, epilepsy, and other medical conditions. As a result, more states began to legalize medical marijuana, albeit only to patients who satisfied strict criteria. To date, 33 states and the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana for medical purposes and expanded the number of patients eligible for medical marijuana prescriptions (Dills, Goffard, Miron, & Partin, 2021).

While decriminalization and legalization of medical marijuana has allowed for advances in scientific and medical research, the states that have seen the most benefit from relaxing policies have been those that have also legalized recreational cannabis (Dills, Goffard, Miron, & Partin, 2021). For example, Colorado and California collect $20 and $50 million per month, respectively, from recreational marijuana alone (Dills, Goffard, Miron, & Partin, 2021). Legalization in these states has been driven, in part, by the need to support strategic objectives. This is seen clearly in state governments that earmark cannabis-based tax revenue to encourage economic growth and promote social inclusion. In 2021, Michigan collected more than $111 million from the 10% adult-use marijuana excise tax. In total, there was $172 million available for distribution from the Marijuana Regulation Fund (Gittus & Leix, 2022). The Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marijuana Act (2018) then requires the state's Marijuana Regulatory Agency to use part of the tax revenue to fund the Social Equity Program, which is designed to "encourage participation in the marijuana industry by people who live in Michigan communities which have been disproportionately impacted

by marijuana prohibition and enforcement" ("Michigan's Marijuana Regulatory Agency Announces Social Equity Program Expansion," 2019).

States that have enacted legalization policies have also created a greenfield opportunity for impact-driven entrepreneurs in the hospitality and tourism industry. According to Forbes, of the $25 billion in legal cannabis business done in the U.S., 25% was driven by tourists who funnel an additional $12.6 billion into restaurants, bars, hotels, and other businesses in the hospitality and tourism industry (Yakowicz, 2022). According to a report from MMGY Travel Intelligence, approximately 20% of American travelers are interested in experiences related to the cannabis industry while they are on vacation (Turner, 2020). In states like California, whose travel industry employs around one million people, nearly 50% of which are in the accommodation and food sector, cannabis presents an enormous opportunity (Dean Runyan Associates, 2022).

CBD: The Appetizer of Cannabis

Despite growing market presence and public policies emphasizing decriminalization, cannabis-based businesses have had to overcome both regulatory and social hurdles. This is especially true as negative attitudes toward cannabis are more entrenched within older segments of society. According to Pew Research, only 32% of American adults over the age of 75 support further liberalization of cannabis policies, compared to 60% of total U.S. adults (Schaeffer, 2021). As such, businesses have found far more interest and support for non-psychoactive cannabis products. CBD was the breakout ingredient of 2018, particularly in the beauty and wellness industry. Given that the first wave of cannabis liberalization was focused on medical needs and the popularity of CBD products in the wellness space, it comes as no surprise that the first hospitality and tourism operators to incorporate cannabis into their service offerings were spas and hotels.

CBD is popular for its wellness benefits including decreased inflammation, relief in muscle tension, and reduced anxiety and stress. As such, spas began to introduce CBD-infused lotions and oils as an option into their regular treatments, like massages. Danielle Martel, co-owner of Primal Wellness in Colorado shared that their "gateway treatment for women is the manicure. [The spa uses] natural nail polish and organic, vegan cannabis-infused oil during the hand massage. That's when they get hooked." Small boutique spas were not the only ones to jump into CBD products. In 2018, large hospitality corporations, like the Ritz-Carlton Spa Los Angeles and JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa, also introduced CBD restorative treatments into their spa menus.

CBD products have become wildly popular. Forbes reported that in 2019, 7% of American adults were using CBD products (Kovacevich, 2019). This spike can be attributed to two main factors. First, while many customers may have been hesitant to use cannabis products and services, spas were able to use the term "CBD" in their branding and marketing rather than the terms "cannabis" or "marijuana." For customers less familiar with cannabis, the use of the term "CBD" made them feel more comfortable with trying these new products since CBD presented drastically differently than what most people thought of when consuming cannabis. The second factor, which ties in closely with the first, is that spas had the added benefit of using topical agents. The "high-inducing ingredient" of the *Cannabis sativa* plant does not have the same effect when applied topically. For new cannabis consumers, these two factors are critical. CBD painted spas as a safe place to try out new trending products in an introductory and non-psychoactive way. For regular cannabis consumers, CBD-infused products were one of the first ways they could legally use cannabis and discuss its benefits with a wider group outside of the underground cannabis industry. From a business standpoint, CBD allowed a business to address two distinctive customer segments in a new and exciting way.

While many spas and hotels quickly saw the benefit of integrating cannabis into their service offerings, confusion around the legality of cannabis did impact their decisions. Nature's Root, the first hemp-based spa in Colorado, was strategic about staying out of legal crosshairs with their business. The spa focused exclusively on cold-pressed hemp seed oil and hemp-derived CBD products, as well as growling organically and processing locally to avoid potential issues. Dani Fontaine, the spa's co-founder, has clarified that the spa does not work with any THC product as a means of avoiding regulatory issues, especially with the Medical Marijuana Enforcement Department in their state.

The Tasting Menu: Cannabis and the Food & Beverage Sector

As customers became more comfortable seeing CBD or Hemp-infused products, the U.S. market began to experiment with other types of cannabis consumption. While many associate cannabis consumption with smoking, those more familiar with recreational cannabis use know that cannabis can be consumed through "edibles." Edibles

(short for edible cannabis products) are products containing cannabinoids that you eat or drink. This shift in cannabis consumption is transforming the food and beverage sector.

Similar to spas, many businesses started as CBD-only. For example, the James NoMad Hotel in New York City worked with renowned cannabis chef Andrea Drummer to launch a CBD-infused in-room dining menu in 2018 (Walsh, 2018). The menu ranged from spicy meatballs, butter lettuce salad, olive tapenade, and tater tots to ice cream sundaes and even bottled water - all infused with CBD. All tasting menu items have an entry-level dosage of CBD (10-20 mg) for relatively affordable pricing.

Other businesses were more comfortable with leaning into the recreational fusion of THC and gastronomy. In 2017, Chris Bennett became New York's infamous "Pizza Pusha", creating THC-infused gourmet pizzas. While recreational cannabis was not legal in New York at the time of opening, the Pizza Pusha now operates a sit-down restaurant called Stoned, which offers a wide variety of foods on the menu, all infused with generous amounts of THC. Stoned is open to customers of all experience levels; however, given that the dosages for each serving are significantly high (meals often totaling over 100 mg), customers new to cannabis work directly with the servers to plan out their meal dosing ahead of time. Stoned also encourages customers to BYOW ("bring your own weed"), so customers not familiar with smoking cannabis should keep in mind the ambiance of the restaurant, particularly around the strong smell.

Cannabis and Experiential Design

While Stoned may seem like an extreme flaunting of cannabis to some, it is important to keep in mind that the restaurant is a prime example of another major trend within the hospitality and tourism industry - the rise of the experience economy. There has been a large shift in customer preference, particularly seen in travelers, away from buying products and towards investing in unique and memorable experiences. This preference centers around 'being' and less about 'owning'. More and more hotels and restaurants are focusing on experiential design to shape their customers' experiences.

To integrate experiential design into the fusion of hospitality and tourism with cannabis, companies must design a service that provides an experience for the consumer. Little Saints is an e-commerce shop born in Detroit that sells CBD-infused mocktails. Little Saints's Founder, Megan Klein, explained that she began developing these mocktails during the pandemic as an antidote to her drinking too much alcohol and feeling terrible about it. In 2021, she showed up to the opening day of one of Detroit's most famous music festivals, *Movement*, to sell her CBD-infused products. What she found was that her mocktails were not just a product, but rather provided her customers with an experience, in that it allowed them to "feel the music" (Klein, n.d.).

While Little Saints is a product example, the same principle can be applied to more service-oriented hospitality and tourism businesses. Veteran hotelier Roger Bloss has explained that the driving motivation for his company, Alternative Hospitality, which develops cannabis-focused hotels, is that people are looking for places to escape and relax, especially post-pandemic (Nessler, 2021). While strategically curating a space is not a new concept in hotels, adding cannabis into the service requires hotel developers, owners, and managers to be much more intentional in creating the right environment for customers.

Many businesses are integrating cannabis directly into their product and service offerings, but for businesses looking to work with the cannabis industry without directly offering cannabis products, there is a strong benefit to partnering with complementary businesses to provide post-consumption activities. These activities can include guided hikes, yoga, and even cooking classes. To understand this complementary relationship, it is important to remember the range of effects cannabis consumption can produce. With consumption of CBD products, consumers tend to feel a more relaxed state with lower stress and anxiety. THC-infused products produce the psychoactive effects, popularly known as a "high", although said feeling is subjective and varies from person to person. Complementary businesses must leverage the effects of cannabis to best design the experience consumers and travelers are looking for.

The Green Triple Bottom Line: Profit, People, Planet… and "Pot"

There has been an evolving societal conversation around what can be defined as creating social impact. As one of the components of sustainability, there is often misunderstanding of how it applies outside of a theoretical concept. This paper has addressed the growth of cannabis from both a public and private sector perspective, and how

coordination between both is required to affect change. As such, it is important to address the concepts of social impact and sustainable frameworks from both perspectives.

From a public sector perspective, the United Nations defines sustainability as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" ("Sustainability," n.d.). When applying this perspective to the impact of the growing cannabis industry, governments must look to structure policies and align regulatory frameworks around reversing the negative societal impacts of prohibitions and create structures that advance society going forward. There is a stark contrast between the prosperity of the cannabis industry and the millions of people who have been affected by prohibition around the world. This is especially true in the U.S., which houses the most incarcerated individuals of any country. Currently, this figure stands at approximately 2.2 million people, nearly half of whom are non-violent drug offenders (O'Neill Hayes & Barnhorst, 2020). In fact, incarceration is one of the principal determinants of poor societal outcomes. The U.S. Department of Justice noted in a report that approximately two thirds of inmates who are released will be reincarcerated within three years, largely due to inability to secure work as a direct result of their criminal record (Johnson, 2020). States like New York are working to take previously incarcerated people into account with their legalization efforts. According to the state, "the Cannabis Law automatically expunges records for people with previous convictions for activities that are no longer criminalized. So far, New York State and the Office of Court Administration have expunged approximately 300,000 records and suppressed another approximately 100,000 from background searches as they await expungement" ("Cannabis Law Overview," n.d.). Similar to Michigan's Social Equity Program, New York and Massachusetts also allow individuals who come from communities disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition to receive priority in the license process to own their own business. This highlights the public sector's understanding of the important role businesses play in societal advancement.

From a private sector perspective, Harvard Business School uses the concept of the triple bottom line to encourage businesses to "commit to measuring their social and environmental impact, in addition to their financial performance, rather than solely focusing on generating profit, or the standard 'bottom line.'" The triple bottom line can also be explained as the 'three Ps': profit, people, and the planet (Miller, 2020). While governments are responsible for creating sustainable regulatory frameworks around cannabis, businesses are critical players in creating social impact while embracing cannabis. According to Forbes, given the novelty of the cannabis industry, canna-businesses are "in a unique position to showcase what a socially responsible industry could look like" (Nison, 2020). The first factor to consider is how the cannabis industry started as a grassroots movement. A movement driven by people's demands means that a business can do the same, especially a business operating in an environment where customers want businesses to focus on social impact. Second, grassroots movements are renowned for their community support. Businesses that follow a similar structure, like seeking out complementary businesses and participating in mutually beneficial business partnerships, will thrive in this industry. This approach to business not only helps build better brand partnerships throughout the industry, but also directly leads to innovation which benefits businesses as well as the entire market (Duggan, 2020). Lastly, canna-businesses are developing in a time where there is significant support for social entrepreneurship. Traditionally, business entities were limited in only two types of business models: for-profit companies focused on the 'bottom line', or nonprofit organizations focused exclusively on social impact, at the risk of lack of funding. Forbes explains that "many emerging leaders are leaning toward a third option: social entrepreneurship. As a tool for effective social change, self-sustaining revenue-generating businesses built to create change can be more impactful than nonprofits, which rely heavily on hard-to-come-by donations" (Nison, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Cannabis-friendly policies around the world have the potential to be a significant part of the hospitality and tourism industries and to serve as a mechanism for social change. With the decriminalization and legalization of cannabis in many areas, hospitality and tourism businesses can integrate cannabis into their business model and significantly increase revenue. Increased revenue means businesses indirectly support social programming through increased tax revenue, while directly integrating social components, like hiring previously incarcerated people, which has been considered a risky hiring decision. The range of product options, including experiential cannabis pop-ups and CBD wellness establishments, are endless. As such, they can become a huge driver for tourism destinations, creating new experiences for both locals and travelers, driving capital to a community, and providing opportunities for social and economic reintegration and even advancements for those negatively impacted by policing of cannabis. By bringing

cannabis into the hospitality and tourism mainstream, cannabis will be further destigmatized and provide economic benefits for marginalized communities.

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HOSPITALITY AND HOSTILITY IN THE COSPLAYERS UNIVERSE

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ABSTRACT

The work addresses the relationship between hospitality and hostility among cosplayers in geek culture events. To achieve the objective, a qualitative research was conducted, with semi-structured interviews with fifteen cosplayers who attend geek culture events. For data analysis, content analysis was used and the data were analyzed with the assistance of Atlas.ti software. As a result, it was identified that hospitality is present both in the organization of events and in the reception of visitors during the event, while aspects of hostility are related to lack of respect, especially towards female cosplayers.

Key Words: Hospitality. Hostility. Cosplay. Geek Culture.

INTRODUCTION

With the exponential growth of cosplay culture, it has become increasingly important to discuss the hospitality and hostility that permeate this universe. Although many cosplayers experience a sense of community and camaraderie, others are targets of hostility and discrimination. This article addresses the world of cosplayers, discussing the relationship between hospitality and hostility present at geek culture events.
Cosplay events arrived in Brazil in the late 1990s (AMARAL and DUARTE, 2008; COELHO JR. and SILVA, 2007), and more recently, its participants have multiple media characters as sources for their costumes, from anime characters to pop music icons or editorial universe. These events have a series of activities, in addition to cosplay contests, such as illustration championships, games, cards, medieval swords, shows, as well as the sale of objects and accessories related to the characters. The Brazilian panorama changed in 2014 with the realization of Comic Con Experience in São Paulo.

It can be said that the word geek is used to describe someone passionate about technology, entertainment, or the internet. Geeks are very focused and often become experts in what they love (Cross, 2005). Geek culture is characterized as a lifestyle in which individuals are interested in everything related to technology and electronics. They like science fiction movies and are fanatics about electronic games and board games.
Friese (2004, p. 68) considers that the concept of hospitality remains in a "constellation marked by distinct ambivalences, which include tensions between host and guest, between hospitality and hostility, proximity and distance, between belonging to a community and being an outsider, between exclusion and inclusion." The author understands that hospitality lies in the mutual obligations between host and guest and that there is a need for reciprocity between these two actors for the existence of hospitality.

The roles are of host and guest, which rely on rituals, through customs and traditions, to regulate the relationship positively (hospitality) or negatively (hostility) (Guimarães & Camargo, 2018). This relationship generates distinct insights (meeting points), and a significant portion of these insights can be analyzed and investigated in the context of hospitality. The human component is one of the most important ingredients for there to be a perception of a positive experience (Guimarães & Camargo, 2018).

The work addresses the relationship between hospitality and hostility among cosplayers at geek culture events. To achieve this, a qualitative research was conducted with semi-structured interviews with fifteen cosplayers who attend the main geek culture events in Brazil. Content analysis method (Bardin, 2014) was used to identify categories related to hospitality and hostility in relation to the events studied.

COSPLAY AND GEEK CULTURE

Cosplay, a shortened form of kosupure, is a combination of the Japanese words "costume" (コス) and "play" (プレ) (Winge, 2006, p. 67). Cosplay is the modern term used to describe fandom, with "fandom" defined as "the realm of avid enthusiasts" (Fandom, n.d.). Cosplay is a type of performance art in which an individual dresses up as a fictional character, typically from graphic novels, comics, anime/cartoons, video games, or science fiction/fantasy media.
The term cosplay (kosupure) was coined in 1984 by Takahashi Nobuyuki, founder/writer of the publishing company Studio Hard, to describe the science fiction and fantasy fans he saw at the World Con Los Angeles that year who were wearing costumes of their favorite characters (Winge, 2006, p. 66). He was impressed by what he saw and upon returning to Japan, wrote about his experiences and encouraged his magazine readers to dress up in the same way (Cozens, 2009).

Cosplay is still understood through the lens of youth subculture theories (Amaral & Duarte, 2008), as cosplayers have their own social and communicational dynamics, with their own forms of identification that make them part of a segment of society. The scene of this youth group could be understood as a subculture to the extent that "the expressiveness through the body, verbal language, clothing, and attitudes combines with the scenic, visual, auditory, haptic resources to which they are exposed, allowing for numerous protagonisms" (Nunes, 2014, p. 237). In addition to being interpreted as a form of expression and cultural practice, cosplay is also seen as a process of sociability, as emphasized by Machado (2009, p. 2), who underscores that the practice takes place at in-person events, animencontros, which in turn have their own dynamics: the way attendees dress, speak, among others. It is possible to affirm that this process of sociability is initially anchored in the relationship established by this group of young people with mangas and anime, which contributes to the configuration of a certain insight, a new lifestyle, a form of culture built and experienced by them, which helps to shape their own way of being in the world.

The growth of the market focused on geek culture is not unnoticed by the Brazilian market, and since 2014, in São Paulo, the Comic Con Experience (CCXP) has been held annually, gaining international recognition as one of the largest events focused on this cultural segment in the country. In the 2022 edition, it received an audience of more than 280,000 people in 4 days of the event, a significant number that should not be ignored, making it the largest festival of pop culture in the world. With this number of people, CCXP broke its own record, obtained in 2019; a number that reinforces why this is the main festival of geek and pop culture in the market, helping to build the sense of identity and belonging to those who participate in the event.

Moriconi (2014, p.08) considers that both identity and belonging are feelings that "can interfere in the construction of values and attitudes" and affirms: "Life is made up of simple moments that move us. These are the moments that truly leave a mark and bring a sense of identity to the human being. These moments that give meaning to people's lives are also the ones that will constitute their character, dignity, and personality. They are the ones that will bring about a sense of belonging and consequently bring an identity of singularity.

Simply put, the Houaiss Dictionary (2010) defines identity as "the set of one's own unique characteristics; awareness of one's own personality; what makes one thing of the same nature as another", while belonging is, among other definitions in the same publication, "to be a part of; to be related to; to be one's own, characteristic".

These communities tend to be identified by their common factors or by the self-identification among their members (McAlexander, Schouten & Koenig, 2002). Consumers recognize "people like themselves" in others (Mcwillian,

2000). That is, people tend to choose activities that are congruent with the salient aspects of their identities, as well as to support institutions that represent these identities (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). In addition, when forming groups, individuals seek the company of others who have similar or compatible identity traits (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995).

HOSPITALITY AND HOSTILITY

The Portuguese word "hospitalidade," as well as the French "hospitalité" and English "hospitality," find their etymological root not only in the Latin term "hospes," but also in the word from which the latter evolved: "hostis." In the Greek language, "xénos" served to designate both the guest and the foreigner. Émile Benveniste elaborates a linguistic analysis of the etymological origin of the word "hospitalidade" in his work "Le Vocabulaire des Institutions Indo-Européennes" (1969), which is worth recovering.

Benveniste highlights the dual meaning that "hostis" acquired in the Latin language, coming to mean both guest and enemy. However, later on, "by a change whose precise conditions we do not know, the word hostis acquired the sense of 'hostile' and now only applies to the 'enemy'" (Benveniste, 1969). Originally, the term only meant guest, visit, someone who would be in a reciprocal relationship, in understanding with another, but progressively took on the meaning of enemy. This may have happened because interpersonal relationships, between communities, gave way to impersonal relationships, between states, so that the trust that served as the basis for "hostis" as a guest gave way to suspicion, making him or her a possible threat (Kearney, 2015).

The possibility of "hostis" being hostile and therefore being an enemy, instead of being friendly and received as a guest deserving of hospitality, was increasingly being outlined. Consequently, the need for another term to designate the notion of hospitality emerged, the other who is received; this consisted of the old term "hostis" combined with "pot(i)s," that is, "hospes" < "hostipe/ot-s.", resulting in "hospes." Thus, the new term consisted of the reunion of "ghosti" – at the base of "hostis" – and "-pets," being an incarnation of hospitality, in its literal sense (Benveniste, 1969). If we look at the Portuguese language, we find numerous words indebted to this new term, as well as the previous one, in addition to the most obvious, from hotel or hostel to hospital or hospice, places that receive, welcome or care.

Although "hospes" emerged to fill the need for a new term to designate the foreigner, the one who is received in a reciprocal relationship and ultimately in hospitality, its origin remains. Derrida (2014) refers to a "hostipitalité," making the proximity between both terms more explicit. The convergence between hostility and hospitality, resulting in this term coined by the author, also reveals another idea: one contains the possibility of the other. Both notions have at their origin a word with a dual meaning that makes it impossible to conceive of one without the other, making it possible to transform hostility into hospitality, but also the opposite. The foreigner could be welcomed as a guest or conceived as hostile, and this is the ambiguity of his or her figure, the duality in which he or she oscillates.

Consequently, the need for two distinct, often opposing terms is revealed, but also the coexistence and proximity of both. Going further, we can even consider the possibility of something that would be contradictory from the outset by assuming two opposite gestures simultaneously: welcoming and renouncing a hostile guest. Following this line of thought, it seems pertinent to invoke the figure of the parasite, which can contain this duality within itself, both in a more literal and a more metaphorical sense, thus constituting itself as paradoxical.

Hospitality and hostility, the two terms come from a similar linguistic root - hospes and hostes - but carry opposite meanings. We have hospitality, lodging, hospital, and in guest, we also have hostility and hostile. Host and guest both derive from a common Indo-European word - ghostis - which means "stranger" and, further, "enemy", not necessarily related to the host and guest, but rather to the relationship that can occur between them, considering that not all encounters happen in a hospitable way. The stranger is offered a hostile reception, as they carry cultural differences that can disrupt the order of the one receiving them (Coracini, 2010; Camargo, 2004).

Through the lens of hospitality, it is possible to observe the various procedures existing to establish and maintain the relationship between host and guest in the sociocultural and economic context, as they involve them without losing their nature and essence with all their symbolic associations, including hostility and what is inhospitable. It should be noted that the concept of inhospitable has its origin in space when it refers to the traveler or foreigner who lives

in another place and who, at a certain moment and for some reason, enters a place that is not considered theirs. In this sense, the concept assumes a dimension of danger, of what will steal or kill, and in the duality of the root in which the word is constituted, the space also becomes a shelter and belonging to the group. Inhospitable also has the same origin as hospitality and hostility - hospes, hospitais, and hostis - and the word danger with its Indo-European prefix per takes on the meaning of moving (Baitello Junior, 2013).

Aspects of hostility are related to prejudice, violence, intolerance, declaration of war, and confrontation with the other, whether for reasons of diverging interests or different perspectives on the same thing.
Lashley & Morrison (2004) approach hospitality by placing the encounter between host and guest at the center of the phenomenon unfolding in three interrelated domains of action: private or domestic, social or cultural, and commercial, with influence from each on the others. The commercial domain represents hospitality applied to business, therefore. Interconnected with it are the other two domains, forming a triple intersection that expresses the influence it receives from cultural and private tradition, that is, values, meanings, and emotional dimensions.

Brotherton & Wood (2004) proposed that hospitality can be differentiated from other forms of human exchange as the expression of the desire for mutual well-being between the parties, and later entertainment was added to the definition to cover all its current activity (Camargo, 2004), (Hemmington, 2007); (Lugosi, 2008).

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the intended objective, in-depth interviews were conducted with fifteen cosplayers, eight men and seven women who attend geek culture events, especially those who have participated in at least one edition of CCXP. A semi-structured script was used with questions about cosplayers' perception of hospitality at events.

To analyze the interviews, analysis units were created. After defining the units, it was necessary to define the categories, a classification operation of constituent elements of a set, based on differentiation followed by regrouping based on analogies, using defined criteria (Puglisi & Franco, 2005). There are two paths that can be followed for category development: a priori or a posteriori.

When categories and their respective indicators are predetermined in pursuit of a specific answer by the investigator, it is called a priori categorization. When not defined a priori, the categories emerge from the "speech", the discourse, and the content of the responses and imply a constant back-and-forth between the analysis material and the theory (Puglisi & Franco, 2005).

In a priori categories, there is a tendency to lead to a significant simplification and fragmentation of the manifest content. Furthermore, the researcher often feels pressured and induced to print one of the categories in the respondent's speech. On the other hand, working with an open system (categories created a posteriori) requires greater theoretical baggage from the investigator, but implicitly brings a large amount of new and diversified data that may emerge (Puglisi & Franco, 2005).

For the definition of categories in this study, an open system was chosen, where categories are chosen during the research process and are entirely flexible because it allows changes until the final result is obtained (Laville & Dionne, 1999). Content analysis enables a deep reading of communications, going beyond the apparent reading.

According to Bardin's guidelines (2009), data collection was carried out from four sources of evidence: bibliographic research, documentary research, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires. To optimize the analysis process, the Atlas.ti software was used, a software for qualitative data analysis. It is important to note that Atlas.ti is a tool that assists the researcher in the process of organizing data analysis, but the software does not perform the analysis itself.
All inferences and categorizations should be made by the researcher, supported by their theoretical background. "The efficiency of the software lies in the interface between human expertise and computer data processing" (Silva Junior & Leão, 2018, p.716).

The Atlas.ti software is a suitable resource for developing all stages of Content Analysis (Bardin, 2009), facilitating the analyst's work and contributing to the establishment of relationships that culminate in the treatment and inference of results.

RESULTS

The categories identified in the responses were grouped according to the keywords found in the literature review and grouped according to Bardin's (2009) method.

Table 1
Categories and Intensity

Category	Frequency
Cosplay	10
Geek culture	15
Fantasy	6
Female	7
Hospitality	32
Hostility	17
Inclusion	11
Belonging	15
Prejudice	6
Respect	10

To analyze the co-occurrence table generated by the Atlas t.i. software, the value of the relationship between categories was used, where the higher and closer to 1 the value, the stronger the relationship between them. Therefore, it can be observed that the most significant relationship is between the categories of hostility and femininity (0.26), which can be seen in the statement of interviewee 2: "Many visitors ask to take a photo with us, and we need to be careful because many take advantage of this opportunity to say aggressive words," and in the statement of interviewee 4: "For women, it is much more complicated. Some visitors take advantage of the moment to take a photo to try something." The statement of interviewee 6 also reinforces this result: "Often I am unsure of which cosplay to wear. I prefer something more discrete to avoid hearing offensive jokes or cheap pick-up lines," especially if she is alone at the event.
Following this, the categories of hospitality and belonging (0.21) and inclusion and hospitality (0.19) were identified, which can be seen in the statement of respondent 1 when he says, "We are very well received, from the event organization, where we have discounts. In these events, we are all equal, take photos with the guests, have space for cosplay support, to change clothes. It's like we're in a parallel universe." Or in the statement of interviewee 8: "We are very well received, we have our moment of fame. It is very gratifying when people ask to take a photo with us. People are kind, and events welcome us from arrival to support during the event." The other relevant relationships were cosplay and geek culture (0.19), followed by fantasy and femininity (0.18).

Table 2
Co-occurancy categories

	belonging	cosplay	fantasy	female	geek culture	hospitality	hostility	inclusion	prejudice	respect
belonging		1 - 0,04	n/a	n/a	3 - 0,11	8 - 0,21	1 - 0,03	1 - 0,04	1 - 0,05	n/a
cosplay	1 - 0,04		n/a	n/a	4 - 0,19	n/a	n/a	1 - 0,05	n/a	n/a
fantasy	n/a	n/a		2 - 0,18	1 - 0,05	n/a	3 - 0,15	n/a	n/a	n/a
female	n/a	n/a	2 - 0,18		n/a	1 - 0,03	5 - 0,26	n/a	1 - 0,08	2 - 0,13
geek culture	3 - 0,11	4 - 0,19	1 - 0,05	n/a		n/a	1 - 0,03	n/a	n/a	n/a
hospitality	8 - 0,21	n/a	n/a	1 - 0,03	n/a		1 - 0,02	7 - 0,19	n/a	4 - 0,11
hostility	1 - 0,03	n/a	3 - 0,15	5 - 0,26	1 - 0,03	1 - 0,02		1 - 0,04	2 - 0,10	2 - 0,08
inclusion	1 - 0,04	1 - 0,05	n/a	n/a	n/a	7 - 0,19	1 - 0,04		1 - 0,06	1 - 0,05
prejudice	1 - 0,05	n/a	n/a	1 - 0,08	n/a	n/a	2 - 0,10	1 - 0,06		1 - 0,07
respect	n/a	n/a	n/a	2 - 0,13	n/a	4 - 0,11	2 - 0,08	1 - 0,05	1 - 0,07	

Participating in cosplay events is a way to be an active part of pop culture and the geek community. Through cosplay, it is possible to connect with other people who share their interests and discover new series, games, and movies to explore. This sense of belonging to a group can be very powerful and, for many people, is a great benefit of the world of cosplay. Recognition and compliments to the cosplayer generate visibility and approval from the group, along with the feeling of belonging.

Overall, participating in cosplay events is a positive experience that offers many opportunities to create, have fun, and make new friends, which corroborates with Moriconi (2014), who considers these moments truly marking and bringing the feeling of identity to the human being. These moments that give meaning to people's lives are also those that will constitute their character, dignity, and personality.

Modern trends of decreasing community interaction and a sense of fading society of belonging have created gaps that geek cultures are capable of filling, providing a space for community and acceptance (Napier, 2006). Abrams describes "dressing up" as an activity that allows individuals to play with a variety of ideas and identities through their own bodies, creating an embodied way of relating to the world. Shared activity is a means of social bonding and has historically contributed to a sense of connectivity and community.

Hospitality is a fundamental aspect of any event and would be no different at cosplay events. In this type of event, cosplayers gather to share their passion for geek culture, displaying their costumes and interacting with each other. Therefore, it is important that hospitality is present to ensure that everyone feels welcome and comfortable.
One of the main pillars of hospitality at cosplay events is inclusion. It is essential that all cosplayers, regardless of their age, gender, or abilities, feel included and accepted. To do this, measures can be adopted such as offering safe and welcoming spaces where they can interact with each other without fears or judgments.

Another element is support and respect. Cosplayers spend a lot of time and effort creating their costumes, so it is essential that participants can exchange ideas, feedback, and constructive criticism without judgments. Additionally, it is important to respect the cultural and gender preferences of cosplayers so that everyone can feel comfortable interacting.

Hospitality is also present in the organization of the cosplay event. It is important that the organizing team provides mechanisms for the protection and safety of cosplayers, such as demarcating and respecting the spaces reserved for presentations and photographs. Hospitality at cosplay events is essential to create a welcoming and comfortable environment where everyone can have fun and share their passion for nerd culture. It is important to emphasize that hospitality is not a fixed idea, but a constant work that depends on each person involved to create a hospitable and inclusive environment. Only then will cosplay events be always remembered for their hospitality, organization, and fun.

The interviews conducted helped to understand the cosplayers' view of the practice, revealing from the enchantment with the possibility of being someone else, to the way cosplay can reaffirm and lead to reflection on who one is, to the motivation given by the challenge of creating and producing the cosplay itself. The speeches also revealed that the practice is a form of sociability that allows finding other cosplayers and fans of the same subjects or of honoring a character/work that one likes. At times, views on the hobby intertwined in a complex and multiple way, demonstrating the possibility of, for example, appreciating the alterity that cosplay allows or the production part, but by seeking for photos and approval to the self that wears the cosplay (De Nadai, 2015).

Finally, hostility at cosplay events can also be fueled by toxic fandoms and continuity wars. Fan groups who disagree with a certain interpretation of the character may harass cosplayers with insults and humiliations, which can lead to violent conflicts.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aimed to evaluate the relationship of hospitality and hostility among cosplayers in geek culture events. For this purpose, a qualitative research was carried out with semi-structured interviews with fifteen cosplayers who attend the main geek culture events in Brazil. The answers obtained showed that the environment of the events is very hospitable for the attendees in general, as well as for the cosplayers. Hospitality is perceived from aspects of event organization to the reception by visitors, who recognize the visitors.

With the exponential growth of cosplay culture, it has become increasingly important to discuss the hospitality and hostility that permeate this universe. Although many cosplayers experience a sense of community and camaraderie, others are targets of hostility and discrimination. This article explores the world of cosplayers, discussing cosplay culture, the cosplay community, and issues of inclusion and diversity. The goal is to open a dialogue about the importance of promoting a healthier and more respectful environment so that everyone can have the opportunity to express their passion for cosplay in a welcoming and inclusive way.

Just like Ashley's study (2012), this study showed that cosplay is indeed a viable and recognizable form of participatory culture. The cosplay community offers incentives for those who share creative expression and participate actively. It encompasses areas such as recognition and support from other community members and personal empowerment provided by the act of designing. Participatory cultures provide many learning venues, skill development for problem solving, and interactions. Adopting cosplay as a participatory culture would allow children and adults access to much-needed social benefits and learning environments.

In conclusion, cosplay culture is a vibrant community that offers the opportunity for creative expression and long-lasting friendships. However, it also faces challenges regarding hostility and discrimination. By recognizing these problems and promoting a more inclusive and welcoming environment, we can make the cosplay world a better place for everyone. The deconstruction of stereotypes and prejudices, along with initiatives to combat hostility and discrimination, are important steps to ensure that cosplay culture can flourish as a healthy and respectful environment for all cosplayers, regardless of their appearance or origin.

Cosplay culture is a vibrant and diverse community that should be welcoming to all. Hostility and discrimination have no place in this universe. All cosplayers deserve to be treated with respect and valued for their art and passion. It is important that everyone involved in this universe reflects on the importance of healthy and respectful coexistence in cosplay culture. Respect and tolerance are essential to ensure that all cosplayers feel safe and welcome.

One of the main forms of welcoming is awareness and combatting harassment and discrimination. Cosplay events are often environments of much interaction and photography, but it is important that participants are respectful of each other and that the event has protection and guidance measures to avoid uncomfortable situations.

Aspects of hostility are related to prejudice, violence, intolerance, declaration of war, and confrontation with others, either for reasons of divergences of interests or different views on the same thing. One cannot speak of hospitality without considering hostility because the former will always be a challenge, as well as an option to be adopted by the host.

Discussing hospitality and hostility in the cosplay world is important because many cosplayers face discrimination and hostility. It is essential to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment so that everyone can express themselves freely and enjoy the cosplay community in a healthy and respectful way.

In conclusion, cosplay events are meant to celebrate pop culture and the characters we love. Unfortunately, hostility can turn these events into toxic and dangerous spaces. Welcoming attitudes at cosplay events are a key factor in ensuring inclusion and diversity in the cosplay community. This requires a constant commitment from organizers, participants, and sponsors to create a safe and inclusive environment that celebrates creativity, diversity, and mutual respect. With this approach, cosplay events can become even more amazing and impactful spaces for all participants.

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LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM IN SAN ANDRÉS DE TEIXIDO (GALICIA – SPAIN)

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ABSTRACT

Tourism planning must take into account the local population from the outset. This project aims to value the destination and promote sustainable tourism development, integrating the local population and proposing solutions that can be applied from both the public and private spheres. Through tourism research, different actions are proposed and carried out in the territory with the aim of disseminating the identity, tradition and history of an outstanding pilgrimage point such as San Andrés de Teixido. As tradition says, a place where anyone who has not gone during life will go from dead.

Key Words: Tourism, craft, project, heritage, interpretation

INTRODUCTION

San Andrés de Teixido is one of the most important pilgrimage sites in Galicia to which, according to tradition, "vai de morto quen non foi de vivo" (Usero, 1992, p. 23), meaning that anyone who has not been in life will go after pass away It is a consolidated tourist destination that has its own pilgrimage route and it is part of various emerging tourism development projects.

As well as the single scenary, the intangible part of San Andrés de Teixido makes it a unique place. Moreover, it is on risk of disappearing if its resources are not properly managed. This is the case of the «sanandreses», a centuries-old handicraft made from unfermented breadcrumbs (Usero, 1992, pp. 39-45) which currently competes with souvenirs lacking authenticity and without any sign of identity.
It is important to highlight that we have carried out in territory all the actions that we mentioned.

PROBLEM AND RESULTS

This research consists of three parts. The phases 1 and 2 two allowed us to obtain the following results:

- Analysis of the external and internal environments.
- Determination of the most appropriate legal form to implement a tourist product.
- "Eufundevivo" brand´s creation.
- Design, plan and creation of the "guided tour" product.
- Communication through digital and physical media (web, press,et
- Research into the heritage resources of the destination.
- To develop other initiatives linked to the brand and the revaluation of the destination. (Pérez-García, Lezcano González, Muíño Freire, & Rodríguez Carro, 2021)

On the 3rd phase, we are looking for:

- To analyse the historical evolution of tourism in San Andrés de Teixido in order to study the functional transformation of the village.
- To evaluate the role of tourism in the transformation of the way of life
- To study the souvenir in San Andrés de Teixido and select those elements relevant to the future of the destination.
- To determine the lines to be followed in the local development through the study of the evolution of the destination.

MAIN RESULTS

Throughout the project, a series of results have been obtained, which meet the initial objectives. Below, each of the phases executed so far to understand and deepen the subject is detailed. It should be noted that the actions indicated

in the document have been carried out in reality, which is a singularity of the work of EUFUNDEVIVO, the registered trademark that encompasses this project. The case described refers to the one carried out in San Andrés de Teixido, but the methodology and the tasks carried out in each of the phases could be replicated in other local tourism development projects.

External analysis
In the development of the first phase, it has been essential to know the environment, both external and internal, that surrounds San Andrés de Teixido. In the first place, knowing the weight that falls on tourism activity in the territory has been fundamental to decide to undertake this project. The services sector during the previous years, has had a great weight and has increased its relevance in the region, compared to other sectors such as agriculture, fishing or even construction.

This is the case of Cedeira, the municipality in which our destination is located, which has more than 55% of the total activity dedicated to the service sector. To this factor, we must add the commitment to projects present in the territory that aim to give prominence and attract new flows of tourists, with geology as a common thread, as is the case of the Cabo Ortegal Geopark Project. Currently in 2023, it is almost a reality since it is pending ratification by UNESCO to be granted global recognition.

On the other hand, if it is intended to contextualize the beginning of the project, in religious matters, it is necessary to emphasize that it was at the gates of the year "Xacobeo 2021", an event that was intended to have a high-level impact on the local economy and the territory, having as its main axis the Camino de Santiago, but that had room for other pilgrimages such as the Route to San Andrés de Teixido. Finally, from the point we are, we know that the pandemic has modified the dates and the expected estimates, but due to the extension of this event for two years and the tourist behaviors and interests of visitors after confinement, they have supported development and research.

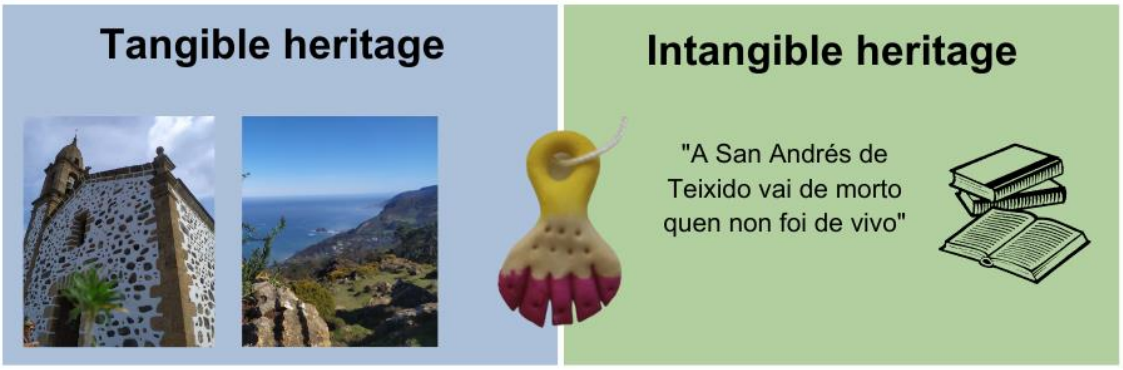
One of the established objectives is the creation of a tourist product for San Andrés de Teixido, therefore, it has been decided to know through the 5 forces of Porter (Porter M.E, 2008), the competition of the place. This will make it possible to determine the type of rivalry that exists between companies; the bargaining power of both customers and suppliers, the threat of new competitors that may arise as a result of the boom in tourism activity in San Andrés de Teixido, thus offering substitute products to the one it is intended to offer.

In the latter case, referring to the entry of new competitors and substitute products, it is convenient to highlight the product that is intended to be created. This is a guided tour. Therefore, after observing other well-known tourist destinations, it has been determined that the "Freetour" modality, characteristic for being a tour in which the visitor does not have a fixed price and pays at will through tips, could be a competitor. The main idea is to establish a conventional guided tour format, with a fixed price although there is discrimination depending on the profile of the client (student, retiree, etc.) but that moves away from the philosophy of the mentioned tours. (Guruwalk, 2019)

On the other hand, the facilitating, incentive and tourist techniques of San Andrés de Teixido have been analyzed, following the typification given by Francisco Muñoz de Escalona (Candela, 2017). In this section it should be noted that there is only one accommodation on site, and that public transport, medical and security services or food are non-existent in the village. Communications suffer certain problems due to the location of the place, located on the Atlantic coast next to the cliffs, so services, today basic, such as mobile or internet are often limited to certain service companies. On the other hand, other elements such as water supply, electricity or road access have a positive assessment although it can be improved depending on the increase in visitors to the place, despite having three main accesses.

To refer to the incentive techniques, 3 main aspects have been selected that encompass the resources of the place: natural, architectural and intangible heritage. The natural heritage is evident since in addition to being recently selected to obtain the UNESCO World Geopark seal, this enclave is located in the Serra da Capelada. The architectural heritage of the sanctuary, as well as the unique buildings of this fishing village, has unique characteristics that add value. Finally, the intangible heritage is a fundamental element to understand the identity of San Andrés de Teixido, since beyond being a point of pilgrimage for Christianity, as cited by authors such as Usero, its roots go beyond pagan traditions. (Usero, 1992)

Figure 1
Incentive techniques. Source: authors.



Therefore, at this point reference must be made to the term of integral heritage, in which the natural and the cultural are intimately linked, being difficult to understand one without the other. (Iglesias Gil, 2007)

Finally, tourism techniques have focused on the shortcomings and points to improve in the place, since the offer of tourist services, beyond the souvenir, is non-existent. The main axes are that there is no joint communication strategy or marketing of the San Andrés product; there is no receptive company that offers on-site services, such as the guided tour product that is intended to be created; and in addition, the money generated by tourism activity in San Andrés is for the benefit of external companies that offer some type of service.

Internal analysis
For a greater knowledge of the place, a SWOT analysis has been developed that has allowed to know the weaknesses, threats, opportunities and strengths, showing in a clearer way the viability of the project and the strategy to follow. From this analysis it has been possible to detect a series of needs that should be satisfied:

- Creation of a tourist product in the place.
- Provide information and tourist support to the visitor.
- Agree on strategy with the different social actors of the place.
- Creation of strategic plan for tourism development.
- Maintenance of existing infrastructure.
- Encourage the protection and care of the place by the local and the visitor.

A need that has been covered, although in a small way, is the creation of rural tourism accommodation in the vicinity. However, some new accommodation is required since the current one only has four rooms. It is a new opportunity to spend the night in the place, but insufficient given the high flow of visitors who arrive in San Andrés de Teixido, especially in high season, coinciding mainly with the summer months.

Legal form of the company
Once the internal and external conditions of the site are known, it is convenient to determine what should be the ideal structure of the company. For this, a study of the different legal forms has been carried out, and due to the characteristics of the project it has been determined that the most adapted would be, at first, to register as self-employed, although with the option of constituting a Limited Company, for a greater protection of the entrepreneur. Once the legal form is known, sources of financing and aid have been sought to undertake that facilitate different organizations in the area such as local action groups, councils or other organizations with competences in tourism.

Creation of brand "Eu fun de vivo" to San Andrés de Teixido
In this section, the mission, vision and values of the company have been described, in this case the project to be carried out. It is convenient to highlight this point to be clear about the role of the organization, and its internal functioning. The constitution of values can serve as a manual of good practices for all the people who make up it. As reflected in Guillén's work, a guide when making decisions and principles that give meaning to the different daily actions. (Guillén, 2005)

This section is accompanied by the definition of business, in this case we wanted to create a brand that identifies the actions carried out under the name of EUFUNDEVIVO.

Figure 2
Logo of the EUFUNDEVIVO registered trademark



For the choice of the name, a thorough investigation and study of the main elements that give identity to San Andrés de Teixido has been carried out. After an exhaustive assessment it has been decided to refer to the traditional phrase of the place that says that "vai de morto quen non foi de vivo", or what is the same, that he is dead who was not alive. As a result of this, we wanted to refer to all those people who have gone alive to the place, so it has been chosen "Eu fun de vivo", I have gone alive. This brand is intended to integrate both the local population and the visitor. It intends that all those people who have ever been in the sanctuary, can feel part of this seal, and those who have not yet attended in life, to serve as an incentive to do so.

In legal matters, the trademark has been registered with the SPTO, the Spanish body in charge of patents and trademarks within the national territory. From the presentation of some documents, previously studied, the national trademark badge has been obtained. Not only does it represent a business opportunity, but it also protects an intangible heritage, of great relevance to the ego, against any attempt for external profit.

The fact that it is a brand integrated by the local population, will give it an added value, own and original.Other actions that have accompanied the brand EU FUN DE VIVO, has been the registration on social networks, on the platforms of Facebook and Instagram, and the creation of a web page that allows to locate the project in the network. To do this, a domain and an email of its own have been requested.

Portfolio strategies
For the creation of the guided tour, different options have been proposed, including the visit in the core of the place (corresponding to the second phase), and the creation of a boat route. This is an interesting strategy since it has served to create synergies with other companies in the territory, and to know the sanctuary from a different point of view. The fact of knowing the natural environment that surrounds it with a perspective as unique as that obtained from the sea, leaves room for the visitor to become a potential visitor to San Andrés de Teixido, thus attracting new profiles interested in culture and territory.

Communication and marketing
Once all these elements have been established, the way to bring the project closer to the desired audience has been raised. For that, a series of strategies have been determined to help achieve the objective. From the use of social networks or the web, corporate clothing of EUFUNDEVIVO, familiarization visits with specialized groups and with groups of schoolchildren; to the appearance in digital and conventional media, or the edition and printing of promotional materials such as brochures, maps, leaflets and articles that provide information to the visitor. In addition, within the schedule of actions, a series of Google Adwords campaigns have been introduced. It should be noted that these actions have been prolonged in time until the present time, in the following phases of the project, incorporating new initiatives such as the contest of stories of different themes, in each of the editions and that has had the collaboration of the parish priest of the place and the official chronicler of the town. What is intended, whenever possible, is to integrate different social actors linked to San Andrés de Teixido.
On the other hand, throughout this time initiatives have emerged that were not in the initial plan but that have been perfectly integrated. This is the case of Teixido Favorito, a proposal that arises in the context of the pandemic so that those who have visited San Andrés de Teixido, write their stories and experiences, in order to collect them and

obtain more information from visitors over time. It is important to emphasize that this is not a scientific method of tourism statistics, but it has been as a backbone to create community with the project.

Design and planning of the guided tour in San Andrés de Teixido

In the second phase of the project, efforts have been focused on the creation of the guided tour, once the legal aspects, the conditions of the territory and the implementation of the communication part have been determined.However, before focusing directly on the visit, it has been convenient to contextualize since in 2020 a condition emerged that was not planned, the Covid-19 pandemic. To this end, an analysis of the trends in cultural tourism after confinement has been made, a decisive aspect to try to know the behaviors of visitors who will arrive in San Andrés de Teixido after this anomalous situation. As has been determined, and now that it is possible to see it from a future perspective, once the vaccines have arrived for most of the population, tourism activity has been recovering, communications have been increasingly fluid, and normality, which we used to know, is increasingly present. Although along the way there have been points of uncertainty and new retention. The pandemic has caused certain tourism models to be rethought and management to focus differently in certain cases, giving preference to large or outdoor spaces within cultural tourism. (UNWTO, 2021) Likewise, the role of the tourist guide has been another section to highlight since it is considered an essential element when it comes to bringing the destination closer to the visitor. The purpose of the guided tour is to know, identify and become familiar with the place, so through interpretation, it is also possible to create awareness of protection and preservation of the destination, while favoring the care of the entire heritage. (Esparza Bermúdez, Ruiz Caro & Guzmán Khang, 2007, pp. 13-14)These two aspects, cultural tourism in times of Covid and the role of the tour guide, were accompanied by a framework regarding pilgrimages, since it is important to take into account the genesis of San Andrés de Teixido and its Camino to focus the guided tour. Knowing the unique elements of each destination will allow you to create a unique and differentiating product that attracts visitors and makes them live a satisfactory experience.

Resource analysis

To know the resources of the place, in addition to those previously mentioned, a fieldwork and bibliographic study has been carried out to deepen the field. To this end, an inventory of resources has been created based on the adaptation of the methodology and the design of a heritage resources file. Once the investigation of resources has been completed, a total of 23 elements have been obtained to be taken into account, which have been divided into categories according to nature: immovable, movable and intangible.From this point, we have worked on the design and planning of the route through the place, taking advantage of the resources of greatest interest. It is important to mention that being a small nucleus, which has little distance between the different elements, it has been possible to use practically all the resources in the development of the visit. The interpretation has been an integrated element in the visit, not only informative communication is sought, but the visitor himself can experience the environment in an enriching way. For this, we wanted to use musical elements, the bouquet of San Andrés itself (a traditional element of the pilgrimage) as a companion during the route, the participation of local population spontaneously and the recreation of certain rituals that were done in the past, such as the call of the deceased in the cemetery before going to the sanctuary. These are the ones chosen in a particular way for the case study, but it is a matter of research to find the appropriate elements in each project to be carried out.

Figure 3
Roadmap of the guided tour



The route has been established following a logical order of route, starting at the initial point at the parking, where the main means of arrival to the place are situated, or entrance of the town. From that beginning, you go through the

town and places that are not visited on a regular basis by those who come to San Andrés de Teixido but, nevertheless, it has an important historical and cultural value. For each of the stops, the topics to be addressed at each point have been detailed and established, addressing all the aspects included in the inventory of resources. The third phase of the research corresponds to the current part of the project, which is still ongoing. This stage focuses on the following aspects, some of them already under development:

Analyze the historical evolution of tourism in San Andrés de Teixido to study the functional transformation of the village and the ways of life of its inhabitants.
Study the souvenir in San Andrés de Teixido and select those elements relevant to the future of the destination.
Determine the lines to follow in the local development of the destination, according to the authenticity and sustainability of San Andrés de Teixido, through the study of the evolution of the destination.

In this section of the project it is worth highlighting the importance of primary sources, such as interviews, since to know the recent evolution of the way of life of the place you have to establish contact with its local population. There is no specific documentation or bibliography that shows this information, so it must be prepared in its entirety. At this stage of the research it has already been possible to determine the importance of communications, as is the case of the main access road, for the development of population centers or villages in rural Galicia. In 1971 the main direct communication route by car was opened, which has meant a change in visitor behavior since then. In addition, the infrastructure of the place has been improved by access, as well as an increase in the number of businesses focused on tourism, such as the souvenir shop and taverns.

Figure 4
Map of San Andrés de Teixido



On the other hand, a study of the souvenir is being carried out in San Andrés de Teixido, focusing on its traditional bread crafts. In order to better understand their identity and relationship with the place, a fundamental part of the research has been participant observation, which as Taylor and Bogdan (1984) mention is obtained by involving the social interaction between the researcher and the informants, within the research, during the data collection process in a systematic and non-intrusive way. This implies the selection of the scenario, access to it, interaction with artisans and people who allow data to be obtained.

The sanandreses, the typical craftsmanship of San Andrés de Teixido, is a typical element that has emerged as a result of the invention of the Reginas, some neighbors of Cedeira who learned from their grandmother Regina Sande (1841-1931) the technique for the elaboration of these pieces. These bread figures are amulets to which different virtues are attributed in various areas for those who possess them: protection, health, food, work, studies, peace, love and travel. Since they began to be sold in the vicinity of the sanctuary and the Camino a San Andrés de Teixido they have become an icon and identity of the place, both for the local population and for the image of the visitor. Currently, there are a couple of families who continue with the elaboration in the destination, and who have been collaborators with the study of them. (Usero, 1992)To know first-hand about its creation, an integration has been made in its day to day craftsmanship, actively participating in the elaboration of the pieces and knowing all the parts of the process. It has sought to understand and know the details of each part that makes up the process, such as the

elaboration of the dough, the modeling of the figures, the firing and the painting. Each part has a rigorous order that is followed once they are prepared and what gives added value to this artisan work.

The communication and dissemination of the project continues to be carried out through the social networks and website of EUFUNDEVIVO, and has also participated in different scientific activities, such as congresses, talks and workshops. In what corresponds to the congresses, it has participated in the IX Latin American Congress of Tourism Research (CLAIT) of Valdivia, in Chile, in order to show the project in a professional context and reference of the tourism industry in the American continent. Collaboration has been established with training and scientific dissemination activities of the Universities in the area, such as the "Cafés viaxeiros" of the University of A Coruña.

In the next actions to be carried out, research will continue on the functional evolution of the village and the ways of life of its inhabitants, focusing on the recent history of the sanctuary. There will also be the souvenir among the topics to be treated again, since these crafts coexist with a wide variety of products called "Made in China", lacking identity, authenticity and personality.

Finally, it would be of great interest to know first-hand the profile of visitors who come to San Andrés de Teixido, a necessary source to focus the tourist strategy of the town in the coming years. At a time when tourism projects are in full development, it is important to know through tourism intelligence as much data as possible and interpret them in the most efficient and effective way possible. Therefore, it is proposed to continue in this part of the project with the analysis of demand, from the creation of surveys in the place and network coordination of different points that allow obtaining information, such as tourist offices and accommodation on the Camino de San Andrés de Teixido.

METHODS

The methodology used throughout the project has been varied with the aim of obtaining valid results. It has been carried out from field work in the destination to the study of bibliographic and audiovisual sources. As well, we have tried and will try to maintain contact people and/or institutions linked to San Andrés de Teixido that can enrich the research with their contributions.

In the study of the different points dealt with so far and in those that are dealt with in the development of the thesis, we will try to actively incorporate elements or other aspects that help to understand and determine a valid final conclusion for the study.

CONCLUSIONS

At the current point of the research we can determine:

- San Andrés has a great tourist potential and there are many resources that are still intact although in danger of disappearing.
- Sustainable development in San Andrés depends on adequate public management, integrated with private companies and local population.
- Purposes established at the beginning of the research have been met, achieving greater results in some situations.
- The current research is developing on the destination the measures studied with to make the proposed ideas a reality.

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HOW TO ESTABLISH TRUST AND SATISFACTION AMONG BICYCLE TOURISTS AFTER THE PANDEMIC? A TEXT-MINING APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

This study uses a text-mining approach to analyze TripAdvisor comments from 1,782 reviews of the Top 100 popular bicycle tours and explore how to establish trust and satisfaction among bicycle tourists after the COVID-19 pandemic. Results suggest that tour guide is the most critical factor related to tourists' satisfaction, while negative experiences related to the service process can lead to low satisfaction. The study recommends training reliable and knowledgeable tour guides and improving the service process to establish trust and satisfaction among bicycle tourists.

Key Words: bicycle tourism, trust, text-mining, tour guide, online review

INTRODUCTION

Cycling is no longer just a means of transportation but a popular recreational activity (Chiu & Leng, 2017). This shift in public perception has prompted Dickinson and Robbins (2009) to suggest that tourist destinations should take advantage of this trend and develop it further as a tourism attraction. European countries like France, Denmark, and the United Kingdom have successfully done so by providing well-constructed facilities and relevant services to boost demand for bicycle tourism (Nilsson, 2019). However, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented severe risks to travelers participating in group bicycle tours. Cycling around the destination with strangers could increase the risk of exposure and infectious virus spread. As a result, fear has become an essential factor in changing people's behaviors amid COVID-19 (Kim, Yang, Min, & White, 2021). This study aims to explore whether the factors that contributed to tourists' satisfaction before COVID-19 remain relevant in the current situation and whether the pandemic has changed tourists' perceptions of risk and their overall experiences of bicycle tours. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to identify the most critical factors for establishing trust and satisfaction among bicycle tourists after the pandemic.

The study utilized text-mining techniques, specifically automated content analysis (ACA), to analyze online reviews and collect a large amount of data quickly and efficiently while minimizing the effects of researcher bias. This approach identified the most frequently mentioned themes and enabled the exploration of tourists' priorities and factors that contribute to their satisfaction. In addition, the study identified the key factors influencing tourists' satisfaction and dissatisfaction by comparing reviews from delighted customers (rating 4 or 5 stars) with those from dissatisfied customers (rating 1 or 2 stars). These findings provide valuable insights for developing relevant facilities and services to establish trust and satisfaction among bicycle tourists after the pandemic.

Text-mining techniques provide a means for researchers to quickly and efficiently collect data on a large scale, which can be especially useful in situations where face-to-face interactions are limited, such as during a pandemic. It provides a more comprehensive understanding of tourists' experiences and perceptions, which can help inform destination and service development (Cheng & Edwards, 2019; Lemon & Hayes, 2020). Moreover, it can provide valuable feedback for businesses, allowing them to identify areas where they need to improve their services and offerings. Overall, this study contributes to the literature on bicycle tourism by identifying the key factors contributing to tourists' satisfaction and dissatisfaction during and after the pandemic. This can inform destination and service development to establish trust and satisfaction among bicycle tourists.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Trust is a crucial factor that can significantly influence people's decision-making and behavior, particularly during uncertain and hazardous times (Hsieh, Chen, & Wang, 2021; Zloteanu, Harvey, Tuckett, & Livan, 2018). I In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, trust has become even more critical for service providers, such as restaurants,

hotels, and travel and tourism businesses. Establishing and maintaining trust has become essential for these service providers to survive and thrive in the current market. One way to establish trust is by implementing proactive measures to prevent the spread of the virus. Researchers found that customers have a more positive attitude toward a brand and will increase trust when restaurants implement mandatory masks and social distancing during the pandemic (Wei, Chen, & Lee, 2021). Similarly, hotels like Marriott and Hilton display messages containing protective measures on their websites and in CEO letters to show their commitment to protecting guests and employees (Hsieh et al., 2021). These proactive precautions and measures have been proven to reduce guests' concerns, fears, and perceived threats and increase their probability of staying in hotels amid COVID-19.

However, more than implementing preventive measures is required to establish trust. Communication is also essential in establishing and maintaining trust. Service providers must communicate their efforts and measures effectively to customers. Su et al. (2021) found that communicating preventive measures to customers is equally important as implementing them. Customers are more likely to trust and patronize brands that are transparent about their efforts and measures to prevent the spread of the virus. Transparency and communication effectiveness are critical factors in establishing customers' trust and increasing their use intentions during a public health crisis (Zheng, Luo, & Ritchie, 2021). Rybak, Johnson, and Burton (2021) also found that protective messages are critical in strengthening customers' positive attitudes and patronage intentions in dining-in and takeout situations. This strategy can also be applied to bicycle tour services that effectively communicate their efforts and measures to tourists and are more likely to increase their trust and patronage.

Existing research suggests that besides the impact of protective messages offered by business providers, individual risk-reduction behaviors and psychological states may significantly influence their usage intentions and purchase decisions for tourism services. Chen and Lu (2021) combined Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) and Usage Situation Theory (UST) to explain the passengers' protective behavior during ride-sharing in China. They found that various usage situations may trigger tourists' protection motivations, leading to compliance with security policies. PMT has been widely used to examine individuals' risk-reducing behaviors in different contexts, such as restaurants, hotels, and tourism, to explain how individuals are motivated to respond protectively to the threat of COVID-19 (Kim et al., 2021; C. Wei, H. Chen, & Y. M. Lee, 2021).

In contrast, UST explains how individuals use products or services based on various circumstances surrounding them (de la Fuente & Guillén, 2008). However, the mainstream literature has yet to fully explore the relationships among bicycle tourists' threat and coping appraisal, trust, perceived importance of protective messages, and their usage intentions or behavioral changes during or after a public health crisis. Furthermore, previous studies have not investigated how individuals' protective behaviors may change based on various situations during or after a crisis. This creates a significant gap in tourism and hospitality research as bicycle tours function differently from traditional business operations, and certain variables may be significantly neglected. It is crucial to conduct further research to explore such relationships and aid academics and practitioners in better understanding the bicycle tourists' decision-making process, particularly during the recovery of the global economy and tourism industry.

METHODS

Academia has long been involved in text analysis, traditionally done by manually examining texts to identify concepts and generate insights. However, this method can be time-consuming and inefficient, especially with large sample sizes. Thus, computer-assisted programs have been developed to aid scholars in performing content analysis through statistical algorithms that reveal hidden themes and concepts within a large body of text. Leximancer has become widely accepted among these programs, with recent applications in tourism studies (Lemon & Hayes, 2020).

Since tourists increasingly share their opinions about tourism products on social media platforms, and these online comments significantly influence potential customers, this study collected TripAdvisor comments to answer research questions. Specifically, WebHarvy, a web scraping tool, was utilized to gather review comments for the top 100 popular bicycle tours worldwide. A total of 1,782 reviews were collected from January 2020 to August 2022. Automated content analysis (ACA) was then conducted using Leximancer 5.0 to structure and explore the unstructured text data statistically and visually. The analysis follows a three-stage process. Firstly, the program identifies the main concepts and themes from the texts, creating a concept map by analyzing recurrently co-occurring words without researcher bias (Cheng & Edwards, 2019; Lemon & Hayes, 2020). This allows the

researcher to recognize the most frequently mentioned themes important to all tourists. Specifically, in the first stage, Leximancer identifies a hierarchical list of concepts based on frequency and co-concurrence of terms used by the reviewers and creates a thesaurus of synonyms for each concept. Themes are sorted based on repeated concepts that emerge together in the texts.
Secondly, a comparative analysis is conducted between highly-satisfied customers (rating 4 or 5 stars) and low-satisfied customers (rating 1 or 2 stars) to identify relevant elements and areas for improvement. A comparative approach is utilized to uncover differences in notions between the two data sources. Each concept is assessed, and its context is understood by connecting it back to the original online comments. Finally, in the third stage, the researcher interprets the results and verifies the output of the Leximancer software, acknowledging its inadequacy in apprehending hidden meanings or implied tones in human language (Chiu, Bae, & Won, 2017).

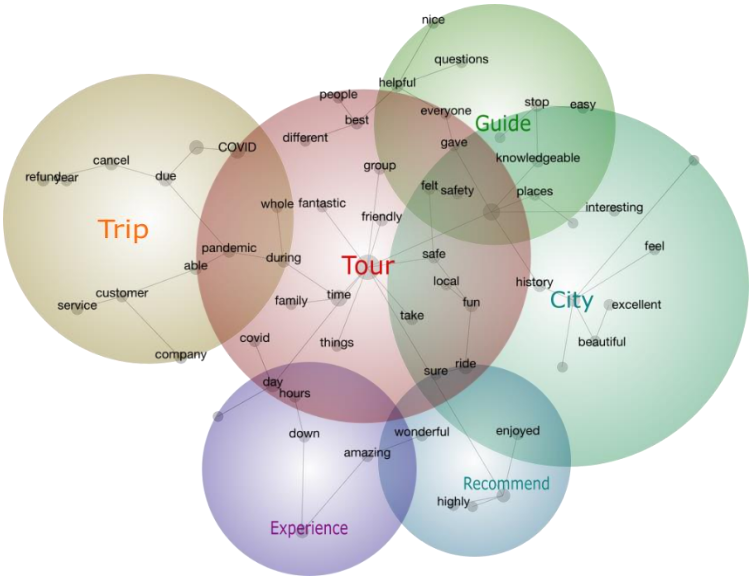
By utilizing automated content analysis with Leximancer, the research aims to provide comprehensive insights into tourists' experiences and perceptions of bicycle tour services during and after the pandemic. The results can aid in informing destination and service development and provide feedback for businesses to improve their services and offerings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Overview of the Online Comments

The results of the study provide valuable insights for bicycle tour companies seeking to build trust with their customers and prevent risks associated with the pandemic. Figure 1 illustrates the bicycle tourism experience after the pandemic outbreak. The study extracted six major themes from TripAdvisor's comments: tour, trip, guide, city, experience, and recommend. The most important theme is "tour," which includes concepts related to the attributes of a bicycle tour, such as safety, pandemic, family, locality, fun, and ride. The emphasis on safety within the "tour" theme indicates that customers are concerned about their health and well-being while on tour. Therefore, bicycle tour companies need to implement proactive measures to prevent the spread of the virus, such as mandatory masks and social distancing. For example, one reviewer from Charlotte, North Carolina, mentioned: "Really enjoyed the bike tour. It was a great way to see the city of Asheville, learn some history, and do a safe, fun social distanced activity!" Another Santa Cruz, California reviewer mentioned: "Love this tour! They are always friendly and helpful with trail suggestions, and during this crazy social distancing time, they have it figured out. Totally safe and clean. Enjoy the ride!"

Figure 1
Concept Map of Bicycle Tour Experiences During the COVID-19 Pandemic



The "guide" theme is a significant finding in tourists' comments, emphasizing the importance of having knowledgeable, kind, and helpful tour guides in building customers' trust. Good tour guides can enhance tourists' experience by providing valuable information about the tour, local culture, and history, making the tour more engaging. Additionally, tour guides can help tourists feel safe and secure during the tour, which is crucial in building trust between the tour company and customers. For example, one tourist from Washington DC made such comments:

We had a great time biking around the city of Lima with our trusty guide Joao. He is a university student who loves history, Peru, and engaging with new people. The bikes were comfortable and operated smoothly. Mostly flat, so there are no big pushes up hills. I would not want to attempt biking around Lima without a knowledgeable guide. There are a few crazy intersections and side roads that do not have bike lanes. Our guide knew the best way to navigate the back streets around Miraflores and Barranco. If you enjoy biking, this is the best way to take in the city of Lima.

Investing in training and developing high-quality tour guides should be a priority for bicycle tour companies. Providing tour guides with comprehensive training that includes information about the tour, local culture, history, and customer service skills can ensure they are knowledgeable, kind, and helpful. This strategy can increase customers' satisfaction and the likelihood of recommending the bicycle tour to others, which is vital for the business's success. Overall, this finding emphasizes the critical role that tour guides play in building customers' trust and loyalty to a bicycle tour company.

Additionally, the theme "trip" was identified as important, which contained concepts such as COVID, cancel, and service. This finding suggests that tourists are concerned about the risks associated with the pandemic and how the tour company addresses them. Thus, tour companies need to effectively communicate their efforts and measures to prevent the spread of the virus, building trust with their customers and increasing their willingness to book a tour. Furthermore, the prominence of the "city" theme, which contains concepts related to the location and cultural aspects of the tour, indicates that tourists are interested in experiencing the local culture and history. Tour companies need to develop tours that highlight the unique aspects of the city or region, enhancing the overall experience and providing added value to the customer. The theme "city" was also prominent, with concepts related to the location and cultural aspects of the tour, such as local, places, and history. The theme "experience" included concepts related to the overall enjoyment and satisfaction of the tour, such as amazing. Finally, the theme "recommend" was identified, with concepts related to the tourists' willingness to recommend the bicycle tour to others, such as enjoyed and wonderful.

The results indicate that tourists value not only the physical attributes of the bicycle tour, such as safety and fun, but also the soft aspects, such as the knowledge and helpfulness of the guides. The location and cultural aspects of the tour are also important, as well as the overall enjoyment and satisfaction of the experience. Tourists' willingness to recommend the bicycle tour to others is also essential, emphasizing the importance of delivering a high-quality and value-added service. These findings can inform bicycle tour companies in developing and improving their services to meet tourists' expectations and needs better. By building trust and implementing risk prevention measures, tour companies can provide a safe and enjoyable experience for their customers while differentiating themselves from their competitors in the market.

Comparative Analysis

Categorizing the comments into low and high satisfaction levels allowed for a more comprehensive analysis of the factors that lead to positive or negative comments and ratings. By excluding the neutral comments, the analysis focused on the factors that significantly impacted the tourists' experience. Specifically, comments with 1 to 2 stars are considered "low satisfaction," and 4 to 5 stars are considered "high satisfaction." The categorization resulted in 1,432 positive comments and 250 negative comments. Notably, most of the comments were positive, indicating that tourists are generally satisfied with the bicycle tour services offered on TripAdvisor. However, the negative comments should also be noticed as they provide valuable insights into the areas that need improvement.

Based on the analysis, "guide" was the most relevant theme identified by tourists with high satisfaction. This result highlights the critical role of tour guides in building customers' trust and satisfaction. Good tour guides can enhance tourists' experience by providing valuable information about the tour, local culture, and history, making the tour more exciting and engaging. They can also help tourists feel safe and secure during the tour, which is crucial in

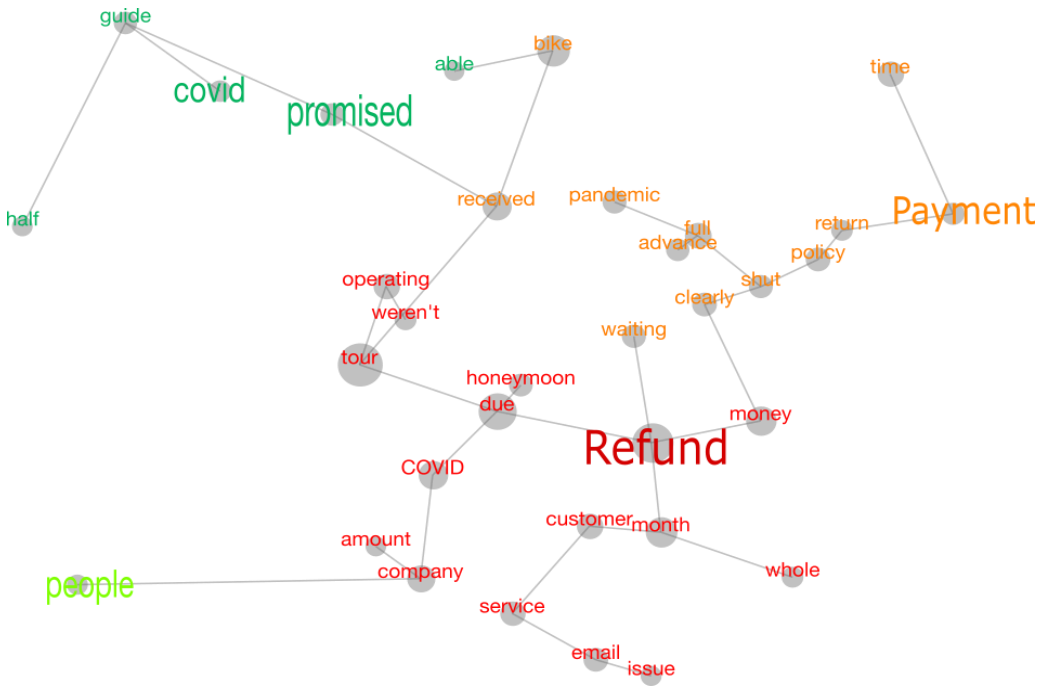
building trust between the tour company and the customers. Trust is a crucial element in the tourism industry, as customers are more likely to book services from companies they trust.

As presented in Figure 2, the negative comments that focused on the service process, such as "refund," "payment," "promised," and "people," indicate the importance of effective risk prevention measures in the bicycle tour industry. These comments reflect customers' dissatisfaction with the tour companies' refund policies and communication channels, which may lead to a loss of trust and reputation damage. For instance, one tourist from Birmingham, United Kingdom, mentioned:

The day before, I had gone on a boat tour and started feeling sick towards the end. The next morning, I woke up feeling worse and emailed the tour company to reschedule for the afternoon slot. However, I missed their response that the afternoon slot was starting earlier, and they were looking for me for 15 minutes before leaving without me. Although I did not use the bike, they refused to refund my payment. This experience highlights the importance of having a company with good customer service and a flexible cancellation policy, especially when unforeseen circumstances arise. Trust is essential in a successful tour company-customer relationship, and companies that prioritize customer satisfaction and understanding can build and maintain customer trust.

To prevent such situations, bicycle tour companies should establish clear and transparent refund policies regarding emergent situations related to COVID and ensure effective communication channels with their customers. This strategy can increase customers' trust in the company and willingness to book services, even during uncertain times like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 2
The Map of Dissatisfied Tourists' Experiences



In conclusion, the analysis of the TripAdvisor comments highlights the importance of trust-building and risk-prevention measures in the bicycle tour industry. Good tour guides are critical in building customers' trust and satisfaction. At the same time, effective risk prevention measures, such as clear refund policies and communication channels, can prevent reputation damage and loss of customers' trust. Therefore, investing in high-quality tour guides and establishing transparent risk prevention measures should be a priority for bicycle tour companies to ensure the success and sustainability of their business.

CONCLUSIONS

Tourists' trust and satisfaction are crucial for the success of bicycle tourism destinations and travel agencies. This research contributes significantly to understanding bicycle tourists' experiences and perceptions during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. By utilizing automated content analysis with Leximancer, the study provides comprehensive insights into the most important themes that emerged from the online comments of tourists who had taken bicycle tours. As shown in Figure 1, the "guide" theme was significant in tourists' comments, highlighting the importance of knowledgeable, kind, and helpful tour guides in building bicycle tourists' trust. The soft aspects of the bicycle tour service, such as the quality of the tour guides, are emphasized by tourists in their comments.

Investing in training and developing high-quality tour guides should be a priority for bicycle tour companies. Good tour guides can enhance tourists' experience by providing valuable information about the tour, local culture, and history, making the tour more interesting and engaging. They can also help tourists feel safe and secure during the tour, which is crucial in building trust between the tour company and the customers.

The research also sheds light on the factors that trigger tourists to leave positive or negative comments and ratings, focusing on the service process and the importance of accountability. This information is crucial for bicycle tour companies to improve their services and offerings, ultimately increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty. As presented in Figure 2, the service process should be more accountable to reduce the probability of triggering negative customer feelings. Customers are easily prone to leave undesirable comments when experiencing a tedious refund procedure, especially in situations when they need to cancel a trip because of uncontrollable reasons, such as lockdown policy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, bicycle tourism destinations and travel agencies should focus on developing high-quality tour guides and improving the service process to enhance tourists' trust and satisfaction. Future research can explore other factors related to tourists' trust establishment and satisfaction by using in-depth interviews to reveal more details and provide further insights into the industry.

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DO KEY DRIVERS OF TOURIST SATISFACTION CHANGE OVER TIME? AN ANALYSIS OF IMPACT-ASYMMETRY AND IMPACT-RANGE FOR CROATIAN SUMMER TOURISM IN 2010 AND 2019

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ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on Croatian summer tourism and seeks to analyze whether the key drivers of tourist satisfaction and dissatisfaction remained stable or changed over time. To achieve this objective, this study uses data from the official visitor survey in Croatia, i.e., the TOMAS survey of tourist attitudes and expenditures in 2010 and 2019. Impact-asymmetry analysis (IAA) and impact-range analysis (IRA) are used as the analytical framework. As the first study to conduct a comparative IAA for different periods, the present study seeks to assist Croatian national tourism marketing and development activities by analyzing whether any significant changes have occurred over a ten-year period. The study concludes with a discussion of key theoretical and managerial implications and points to possible future research directions.

Key Words: key drivers; tourist satisfaction; Croatia; impact-asymmetry; impact-range.

INTRODUCTION

The present study focuses on Croatian summer tourism and seeks to analyze whether key drivers of tourist satisfaction and dissatisfaction remained stable or changed over time. To achieve this objective, this study uses data from the official visitor survey in Croatia, i.e., the TOMAS survey of tourist attitudes and expenditures in 2010 and 2019. Impact-asymmetry analysis (IAA) and impact-range analysis (IRA) are used as the analytical framework. This approach focuses on detecting possible asymmetric relationships between attribute-level performance and overall tourist satisfaction, on the one hand, and identifying the most determinant destination attributes in explaining the tourists' satisfaction, on the other hand. Within this context, as the first study to conduct a comparative IAA for different periods, the present study seeks to assist Croatian national tourism marketing and development activities by analyzing whether any significant changes have occurred over a ten-year period. The study concludes with a discussion of key theoretical and managerial implications and points to possible future research directions.

IMPACT-ASYMMETRY AND IMPACT-RANGE ANALYSIS

The asymmetry of impact on customer/tourist satisfaction is expressed in the nonlinear relationship between the level of performance of product/service/destination features and the overall global satisfaction of product/service users. According to Kano's model (Kano et al., 1984) and the theory of the multifactor structure of customer satisfaction (Füller & Matzler, 2008), the impact of individual product/service/destination features does not necessarily have to be linear, and individual features may have greater potential to create dissatisfaction than satisfaction (dissatisfiers), and vice versa (satisfiers).

Such asymmetries can be detected using impact-asymmetry analysis (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2008), which is based on penalty-reward contrast analysis according to Brandt (1987). The aim of the analysis is to quantify the asymmetry of the impact of one variable on another. To date, IAA has been used in several tourism- and non-tourism-research settings, like, e.g. shopping tourism (Lee & Choi, 2019), online travel agencies (Ye, Fu, & Law, 2016), upscale hotels (Lai & Hitchcock, 2017), hotel entertainment programs (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2011), hotel brand equity (Šerić, Mikulić, & Gil-Saura, 2018), casino attributes (Lai, Yang, & Hitchcock, 2020), hiking tourism (Oh et al., 2019), gastronomic tourism (Pratt, Suntikul, & Agyeiwaah, 2020), exhibitions (Wong, & Lai, 2018), food attributes (Back, 2012), extranet attributes (Caber, Albayrak, & Loiacono, 2013), neighbourhood attributes (Cao et al., 2020), communication consistency (Šerić & Mikulić, 2020), or transportation services (Wu, Cao, & Ding, 2020).

The analysis consists of three basic steps. In the first step, data is collected using a survey questionnaire. Respondents evaluate the performance/satisfaction of individual features and rate their satisfaction with the provided service on, e.g. Likert scale or direct rating scales. In the second step, the obtained ratings are binary-coded to create two sets of dummy variables. The first set is created by coding only the lowest ratings as 1 (e.g. 1, or 1 and 2 on a seven-point scale) and all other ratings as 0 (e.g. 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7). The second set is created by coding only the highest ratings as 1 (e.g. 7) and all other ratings as 0 (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6). These two sets of dummy variables are then used in regression analysis as independent variables, and the dependent variable is the variable of interest, i.e., the overall satisfaction of customers/tourists. For each analyzed feature, the analysis results in two regression coefficients, where the first coefficient represents the quantification of the 'penalty' in the case of a very low performance level, and the second coefficient represents the 'reward' in the case of a very high performance level. The degree of impact asymmetry (impact asymmetry index) can easily be calculated by creating the total of the (negative) penalty score and the (positive) reward score. Depending on the degree of impact asymmetry, the analyzed features can be divided into the following three categories:

$$\text{dissatisfiers: } -1 \leq \text{impact-asymmetry index} < -0.1$$
$$\text{hybrid (or linear factors): } -0.1 \leq \text{impact-asymmetry index} \leq 0.1$$
$$\text{satisfiers: } 0.1 < \text{impact-asymmetry index} \leq 1$$

In addition, by totalling the absolute value of the penalty score and the reward score, one obtains an indicator of the range of impact on overall satisfaction (RIOS) for each feature (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2008). In combination with the scores of impact asymmetry, these can be plotted into a two-dimensional matrix to facilitate easier identification of features/attributes of lower or greater impact on overall satisfaction, on the one hand, as well as features/attributes of lower or greater potential to create dissatisfaction or satisfaction.

DATA

This article utilized data from two surveys, i.e., the TOMAS 2010 Summer survey and the TOMAS 2019 Croatia survey, which are part of a longitudinal survey-based study that examines the attitudes and expenses of tourists who stay at coastal destinations in Croatia (2010 survey) and the whole of Croatia (2019 survey). To ensure the comparability of results for these two time periods, this article uses only part of the 2019 survey data, which applies to the coastal part of Croatia, using the same methodology as the 2010 survey.

The Institute for Tourism in Zagreb conducted the studies on behalf of the Croatian Ministry of Tourism (2010 survey) and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (2019 survey). The survey methodology is based on the TOMAS framework, originally developed by Mazanec and Schmidhauser in 1985 to monitor changes in tourist behaviour through national guest surveys (known as the Swiss Touristic Market Intelligence System). The survey questionnaire, which is available in 12 languages, is highly structured, and the survey method used is personal interviewing. The fieldwork for the TOMAS 2010 Summer and 2019 TOMAS 2019 Croatia surveys was carried out by specialized market research agencies whose interviewers received pre-survey training.

The dataset used in this study is only a portion of the total data collected. Specifically, this study focuses on how tourists perceive the performance of Croatian destination attributes. Perceived performance was evaluated on five-point direct rating scales (ranging from 1=very poor to 5=excellent) in the 2010 survey and on seven-point direct rating scales (ranging from 1=very poor to 7=excellent) in the 2019 survey.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The samples were selected using a stratified random sampling technique based on the tourists' country of origin, type of tourist accommodation, and county visited. The sample of the 2010 survey consisted of 4,973 participants who stayed in Croatian seaside counties during the peak tourism season (June to September). The sample was divided among the 85 Croatian coastal destinations with the highest number of recorded tourist stays in the previous season. The sample of the 2019 survey consisted of 5521 respondents (from the same counties, June to September).

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

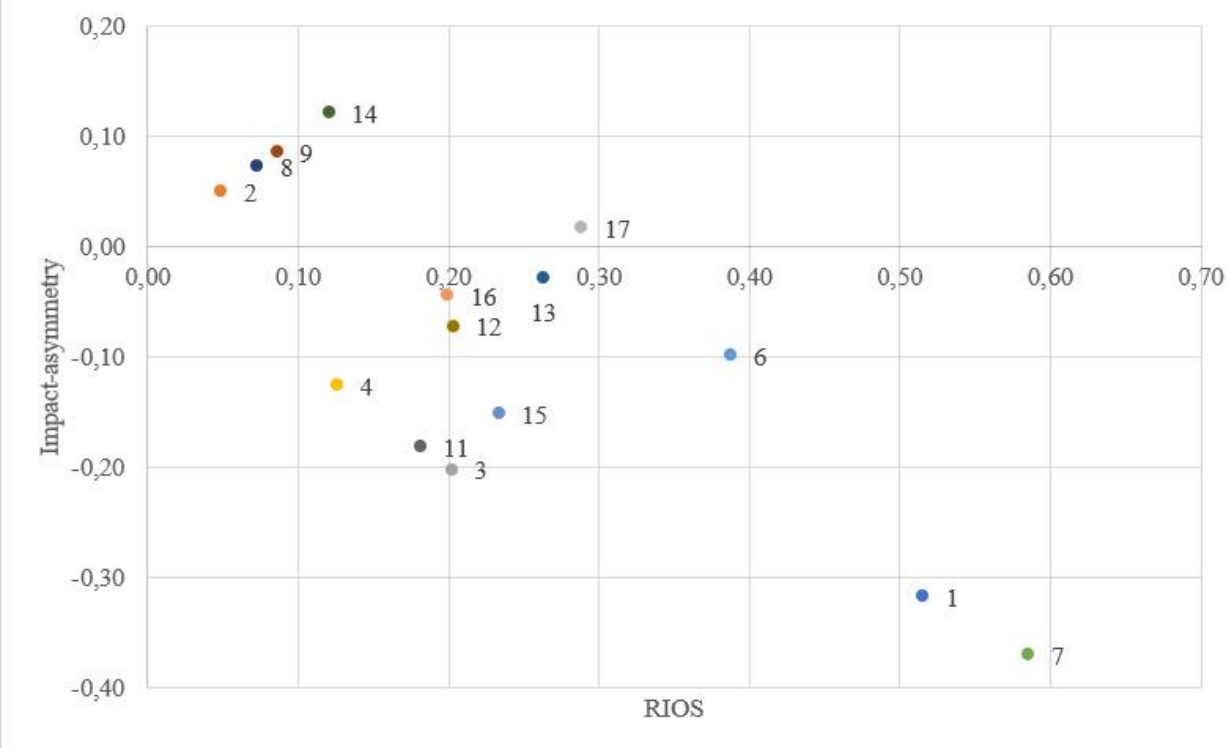
The IAA and IRA results based on the 2010 study are presented in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1
Impact-asymmetry and impact-range analysis results – 2010 study

	2010 Study	**Penalty score**		**Reward score**		**IA**	**RIOS**	**Class**
		B	**Sig.**	**B**	**Sig.**			
1	Beauty of nature and scenery	-0.416	0.001	0.099	0.000	-0.317	0.516	dissatisfier
2	Picturesqueness of the place	-0.018	0.847	0.049	0.066	*0.049*	0.049	hybrid
3	Ecological preservation	-0.202	0.006	0.042	0.129	*-0.202*	0.202	dissatisfier
4	Transport accessibility	-0.126	0.061	0.021	0.403	*-0.126*	0.126	dissatisfier
5	Public transportation quality	0.005	0.879	-0.030	0.302	n.s.	n.s.	indifferent
6	Friendliness of locals	-0.244	0.000	0.144	0.000	-0.099	0.388	hybrid
7	Accommodation quality	-0.478	0.000	0.108	0.000	-0.370	0.586	dissatisfier
8	Tidiness of beaches	-0.052	0.452	0.073	0.004	*0.073*	0.073	hybrid
9	Equipment of beaches	-0.057	0.319	0.086	0.002	*0.086*	0.086	hybrid
10	Marking landmarks	0.058	0.321	-0.008	0.798	n.s.	n.s.	indifferent
11	Information quality in the destination	-0.181	0.006	0.029	0.244	*-0.181*	0.181	dissatisfier
12	Cultural offerings	-0.138	0.026	0.065	0.031	-0.072	0.203	hybrid
13	Nightlife	-0.146	0.004	0.117	0.000	-0.028	0.263	hybrid
14	Gastronomy	-0.038	0.617	0.121	0.000	*0.121*	0.121	satisfier
15	Sports activities	-0.193	0.001	0.041	0.164	-0.152	0.233	dissatisfier
16	Excursion possibilities	-0.122	0.055	0.078	0.009	-0.044	0.200	hybrid
17	Shopping possibilities	-0.136	0.002	0.153	0.000	0.018	0.289	hybrid

Notes: Penalty (p) and reward (r) scores are unstandardized regression coefficients; IA=p+r; RIOS=$\left|p\right|$+r; R^2=0.561.

Figure 1
Impact-asymmetry and impact-range analysis results – 2019 study



Based on the analysis of the 2010 data, six attributes were classified as dissatisfiers, eight as hybrid attributes, only one as a satisfier (i.e. 14-Gastronomy), and two as indifferent attributes (16-Excursion and 17-Shopping possibilities). Moreover, two attributes could be classified as high-impact attributes according to their RIOS scores (RIOS>0.4; 7-Accommodation quality; 1-Beauty of nature and scenery), six as medium-impact attributes (0.2≤RIOS≤0.4; 3, 6, 12, 13, 15, 17), and seven as lower-impact attributes (RIOS<0.2; attributes 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 14, 16).

The IAA and IRA results based on the 2019 study are presented in Table 2 and Figure 2.

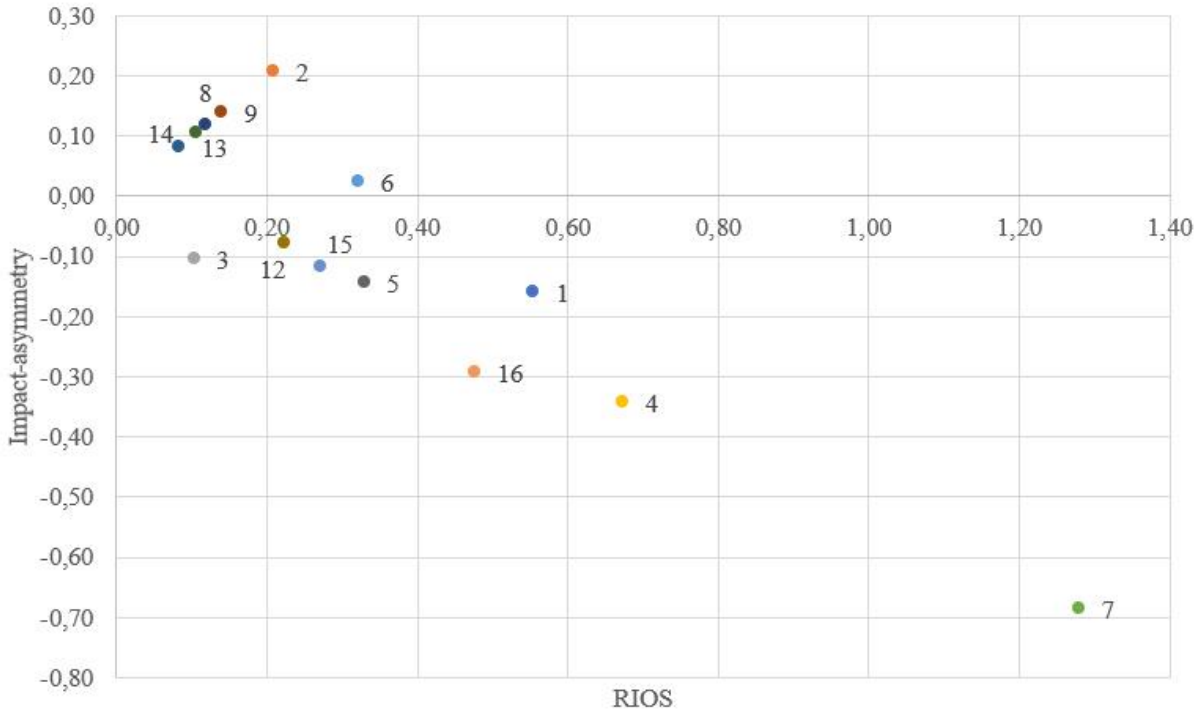
Table 2
Impact-asymmetry and impact-range analysis results – 2019 study

2019 Study		**Penalty score**		**Reward score**		**IA**	**RIOS**	**Class**
		B	**Sig.**	**B**	**Sig.**			
1	Beauty of nature and scenery	-0.357	0.192	0.198	0.000	-0.159	0.554	dissatisfier
2	Picturesqueness of the place	-0.107	0.066	0.316	0.000	0.209	0.209	satisfier
3	Ecological preservation	-0.103	0.024	0.000	0.993	*-0.103*	0.103	dissatisfier
4	Transport accessibility	-0.508	0.000	0.165	0.000	-0.342	0.673	dissatisfier
5	Public transportation quality	-0.236	0.002	0.093	0.021	-0.143	0.329	dissatisfier
6	Friendliness of locals	-0.049	0.042	0.173	0.000	0.024	0.321	hybrid
7	Accommodation quality	-0.982	0.000	0.297	0.000	-0.685	1.279	dissatisfier
8	Tidiness of beaches	-0.004	0.978	0.118	0.008	*0.118*	0.118	satisfier
9	Equipment of beaches	-0.058	0.688	0.140	0.001	*0.140*	0.140	satisfier

10	Marking landmarks	-0.118	0.440	0.046	0.309	n.s.	n.s.	indifferent
11	Information quality in the destination	-0.176	0.291	0.067	0.141	n.s.	n.s.	indifferent
12	Cultural offerings	-0.150	0.189	0.073	0.085	-0.077	0.223	hybrid
13	Nightlife	-0.032	0.758	0.083	0.043	*0.083*	0.083	hybrid
14	Gastronomy	-0.013	0.934	0.106	0.021	*0.106*	0.106	satisfier
15	Sports activities	-0.193	0.055	0.077	0.063	-0.116	0.271	dissatisfier
16	Excursion possibilities	-0.384	0.009	0.092	0.029	-0.291	0.476	dissatisfier
17	Shopping possibilities	-0.006	0.956	-0.027	0.494	n.s.	n.s.	indifferent

Notes: Penalty (p) and reward (r) scores are unstandardized regression coefficients; IA=p+r; RIOS=$\left|p\right|$+r; R^2=0.548.

Figure 2
Impact-asymmetry and impact-range analysis results – 2019 study



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The analysis of the 2019 data reveals the following picture. Seven attributes were classified as dissatisfiers (one more than 2010), three as hybrid attributes (five less than 2010), four as satisfiers (three more than 2010), and three as indifferent attributes (one more than 2010). Ten out of 17 attributes were classified the same according to the three-factor theory (attributes 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, and 15), with two more attributes which fell close to the classification threshold between satisfiers and hybrids (attributes 8 and 9).

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The temporal robustness of attribute classifications is considerably high given the ten years period. A possible interpretation of this result is that expectations levels among Croatian summer tourists have not significantly changed regarding these attributes.

Conversely, the IAA also indicates that expectations-levels have somewhat changed for the attributes with changed classifications. On the one hand, expectation levels seem to have risen regarding the quality of public transportation services (attribute 5) and excursion possibilities (16), which are both classified as dissatisfiers in 2019, whereas they were indifferent and hybrid attributes, respectively, in 2010. Both changes could be explained by an increased desire for a more active vacation over the last decade. On the other hand, the Information quality in the destination (attribute 11) changed from a dissatisfier to an insignificant (indifferent) attribute, which could be explained by the increased ease and quality of accessing relevant and needed information directly via smartphones, which makes external information sources increasingly irrelevant. A similar trend also seems to apply to the shopping possibilities in the destination, where indifference might result from the proliferation of online shopping over the last ten years, thus turning shopping possibilities abroad into an increasingly less influential destination attribute.

The RIOS scores are not directly comparable because different scales were used in the two surveys (5-point rating scales in 2010 and 7-point scales in 2019). However, one can analyze the attributes' relative positionings. Accordingly, among the highest-impact attributes, attribute 7 remained the most influential attribute (Accommodation quality) and was the by far most influential attribute. Attribute 1 (Beauty of nature and scenery), which had a similar RIOS score as attribute 7 in 2010, is now the third most influential attribute, whereas Transport accessibility (attribute 4) increased in impact and was the second most influential attribute in 2019.
In terms of theoretical implications, the present study is the first to provide empirical evidence for substantial temporal robustness of attribute classifications according to the three-factor theory of customer satisfaction. Moreover, this result indicates the high reliability of the IAA and IRA analysis frameworks for attribute classifications, as they were performed using two independent samples over a ten-years time window.

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THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY IN TOURISM: AN EXPERIENCESCAPE SIGHT

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ABSTRACT

Service researchers have emphasized the importance of analyzing service experiences, encompassing multiple service encounters. Although studies of service encounters have increased, the scope of research in this area remains narrow. Service research has traditionally concentrated on understanding, measuring, and optimizing core service delivery. We present a framework to guide comprehensive service experience research on tourism. Broadly, we define the relationship between the pre-core, core, and post-core service encounters and the interaction between experience-scape and memorability. Finally, we argue that researchers must simultaneously consider all service-experience periods to make valuable contributions to the literature.

Key Words: customer journey, value co-creation, service encounters, experiencescape

INTRODUCTION

Despite growing interest in customer journeys within the service marketing literature, a gap remains in evaluating service brand awareness within customer journey conceptualizations and measurements (Fuller et al., 2023). Customer journey analysis primarily focuses on interactions with various touchpoints to enhance the customer experience (Bolton et al., 2018). However, the limited focus has been placed on formalizing the methodology for examining customer journeys (Halvorsrud et al., 2016), with the literature largely neglecting the affective, cognitive, emotional, relational, and behavioral dimensions of experience in the pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages (Kranzbühler et al., 2018).

In the digital landscape, analyzing touchpoints during customers' journeys and their interactions at different purchase stages is crucial for companies aiming to create and deliver enhanced customer experiences (Bolton et al., 2018). Scholars have called for more empirical research on customer journeys (Jaakkola et al., 2015), and existing pre-Internet decision-making models have remained mostly unquestioned in digital marketing discourse (Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2014, p. 317). Marketing scholars generally conceptualize the customer journey in three high-level stages: pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016), grounded in market or business strategy theory (Grewal & Roggeveen, 2020).

Effective customer experience management is crucial in industries such as hospitality and tourism. The tourism experience journey is a holistic, multiphase customer journey encompassing various interconnected emotional processes from pre-to on-site and post-travel (Knobloch et al., 2017). Emerging technologies shape customer interactions with organizations and engagement with different actors (Ponsignon et al., 2015), reconfiguring existing touchpoints and creating new ones (Rangaswamy et al., 2020). Researchers emphasize the importance of facilitating communication across the customer journey to manage expectations, ensure service quality and satisfaction, and prevent service gaps and failures (Følstad & Kvale, 2018).

This study contributes to the service management literature by integrating Service Experience (SE) characteristics with different purchase stages (pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase) of the customer journey, as developed by Lemon and Verhoef (2016), offering a fresh perspective on SE's role of SEs in value co-creation processes (Zhang et al., 2018) within service industries, such as tourism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of Service Experience in Tourism

Customer satisfaction in tourism is linked to performance attributes, service experience, or both (Alegre and Garau, 2011). Tourism value co-creation is centered on use value, focusing on the value attributes of products or services during consumption (Helkkula et al., 2012). Tourism functions as a dynamic service-experience network, providing various stakeholders with opportunities to participate in value creation (Binkhorst et al., 2009). Physical design is critical in creating an atmosphere, a crucial aspect of the service experience (Haber & Reichel, 2007). Employee-customer interactions are essential in tourism, impacting customer perceptions and service quality (Grönroos, 2011).

Service experience, tourists' subjective personal reactions, and feelings when using a service significantly influence their evaluations and satisfaction (Chen & Ritchie, 1996; Chen & Chen, 2010). Each service experience within a destination affects the image of the tourism destination and overall perceived service quality (Mariani et al., 2013). Success in the hospitality marketplace typically occurs when the service experience exceeds customer expectations (Dong & Siu, 2013). Understanding the experience of service co-creation is vital for comprehending value co-creation (Vargo and Lusch, 2016).

The Customer Journey in Tourism Services

The tourism customer journey (TCJ) maps a tourist's entire journey, outlining all stages experienced during travel for tourism purposes (Astrøm, 2020; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). TCJ is relevant to individual companies and encompasses activities during the journey (Thees et al., 2020). Tourism experiences are accumulations of sequential customer journey phases, including the pre-, during-, and post-purchase stages (Kim et al., 2012).

Internet and digital technologies have significantly impacted the customer journey, revolutionizing how travelers gain inspiration, books, plans, and travel experiences (Neuhofer et al., 2012). Successful customer journey experiences in tourism require learning from customers, fostering intensive interactions, and acknowledging the subjective yet essential nature of the value derived from these experiences (Yachin, 2018). Research on customer experiences can adopt both processes- and outcome-based perspectives, connecting various touchpoints within the customer journey to achieve positive outcomes such as satisfaction, loyalty, and enhanced well-being (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Kim, Ritchie & McCormick, 2012).

Components of Service Experience: Pre-Core, Core, and Post-Core Service Encounters

Pre-Visit Stage (Pre-Core Stage)

Travel motivation, often driven by advertisements or shared experiences (Zhang, 2020), prompts prospective travelers to gather information through online sources and peer communication (Weigert, 2018). Decision-making regarding flights, accommodations, and guided tours is influenced by peer recommendations and online research (Hwang et al., 2013). Travelers may opt for shared accommodation over traditional lodging facilities (Zhang et al., 2018), engaging in pre-visit co-creation by contacting agencies for additional information or personalized packages (Laesser et al., 2019).

The emergence of digital technologies, including websites and social media, has transformed e-commerce into social commerce (Rezaei et al., 2021; Liberato et al., 2018), prompting businesses to develop platforms for customer-company interactions (Vo et al., 2019). Website design significantly impacts electronic service quality (Al-Khayyal et al., 2020) and is crucial in attracting customers and fostering satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty (Vo, Chovancova, & Tri, 2019).

The increasing use of Web 2.0 and social platforms has revolutionized business operations (Mahadin et al., 2020) and provides new opportunities for interaction and electronic content generation (Meilatinova, 2021). Individuals use digital tools for decision-making, communication, and evaluation during travel experiences (Liberato et al., 2018). Consumers employ mobile social media, applications, and websites to research products and services (Rezaei et al., 2021) and engage in value co-creation through numerous online platforms, acting as co-creators of value or experiences throughout the delivery process (Tesshusa, 2020).

Value Co-Creation (Core Stage)

Limited research exists on customers' attitudes toward websites and their behavioral intentions for co-creation experiences in electronic contexts (Liberato et al., 2018). Technology plays a vital role in co-creating experiences

(Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2012), as tourists increasingly rely on online and mobile technologies for information gathering and decision-making (Sthapit et al., 2020). Customers are considered value co-creators within the service-dominant logic (S-D Logic) framework (Lusch, Vargo, & Wessels, 2008). Grönroos (2011) posited that service providers can co-create value with customers under specific conditions, resulting in loyal relationships.

Value co-creation has been explored in various domains (Ruiz-Alba et al., 2019) and has gained attention as a concept that describes multiparty relationships (Ranjan & Read, 2016). In tourism literature, co-creation is viewed as a journey that provides value through an experiential environment that encourages customer interaction and personalization (Kallmuenzer et al., 2020). Travelers create value by engaging with others via social media (Tesshusa, 2020), and successful co-creation increases market share and profitability (Rezaei et al., 2021). The shift towards servitization, offering solutions combining products, services, support, and knowledge, represents a value co-creation process (Ruiz-Alba et al., 2019).

Greer et al. (2015) define value co-creation as customer participation during an exchange. Technological advancements have affected potential research areas in value co-creation (Femenia-Serra et al., 2018). Co-creation and information availability influence satisfaction with websites for accommodation and bookings, affecting continuance use intention (Sthapit et al., 2020). Scholars recommend a stakeholder-focused approach to studying motivation, ethics, and legitimacy in co-creation (Metz et al., 2019), emphasizing the importance of relationship quality and loyalty. Customers create value through word-of-mouth (WOM) and social platforms (Kallmuenzer et al., 2020).

Customer Citizenship Behavior (Post-Visit Stage)

Customer citizenship behavior (CCB) is characterized as voluntary and discretionary actions that are not mandated for successful service production or delivery yet contribute to the overall service organization (Groth, 2005). Tourist citizenship behavior, a related concept, refers to autonomous altruistic behaviors tourists exhibit (Arica & Çorbaci, 2020), often displayed through post-travel feedback activities (Laesser et al., 2019). Such behaviors are regarded as co-creation efforts when travelers engage directly with service providers or contribute to other potential travelers' decision-making processes (Zhang et al., 2018).

CCB benefits firms, customers, and other consumers considerably, enhancing organizational performance through improved relationships among service encounter participants (Yi, Nataraajan, & Gong, 2011). It also adds value to customers by fostering a sense of belonging and usefulness and facilitating social interactions with other customers. Furthermore, respectful treatment of employees and assistance to staff and fellow consumers, without expecting direct rewards, contribute to overall CCB (Van Doorn et al., 2010).

Although various studies have examined the antecedents of tourist citizenship behaviors (Shafiee et al., 2020), many have overlooked the differences in CCB across industries, limiting the applicability of the findings to tourism activity (Liu et al., 2021). Tourist citizenship behavior includes tourist- and destination-oriented citizenship behaviors (Torres-Moraga et al., 2021).

Customers' willingness to co-create is primarily dependent on "customer participation behavior," a required behavior for successful value co-creation, whereas "customer citizenship behavior" is voluntary behavior that provides extraordinary value to the firm but is not essential for value co-creation (Groth, 2005). Few studies consider CCB a possible outcome (Yang, Tang, Cai & Guo, 2023).

The Role of Experiencescape

The intangible nature of service encounters in the tourism and hospitality industries has led to increased emphasis on experience creation (Kandampully et al., 2022). Experiencescape, derived from Bitner's (1992) "servicescape," is a strategic tool for designing and managing customer experiences, incorporating sensory, functional, social, natural, and cultural stimuli (Pizam & Tasci, 2019). This concept transcends the physical environment and encapsulates consumption within a physically and socially themed environment (Mossberg, 2007).

Experiencescape facilitates proactive interactions between supply and demand, with customers determining consumption and value creation (Chen, Suntikul, & King, 2020). Customized experiences generate value and are associated with revisit intention and memorability (Hallmann et al., 2020). Effective experiencescape management

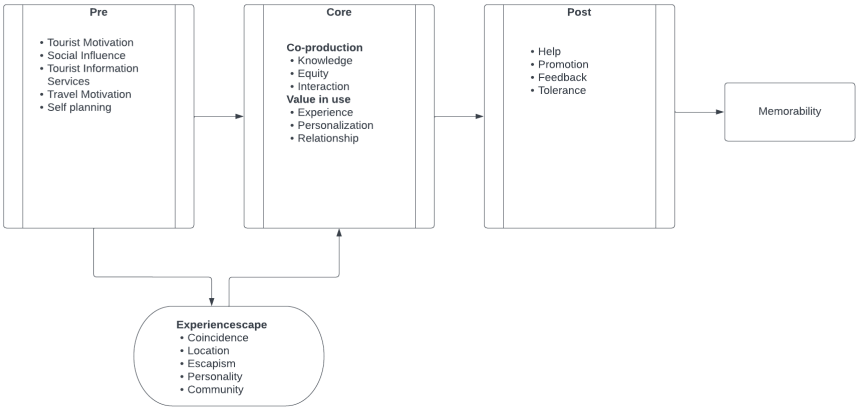
influences customers' memories and emotional responses (Pizam & Tasci, 2019) and acknowledges the importance of consumer resources such as skills and expectations in understanding experiences (Lindberg & Østergaard, 2015).

Memorability in the tourism service experience

Memorability, a critical tourism component, refers to an individual's ability to retain and recall information (Saket et al., 2016) and is considered an outcome of tourist journeys (Sthapit et al., 2020). Various factors contribute to memorable experiences, including environment, affective feelings, product quality, ambiance, and cultural background (Li et al., 2022). Memorability is linked to co-creation and can influence future consumption and travel choices (Campos et al., 2017). Tourism seeks to enhance memorability as a distinct economic value proposition, resulting in good behavioral intentions (Loureiro, 2014).

Figure 1 presents the graphical conceptual framework from which the following hypotheses were derived: H1: Pre-core service encounters positively impact value co-creation (core); H2: Value co-creation (core) positively impacts the post-core service encounter; H3: Experiencescape mediates the relationship between pre-core and value co-creation (core); H4: Experiencescape positively impacts value co-creation (core); and H5: Post-core service encounter positively impacts memorability.

Figure 1 – Conceptual Framework



METHODOLOGY

This study employed a survey to gather data from 145 tourists in Puerto Rico. An online questionnaire administered in Spanish was developed to capture the respondents' opinions and insights. The survey was distributed to a convenience sample of tourists. The collected responses were subsequently analyzed using the SPSS and Smart PLS software.

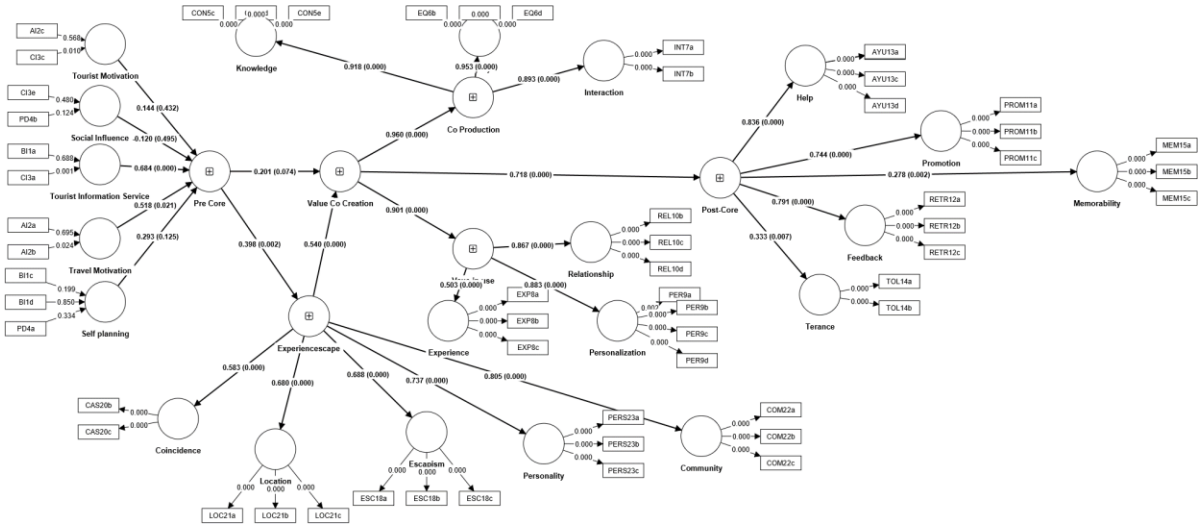
RESULTS

Data analysis was conducted using PLS-SEM, suitable for small sample sizes and complex models. The outer model evaluation assessed the relationships between the constructs and their indicators, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted. Reflectively measured constructs displayed reliability and validity, with composite reliability ranging from 0.805 to 0.948 and average variance extracted from 0.518 to 0.852. Discriminant validity was established using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio. Collinearity concerns were addressed using variance inflation factor (VIF) metrics.

The results of the structural model, depicted in Figure 1, were evaluated to assess the outer model (Hair et al., 2017). This evaluation involved an examination of the relationships between the constructs and their indicators, as well as the reliability estimates (see Figure 2). The findings indicate that all the reflectively measured constructs were

reliable and valid. Therefore, the results support using PLS-SEM as an appropriate analytical method for our research model.

Figure 2 – Structural Model



Bootstrapping was employed to assess the significance and relevance of the path coefficients, revealing that most structural model relationships were significant. The mediation analysis demonstrated that CRM capabilities mediated the relationship between marketing and sales collaboration and CRM performance. Finally, the model's in-sample and out-of-sample predictive powers were evaluated using PLSpredict, yielding Q2 values above zero, indicating predictive relevance.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight the crucial role of pre-core activities in influencing value co-creation (core) within the customer journey. Furthermore, the results indicate that experiencescape mediates the relationship between pre-core activities and value co-creation (core). The value co-creation process subsequently impacts post-core activities, which, in turn, affect memorability. These results have significant implications for tourism.

From a tourism perspective, this study emphasizes the importance of engaging customers in pre-core activities to enhance value co-creation during their experiences. By creating a compelling and immersive experience, tourism providers can foster a positive relationship between pre-core activities and value co-creation, ultimately improving the post-core outcomes. The increased memorability resulting from this chain of events can positively impact customer loyalty, word-of-mouth recommendations, and overall satisfaction.

Tourism stakeholders should consider these findings when designing and implementing strategies to optimize the customer journey and create memorable experiences that contribute to long-term business success. Tourism providers should focus on designing captivating pre-core activities and experiential elements that facilitate value co-creation while ensuring a seamless transition to post-core activities that consolidate memorable experiences.

This study contributes to the existing literature on value co-creation and customer journeys within the tourism industry, providing a deeper understanding of the interrelationships between the pre-core, core, and post-core stages. Further studies could explore the applicability of these findings in different tourism contexts or examine the specific components of experiences that are most effective in mediating the relationship between pre-core activities and value co-creation.

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"HEAVEN AND PEOPLE IN ONE" DINING EXPERIENCE: THE EFFECT OF FOOD SEASONALITY ON VISIT INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of seasonality of menu design on customers' travel intention via well-being and emotion, followed by the Chinese and Japanese concepts of food and medicine from the same source. The research adopts a mixed-method approach to design experiment stimuli and analyses survey data. The result adds to the knowledge of well-being studies and the application of Asian philosophy in hospitality studies. Furthermore, this study shows the possibilities of promoting a destination by enhancing the well-being of locals and visitors' dining experience, which echoes the tenet of the "law of nature" in Asian philosophy. It also advocates more intimate collaboration between restaurant sectors, destinations, and related industries.

Key Words: Dining Experience, Food Seasonality, Well-being, Emotion, Menu Design, Travel Intention

INTRODUCTION

Ancient Asian philosophy always emphasises harmony between nature and humans, that humans shall be a part of nature. In recent decades, tourism study has discussed sustainability and well-being concepts well. Food always plays a vital role in the destination as a kind of resource and attraction that generate experience for visitors. For instance, food image is vital in influencing the destination choice of tourists (Chatterjee & Suklabaidya, 2020; Gupta & Duggal, 2021).

Inspired by human and natural harmony, this study examines the influence of food seasonality, such as the incorporation of seasonal food and visual stimuli in menu design related to seasonality, on tourists' behaviour intention.

The findings help the integration of the primary industry (e.g. agriculture and fishery), the secondary industry of food production and the tertiary industry of restaurant sectors, tourism destinations and related service industries further collaborate and develop their destination marketing by promoting more authenticity and sustainability, caring about the well-being of locals and visitors' dining experience, and sustainably using local food resources by following the real world of natural law.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of conforming with seasonality in food consumption

This study was inspired by the ancient Asian nature-related philosophies that match some of the modern well-being concepts discussed.

"*The heaven and people in one* (天人合一)" are a Chinese concept that emphasises the harmony between humans and nature. This concept and its variants can be easily found in ancient Chinese philosophies. For instance, the idea

of "*bu shi bu shi* (不时不食)" raised by the Chinese sage Confucius means that the harmony between humans and nature can be demonstrated through the habit of consuming fresh and seasonal food, believing such practice benefits human well-being (Ni,2017). UNESCO listed "Washoku", a traditional type of cuisine in Japan, on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2013, highlighting the importance of respecting diverse and fresh ingredients with nutritional balance and the expression of nature's beauty (UNESCO, 2013). In the Western literature, there are two definitions of seasonality in food consumption, which are global seasonality and local seasonality (Macdiarmid, 2013). Global seasonality refers to the in-season production of food ingredients, while local seasonality denotes both in-season food production and consumption. The principles in *"bu shi bu shi"* share many similarities with the Western understanding of local seasonality in food consumption. Hence, in this paper, the seasonality of food is understood as the in-season consumption of locally produced in-seasonal food in the same climatic zone.

The impact of seasonal food consumption on well-being

According to Fu and Lin (2022) and the World Health Organization (2021), human well-being involves objective and subjective aspects. Objective well-being is measurable, such as physical health, while subjective well-being is more personal, involving psychological, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being (Pesonen & Komppula, 2010; Diener, 2000). Asian philosophy including "*Ishokudōgen* (medical, edible food and medicine from the same root.)", "*Huangdi Neijing*" and "*The Confucian Analects*" advocate individuals to achieve a healthy lifestyle by acting accordingly to natural law. For example, Japanese philosophy emphasises the importance of seasonal food for its peak flavour and higher nutritional value, while Chinese philosophy emphasises the negative health impact of going against nature (Nakamura, 2022; Imura, 2020). Block et al. (2011) suggest food is key to overall well-being. Similarly, Mora et al. (2020) discovered that food influences physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being. On the one hand, seasonal food is perceived as healthier and contains more nutrients than out-of-season food (Wallnoefer et al., 2021). On the other hand, Ares et al. (2014) found that words related to food well-being include health, quietness, happiness, peace, pleasure, and comfort. Diners prefer less stressful dining experiences, which aligns with psychological well-being (Björk & Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2016). Meigs (1987) shared that eating food that strongly bonds to the different seasons spiritually connects one to mother nature. To conclude, the above literature and philosophies demonstrated the interconnectedness between climate and the natural environment, humans' dietary habits, and well-being. Therefore, it is hypothesised that eating seasonal food improves human well-being.

Hypothesis 1a: Food seasonality influences consumers' perceived well-being.

The impact of seasonal food consumption on emotion

Köster & Mojet's (2015) research focused on the link between human emotions and food. Their findings suggest that mood affects food choices. For instance, people with eating disorders overeat to reduce anxiety. Moreover, consuming food relating to specific memories may evoke the same emotions felt in the past. Spence's (2017) research highlighted that comfort food contains fatty acids which help alleviate negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, and depression. Heine (1998) noted that natural seasonal changes are associated with human emotions such as joy and sadness. Therefore, both seasonal changes and food consumption are associated with human emotions. It is hypothesised that consuming seasonal food can influence human emotions.

Hypothesis 1b: Food seasonality influences consumers' perceived emotions.

The impact of well-being on emotion

The relationship between well-being and emotions is well-established, especially regarding subjective well-being. Emotional well-being is a crucial component of this connection that positively supports the effect of physical health. Subjective well-being involves more personal own perceptions. For example, life satisfaction is commonly measured by the emotion of happiness and depression (Diener, 2009). Moreover, benefiting from the positive feedback loop between physical health and mental health, some studies support that healthier people may perceive better positive emotions due to physical health, which can contribute to better mental health and emotional well-being by improving mood (Steinmo et al., 2014).

Based on it, it is probable that perceived overall well-being influences emotions.

Hypothesis 2a: The perceived well-being affects the emotion of consumers.

The impact of well-being, emotion, and seasonality on intention to visit.
Perceived well-being can influence people's behavioural intentions. Lin (2014) and Kim et. Al. (2015) found that psychological and subjective well-being influence tourists' revisit intentions. These studies assume a positive relationship between customer subjective well-being and visit intention. Furthermore, Lin (2014) found that the food experience related to health influences psychological well-being and visiting intention. Another study also highlighted the fact that health is one of the reasons that motivated consumers to consume local food, and these customers have a higher intention to travel to taste the local food (Gurbaskan Akyuz, 2019).
Thus, it is hypothesised that perceived well-being resulting from seasonal food consumption affects the visiting intention of consumers.

Hypothesis 2b: The perceived well-being affects the visiting intention of consumers.

Fredrickson and Brangian's broaden-and-build theory (2005) supports the relationship between emotion and behavioural consequences. Studies by Nawijn and Fricke (2015) and Han et al. (2009) showed that visitors' emotions predict intention to revisit. In particular, Han et al. (2009) found that customer satisfaction mediates the effect of food consumption emotions on revisit intention. Thus, it is hypothesised that consumer emotions influence visiting intention.

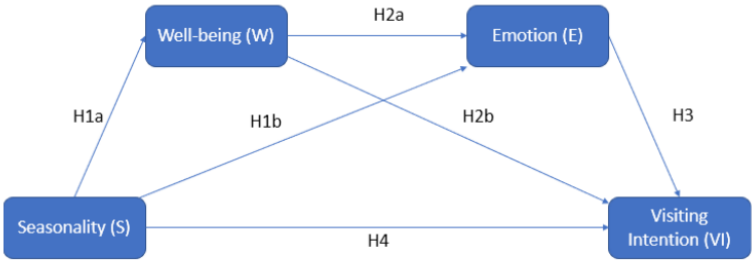
Hypothesis 3: The emotion of the consumer influences their visiting intention.

Tourists' intention to travel could be explained by their different motivations (Jang et al., 2009). Elements relating to seasonal changes could be regarded as one travel motivation (Sæþórsdóttir el. al., 2019; Zehrer & Siller, 2007). Tourists are motivated to visit specific destinations owing to their food culture or particular seasonal food only available in a typical season. For example, some fruit tourism destinations are mainly attractive to tourists during harvest season when the primary product is fruit. However, fewer tourists are during the out-of-season due to the absence of a seasonal product to serve as the main attraction (Kurniawan & Abidin, 2020).
Based on previous discussions, seasonal food consumption is hypothesised to influence visiting intention.

Hypothesis 4: Seasonal food consumption influences visiting intention.

Proposed model
Based on the discussion and hypotheses listed above, the conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 mainly focuses on how the mediating effect of visitors' well-being and emotion influences the relationship between seasonality and travel intention. That proposed that the visiting intention is influenced by seasonality, tourists' perceived well-being and emotion.
This model suggests that the presence of a seasonality element would, directly and indirectly, influence the tourist visit intention through the perceived well-being and emotion toward their intention to visit.

Figure 1 - The conceptual framework of this study



METHODOLOGY

This research used a mixed method, using content analysis and experimental study. First, interview and content analysis were conducted to generate the stimuli before an experimental approach to a survey with a scenario set to analyse further the data collected from the survey.

Study 1

Study 1 (menu analysis) worked on developing experimental stimuli by conducting content analysis. Some hotels were selected to perform the bottom-up approach content analysis because they are with restaurant service, and the researcher can access the menu item. Luborsky (1994) mentioned that inductive content analysis helps to discover the pattern and categories within data built upon the researcher's observation. Therefore, the researcher searched online and checked the restaurant's menu in the Hot Spring Hotel in Japan to see the main elements on their menu or the page shared by the restaurant about the menu in Japanese cuisine covering both "Washoku" and "Yōshoku", which is a type of Japanese cuisine style influenced by Western cooking method originated during the Meiji Restoration, furthermore, by interviewing travellers to seek how their expectations and experience interacted with menu items when they travelled overseas.

The result found that three elements commonly present on the menu are seasonality, using local food ingredients, and using calligraphy font on the menu. A total of 100 menus were used in the content analysis to reach the saturation point; more information was needed. The most common is mentioning seasonal food ingredients; the second is mention of the local food ingredient used, especially for the hotel located in a relatively rural prefecture, it emphasises the local ingredients; Third, this is common on the "Washoku" menu with a picture or PDF format they will provide the Japanese/Kanji calligraphy-like font style on the menu.

Based on the result of the content analysis, the researcher designed the experiment menu by consolidating the information gathered from the content analysis and selecting some worldwide seasonal food ingredients matched with the setup.

Based on the Seasonality element (present or absent the information), two sets of menus are created for different studies given that the "Yōshoku" style menu is used since the pattern is a universal format and allows a space to put the translated work on the menu in a better presentation. To avoid bias from any existing destination, the researchers created a fictional tourist destination called Delishima Island. It provided information on different made-up locations with relatively universally known seasonal ingredients on the menu of an experimental scenario. A further pilot study was conducted to verify the manipulations and realism of the experimental stimulus.

Study 2

Study 2 assessed the realism of the experimental scenario (map), the authenticity, the manipulation of the experimental stimuli (menu), and the measurement scale's validity and reliability.
Before the online survey, a pilot study was conducted to make proper amendments to the questionnaire (Feng, Liu, & Li, 2022; Peng, Yang, Fu, & Huan, 2023; Su et al., 2018; Yasami, Promsivapallop, & Kannaovakun, 2020).

Formal experiment

After two pilot studies, a formal experiment with data collection using Mturk and Qualtrics set up an online survey to obtain a reliable reply from the platform that this approach targets designed populations at a reasonable cost and in a reasonable time frame. Since various scholars epidemically accept MTurk as a reliable online platform for data collection in an experimental study (Wu, Shen, Fan, & Mattila, 2017). The targeted sample for quantitative data collection was around 200 of the population. The questionnaires used English to target the interviewee to receive more worldwide responses, with filtering questions set by asking participants if they have any travel experience and if they travelled for food. In this research, the participant who answered both yes will be directly participating in the duty and reflect on the result to ensure participants with specific knowledge of the scenario of the experimental design (Wu, Shen, Fan, & Mattila, 2017). Furthermore, questions for attention check and manipulation check were included to screen out the less reliable participants and check the effectiveness of the manipulation in an experimental design for the Formal experiment to test seasonality (present vs absent) with two groups between-subject design.

The study was designed to examine the mediate the effect the well-being of visitors influences the relationship between seasonality, emotion, and travel intention. A one-factor between-subject experiment with two-level, the presence of seasonality elements on the menu or absence of seasonality elements on the menu, was conducted.

For the stimuli, a map introducing the destination "Delishima" was developed for this study and used as a scenario with two sets of menus in Japanese and English were designed to be used as stimuli. Before the participants read the menu, background information about the participants is now travelling in "Delishima Island" by introducing the place and resources of the place to the participants. The attention check was provided as the screen-out questions at this stage. By then, in the section of the menu presentation, the menu was manipulated by presenting some seasonal elements such as the graphic decoration, slogan related to the season, and small passage introducing the seasonal ingredient, which the set control menu was without this manipulation.
Study participants were assigned randomly to one of the two menu sets. They were told they were now in the restaurant during their vacation in "Delishima Island", and then the menu was displayed to the participants. After reading the menu, the participants were asked to complete a questionnaire with manipulation check and post-experiment questions.

Methods of data analysis
Based on the data collected from the online survey used for the study, followed by the Smart PLS4 and SPSS analysis on Hayes PROCESS Model 6 for checking the serial mediation (Hayes, 2012). Based on the data collected will process the hypothesis testing to link analysis to theory (Seakhoa-King, 2022).

RESULT

Demographic profile
A total of 225 questionnaires were collected, with 112 successfully passing the attention check. A total of 100 valid responses were collected after filtering the outliers. Among the respondents, 50 are from the experimental group, and 50 are from the control group. The sample had the male to female ratio of 44/56, more than half of respondents were in the age group of 21-30 (52%), and it shows the majority of respondents were well educated, with over 86% having bachelor's degrees or above and 22% with the graduate or professional degree. The high education level and relatively young age responses were collected, maybe due to the location of data collection being online and the questionnaire being only available in English. Most of the respondents were working a full-time job (94%), and the salary range mainly dropped the range $50,000 - $99,999. 100% of the respondents travel oversea once a year. More than 80% of the respondents travelled oversea with a pattern twice or above per year, suggesting the sample could represent the traveller population.

Hypothesis testing
The ANOVA was used to compare the perception, response, and emotion between the menu with the experiment and control design. The independent variable in the ANOVA was the menu design, with the food seasonality design as the experiment group and without the food seasonality design as the control group. The five dependent variables are perceptions of well-being, visiting intention and emotion.
The ANOVA result shows a significant difference in perceptions, perceived value, and response in Table 1.
The result, supported by a p-value less than 0.05, shows a significant positive relationship between perceived well-being, visiting intention and emotion ($p<0.01$) between the menu design with and without the seasonal element.

Table 1 Summary of the effects of the presence of food seasonality design on the menu

Variables	Mean (Without Seasonal element)		Mean (With Seasonal element)			F	p
Wellbeing	5.44		5.81			5.505	0.021**
Visiting Intention	5.20		5.71			8.350	0.005***
Emotion	5.43		5.88			7.853	0.006***
Total Effect (Seasonality -> Visiting intention)	Direct Effect (Seasonality -> Visiting intention)	Relationship	Indirect Effect	95% Confidence Interval		t	Conclusion
				Boot Lower	Boot Upper		
0.5040 (.0047) ***	0.1059 (.2403) n.s.p	H1: Seasonality – Well-being – Visiting Intention	.2759	.0553	.5339	2.2286**	Full Mediation
		H2: Seasonality – Emotion – Visiting Intention	.1222	.0122	.2894	1.75*	Full Mediation in 90% confidence level

Note: ***p< 0.01; **p< 0.05; *p< 0.1;n.s.p≥0.1.
**The t-value is greater than 1.96 to reject the null hypothesis with a level of significance of 0.05.
*The t-value is greater than 1.645 to reject the null hypothesis with a level of significance of 0.1.
Analysis was conducted to check the serial mediation between the presence of food seasonality design on the menu, well-being, emotion and visiting intention.

Table 2 The summary path between the presence of food seasonality design on the menu, well-being, emotion and visiting intension.

Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Seasonality -> Wellbeing	0.412	0.412	0.164	2.51	0.012**
Wellbeing -> Emotion	0.755	0.759	0.07	10.717	0***
Emotion -> Visiting Intention	0.819	0.808	0.106	7.726	0***

Note: ***p< 0.01; **p< 0.05;*p< 0.1;n.s.p≥0.1.

By using Smart PLS4, the data between paths were shown, providing that it is significant on the path between the presence of food seasonality design on the menu and consumer's perceived wellbeing (p=0.012>0.05), between consumer's perceived wellbeing to emotion (p=0.000) and between consumer's emotion to their travel intention (p=0.000).
To further understand the relationship between mediators and if there is any serial mediation effect in between, used Hayes Process Macro Mediation Analysis Model 6 for checking the relationship by examining the mediators on the relationship between the dependent and independent variable, which a serial mediation hypothesises a causal chain linking of mediators which variable is continuous. (Hayes, 2012).

Table 3 The final summary of the interrelationship of the effects of the presence of a seasonal item

	Variables	Coefficient (b-weight)	Standard Error (b-weight coefficient)	t-value	p-value	lower level of confidence interval	upper level of confidence interval
a1	Seasonality-Wellbeing	.3767	.1605	2.3463	.0210**	.0581	.6952
a2	Seasonality-Emotion	.1774	.1146	1.5488	.1247n.s.p	-.0499	.4048
b1	Wellbeing-Visiting Intention	.7324	.0786	9.3225	.0000***	.5765	.8884
b2	Emotion-Visiting Intention	.2714	.0785	3.4587	.0008***	.1156	.4271
c’	Seasonality-Visiting Intention	.1059	.0896	1.1817	.2403 n.s.p	-.0720	.2838
d	Well-being-Emotion	.7249	.0701	10.3353	.0000***	.5857	.8641

Note: ***p< 0.01; **p< 0.05; *p< 0.1; n.s.p≥0.1.

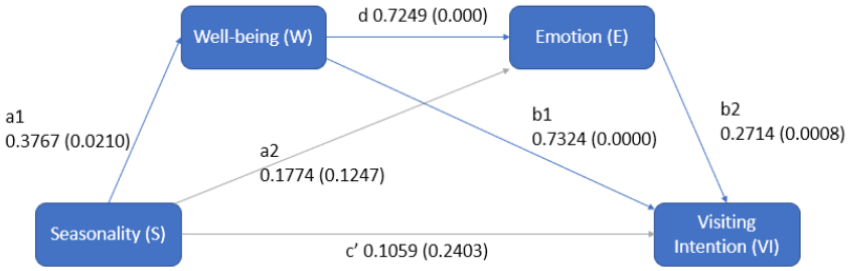


Fig. 2. The result after the Model 6 Analysis

Using Process Model 6, with different variables shown in Table 3 and Figure 2, the visiting intention is the dependent variable. The presence of food seasonality design on the menu is the independent variable; perceived well-being and emotion are mediating variables. The presence of food seasonality design significantly impacts well-being (b=0.3767, t=2.3463, p=0.0210< 0.05). The perceived well-being significantly affects visiting intention (b=.7324, t=9.3225, p=0.0000<0.01). Emotion significantly impacts travel intention (b=0.2714, t=3.4587, p=0.0008<0.01). Moreover, perceived well-being significantly affects emotion (b=0.7429, t=10.3353, p=0.0000<0.01). However, the food seasonality design does not significantly impact the travel intention (b=0.1059, t=1.1817, p=0.2403>0.1). The presence of food seasonality design does not significantly impact emotion (b=0.1774, t=1.5488, p=0.1247>0.1), and there is no sign of a direct effect between the presence of food seasonality design and emotion.

This study assessed the mediating role of well-being and emotion on the relationship between the presence of food seasonality design on the menu and visiting intention presented in Table 4. The result revealed a signification indirect impact of seasonality on visiting intention through well-being (b=0.2759) and an impact of seasonality on visiting intention through well-being and emotion (b=0.0820) statistically significant that supporting there is a medication role of well-being on the relationship between the presence of food seasonality design on the menu and visiting intension with the level of significance of 0.05. However, it cannot support that the indirect effect is significate through emotion with a significance level of 0.05, while it can be supported with a level of 0.1.

Table 4 Access the indirect effect after Model 6 Analysis

	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI	Significant
Total Effect of Seasonality on Visiting Intention	0.5040	0.1744	0.1579	0.8501	Yes
Direct Effect (s) of Seasonality on Visiting Intention	0.1059	0.0896	-.0720	.2838	No
Indirect Effect (s) of Seasonality on Visiting Intention	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	Significant
TOTAL	.3981	.1617	.0997	.7261	Yes
Seasonality -> Wellbeing -> Visiting Intention	.2759	.1294	.0416	.5526	Yes
Seasonality -> Emotion -> Visiting Intention	.0481	.0385	-.0082	.1392	No
Seasonality -> Wellbeing -> Emotion -> Visiting Intention	.0820	.0486	.0032	.1938	Yes

With the final check, bootstrapping 5000 subsamples were used to confirm the results. Refer to table 5 shows that the path from seasonality to well-being(0.012), well-being and emotion(0.000), well-being to visiting intention(0.000), and emotion to visiting intention(0.012) are significant, given that there is full mediation between the presence of food seasonality design and visiting intention though perceived well-being.

Table 5 The summary path in between the presence of food seasonality design on the menu, well-being, emotion and visiting intention after Model 6 Analysis

Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Seasonality -> Wellbeing	0.407	0.410	0.161	2.530	0.012**
Wellbeing -> Emotion	0.746	0.748	0.070	10.674	0.000***
Wellbeing -> Visiting Intention	0.728	0.735	0.093	7.807	0.000***
Emotion -> Visiting Intention	0.292	0.276	0.116	2.514	0.012**

Note: ***p< 0.01; **p< 0.05; *p< 0.1; n.s.p≥0.1.

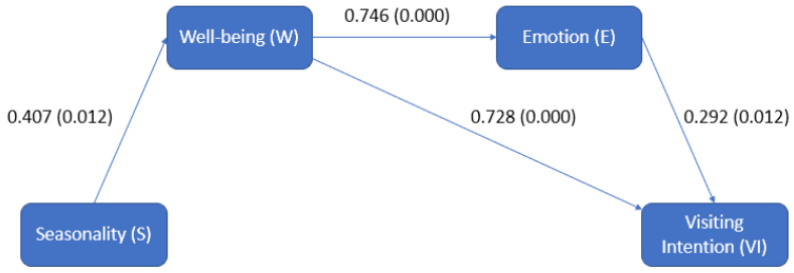


Fig. 3. The final result

Thus, based on the statistically significant shown in Figure 3, it can show that the visiting intention is affected by perceived well-being and emotion. Furthermore, the findings show that food seasonality design on the menu enhances perceived well-being, which translates into positive emotion and visiting intention (Yu et al., 2022).

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this study, one experiment was conducted via an online survey platform to investigate the effect of using the presence of the food seasonality design on the menu. Findings suggest that food seasonality demonstrates on the menu design positively affects consumers' well-being and the intention to visit the place of origin as the destination. The design presence with food seasonality increases the consumers' positive perceived well-being and emotions,

eventually increasing the destination's visiting intention. This study indicates that using a food seasonality on the menu promotes the destination at the restaurant in the destination to attract consumers to revisit.

This study draws the following findings. First, the food seasonality design on the menu will positively influence consumer perception of well-being. Second, the perceived well-being and emotion sequentially mediated the relationship between the food seasonality design on the menu and consumer intention to visit. Third, perceived well-being was more significant in mediating the effect between the seasonality design on the menu and the intention to visit. These support the point of view from previous studies.

The theoretical contributions of this study are particularly significant in the context of the well-being trend in the hospitality and tourism industry. By linking ancient Asian philosophy with modern well-being discussions, this study provides a valuable theoretical framework for businesses to understand how to promote human and natural harmony through their offerings. The philosophy of human and natural harmony has long been emphasised in ancient Asian cultures. This study highlights how these ideas are relevant in the context of the well-being trend. The study's focus on subjective, physical and spiritual well-being is also essential in the context of the well-being trend. This includes life satisfaction, positive emotions, and meaningful relationships, all critical elements of the well-being experiences that businesses need to prioritise.

The practical implications of this study suggest that businesses in the hospitality and tourism sector can leverage seasonality design on menus to enhance customers' well-being and encourage repeat visits. Seasonal designs can include using fresh, locally sourced ingredients that reflect the season or incorporating seasonal themes in the presentation of dishes. By doing so, customers may perceive the restaurant as providing a more holistic dining experience that aligns with their desire for natural and seasonal harmony.

In addition, the study highlights the importance of perceived well-being in shaping customers' intentions that would spread positive word of mouth about the local seasonal food and the destination. This finding suggests that businesses should prioritise providing positive emotional experiences that align with customers' values and desires for well-being. For instance, companies can incorporate elements that promote relaxation, comfort, or emotional connections following nature, such as providing seasonal local food as the main product while promoting local food. In summary, this study's theoretical and practical contributions highlight the importance of understanding human and natural harmony and well-being in the context of the well-being trend in the hospitality and tourism industry. By incorporating these elements into their offerings effectively, businesses can enhance their customers' well-being experiences and contribute to the overall well-being of their customers.

This study has a few limitations that can improve in future studies. Firstly, the seasonality design for this time is mainly focused on the interpretation of food ingredients and used Autumn as the experiment scenario. In contrast, the seasonality design shall have a different element to influence humans' feelings about the seasonality design. Hence, further study could determine what element would impact consumer perception of seasonal design. Secondly, not only would the seasonality factor influence the food item, but in the future, the food from local and non-local shall test if the use of local and non-local food ingredients would influence the visiting intention of the consumer. Furthermore, this study only explored seasonality, well-being, and emotion towards visiting intention. In comparison, many factors may influence people's decision to visit the destination. Finally, the emotions and concept of the well-being of consumers are constantly changing, especially on well-being is an idea that keeps expanding in recent decades, considered in future research, well-being could be broken down differently for further study to see how the dining experience would influence types of well-being to induce some of the impacts.

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BEERSCAPE, HOSPITALITY, AND CRAFT BEERS IN BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

The craft beer market grows steadily around the world, and the study of unique characteristics of breweries becomes relevant. The beerscape, also known as beer panorama, is a recent area of studies in the brewery environment that covers several definitions, and this article seeks to synthesize them. The main objective of this qualitative and exploratory work was to list the main definitions of beerscape that can be adapted to the hospitality inherent to breweries. The relationships between place and beer are inseparable and supported by the context in which they are inserted.

Key Words: Hospitality. Craft beer. Beerscape.

INTRODUCTION

Beer has been consumed by humans for millennia in various forms, including barley malt beer, rice beer (sake), cassava beer (cauim), among others. Often used as a substitute for water due to the boiling process making it safe to drink, beer has played various roles throughout history, such as an important source of nutrients, a social lubricant in celebrations and religious rituals, and numerous other cultural, social, and economic roles. Craft beer, according to Cottone (1986), is produced in a small brewery using traditional methods and specific quality ingredients to produce a handmade, uncompromising beer that is typically consumed in the local market.

The craft beer market is growing rapidly around the world, even during the COVID-19 epidemic, in contrast to mainstream beer consumption (common, mass-produced beers), which decreases by about 1 to 1.5% per year. In Brazil, the sector has grown from 40 craft breweries in 2000 to 1383 in 2021 (MAPA, 2021). Similar growth has been observed around the world in different cultures, such as China (Hao, Chen, & Su, 2005; Amorim, 2017) and Africa (Rogerson, 2015; Oliver, 2011). Notably, countries with traditions in other beverages, such as Japan (Knoth, & Borrit, 2017), France (O'Brien, 2018; Ansart, 2017), and Italy (Esposti, Fastigi, & Viganò, 2017; Fastigi, & Cavanaugh, 2017) have also seen significant growth in the craft beer market.

The offering of beer necessarily involves a service in beer-related environments. The service, described as an ephemeral and immaterial activity offered from one party to another, is a process that generates changes and creates benefits for customers, physical goods, and intangible assets. The provision of services in the beer industry is closely related to customer behavior and experience (Hemmington, 2007), creating a connection to hospitality - described as the relationship between a host and a guest, based on rules, rituals, and laws. The rapid advance of craft beer around the world has leveraged local identities, reconfigured tourist geographies, and transformed the beer landscape from a global industry at all scales - even artisanal (Reid & Gatrell, 2017).

Among the ways to study brands or tourism, the suffix *-scape* has been constantly used in scientific literature to support different approaches to analysis (Chen, Suntikul, & King, 2019). Various subfields of study relate to their respective objects of study: *brandscape* (study of the range of brands in the market), *experiencescape* (study of the

context of various tourism or service experiences), *servicescape* (according to Bitner (1992), the physical environment in which services occur, for both customers and employees), *soundscape, technoscape, winescape*, etc. Among these, a term related to the beer market has emerged: *beerscape*. Closely related to *winescape* (Quintal, Thomas, & Phau, 2015), the term used definitions that were adapted to the beer environment. Due to the novelty of the subject, some authors have attempted to define it, creating a range of interpretations. The aim of this article is to gather existing definitions of *beerscape*, relating them to the field of study of craft beers.

RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVE

The concepts of *experiencescape* and *servicescape* have already been widely used in the world scientific literature. On the other hand, the use of the concept of *beerscape* is still in its early stages, with no scientific work found in the national literature until the end of June 2021. The main manuscripts found were in foreign literature (Talpos, 2016; Carr, 2017; Carr, Shin, & Severt, 2019; Tomisic, 2020, etc., summarized in Table 1), analyzed later in the "Discussion" section. The search was carried out in the Scopus, Scielo, and Web of Science databases, and duplicated references were excluded at the end. The words used were "*beerscape*," "*beer servicescape*," "*cerveja*," "*cerveja artesanal*," "*beer*," "*craft beer*," "*cerveza*," and "*cerveza artesanal*," in June 2021, resulting in 11 articles. The languages used in the search were Portuguese, Spanish, and English, with results only found in the latter. Through the prior selection of study type and biases criteria, methodological rigor was ensured through the systematic and standardized research approach. The purpose of this work was to list the different definitions of the topic in the world literature, under the theoretical umbrella of hospitality.

This qualitative and exploratory article used systematic literature review as a tool. Specifically, methodological review was used, as the focus was on how the object of *beerscape* was studied, and not the results of the study. This documentary research was based on the following research problem: which models of beerscape are adaptable to the hospitality existing in Brazilian beer establishments? Thus, the main objective of the work was to list the main definitions of *beerscape* that are adaptable to the inherent hospitality of Brazilian beer establishments. The steps to achieve the proposed objective were: to list the different definitions of beerscape, relating it to the inherent hospitality of Brazilian beer establishments; analyze aspects of hospitality and commensality present in the beer movement; verify the possible connections between the different definitions of *beerscape* and the hospitable characteristics of national beer establishments; in summary, the secondary objectives. The agglomeration of the conceptualizations of the term *beerscape* aims, ultimately, to assist the market on the different existing approaches, allowing a macro view of the concept.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Hospitality

Hospitality is based on the relationship between two people, in the form of a host and a guest (Camargo, 2003; Lashley & Morrison, 2000; Selwyn, 2000) and under rules, rites, and laws. Hospitality cannot be described solely from a commercial, economic, and industrial reductionist perspective (Brotherton & Wood, 2000), given the complexity of the field of study - a theoretical umbrella under which various fields can be analyzed, such as Economics, Social Sciences, Tourism, Management, Human Resources, Psychology, among others. The contemporary multidisciplinary approach has, as one of its origins, the works of Lashley and Morrison (2000), especially regarding the Venn diagram of the dimensions of hospitality: private, social, and commercial. This model has evolved into a more robust theoretical framework, the lenses of hospitality, which encompass more areas of knowledge and application (Lashley, Lynch & Morrison, 2007). Other diverse applications are presented in Montandon (2011a), in addition to a series of other relevant authors in the hospitality field (Cassee, 1983; Camargo, 2004; Lynch et al., 2011; Bell, 2012; Lugosi, 2014).

Hospitality materializes with the offer of food, beverages, and/or accommodation (Montanari, 1996; Brotherton & Wood, 2000; Carneiro, 2003; Poulain, 2004; Boutaud, 2011; Contreras, & Gracia, 2011; Fischler, 2011; Montandon, 2011b; Giacoman, 2016). The division of food and beverages, in particular, creates community (Gotman, 2000) - the beginning of commensality, that is, the egalitarian division of food and beverages, also governed by rules, rites, and laws (Fischler, 2011; Giacoman, 2016). In the academic environment, the commercial implications of this hospitality approach were one of the incipient study themes (Hemmington, 2007), generating a theoretical conflict between the commercial aspects of food and commensality. The distinction between the characteristic of hospitable people - Telfer's *hospitableness* (1995) - and the economic focus of business was the subject of some authors' work, such as

Pine and Gilmore (1998, 1999). The experience economy, according to the authors, is a distinct form of economic production, different from mere goods or services. In this way, the concepts of commensality can be inserted into the commercial aspect of business, in the form of better experiences offered - among them, the psychological connection of brands with customers.

Brands

Globally, brands produce heterogeneity in local cultures, thanks to the variety of local meanings (Ger & Belk, 1996; Miller, 1998). The meanings of brands permeate consumers' imaginations. They tend to sacralize consumer objects in order to create transcendence in their lives (Belk, Wallendorf, & Sherry, 1989). Underlying this sacralization is the search for authentic and differentiated consumer experiences (Thompson, 2006) from consumers tired of mass-produced and pre-formulated experiences. As competition creates numerous possibilities, companies seek emotional connection, indispensability, and long-term relationships with customers (Wheeler, 2013).

The formulation of a brand seeks to meet consumers' imaginations, as it involves emotions and narratives (Arthur & Fage, 2017). The effort to create a brand must be aligned with the organizational processes of companies, which assist in delivering promises aligned with consumer desires (Ghodeswar, 2008). The results of this alignment are greater customer satisfaction, less price sensitivity, lower customer churn (greater loyalty), more market citations (especially digital), and greater customer return, among others (Knapp, 2000).

Several brand-building models have been developed. Among these, some stand out, such as the PCDL (Ghodeswar, 2008): brand positioning (*positioning*), communication of the brand message (*communicating*), delivery of brand performance (*delivering*), and driving brand value (*leveraging*). Kayaman and Arasli's (2007) research on brand value supports the PCDL model, based on three dimensions: brand loyalty, perceived quality, and brand image. The ultimate goal of these three dimensions can be achieved in craft beer and other products through a focus on processes, taste/flavors, local production, customs/traditions, and cultural celebration.

The process of producing a beer brand (Arthur & Fage, 2017), in general, consists of:

- Definition and elaboration of brand values (the basic values that guide the brand);
- Definition of the brand essence (better understanding of what makes up the brand, the major differentiators);
- Determination of brand positioning (understanding the differentiators with respect to the competition - what we do, who we do it for, how we differentiate; in other words, definition of concept and product, definition of target audience, definition of team and location, etc.);
- Delimitation of the brand's personality and voice (elaboration of the brand's real story, as well as its personality traits; elaboration of the brand's voice and tone - the way it communicates its values and personality to a particular audience);
- Elaboration of the brand's design and story (creating the brand culture, based on values and essence; involves participation in the local community, team dynamics, online environment and respective monitoring, problem-solving, etc.);
- Development of visual identity, packaging, online environment, and physical environment (creating the ideal name - authentic, different, easy, fun, flexible, portable; brand identity system - name, logo, color palette, typography, packaging, spatial design, web design - a set in which everything must speak to each other).

The images generated in the final stage, such as metaphors or representations of ideas, become a way of penetrating deeply into consumers' thoughts about specific products (Joy et al., 2009). This level of product/person interconnection can be analyzed under the idea of Hodder's *entanglement* (2012), which discusses the interconnection between objects and people, so that the correct description of one becomes indispensable to the connection with the other.

It should be noted that in some spheres of analysis of the artisanal environment, the brand is read as a symbol of minor relevance, given that consumption is marked by a local character (Dalmoro & Fell, 2020). This fact illustrates the fluctuations in market dynamics, which are constantly configured and reconfigured (Giesler & Fischer, 2017). Finally, it is observed that the term "*brandscaping*" has been used to designate regional and landscape development of localities, based on investments focused on sustainability and high-quality local products (Boesch, Renner, &

Siegrist, 2008) - an alternative to simply analyzing brand development. Another example of the term associated with the field of Geography was the interconnection between major fashion brands and the city of Florence, Italy (Bellini & Pasquinelli, 2015). Other works relating the theme to Geography have been identified (Pasquinelli, 2013, 2014; Jansson & Power, 2010), highlighting the relevance of the topic.

DISCUSSION: *Beerscape*

The term *beerscape* emerged from *brandscape*, which combines the words brand and landscape. It can be translated as the landscape of commercial brands (the original term used was beer landscape before it was changed to *beerscape*). The term *brandscape*, coined initially by John Sherry (1986), refers to the expansion of brands and related items in a particular culture or market. It relates to glocalization (a combination of global and localization), as global companies tend to find local solutions for their products adapted to the local consumer (Robertson, 1995). The concept of *beerscape* also relates to the wine-related perceptions of Quintal, Thomas, and Phau (2015), which involve the structure, atmosphere, symbols, drink quality, drink value, complementary products, and staff as tourism differentiators, with the added dimension of beer variety (Kraftchick et al., 2014; Murray & Kline, 2015; Murray & O'Neill, 2012). In an initial survey, some articles were analyzed, resulting in Table 1.

Table 1 – Authors

Author	Publication	Year	Elements related to *beerscape*
Batzli, S. A.	Mapping United States Breweries	2014	Geographical aspects of the beer landscape.
Shears, A.	Local to national and back again: beer, Wisconsin & scale	2014	Geographical aspects of the beer landscape.
Eberts, D.	Neolocalism and the branding and marketing of place by Canadian microbreweries	2014	Neolocalism. Beer brand.
Murray, A., & Kline, C.	Rural tourism and the craft beer experience: factors influencing brand loyalty in rural North Carolina, USA	2015	Brewery brand; rise of beer tourism.
Talpos, P.	Culture you can drink: what can museums learn from brewery tours?	2016	Physical aspects of the location as a brand differential; beer brand.
Reid, N., & Gatrell, J. D.	Craft breweries and economic development: local geographies of beer	2017	Revitalization of places by breweries (related to neolocalism); rise of beer tourism.
Carr, A. M.	Microbrewery consumer behavior	2017	Physical aspects of the venue as a brand differential. Characteristics of the craft beer consumer. *Winescape* vs *beerscape*.
Carr, A. M., Shin, Y. H., & & Severt, K.	Predicting intentions to visit microbreweries and investigating beerscape	2019	Physical aspects of the location as a brand differential.
Tomisic, V.	The creation of the beerscape evaluation model	2020	Physical aspects of the location as a differential of brand. *Winescape* vs. *beerscape*.

Source 1 – author's own elaboration (2021).

The first aspect raised about *beerscape* was the relationship established between the geographical aspects of the beer landscape - the location and the beer - discussed in the field of Neolocalism (the conscious effort of companies to develop a sense of belonging based on the attributes of the local community). After World War II, there was an advancement of large beer corporations, which generated a human movement against the normalization of taste and in favor of the revival of craft products as an act of resistance. This pattern of behavior accelerated around the world from the 2000s, accentuating the Neolocalism movement. Given the inherent spatiality of brands and their creation

(Pike, 2011), craft beers tend to relate identitarily to the local area where they originate. This connection to the local area generates, often in an intense manner, brand identity links to the location, either through visual communication or marketing strategies (Eberts, 2014) - a self-conscious assertion of local distinction (Flack, 1997). The simplest detectable instance of Neolocalism in craft beers is the name of the company and its products (Eberts, 2014): Tupiniquim (RS), Cervejaria Nacional (SP), São Paulo Tap House (SP), Nativas - Mangaba, Ogre - Jacu do Mato, Capitu, Condessa Augusta, Vó Maria e seu Lado Zen, Camila Camila, Empório Alto dos Pinheiros (SP), Academia Barbante (SP), Amazon Beer - Bacuri (AM), Cacau IPA (PR), Cais - Canal 3 (Santos), Complexo do Alemão (RJ), Morada - Cupuaçu Sour, Paulistânia (SP - Ipiranga, Marco Zero, Trem das Onze, Pátio do Colégio), 3 Cariocas (RJ), among others existing in the national market. In a broader sense, discussions about gentrification or symbiosis of beer establishments with the environment were discussed by Bell and Binnie (2005), including under the lens of recovering degraded urban areas. Breweries, to a significant extent, seek to embed themselves in the local culture and community, representing the history and landscape of the area in logos, labels, and names (Murray & Kline, 2015). The identified examples, among others existing in the national market, are also related to the concept of *Locavorism* - the movement of buying and consuming food and beverages produced locally, usually within a radius of up to 50 kilometers from the consumption site (Azevedo, 2015). The study of *Neolocalism* and *Locavorism* in the beer industry has a direct connection to the field of Geography.

The second aspect identified was the correlation between *beerscape* and physical aspects of the environment studied. This aspect is immediately connected to the concept of *servicescape*, especially in Bitner's work (1992), regarding the physical environment in which services occur, both for clients and employees. When relating the term to the aspect of restoration in comensality, one of the greatest examples are open restaurants with glazed kitchens - Bitner's (1992) simultaneous consumption 'factories' - that offer the customer the chance to follow the preparation production process, as well as enforcing appropriate kitchen cleanliness and organization. This parallel arises in the trend of constructing brewpubs, beer factory restaurants, with open glass areas as a local branding differential for the establishment. In addition, beer establishments have their own emblematic characteristics, for the most part: internal structure reminiscent of factories (exposed bricks/conduits for wiring/tiles - especially in brewpubs) and, in the presence of beer taps, the visible structure of the taps, as the central focus of the establishment. As symbols, beer memorabilia on the walls (such as posters, signs, trays, beer coasters, etc.). As environmental aspects, the presence of air conditioning, background music or live music groups (often geared towards rock culture), relatively high levels of noise, among others, are observed. In the specific case of brewpubs, in addition to all the mentioned structure and ambience, the production structure, such as maturation tanks, fermentation tanks, pumps, aging barrels, piping, etc., becomes a central point of interest - the open kitchen. Finally, team training deeply affects customer behavior, becoming an essential part of the beerscape. As examples in the city of São Paulo, brewpubs such as Cervejaria Nacional, Dogma, Vórtex, Les Trois Brasseurs, Goose Island, Paulistânia (at Eataly), and others use the same concept of *beerscape*. All of these physical and team characteristics aim solely to increase the customer experience, making it memorable and generating loyalty (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). The experience in the food and beverage consumption environment is based on the organization, dynamics, administration, and improvement of the hospitable encounter (Brotherton & Wood, 2004).

The rise of the concept of beer tourism was observed as a third aspect. The term, analyzed by several authors (Bujdosó & Szücs, 2012; Coelho-Costa, 2015; Francioni, 2012; Garbin, 2017; Moretti, Zucco, & Pozo, 2016; Plummer, Telfer, & Hashimoto, 2006a; Rogerson, 2015), is also known in foreign literature as beer tourism or ale trail. It has several similarities with wine tourism, the analysis of tourism focused on wine. Wine tourism involves the valorization of local products, the craft production process, and the connection with family values, among others, just like beer tourism. All food and beverage tourism movements have complex drivers, which represent, when associated with local product movements, the local gastronomy values of Telfer and Wall (1996), corroborated by Csapó and Wetzl (2016). The definition of beer tourism as an intentional activity focused on craft beers by leisure tourists (Stone, Migacz, & Wolf, 2016) involves a series of extrinsic (instrumental, utilitarian, functional) or intrinsic (autotelic, hedonic, experimental) motivations (Mokhtarian, Salomon, & Singer, 2015), such as the need for learning, cultural conditioning, social influences, and personal perceptions (Moretti, Zucco, & Pozo, 2016).

According to the same authors, beer visitors seek to experience unfamiliar customs and cultures, as well as the encounter of new situations different from their environment; there is also the search of visitors for alternatives to alter their own daily culture and discover the world (Moretti, Zucco, & Pozo, 2016). The main drivers of beer tourism identified by Bujdosó and Szücs (2012) were: visits to breweries and brewpubs, autonomous or guided exploration of beer routes and brewery visit packages, beer tasting and/or menu pairing, visits to beer festivals or

other beer-related events, museum visits, and purchase of beer memorabilia. As an example, the experiences of Oktoberfest around the world are taken, starting from the original, held every year at Theresienwiese, a 46-hectare site in the center of Munich (Germany). In addition to the traditional 14 tents with capacity for up to 8,450 people (Paulaner), the event features an amusement park, music, cultural and typical dance performances, dozens of food establishments, sale of memorabilia, a separate historical-inspired area (Oide Wiesn), a specific day for LGBT events (Rosa Wiesn), traditional clothing parades, and extensive safety, lighting, transportation, hygiene, bathroom initiatives, etc. On the other hand, a specific study by Plummer, Telfer, and Hashimoto (2006b) points to the decline of a beer tourism route in Canada, the Waterloo-Wellington ale trail, due to some factors: personal competitive interests over collective interests, lack of engagement, period of economic and institutional uncertainties, loss of movement unity, lack of central driving figure and extra work. The *beerscape* focused on beer trips has complex tourism dynamics.

The fourth topic analyzed lists the characteristics of the craft beer consumer as an integral part of the *beerscape*, affecting and being affected by the construct. The influence on the consumer can be measured (Carr, 2017) by their behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. Carr (2017) developed a scale to measure these beliefs by transposing the structural similarity between *winescape* and *beerscape*. Visits to wineries have several similarities with visits to breweries, such as physical structure, atmosphere, environmental signage, drink quality, drink value, complementary products, and service staff (Quintal, Thomas, & Phau, 2015), far beyond the analysis of the tourism factors examined in the previous point. The most significant difference between the concepts lies in the location of the environments and the variety of beers. While *winescape* is predominantly located in rural areas, *beerscape* is concentrated in mixed environments, both rural and urban (with urban areas being predominant). This difference is based on the production of wine and beer: wine must be made near the producing regions due to the perishability of grapes, whereas beer can be brewed anywhere due to the non-perishability of its components (water, barley malt, hops, and yeast). Regarding the variety of beers offered, the literature suggests that the total beer experience is directly proportional (Murray & O'Neill, 2012; Kraftchick, Byrd, Canziani, & Gladwell, 2014; Murray & Kline, 2015). A third point raised by Tomišić (2020), not observed in the analysis of Quintal, Thomas, and Phau (2015), concerns electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM), which the author considers fundamental in modern digital society. Despite these differences, craft beer is a symbolic product based on experience, diametrically opposed to the widely consumed and produced beer, the so-called mainstream (Gómez-Corona et al, 2016).

The study on beer brands and *beerscape*, the fifth and final topic discussed in the article, constitutes another complex field of research. Initially, the concept can be discussed from the perspective of the brand itself: label design, logo design, drink name, etc. However, this is just a superficial analysis of the topic. *Beerscape* is deeply related to aspects of marketing culture (orientation and posture towards the market), marketing strategy (segmentation, target, and positioning), and marketing operations (processes). The beer segment has mixed characteristics, both in terms of products (beer itself, memorabilia) and services (customer service, ambiance, signage, etc.). In this way, unique characteristics intertwine in an extremely complex, multidimensional environment. In the beer business, both product and service characteristics must be observed, as both aim solely for customer loyalty, with the quality of service or product being the deciding factor in acquisition (Reidenbach & Sandifer-Smallwood, 1990; Congram & Friedman, 1991; Grönroos, 1995). One of the biggest challenges in parameterizing the concept of "service" is its abstraction, given the intangibility, heterogeneity, and inseparability of production and consumption. A model that meets the parameterization of these aspects is the experiencescape (Pizam & Tasci, 2018), a multi-stakeholder approach that encompasses the sensory, functional, social, natural, and cultural stimuli of a particular product or service and how the interaction between constructs generates the experience. The creation of a beer brand must encompass all these requirements to generate the best possible experience for the customer.

Another point to be observed regarding beer brands concerns the denominations of origin, which attribute specific characteristics to products from certain locations - geographical indications. With 158 varieties (Brewers Association, 2021), beer has a wide taste spectrum, varying in terms of bitterness (hops or roast), acidity, sweetness, salinity, smokiness, brewing adjuncts, body, clarity, color, and so on. In addition to all the aspects that differentiate them, beers have their own characteristics from the places where they originate, adding another nuance to the beerscape: *kölsch* is produced exclusively in the city of Cologne, Germany; *weinachtsale* (high-alcohol Christmas beer) is produced throughout the Germanic world for end-of-year celebrations; *lambics*, sour and wild-fermented, are produced only in the region south of Brussels known as the Senne Valley. These are some examples, among many others, that relate regional characteristics to beer style. Similarly, the main ingredients for the beverage, barley

and hops, ideally grow between parallels 40 and 50 - coincidentally, the regions of origin of the world's main beer schools: German, Belgian, English, and American. As observed, the connection between beer and geography goes beyond the simple discussion of local characteristics.

CONCLUSION/CONTRIBUTION

This study sought to identify the different approaches to analyzing *beerscape* from the perspective of hospitality. Given the incipient nature of the topic, no studies were identified that condensed the definitions into a single point of view. The method used for the research was methodological review, based on thematic bibliographic survey.
As a result, different points of view were observed regarding the discussion of *beerscape*. The located scientific works dealt with, but were not limited to, the geographical aspects of the beer landscape, Neolocalism (including, regarding the revitalization of places), discussions about the creation and development of beer brands, the rise of beer tourism, physical aspects of beer establishments, characteristics of the craft beer consumer, and similarities and differences between *winescape* and *beerscape*.

Craft beer, through the lens of *beerscape*, has meanings far beyond the simple ingestion of liquid. The collective consumption of the drink has strong connotations of social cohesion, lubricant of relationships and situations, psychological support, personal and collective health, among others. From the study of the beer landscape and its various meanings, it is possible to draw parallels and bridges with various areas of knowledge, pointing to the non-homogeneity of *beerscape*. This article sought to list and analyze a part of the existing manuscripts on the subject, without, however, exhausting it. The broad relationship between beerscape and the field of geography was identified, indicating a possible trend for studies on the subject. The relationships between place and beer are inseparable and supported by the context in which they are inserted. In addition, the relationship between brand development and the field of marketing points to another direction of studies on *beerscape*, of equal complexity.
As a limiting factor, it is observed that the wide variety of topics covered by *beerscape* ends up preventing the creation of a single definition. More studies are needed so that at least some of the definitions on the subject can be encompassed in a single concept. As future studies, the development of a broad theoretical model and its respective applications for the consolidation of the model are suggested. In this way, *beerscape* can become a tool for understanding the customer, the market, and the place.

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IMPACT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ON HUMAN RESOURCES ACTIVITIES: A RESEARCH IN HOTEL ENTERPRISES

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ABSTRACT

Human resources management systems are software systems that automate and streamline various human resources activities and processes. These systems can include modules for managing employee data, recruiting and hiring, benefits administration, performance management, and compliance with labor laws. This research aimed to investigate the relationship between human resources management systems and human resources activities in organizations. Survey data were collected from randomly selected 280 employees working in 20 different four- and five-star hotel enterprises operating in Konya, Turkey. Research results empirically proved that there is a significant and positive relationship between human resources management systems and human resources management activities.

Key Words: human resources management systems, human resources activities, hotel enterprises.

INTRODUCTION

Human resource (HR) is one of the greatest assets of any organization which enables achieving organizational goals and objectives. Human Resource Management (HRM) is a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through an integrate array of cultural, structural, and personal techniques (Ferguson, 2006, p. 58). The way a company manages its employees can make a big difference in how much work gets done (H.a.s.s et al., 2020). Human Resource Management System (HRMS) is a group of HR practices that can help an organization be more successful. HRMS are very important for modern HR practices. These systems make it easier to do HR tasks like keeping track of employee information, paying employees, evaluating job performance, training employees, and hiring new staff (Rogiers et al., 2020; Song & Wu, 2021). HRMS can make HR tasks easier by doing them automatically. This saves time, money, and effort that would otherwise be used to do them manually (Alfityani, 2023). HRMS records large amounts of employee data. This information is useful for analyzing trends, tracking performance, and making smart choices. HRMS also help organizations follow laws and data protection regulations concerning HR management (Rogiers et al., 2020).

HRMS can improve the employee experience by providing easy access to information and services, as well as reducing the administrative burden on employees (Zhang & Chen, 2023). Thus, researching HRMS can help organizations to identify the best systems available and implement them in a way that maximizes their efficiency, cost savings, data analytics capabilities, compliance support, and employee experience. There have been several research studies conducted on the HRMS, however, research on the relationship between HRMS and HRM is relatively lacking. Therefore, this research aimed to investigate the impact of HRMS on HR activities

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

HRM is the process of managing a company's workforce, or human resources. This includes recruiting and hiring employees, managing and developing employees, and providing the support and resources necessary for employees to be successful in their roles, dealing with legal aspect of hiring, terminating and firing an employee, and making sure company comply with the legal standards in terms of employee rights and discrimination (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020; Nayem et al., 2020).

HRM practices involve choosing the right people for the right jobs, giving feedback on how well they are doing, teaching new skills, working together as a team, sharing information, making sure the work is interesting and challenging, and rewarding them for doing a good job. HRM practices also help make sure everyone is treated fairly and has job security. These actions improve the way a company works by helping employees learn more, become

better at their jobs, and giving them chances to use these skills to make the company better. It also makes employees more eager to do their jobs well. It makes sure that the group can be successful because of its employees (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020; Nayem et al., 2020).

The relationship between HRMS and HRM can be described as complementary and mutually reinforcing (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020). Firstly, HRMS is a tool that facilitates HRM functions such as recruitment, employee data management, performance management, training and development, and payroll processing (Hu et al., 2022). By automating routine tasks and centralizing employee data, HRMS enables HRM to focus on more strategic tasks such as talent management, employee engagement, and organizational development. This allows HRM to play a more strategic role in the organization by supporting organizational goals and contributing to organizational success.

Secondly, HRM plays a critical role in the success of HRMS (Rogiers et al., 2020). Effective HRM practices such as talent management, employee engagement, and performance management can enhance the effectiveness of HRMS. For example, HR management can create useful ways to manage how well employees are performing at their job. This will help them keep track of how they're doing and let them know how to improve (Wang, 2022). HR can create helpful training and improvement plans to find out what skills staff need and schedule sessions to teach them.

The study of existing literature indicates that using HR technology systems effectively requires good human resource management practices. To explain, things like employee involvement, communication, and training can help employees get used to the new system, understand its benefits, and use it effectively. Additionally, effective HRM practices can help in mitigating potential challenges such as resistance to change, employee concerns about data privacy, and lack of technical skills (Xu et al., 2022).

The literature suggests that effective HRM practices can enhance the effectiveness of HRMS, while HRMS can enable HRM to play a more strategic role in the organization. It is therefore important to explore empirically the relationship between HRMS and HRM activities from the employee perspective. Thus, the following hypotheses was proposed in this research:

H_1: human resources management systems have positive impact on human resources activities in organizations.

METHOD

This quantitatively designed research investigated the effect of HRMS on HRM activities in organizations. The data collected through this study was obtained via a structured questionnaire consisting of three distinct sections. The initial segment of the questionnaire was comprised of the scale of HRMS, the subsequent section involved the scale pertaining to HRM activities, and the third section focused on the demographic attributes of the subjects involved in the investigation.

Both measures, HRMS and HRM activities, were in the form of 5-point Likert type scales ranged from “1 = strongly disagree " to "5 = strongly agree”. Both measures were borrowed from the research of Menteşe (2012). The HRMS measure consisted of 31 items and the measure for the HRM activities consisted of 19 items.

A reliability analysis was performed for both measures. The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability values for the HRMS measure was $\alpha = 0.79$ (31 items), and for the HRM activities measure was $\alpha = 0.85$ (19 items). Results of the reliability tests suggested that the internal consistency of the items of the measures were good for the both measures.

Population of the research comprised the four- and five-star hotel enterprises operating in Konya, in Turkey. Konya is one of the top seven developed big cities in Turkey. Sampling framework of this research was formed with randomly selected employees working in the four- and five-star hotel enterprises.

A total of 300 questionnaires were collected from randomly selected employees and 280 of them were determined valid for the data analysis. This size of the sample was considered adequate to make generalization by taken into consideration the limitation of having at least 5 observations for each variable (Hox & Bechger, 2006).

Expert feedbacks were taken from four experts actively working in the target industry and two academicians from the field to increase the surface validity of the scales and the questionnaire. A pilot study was conducted to test the

preliminary construct validity of the measures. By analyzing 35 valid pilot data, some items of the measures were rephrased to clarify the meaning of the items.

FINDINGS

Descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, and structural equation modeling technique were employed to analyze the data. The descriptive statistics pertaining to the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents indicated that a significant proportion of the sample were male (73.21%), married (56.43%), 25 to 34 years old (52.14%), worked 0 to 3 years in their current organization (65.71%) at housekeeping (40.36%) and food and beverage (38.21%) departments. The demographic data statistics disclosed that the participants constitute a group of juvenile adults who are undergoing their initial employment phase in their professional pursuits.

Construct validation of the HRMS scale was carried out through an exploratory factor analysis. The present study employed the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, whereby the obtained value of KMO indicated that the sample size was sufficient for the analysis (KMO = 0.670). The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded a significant outcome ($\chi 2$ = 1970.465, df = 465, p < 001), which is indicative of the appropriateness of applying factor analysis to the given measurement. The method of Principal Component Analysis with the "Direct Oblimin" rotation technique was executed for the analysis. The exploratory factor analysis resulted in the identification of 11 distinct components that account for 63.945% of the total variance. Four components were excluded from the analysis due to the fact that these components exhibited a loading pattern having only two items, and one component was excluded due to unacceptable low reliability coefficient value. Further analysis was performed with the remaining six compound variables that were named as planning, wage tracking, compensation management, recruitment, staffing, training and development, and career management.

Another exploratory factor analysis was conducted for the measure of HRM activities. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for this measure also suggested that the sample was factorable (KMO = 0.796). The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity test had a significant result ($\chi 2$ = 1018.082, df = 91, p < 0.001), indicating that the factor analysis can be applied for this measure. Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed by using “Direct Oblimin” rotation with Principal Component Analysis method. Five items of the measure were eliminated from the analysis because of dual or low loading reasons. Exploratory factor analysis generated four components explaining 57.35% of total variance. Two components were loaded with just two items. Thus, these components were removed from the further analysis. Further analysis was conducted with two compound variables named as human resource management and performance assessment.

Pearson correlation analysis was performed to determine whether there is a significant linear relationship between compound variables of the two measures. Table 1 displays the Pearson correlation analysis results. According to the results, the correlation between compound variables ranged from 0.04 to 0.427, indicating low correlation.

Table 1
Pearson Correlation Analysis

Compound Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Human resource management	280	3.53	0.661	1							
2. Performance assessment	280	3.81	0.683	0.427**	1						
3. Planning	280	3.70	0.688	0.135*	0.157**	1					
4. Wage tracking	280	3.77	0.666	0.137*	0.064	0.191**	1				
5. Compensation management	280	3.78	0.694	0.082	0.045	0.173**	0.055	1			

6. Recruitment	280	3.74	0.670	0.136**	0.042	0.184**	0.182**	0.179**	1	
7. Staffing	280	3.81	0.735	0.109	0.067	0.138**	0.279**	0.126**	0.157**	1
8. Career management	280	3.77	0.696	0.024	0.070	0.183**	0.125**	0.048	0.165**	0.184** 1

*: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); **: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The proposed hypothesis was tested by performing a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) path analysis. SEM is a multivariate statistical analysis technique that is used to analyze the structural relationship between measured variables and latent constructs. Figure 1 displays SEM results with standardized values.
Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a statistical analysis method that enables the examination of the interdependent relationships among measured variables and latent constructs. The findings illustrated in Figure 1 depict the results of standardized values derived from the SEM.

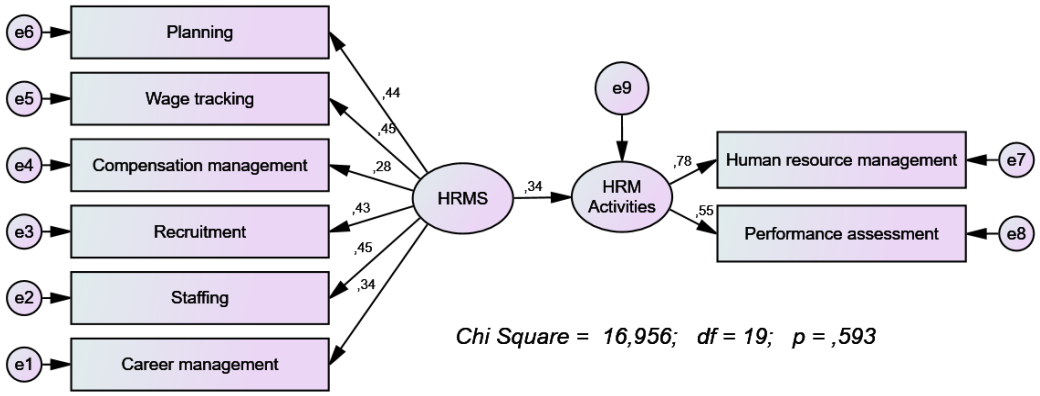

Figure 1. Structural Equation Modeling for the Theoretical Model

SEM model yielded statistically fit indices [$\chi 2$ = 16.956 (19), p = 0.593; $\chi 2$/df = 0.892; goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.985; the Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.898; the comparative fit index (CFI) = 1; the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 1.022; the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.000], and found a moderate positive relationship between the variables HRMS and HRM activities (R^2 = 0.34, p < 0.001). The proposed hypothesis (H_1: β = 0.75, p < 0.001) was supported.

DISCUSSION

HRMS and HRM activities are the concepts that often separately studied in the literature in relation with other concepts. However there have been limited studies investigating the relationship between HRMS and HRM activities. Some studies have found that HR practices implemented through HRMS can enhance employee creativity and develop required knowledge, while others have focused on the impact of HR practices on HR outcomes and organizational performance (Hu et al., 2022; Zhang & Chen, 2023).

The study conducted by Ho and Kuvaas (2020) explored the additive, interactive, and nonlinear relationships among HRMS, employee well-being, and organizational performance. The study revealed that HRMS produce a performance effect that surpasses the influence of individual practices, indicating favorable synergies among various HRM practices. The findings indicate a positive association between HRM practices and the well-being of employees. Specifically, increased levels of commitment, job satisfaction, and management relations were observed alongside reduced anxiety levels. All these findings are in harmony with the current research. This current research also evidenced that HRMS have positive impacts on HRM activities and performance assessment.

Yang (2022) conducted experimental investigations to study the organizational HRM and operation system based on artificial intelligence. The researcher found that compensation, performance, and promotion are effective ways to manage employees. The results of the current research also validated these findings. Research in this field has shown that HRMS can play a crucial role in supporting HRM activities and improving organizational performance, particularly when implemented effectively and aligned with the goals and strategies of the organization.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This research explored the impact of HRMS on HR activities in four- and five-star hotel enterprises in Konya. The findings evidenced that HRMS have positive impacts on HR activities in those enterprises. HRMS are software systems that automate and streamline various HR activities and processes. These systems can include modules for managing employee data, recruiting and hiring, benefits administration, performance management, and compliance with labor laws. By automating these tasks, HRMS can help HR departments more efficiently manage the employee life cycle, from hiring to retirement. Additionally, an HRMS can provide managers and employees with self-service portals to access information and perform tasks such as updating personal information or requesting time off. Overall, HRMS helps to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of HR activities.

This current study was conducted based on survey data from four- and five-star hotel enterprises operating in Konya, in Turkey. Thus, the generalizability of the findings may be limited. Therefore, future research should validate the current framework in other industrial and cultural samples. This research designed quantitatively. Future researches can be designed qualitatively to get in-depth knowledge of the concept.

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CHALLENGES FACING THE MARKETING OF NATIONAL MUSEUMS AMONG RESIDENTS IN TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the challenges facing the marketing of national museums among residents and successful tactics by using evidence drawn from Tanzania. It applied Kotler et al.'s (2008) Strategic Marketing Planning Process (SMPP) framework and employed interviews and documentary analyses. The findings indicate that museum marketing is not immune from dissonance emerging from tension as museum actors strive to maintain the balance between their preservation function and serving the public. A participatory approach involving museum staff and stakeholders is needed. The resources such as time, funds and networks can be critical challenges. The study demonstrates the applicability of SMPP and makes useful recommendations.

Key Words: Marketing; national museum; Tanzania; domestic tourism; strategic marketing; not-for-profit marketing

INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, increasing numbers of museum curators in the world have been involved in marketing them, which is not their core function. They have continued to redefine their museums' business models along market-oriented lines, with the public having an increased voice in shaping museum products (Larkin and Burtenshaw, 2021; Suwaryono et al., 2022), which can have several benefits. Museums can enhance their visibility and make the public aware of them, and influence their choice to visit them, thereby complementing the museum's core functions of communication, education and public outreach (Cole, 2008; Rentschler, 2007). They can also attract more income through entry fees and merchandise, which is critical for counteracting the decline in public funds, the falling level of private giving, the reduction in tax privileges and other subsidies, and the rise in operating costs (Cole, 2008; Mansour and Mwambwiga, 2021; Rentschler, 2007; Suwaryono et al., 2022; Triarchi, 2018). However, the reality is that only a few museums in the sub-Saharan African (SSA) region have interested residents to pay a visit (Silverman et al., 2021; Mansour and Mwambwiga, 2021). This is because most museums in the region have made little attempt to strategize marketing activities and do not see the need for museums to change from being object and expert-based to being intentionally people-based (Mansour and Mwambwiga, 2021).

The national museums in SSA are in most cases attached to colonial periods, when the majority of Africans were marginalized from accessing and managing them and even now, they still regard museums as colonial-oriented as they have adopted the colonial custodial approach (Msemwa, 2005; Silverman et al., 2021). African curators and museum leaders who took the responsibility of managing the modern museums mostly after independence have remained static with the colonial object-based approaches and barred from the ongoing dynamics of the modern

museum industry (Silverman et al., 2021). Indeed, apart from external-oriented challenges such as lack of political will, persuading African citizens to visit museums and promote them as being relevant would require an internal institutional approach and systems beyond that of conventional colonial object-based custodianship (Kotler et al., 2008). However, these internal institutional approaches and systems and how they frame challenges for marketing museums among residents remain blurred.

This study, therefore, explores the challenges facing the marketing of national museums and successful marketing tactics by using evidence drawn from Tanzania, where its national museums have successfully attempted to increase the number of resident users from 67,382 in the year 2019 to 1,093,570 in the year 2022, where domestic users (residents) were 1,082,187 (equals to 99 percentage) and international users were 11,383 (1 percentage) (National Museum of Tanzania - NMT, 2022a). The study employs - and shows the significance of - Kotler et al.'s (2008) SMPP in understanding the marketing planning process in the SSA's museum context and in deciphering the inherent challenges. The study demonstrates that the strategic marketing planning process is not static but rather a dynamic and iterative one, having contradictory implications for the various museum actors in SSA. Interestingly, the study shows that the process is not immune from dissonance, due to the tension between museums' professional role of preserving antiquities and their social role of serving the public and meeting their needs. It also presents a range of strategic marketing tactics that other related museums can adopt to attract residents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on museums have reported on the strategic marketing being applied by museums to attract residents and international tourists, especially in big museums in North America and Europe (Yucelt, 2001; Andreasen and Kotler, 2008; Kotler et al., 2008; Gilmore and Rentschler, 2002; McLean, 1993; Bradford, 1991). On the other hand, most national museums in SSA employ marketing in an *ad hoc* manner, without a clear strategy, making their marketing efforts ineffective (Mansour and Mwambwiga, 2021). According to Kotler et al. (2008), strategic marketing is a process that involves environmental scan, mission and goal formulation, strategy formulation, strategic marketing, marketing research, tactical marketing, monitoring of planning outcomes and implementation (Figure 1). The process begins with an external environmental scan, which acknowledges that museums operate in a rapidly changing environment, consisting of macro and micro environmental forces that can affect the achievement of museums' missions. These forces can be captured using the PEST (political, economic, social and technological) model, which generates an understanding of threats and unfavorable conditions, and opportunities and favorable conditions affecting museums' achievement of their mission. On the other hand, the internal environment scan assesses organizational culture, the product development process, and internal institutional systems. This reveals the strengths and weaknesses of a museum, and so it may need to design a strategy to rectify particular weaknesses and develop particular strengths that relate to specific marketing opportunities (Kotler et al., 2008). The formulation of its mission involves establishing the museum's marketing goals based on the realities in the external and internal environment. The goals can further be cascaded into specific objectives, which are measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (Kotler et al., 2008).

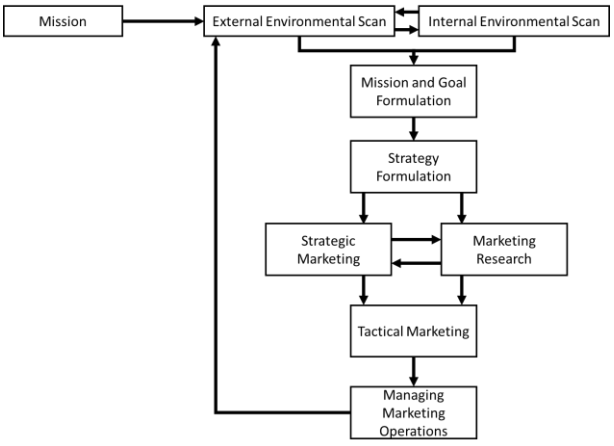

Figure 1
Kotler et al.'s (2008) Strategic Marketing Planning Process (SMPP)

According to Kotler et al. (2008), the museum portfolio approach is often employed to evaluate the products and systematically identify promising opportunities, whereby the museum can decide to follow one or a mixture of the following choices: (i) market penetration whereby the museum maintains or expands its visitor base by deepening penetration into its existing markets with its existing products, (ii) market development strategy involving geographic expansion whereby the museum can bring its existing products to a wider geographical market, (iii) product development strategy involving product modification where the museum decides to modify some offerings to attract more of the existing market, and (iv) diversification strategy, which involves modifying products for a new market. These strategic choices are focused on a selected visitor segment that the museum seeks to attract. This involves segmenting the market based on geographic, demographic, psychographic and behavioral variables, as well as positioning, which is developing a clearly defined competitive position (differential advantage) and a distinctive identity *value proposition* in the mind of the target market (Kotler et al., 2008). The museum's positioning strategy and products' distinctive identity are visually encapsulated through branding activities (Kotler et al., 2008). Finally, tactical marketing reaches the target market and motivates people to visit a museum, involving the five Ps, which are having a *product* that corresponds to the museum users' view of value, a *place* that reflects the consumer's view of convenience, the *promotion* that corresponds to communication tactics, the *price* that reflects cost from the consumer's point of view, and *people* that corresponds to the caring expected by visitors (Kotler et al., 2008).

To carry out the SMPP described above, a museum must develop an effective marketing organization and effective and efficient internal systems for planning, implementing and controlling. This is a point where the context of the museum needs to be taken into account. In this regard, the democratization nature of the national museums, referring to the purpose of serving everybody in the public, makes the concept of competition, profit, pricing, market segmentation and targeting irrelevant (McLean, 1995). In this context, it is not clear what museums are competing with, as the public may not regard them as popular, and the notion of profit and price undermines the museum's mission and is equated to slotting it into a good marketing mechanism (McLean, 1993). It is also not clear what is to be marketed by museums and to whom they market (i.e., visitors, funders and trustees) (Bradford, 1991). In addition, the limited understanding of the link between a museum's purpose and the marketing process often causes the marketing of goods to dominate (McLean, 1993). A tug-of-war often prevails between experts holding custodial and market-focused views (Gilmore and Rentschler, 2002). Museums are also struggling to define the kind of benefits that they should publicize to attract residents, not only due to the heterogeneity of museum products and services as argued by Suwaryono et al. (2022), but also because of the complex nature of the products that are embedded with colonial and sensitive ethnographic notions. It would therefore be interesting to understand deeply the kind of tug-of-war prevailing between experts in national museums in a once-colonized state that struggles to decolonize its practices in the SSA's context.

Based on past research, this study postulates the existence of tensions and complexities in internal institutional systems and due to their contexts as museums strive to practice SMPP, which however remains blurred. Without an in-depth understanding of the link between the museums' internal institutional systems and their dynamics, and the kind of challenges they shape in the implementation of SMPP, which is unfortunately transferred from the business and developed world contexts, the use of marketing in museums can remain flawed. This study addresses this paucity.

THE CONTEXT OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF TANZANIA

The national museums in Tanzania are managed by an organization named the National Museum of Tanzania, which was established by the Act of Parliament No 7 of 1980 (URT, 1980). The history of the institution dates back to the early 1900s, during the construction of the central railway line in Tanganyika by the German colonialists. Later, using the Colonial Museum Ordinance No. 40 of 1935, the British colonialists made the idea of a museum a reality by initiating the King George V Memorial Museum (KGMM) in 1940 in Dar es Salaam. After independence in 1961, through the National Museum Act No. 23 of 1963, the major goal of the museum's management was to decolonize the KGMM so that it became a national museum that served the social agenda of nationalization (Maligisu, 2018). Consequently, the Village Museum was initiated as an open-air museum in Dar es Salaam to preserve and display traditional houses (Masao, 1993), and the Arusha Declaration Museum was established in 1977 in Arusha to preserve the history of the country's nationalism. The National Museum Act of 1980 allowed for the establishment of more museum centers, including the Natural History Museum in 1980 in Arusha region, Mwl.

Nyerere Memorial Museum in Butiama in 1999 in Mara, Maji Maji War Memorial Museum in 2010 and Dr. Rashid Mfaume Kawawa Museum in 2017 in Ruvuma.

The national museums in Tanzania, like most museums in the world, have been facing several problems, such as not being flexible and relevant to different types of people, and a drop in the number of visitors (Msemwa, 2005). This is in contrast to museums in Europe, which have been transformed from being solely preservation and research entities to accommodating public access to education and recreation and attracting tourists (Triarchi, 2018). In 2018, the national museums began to consider how they could reverse the decline in the number of visitors (see Figure 2). The management of the museums directed the unit responsible for Public Relations to coordinate the marketing activities, which it began to do in an *ad hoc* manner in 2020. In drafting its five-year strategic plan (2021/22 to 2025/26), the national museums developed a new vision of "making society value its heritage, and conserve and use it for its sustainability". With this vision, the museums intend to increase its customer base to 2,000,000 by June 2026. To achieve this, it developed a strategic marketing plan following Kotler et al's. (2008) SMPP model through a special team of eight staff members who are fairly well-oriented in marketing (see Appendix I). The team was chaired by the Head of the Public Relations Unit. It first conducted a workshop with five education officers from each national museum, and two conservators and curators, where it presented the first draft of the marketing plan, received comments and together worked on incorporating the comments. The team then submitted the second draft to all museum centers for the museum staff to review and then, based on the staff's comments, prepared the third draft for external stakeholders. A three-day workshop was organized for these stakeholders to incorporate their comments. The workshop involved representatives from the local communities, tour operators, hotels, the Tanzania Tourist Board, the Zanzibar Tourism Commission, the Antiquities Division, the University of Dar es Salaam Business School, museum experts and museum education officers. Within two years of the implementation, the strategic marketing plan generated about 1,093,570 users, where more than 90 percent were residents (see Figure 2).

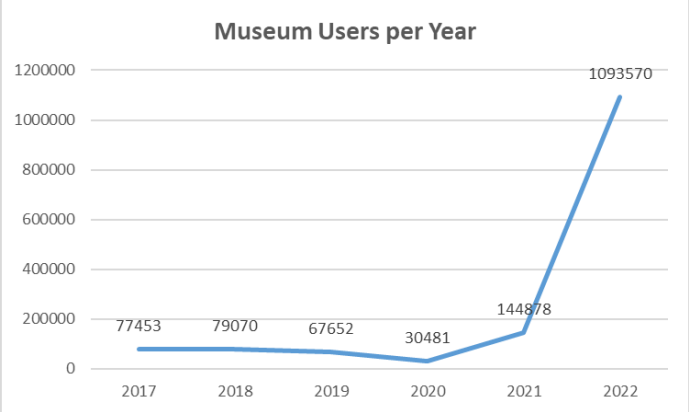

Figure 2
Museum Visitor Trends from 2015 – 2022
Source: NMT (2022a)

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the interpretivism approach because of the explorative nature of the research question. Purposive sampling was used to select individuals because the study sought to obtain in-depth information from museum members who participated in and coordinated the marketing planning process. The respondents were eight members of the special team that coordinated the process at the museums (see Appendix I for their profiles). Data collection involved triangulating the three qualitative methods of interviews, documentary analysis and the researcher's anecdotal experience. The qualitative interviews were conducted using an interview protocol to guide them (Yin, 2010), which included topics and probes regarding the marketing planning process, the challenges and contradictions that occurred during the process, and the lessons learned from it. The documentary analysis involved critically reviewing and analyzing the marketing plan, brainstorming notes and minutes of the meetings of the marketing team. The anecdotal experience involved analyzing the researcher's experience of the marketing planning process. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data.

FINDINGS

This section presents the findings on the challenges facing the marketing of the national museums in Tanzania and successful strategic marketing tactics by using verbatim and statements generated from the interviews and documentary analyses.

Disagreements and time consumption

When asked about the nature of the process, the team coordinator responded: "We were supposed to finish preparing the marketing plan in November 2021, but, due to prolonged debates and disagreements during brainstorming sessions, we had to have more sessions with experts with different views to reach a consensus.... because we decided to develop the plan ourselves without a consultant, we spent a lot of time engaging experts and stakeholders, and gathering and analyzing their differing opinions and views" (Interviewee 01, Female). Another team member reported: "…the process was driven by museum experts and stakeholders rather than us the coordinators, knowledge was generated through dialogue and a consensus was reached by those we involved in brainstorming and workshops…our task was to analyze and compile the marketing plan document…... which resulted in the marketing plan process being owned by the museum experts and even those who would have rejected it in the beginning" (Interviewee 02, Male).

Environment scan and differing opinions about "competition"

In terms of the external environment scan, the team agreed on all components, except the notion of competition. For instance, with reference to the political environment, the team reported that the National Museum of Tanzania (NMT) Act cap. 281 directs the museums to collect entry fees from visitors to cover their operational costs. Achieving this partly depends on increasing the number of visitors, hence marketing is necessary. The Cultural Heritage Policy of 2008 (URT, 2008) also encourages the use and development of heritage for tourism. From an economic point of view, the improvement in road infrastructure has encouraged the public to visit national museums. Government funding of the museums has also fairly improved, thereby making it possible to refurbish exhibitions, improve facilities and introduce new museum programs. As regards the social environment, the team acknowledged the fact the majority (61%) of the Tanzanian population is the younger generation under the age of 35, and those between 5 and 12 years old (school children) compose 22% of the population (URT, 2023). In addition, the current education policy of *Education for All* has led to an increased number of school students. In terms of technology, there is an increasing number of smartphone users in the country (about 53 million), meaning that they can be promptly reached through digital technology, such as the Internet and social media platforms (URT, 2023). In terms of competition, it was reported by the team that the museums compete for potential museum users' time and money with similar places, such as nearby historic sites and national parks, shopping malls, resorts and other leisure facilities. However, the team members were divided over the notion of competition. Some members acknowledged that, although the museums compete with similar entities, they often complement them rather than being in competition with them. On the other hand, the opposing argument was that museums are unique entities focused on preserving heritage, and may not be compared with leisure and recreational for-profit facilities. After a long time, a consensus was reached that the museums do compete with other entities in the marketplace for potential visitors' time and money, but that does not rule out the fact that they may complement other facilities. In terms of the internal environment scan, the team agreed that the national museums hold unique and famous historical collections such as *Zinj,* Mwl. Nyerere's legacy and African liberation heritage places. They are among the few places preserving traditional houses, with spacious gardens located in major city centers. It was also noted that the museums have modestly begun using digital technology. In addition, the Swahili name for the museum, that is *Makumbusho*, is a popular catchy name in the country. On the other hand, a market survey conducted in 2000 (Msemwa, 2005) and 2021 (NMT, 2021), the museums were noted to have non-interactive and outdated exhibitions that will not interest the younger generation and millennials who are technology-oriented. It was also noted that the museums had limited internal monetary collections.

Overall, based on the environment scan, it became clear that, since domestic tourism in Tanzania is growing, and there is increased interest by the younger generation, school students, college/university students (young adults) and working adults, marketing efforts should be aimed at enhancing the museum's educational programs, involving fun and learning components and improving museum events. It was also thought by the team that the museums can take advantage of the existence of digital technology to enhance their exhibitions, educational programs and promotion. It was also clear that the museums can link themselves with mainstream attractions such as national parks. On the

other hand, the team insisted that the museums need to address their weaknesses by mobilizing funding and employing marketing staff and training in digital marketing, product innovation and customer care.

Museum Marketing Goals and the rejection of income and profit-oriented objective

Based on the environmental scanning and the opportunities revealed by it, and the requirements of the five-year strategic plan, it became clear that the national museums should focus on two major goals: i) expand their customer base and ii) improve customer service. By expanding the customer base, the museums would be able to educate more people, and make the heritage popular and visible to the public. To achieve the major goals, the museums aimed to achieve the following specific objectives: i) to increase the number of visitors by 25 percent annually in five years; ii) to grow the membership of the museums by 50% by June 2026; and iii) to conduct customer surveys annually by 2026. The process of developing these objectives was however embedded with disagreements. The dilemma was whether or not the marketing goal should consider increasing internal income. The team members whose background was in marketing argued for the incorporation of income generation, while those who focused on preservation argued for limiting objectives to attract more visitors and enhance the quality of service. A conservation-based member argued: "…the income generation goal will violate the *raison d'etre* of the museums and distort the intrinsic value of the heritage that the national museums conserve…" (Interviewee 03, Male). On the other hand, a marketing-oriented member argued: "This reminds me of the attempt I made back then to introduce the publicity plan to the museum after I graduated with an MBA…the idea was rejected by the management for fear that it would damage the intrinsic mission of the museums" (Interviewee 02, Male). All in all, the team agreed to leave out the profit-orientation goal, and implicitly embed it in the related goal of increasing the number of visitors.

Target market and the dilemma of "museum-for-all" versus "selected user segments"

In terms of the target market, some team members with a marketing background recognized that, for marketing planning purposes, the museums must focus on selected market segments. On the other hand, those without a marketing background argued that it is impossible to select a few segments because the museums are there to serve people from all walks of life and cultures. After a long debate, the team came to a consensus, acknowledging the fact that the marketing plan has financial implications and so needs to be prioritized. Therefore, based on the museums' opportunities and strengths mentioned earlier, the team thought it wise for the museums to offer their existing products in line with existing market segments, but on an increased scale by applying the market penetration strategy. In this case, the team observed that the museums had not yet fully explored the current market, including researchers, children, teenagers and young adults in schools, colleges and universities. The team further observed that the museums' products have not reached the maturity stage of the product life cycle, and so there is potential to increase the number of users. In addition, the team felt that the museums should engage in geographical expansion by distributing their products to a wider market through off-site strategies.

Positioning and the "cultural" versus "recreational" mission debate

A debate occurred among the team members, whereby the conservators insisted on limiting the positioning of the museums using their core cultural mission, which is to build the nation's image, identity and pride, and to preserve its history. On the other hand, some members focused on positioning the museum to provide its diverse products for recreational functions. "The complexity of museum products as a mixture of goods and services posed problems in positioning the museums to provide the benefits expected by all those targeted" (Interviewee 03, Male). The team's ultimate decision was to integrate the two dimensions and suggested that the positioning of the museums could take advantage of its strength in building and maintaining the state's identity and essence, as well as people's attachment to their heritage. Thus, the team formulated the following statement to express unique benefits that form the museums' Unique Selling Point (USP): "To all on a quest for recreation, while enhancing knowledge about their heritage and encounter authentic scientific and cultural objects of the past, the national museums offer engaging cultural programs, events and facilities that educate, restore the identity, build patriotism and pride, and entertain more traditionally than other destinations can do" (NMT, 2022b).

Marketing mix (5Ps) choices

The team members were divided regarding museum products in the first place, some arguing that objects are the sole products in the museum: "…objects are what people want to see and experience in the museum" (Interviewee 08, Male), with others arguing that there is a set of complex components involving objects and services that people want to experience in the museums, and it is hard to conceive them as museum products: "…museums have a mixture of things and services that people want to see and experience, and this caused confusion among experts in identifying what comprises museum products" (Interviewee 04). Ultimately, the team appreciated the fact that the museum

product is composed of objects and other services and experiences and identified major categories of products including museum objects, exhibitions, programs and facilities. It also conducted a product portfolio analysis to determine which ones it should build, maintain, reduce and terminate. The thinking behind this was that museums should invest in products that are highly attractive and relevant to the museums and their core mission. Regarding this, the team reported that products of high quality with market viability were the original skull of the *Zinj*, traditional houses, and collections associated with Mwl. Nyerere *the Father of the Nation*. The programs to be included were *Zinj* Day, Museum Art Explosion, *KijijiSoko* (Village Market), Nyerere Day, Ethnic Traditional Day, Maji Maji Festivals and research programs. The facilities to be emphasized were the Theatre, Curio Shops and restaurant at the Village Museum. The team also identified products of medium quality, which can draw a large number of users to the museums if their quality is improved. These include the historic state cars exhibition, art gallery, ethnographic exhibition, museum gardens, libraries and conference halls. The team agreed on employing electronic information technology including interactive computer screens and hand-held audio-video guides that provide pictures, sounds and information to make the products more interactive. In addition, the team proposed new programs such as lectures and storytelling to students, and special behind-the-scenes tours in storage and conservation laboratories for researchers. It also identified potential facilities such as gardens, cafes and restaurants serving traditional food and drinks, gift shops and souvenirs, fountains and sculptures for recreational users, and special child-related facilities such as a children's booth, storytelling corners and animation for children.

The team generally agreed on all promotional tactics ranging from basic promotional materials, to direct marketing channels, indirect marketing channels, mobile marketing, social media marketing, and public relations and publicity channels. The basic promotional materials include the use of simple, yet effective promotional materials, to form a base for promoting the museums, including business cards, website addresses, email signatures and outdoor signage. The team recommended that the direct marketing approach should be used to target specific markets, such as teenagers, young adults and adults at college or university and those at work. It also suggested promoting the museums by placing billboards where they will be seen by many people, such as markets and bus stands, as well as producing flyers and brochures, advertising on the radio and television, and email newsletters. In addition, the Friends of Museum Membership scheme could be developed to target senior citizens and the youth. It also suggested that indirect marketing channels could be employed to maintain museums' reputations and build customer rapport with their target market, such as attending networking events and trade shows and exhibitions and promoting sales through gifts and discounts. Since more Tanzanians are accessing information from their mobile phones, the team recommended that the museums should capture this ever-growing market that shops, browse and stays in touch via their mobile phones, which can be done by using the service that detects users' location and sending promotional messages (e.g., special offers and promotions), and the quick response (QR) code that people can scan to get information about the museums. The team acknowledged that social media is a perfect means of educating, entertaining and communicating in real time. It, therefore, suggested that the museums should use social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube to tell their stories to many audiences, build relationships and increase visibility. Public Relations (PR) and publicity channels were identified by the team as useful for changing the public's perception of the museums and building loyalty. For instance, they can be featured in the mass media without paying for it, through interviews, articles and press releases.

It became clear that some members of the team perceived museums as physical entities located in a specific place, the benefits of which are primarily available to those who make the effort to visit their premises, but others thought this was a limited view of how the museums could reach more people. Therefore, the team agreed that the museums could make themselves more accessible by bringing their products to where people live and work by providing lectures, exhibitions and slide shows at the downtown headquarters of cities and towns *off-site distribution*. It also suggested that the museums could provide tourist agencies with brochures and information about their collections that could be included in the famous City Guide, and organize marketing partnerships with hotels, airlines and restaurants, or even banks, universities and colleges. The museums could also set up temporary exhibitions or use mobile exhibitions in some places such as universities, schools, community centers, city centers and gardens, trade fairs, during big events/festivals, and at airports, bus stands and sports grounds. In addition, the museums could use their website to enable people anywhere in the world to visit them digitally and even make purchases online.

The team generally agreed on the issues of *price* and *people*. Some members reported that the pricing of museum products is determined by the management and approved by the parliament after a long bureaucratic process, which means that the entrance fee is fixed for a long period. The admission charge for Tanzanian adults is Tsh. 2,500/= (USD 1), for students it is Tsh. 1,000/= (USD 0.6) while children under five (5) are free. The team found that these

charges are lower than those of national parks, which charge Tsh. 10,000/= (about USD 5) per adult Tanzanian. There was an agreement regarding the pricing mechanism. In terms of people, the team acknowledged that potential visitors expect the museum staff to be caring and hospitable. In the brainstorming sessions, it was clear that the museums have an inadequate number of staff in the core function as they have 120 of the 240 staff required. While the museums are waiting for approval to employ new staff and its newly proposed organizational structure accommodating the marketing unit, a training plan has been prepared for existing staff in marketing, entrepreneurship, customer service and other core functions.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, the focus has been on exploring the challenges facing the marketing of national museums among residents and successful tactics by using evidence drawn from national museums in Tanzania. By employing Kotler et al.'s (2008) SMPP model, an objective of this study was specifically to identify the challenges inherent in the marketing planning process in order to broaden our understanding of the kind of internal organizational system that is useful in persuading the public to visit the museums and contribute both conceptual and empirical insights to the extant literature. The study postulated that the marketing process is not a straightforward task but rather complex and fluid due to the existence of tensions and complexities in internal museum systems shaped by their contexts. With the consideration of the extant literature, the three-fold major discussion points are presented, namely: i) object-people approach ii) museum experts' power and identity struggle, and iii) preservation-social agenda.

The findings in this study reveal that museums suffer from the absence of experts who are well-oriented in marketing. Object-based curators find it illogical and irrelevant to set aside time and funds for marketing. What we learned from the national museums of Tanzania is that political will is vital, that their leaders need to be oriented to the marketing approach, and emphasize that it complements the museums' educational programs by increasing the number of visitors. These were among the reasons that stimulated the national museums in Tanzania to set aside funding, and some of their staff to set aside adequate time for the planning of marketing activities. It is also clear from this study that museums are in transit in their transformation journey from a conventional object-based to a people-oriented approach, and inadequate staff with experience in using the participatory *people* approach in museums can be a critical drawback for marketing initiatives. We learned from the national museums in Tanzania that the search for internal staff with participatory orientation was the most important task, whereby some museum curators, education officers and planning staff were vital in forming the marketing planning team. However, the core responsibilities of museum staff prevented some of them from engaging fully in marketing planning. Therefore, setting up a timeframe and incentive scheme can be essential as this would encourage them to balance the core and marketing planning functions. To this end, capacity-building seminars and learning along the way could stimulate interest and ensure meaningful engagement and effective participation of museum staff and stakeholders in the marketing planning process. In addition, having institutional and personal networks with external marketing experts is critical, whereby both formal means, such as expert meetings and workshops and informal means, such as brainstorming on WhatsApp and virtual groups, can be useful. The study, therefore, argues for the importance of using the staff-participatory approach rather than the conventional consultant-based marketing approach in the planning process. In this regard, it advocates that the marketing planning team should be constituted by museum internal staff, and be not only the coordinator of the planning process but also the facilitator, enabling other museum staff and stakeholders to participate and articulate their concerns.

In this study, the findings indicated that, while the museum staff agreed with the notions of promotion, pricing and people, there was a dilemma regarding the notions of competition, setting up of marketing goals, market segmentation, positioning, product and place. The direct link between promotional tactics and the current museum education functions and the recognition of the importance of skilled staff were the reasons for the ease of acceptance of the promotion and people plans. On the other hand, the museum experts were divided as follows: i) museum as competitive entities versus museum as complementing related facilities, ii) supporting profit-oriented goal versus rejecting it, iii) museum for targeted segment versus museum-for-all, iv) core-function versus recreational-oriented positioning, v) museum as an object-based product versus mixed experience product, and vi) physical-based museum distribution versus off-site museum distribution. Indeed, with the exception of the notion of price, the findings in this study agree with past research. Probably, the museum staff had no influence over changing the government-determined pricing system in a short term, which resulted to ease of agreement over the notion of price.

The dissonance challenge described above amplifies the existence of the struggle for professional identity and power by museum preservation-based curators, who are more dominant than those with a marketing orientation and defend the museum's cultural mission, clearly reflecting the tug-of-war between the custodial and market-focused views. For instance, the profit-based goal was rejected as it reflects the economic drive of the museum, but contradicts its core mission, which is to preserve the nation's heritage and culture regardless of the cost incurred to do so. On the other hand, the goal of increasing the number of visitors was easily accepted as it complements the museum's need to engage the public. Improving the quality of service as a goal was also accepted, but with the caution that visitors' demands should not cause museum products and facilities to change to the extent of overwhelming their cultural value. Regarding the positioning of the museum in the marketplace, the findings indicated that a mixed set of dimensions of preservation, cultural, edutainment and recreational functions of the museum were taken into account. The object-oriented preservation dimension refers to the conventional agenda of the museum, which would appeal to researchers. The cultural dimension, referring to the social role of the museum in building and maintaining the community and state's image and identity would appeal to the younger generation seeking a better understanding of their country and origin, and local communities, especially senior citizens commemorating historic times and feeling proud of the legacy they have inherited. The edutainment dimension, referring to the museum's social role and the recent move to become relevant to society, matching the marketing dimension, will appeal to students, educational institutions and the general public. The recreational dimension, reflecting modern thinking of museums as places that can satisfy those seeking relaxation and fun, would appeal to leisure visitors. The question raised by this study is which dimension to prioritize in the positioning of the museum in the marketplace. Definitely, from the marketing perspective, the museum would prioritize the demands of the target market, but run the risk of this agenda being rejected if the demands contradict the core mission of the museum. In the case of the national museums in Tanzania, we learned that the marketing team came to a consensus by integrating all the dimensions, given that the museums, from the democratic point of view, as argued earlier by McLean (1995), target a broad range of market segments, ranging from local community elders (the keepers of the traditions and customs) to the younger generation and researchers. The findings imply that, in adopting to marketing approach, the national museums should often structure their internal systems by reflecting on their core mission, linking marketing goals with their mission and observing that these goals complement the cultural and democratic agenda.

The study, in general, shows the significance of using Kotler et al.'s (2008) SMPP model to frame the marketing of museums and its relevance in marketing the national museums in the SSA region. The model has been useful in unraveling challenges related to the marketing planning process. The study also makes an argument that the SMPP is dynamic and fluid. The enlightenment to the complexity of applying several marketing concepts and the importance of the incorporation of the core museum mission and concerns was however outstanding contributions by this study to the body of knowledge of marketing planning and poses the question as to whether and how these can be integrated into Kotler et al.'s (2008) model.

This study has also presented a range of successful strategic marketing tactics, including those related to targeting, positioning, product, promotion and place *distribution*, which the national museums in Tanzania planned for, and perhaps helped them to increase their visibility and number of domestic visitors that other museums could adopt. Interestingly, the planning process proposed off-site and digital marketing tactics as part of the promotion strategy, which definitely helped the museums to succeed despite the Covid-19 pandemic and post-pandemic effects. Although mixing the off-site and on-site perspectives poses conceptual challenges to a sector that treasures the in-person experience, it presents the opportunity to create compelling forms of engagement in light of the developing digital economy and changing modes of cultural consumption, from which the sub-Saharan African region is not exempt. It is hoped that this study stimulates further discussion on the subject of not-for-profit marketing not just in Tanzania's museums, but in other museums in sub-Saharan Africa and the developing world as a whole. Broadening the understanding of context-specific marketing is one step towards applying it to museums in their quest to reach more members of the public. Future studies could focus on investigating the needs and demands of the potential and actual domestic users of museums by comparing and contrasting them in terms of locally and colonial-founded national museums, and how they can be integrated into the marketing plan, and analyzing the dynamic processes of implementing and evaluating the marketing plans.

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Appendix I: Interviewees

SN	Identification	Profile		
		Sex	**Position**	**Education**
1.	Interviewee 01	Female	Head, Public Relations	MA Public Relations
2.	Interviewee 02	Male	Education Officer	Dipl. Education, MBA
3.	Interviewee 03	Male	Conservator	MA Heritage Management
4.	Interviewee 04	Male	Cultural Officer	Arts, MA Tourism
5.	Interviewee 05	Male	Cultural Officer	Arts
6.	Interviewee 06	Female	ICT Officer	MSc ICT
7.	Interviewee 07	Female	Marketing Officer	B. Marketing
8.	Interviewee 08	Male	Museum Curator	MA Heritage Management

ASSESSMENT TOURISM DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY WITH THE DEA APPROACH UNDER DIFFERENT WEIGHTING SCHEMES

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to contribute towards the use of DEA as an aggregation method to merge the information composed of a set of sustainability indicators. The proposed method enables DEA to be used in various ways in the building of composite indicators. The research was carried out in Cuba and the indicators employed are representative of the topics considered relevant by international organizations in destination sustainability attainment. These were grouped according to the regional initiative of the Caribbean Zone of Sustainable Tourism and finally, applied at local level, in each of the destinations considered within a single country.

Key Words: Sustainability indicators; Data Envelopment Analysis; Composite indicator; Tourism destination sustainability; Cuba.

INTRODUCTION

In the field of tourism, numerous salient reasons call for an urgent assessment of sustainability. The dynamic, unstable, and unpredictable nature of the industry reveal the need for the consistent assessment and monitoring of progress toward Sustainable Tourism Development (STD) (Asmelash and Kumar 2019). Therefore, considerable attempts have been made to achieve assessment methodologies that are understandable and easy to interpret (Blancas and Lozano-Oyola 2022), and diverse initiatives have been carried out to measure STD (Estêvão et al. 2019; UNWTO 2017).

To attain this goal, indicators appear among the most suitable tools. With a strong theoretical framework, it is possible to attain appropriate indicators, based on quantitative and/or qualitative data (Schianetz, Kavanagh, and Lockington 2007). Their application for realistic tourism sustainability measurement is considered to still be in its early stages (Asmelash and Kumar 2019); however, there is no doubt regarding their great influence in STD measurement. There are diverse initiatives aimed to create indicators to measure STD through international organizations worldwide (e.g., UNWTO 2017; OECD 2003), or at a regional level (e.g., ACS, 2001; European Commission, 2017), and at local level (Asmelash and Kumar 2019).

However, despite the existence of diverse indicators to measure STD at different levels, there is no unanimity amongst scholars regarding a global set of indicators able to describe the sustainability degree of diverse destinations (Asmelash and Kumar 2019). A similar situation arises with the dimensions comprised in STD. Previous studies focused either on one of the three traditional dimensions (e.g., economic) (Dubois 2005), on all three of these dimensions (economic, socio-cultural, and environmental) (Schianetz and Kavanagh 2008) or comprised even more dimensions, including those of institutional sustainability (Ko 2005), or political, social, ecological, economic, technological, and cultural dimensions (Choi and Sirakaya 2006).

By taking into account the number of indicators and the information they involve, the use of composite indicators (CI) to measure STD has gained major relevance. Composite indicators have attracted increasing attention from the academia and public sphere since they are easy to use and understand (H. Wang 2015) and they measure multi-dimensional concepts uneasily achievable by a single indicator (Nardo et al. 2005).

Due to the extended use of CI, diverse methods have been employed for their construction. Nardo et al. (2005) propose a set of steps to attain reliable CI, and the initiatives for the weighting and aggregation processes varies. Nevertheless, Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) outstands among those widely used thanks to its ability to achieve a 'fair' set of weights for all the Decision-Making Units (DMUs) (H. Wang 2015), and to its independence of the units of measurement of the individual indicators (Fernández-Macho, González, and Virto 2020), which both constitute great achievements in the building of CI.

Consequently, this research aims to contribute toward the use of DEA as an aggregation method to merge the information comprised in a set of sustainability indicators. The approach will be based on the information employed to measure STD in 15 Cuban nature-based tourism destinations that represent the whole nature-based tourism offer of this country. The indicators used have been obtained by taking in consideration the creativity of the UNWTO, the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), the Caribbean States Association (CSA) through the initiative of the Caribbean Zone of Sustainable Tourism (CZST), and diverse research studies developed to this end.

The novelty of the study is the use of both subjective and objective indicators in the evaluation of STD. The combination of the two measures -qualitative and quantitative- is required for a holistic STD measurement. The tourism destinations will be selected zones from Cuba that may be comprised of one or more municipalities; therefore, the regional initiative will be applied at the local level. This case study focuses on the sustainability of nature-based tourism destinations in the fulfilment of a Caribbean regional initiative and the suitability of DEA in searching for a ranking.

Sustainability assessment of tourism destinations using dea

For sustainability assessment, the application of DEA considers the sustainability indicators as inputs and outputs, while the DMUs are taken as the alternatives to be assessed (Thies et al. 2019). For the construction of CI, DEA has been popular for years since it is desirable to attain a 'fair' set of weights for all DMUs (H. Wang 2015). Examples of studies that utilize single DEA models to this end include those by Fernández-Macho, González, and Virto (2020) and Hermoso-Orzáez et al. (2020). Certain authors propose a combination of DEA with various approaches in order to take advantage of all the methods available. This is the case of Pérez et al. (2016) with the combination of DEA with PCA. Furthermore, Gómez-Vega and Picazo-Tadeo (2019) merged DEA with multi-criteria decision methods (MCDM).

Data envelopment analysis

Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA), first proposed by Charnes, Cooper, and Rhodes (1978), provides a method for the evaluation of the performance of peer decision-making units (DMUs) whose inputs and outputs are multiple performance measures. This is a non-parametric approach to efficiency analysis of DMUs and seeks to compare the DMUs to their best peers. According to Charnes, Cooper, and Rhodes (1978), the efficiency of any DMU is attained as the maximum of a ratio of weighted outputs to weighted inputs, under the condition that the similar ratios for every DMU remain less than or equal to unity. In a more precise form:

$$\max h_0 = \frac{\sum_{r=1}^{s} u_r y_{r0}}{\sum_{i=1}^{m} v_i x_{i0}}$$

subject to:

$$\frac{\sum_{r=1}^{s} u_r y_{rj}}{\sum_{i=1}^{m} v_i x_{ij}} \leq 1; \quad j = 1, \ldots, n$$
$$u_r, v_i \geq 0, r = 1, \ldots, s; \quad i = 1, .., m.$$

Here, y_{rj}, x_{ij} (all positive) are known outputs and inputs of the *j*th DMU, and $u_r, v_i \geq 0$ are the variable weights that must be determined through the solution of this problem (e.g., by the data and all of the DMUs used as a reference set). The efficiency of one member of this reference set of *j* = 1,..,*n* DMUs must be rated in relation to the other members. The method chooses the most favourable weighting that is permitted by the constraints. The initial model has been transformed in the search for improvements, while its main essence is maintained (Hermoso-Orzáez et al. 2020).

DEA with individual weights

This methodology considers *n* destinations as the DMUs, *(j=1,2,…,n).* These are evaluated in *m* indicators, which are considered as inputs, with a negative improvement direction *(i=1,2,…,m),* and *s* positive indicators *(k=1,2,…,s),* considered as outputs. Let x_{ij} be the amount of the *i*th input consumed by the *j*th destination, and y_{kj} be the amount of the *k*th output produced by the *j*th destination. Thus, the Sustainability Index (SI) for the destination j_0 is obtained as follows:

$$Max \quad SI_0 = \sum_{k=1}^{s} v_k \cdot y_{k0}$$
$$s.t. \quad \sum_{i=1}^{m} u_i \cdot x_{i0} = 1$$
$$\sum_{k=1}^{s} v_k \cdot y_{kj} - \sum_{i=1}^{m} u_i \cdot x_{ij} \leq 0, \quad j = 1, \ldots, n$$
$$v_k \cdot y_{k0} \geq 0.1 \cdot \sum_{r=1}^{s} v_r \cdot y_{r0}, k = 1, \ldots, s$$
$$u_i \cdot x_{i0} \geq 0.1 \cdot \sum_{r=1}^{m} u_r \cdot x_{r0}, \quad i = 1, \ldots, m$$
$$u_i, v_k \geq 0 \quad i = 1, \ldots, m; k = 1, \ldots, s$$

Where u_i and v_k are the weights chosen for the positive indicators (outputs) and negative indicators (inputs) respectively. This is the so-called CCR model (Charnes, Cooper, and Rhodes 1978) in which the objective maximizes the weighted sum of the outputs, while the weighting sum of the inputs are constants with value 1. The problem therefore consists of seeking the best combination of weights for each destination to attain the highest score of sustainability as compared to the other competitors/destinations. The problem is solved for each unit/destination, while considering the remaining destinations in the constraints.

The objective function selects the weights that maximize the value of the composite index for observation DMU_0. In the best scenario, the global synthetic index assumes a value of 1, which implies that the performance of the destination is equal to that of its reference unit; for the worst scenario, this synthetic index takes a value of 0.

In general terms, this process enjoys the advantage of producing a composite indicator value sensitive to stakeholders' requirements; a greater weight is given to those indicators whose destinations are in a better position in comparison with those of other destinations included in the study. The strengths and weaknesses of destinations can thereby be evaluated. Weights are calculated whereby the maximum possible value is determined for the composite indicator at each destination. This indicates procedure flexibility since it is not necessary for the same level of importance to be given to every indicator in the various destinations.

DEA with common set of weights

While it has become standard practice for the evaluation of the units' performance to apply different sets of weights to evaluate the efficiency of the observations, certain practitioners disagree with individual weights being considered for the construction of a ranking of units (see, for instance, Kao and Hung (2005) for a detailed discussion). To this end, a model is proposed based on the application of Li and Reeves (1999). The model maintains the essence of DEA in terms of the free selection of weights, but it concludes with the determination of a common base for the evaluation of all the alternatives. The authors also state that the power of discrimination of models with common weights is higher. In Li and Reeves (1999), a multi-criteria approach to DEA is studied. A model is developed that simultaneously maximizes the composite index across the set of observations, equivalent to the CCR model (Charnes, Cooper, and Rhodes 1978).

$$\begin{aligned} & Min \quad d_0 \\ & s.t \quad \sum_{i=1}^{m} u_i \cdot x_{i0} = 1 \\ & \sum_{k=1}^{s} v_k \cdot y_{kj} - \sum_{i=1}^{m} u_i \cdot x_{ij} + d_j = 0, \quad j = 1, \dots, n \\ & u_i, v_k, d_j \geq 0, \quad \forall\, i = 1, \dots, m; k = 1, \dots, s; j = 1, \dots, n \end{aligned}$$

Note that this model proposes the minimization of the differences between the composite index and an ideal value equal to unity for the *n* observations, through the variable d_0. The efficiency (sustainability) of the *j*th destination is calculated as $1 - d_0$. Through the search for a common set of weights that simultaneously evaluate the *n* destinations (DMUs), the model above allows the formulation of alternative objectives. The most immediate is to find the vectors (u, v) which optimize the efficiency of the set of DMUs. There are two possible interpretations can be attained from the objective of common efficiency. The first is that which maximizes the total efficiency, considered as the sum of the individual efficiencies of the *n* units under evaluation and the model that maximizes the minimum efficiency. Similar to the proposal of the selection of individual weights, the additional constraints ensure the representation of every single indicator in the composite measure. In this case, the minimum value accepted for the virtual outputs and the virtual inputs for the *j*th destination is also 10% of the weighted sum of the outputs and inputs, respectively.

THE STUDY

The study comprises 15 Cuban nature-based tourism destinations that are representative of the overall tourism of this type across the country. Nature-based tourism plays a major role in Cuban tourist development since it includes the options necessary for tourism to be increased in order to maintain its high-ranking position among competing destinations in the Caribbean, where sun-and-sand holidays are the principal attraction. Therefore, such sustainability presents a practical necessity and not just an optional extra (Nesticò and Maselli 2020). According to the Ministry of Tourism of the Cuban Republic, these 15 zones are priority areas for the development of nature-based tourism. They cover nearly 7774,97 km^2, which is approximately 40% of the total surface area, and receive approximately 10% of the total number of tourists to Cuba. With the exception of two of these, the remaining destinations in Cuba enjoy a certain degree of protection from the National System of Protected Areas.

DATA

Since Cuba is part of the CZST (ACS 2001), the dimensions used in this study are those proposed by Díaz and Norman (2006): Social, Economic and Patrimonial, for the countries involved in this regional initiative. Notwithstanding, it should be argued that this proposal for dimensions and indicators is also supported by the initiative of the UNWTO (2005) and by other studies. The indicators used in the present study are therefore capable of supplying information while simultaneously remaining methodologically and scientifically valid (Torres-Delgado and Saarinen 2014).

As DEA does not allow more indicators than destinations to be employed, the indicators used should be representative of almost all the information considered. To this end, from an initial set of 43 indicators (divided into 11 Social, 18 Economic, and 14 Patrimonial), a PCA was carried out for each dimension in order to reduce the

number of indicators. As a result, 14 components were obtained -four, five and five, for the Social, Economic and Patrimonial dimensions, respectively- which explained 79.64%, 82.35% and 85.12% of the total variance of each dimension. The indicators were selected, in accordance with the Factor Loadings. Therefore, 14 indicators were obtained. Finally, the duplicity of information is studied through the correlation coefficient. For the 14 indicators selected and those having high correlations with the others were omitted. As a result, eight indicators were finally chosen.

The selected indicators correspond to factors that jointly explain 57.10% of the total variance. In the social dimension, two indicators were used: IS_4 (Social Indicator 4) "Perception by the local population that tourists exert an undesirable effect on lifestyle at the destination"; and IS_9 "Perception by the local population that the quality of life has increased due to tourism". Both indicators are subjective in that they are representative of the perceptions by the local population regarding aspects related to tourism in the regions. The indicator IS_4 is negative in character, which means that lower values are associated to a better degree of sustainability. In contrast, the indicator IS_9 is positive.

The economic and patrimonial dimensions each contain three indicators. Considering economic aspects, the indicators chosen are positive and objective; they are all obtained from statistical sources of information. The first indicator, IE_{21} is "the lodging capacity of the destination". It represents the host capacity of the destination in regulated accommodation facilities. IE_{26} "Earnings per dollar of income" and IE_{28} "Average tourist-day expenditure" demonstrate the economic strength of the destination. These three indicators measure the general behaviour of the tourism industry, which is crucial since the information contained therein is collected during the planning process and provides a useful reference list for planners.

Finally, the patrimonial dimension is represented by IP_{34} "Volume of solid waste attributable to tourism" and IP_{36} "Tourist valuation of the cleanliness of the destination", which evaluate the factors related to waste generation since uncollected refuse may bother tourists and affect the prestige of the destination. These are negative and positive, and also objective and subjective, respectively. Moreover, IP_{42} "Local population perception of the stimulus to craftsmanship and local culture due to tourism", also subjective and positive, evaluates local identity and culture.

As can be observed in Table 1, there are low correlation scores between each pair of variables. As a result, it is possible to affirm that the indicators analyse different sustainability issues. High correlation appears only between IS_4 and IP_{26} and between IE_{34} and IP_{21}, both of which are significant at 0.01. However, each indicator belongs to a different dimension, and not only should duplication be detected through statistical analysis but also by the analysis of the indicator itself on addressing the remaining indicators and the phenomenon they aim to depict (Nardo et al. 2005).

The combination of subjective and objective indicators is advisable for a holistic measurement. These measurements complement each other. The objective measures provide factual information regarding the resources and/or situations, while the subjective indicators represent a diagnosis of the perceived situation of the destination. For the purpose of the study and the proposed DEA models, the positive indicators were assumed as outputs, given their improvement direction. In contrast, negative indicators represent the inputs. The presence of both negative and positive indicators also grants a realistic view of sustainability due to the recognition of the presence of contrast in the objectives represented by the indicators.

Table 1
Correlations between the initial indicators selected

	IS_4	IS_9	IE_{21}	IE_{26}	IE_{28}	IP_{34}	IP_{36}	IP_{42}
IS_4	1							
IS_9	0.454	1						
IE_{21}	-0.431	-0.049	1					
IE_{26}	0.080	0.114	-0.046	1				
IE_{28}	0.442	-0.083	-0.306	0.047	1			
IP_{34}	-0.392	0.007	0.866**	0.031	-0.452	1		
IP_{36}	-0.335	-0.517*	0.459	0.189	0.146	0.380	1	
IP_{42}	-0.081	0.506	0.344	0.281	-0.322	0.292	0.123	1

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results appear in Table 2. The scores represent the value of the composite sustainability index for each destination. The outputs represent the virtual outputs, and the virtual inputs are also indicated in the last two columns. These values show the contribution of each indicator to the global measurement. They represent the importance attached to each topic utilized to create the global measure. Three destinations attained the highest score: Ciénaga de Zapata, Habananilla, and Caguanes National Park. This is a result of allowing freedom in the choice of the weights.

A detailed analysis of the virtual outputs confirms that all the destinations assign the highest importance to the economic aspect IE_{26} "Earnings per dollar of income". The perception of the improvement of the quality of life in the regions (IS_9) is the second-most valued topic for seven destinations (46.66%), while the indicator representative of the stimulus of craftsmanship and local culture due to tourism (IP_{42}) is the second-most important aspect for 33.33% of the destinations compared, with tourist perception regarding cleanliness accounting for the remaining 20% of the destinations. The lowest weights are grouped within two indicators, both representative of the economic dimension. The lodging capacity (IE_{21}) was the least important for 66.66% of the destinations, while the average daily expenditure per tourist is the least important for the remaining 33.33% of the destinations studied. Considering the inputs, for all the destinations the highest importance is attached to the perception by the residents of the effect of tourism on the lifestyle at the destination (IS_4) with the exception of Caguanes National Park, for which the most important issue is the volume of solid waste attributable to tourism (IP_{34}).

The most sustainable destinations have, on average, the highest average daily expenditure per tourist (IE_{28}), at 2.5 times higher than the average of all the destinations comprising the nature-based Cuban tourist offer. Moreover, these top destinations have an average volume of solid waste attributable to tourism (IP_{34}) that is five times lower than the global average, and Caguanes National Park is the destination with better values in both these indicators (in positive and negative directions). The main concerns for the destinations in the lower positions are related to the "Earnings per dollar of income" (IE_{26}), the "Average daily expenditure per tourist" (IE_{28}), and the perceived cleanliness of the tourists (IP_{36}).

The set of weights that guarantees the accomplishment of all the constraints in the second proposed approach is as follows: For the outputs. IS_9 (0.3015), IE_{21} (4.64E-05), IE_{26} (0.0162), IE_{28} (0.0003), IP_{36} (0.2387), IP_{42} (0.0010), and for the inputs, IS_4 (0.5576) and IP_{34} (0.0008). This is the set of weights employed to calculate the scores presented in Table 3. The method selected is that which maximizes the total efficiency, considered as the sum of the individual efficiencies of the *n* destinations evaluated. The highest importance is attached to the social aspects: the issue representative of the general effects of tourism on community lifestyle (IS_4), and the social consideration of the economic benefits of tourism for the host destination (IS_9). In contrast, the lowest importance is attached to economic aspects IE_{21} and IE_{28}, which represent the economic strengths of the destinations.

The second and third row on Table 2 shows the position of each indicator (Outputs and Inputs) according to the weights attained for the two initiatives: Common Set of Weights (CSW) and Individual Weighting Schemes (IWS). The value used for the IWS was the average of the weights for each indicator, and the divisions of the table correspond to a single indicator (the sign positive indicates its use as an Output, while negative specifies its consideration as an Input). The values employed represent the level of importance, where 1 corresponds to the highest weight (the most important) in each approach.

The results of the SCW approach (the last two columns of Table 2) demonstrate the discriminatory power of the second proposal. The use of a common set of weights enables a ranking to be created without any incomparability problems. As a result, there are no ties, and the units are ordered according to the composite values of sustainability. The most sustainable destination is Baconao, followed by Ciénaga de Zapata (2nd) and Hanabanilla (3rd). Ciénaga de Zapata and Hanabanilla remain within the three most sustainable destinations under either approach; however, Baconao improved from the fifth position (3rd really, considering the score of 1 for the three first destinations in the previous method) and attained the first position using a common set of weights. The improvement of Baconao with respect to Caguanes National Park is due to its better scores in the social aspects related to the consideration of the effect of tourism on the lifestyle at the destination (IS_4), which is the second indicator according to the level of importance, and its better sustainability values with respect to the host capacity of the destination in regulated accommodation facilities (IE_{21}) and the evaluation of the local culture (IP_{42}). Economic and patrimonial topics stand at eighth and fifth positions respectively, according to the level of importance attained in the two procedures.

A view of the least sustainable destinations situates Guajimico in this group for each ranking. The main concern for the administration of this destination should be focused on the profitability of the destination, with the minimum value for the earnings per dollar of income (IE_{26}), fourth, according to the weights. This destination should also manage its local perception of the effects of tourism on the lifestyle at the destination (IS_4), which is the most important indicator according to the weight attained.

A comparison between the two rankings was carried out. The results demonstrate great stability, with an average variation between the rankings of 3.2 positions. The most variable was Desembarco del Granma National Park, with a worsening of 11 units with the common set of weights. This was caused by its low hosting capacity (IE_{21}) and the scarcity of activities aimed to strengthen the local culture (IP_{42}). Spearman's rho correlation (higher than 0.514 for each comparison) reveals the existence of similarities between the rankings, which is significant at 0.05, despite the difference between the weights.

Like previous DEA models, the proposed approaches look for the most efficient units that may serve as a reference for those resulting inefficient. Their combination of selected indicators allows the consideration of the preferences of the decision-makers in terms of sustainability and, the additional constraints enable including all the information in the composite sustainability measure. Therefore, all the issues considered fundamental for sustainability assessment are considered. The introduction of the second approach (CSW) has helped to solve one of the main drawbacks in DEA problems, related to the non-uniqueness of the optimal weights in the efficiency evaluation, which implies the necessity of including secondary goals in the models. In addition, this model permits comparing the destinations under the fairest conditions and, consequently, the achievement of a sustainability ranking, as is the goal of this study.

Table 2
Results

Destinations	Rank	Score	Individual Weighting Schemes								Common Set of Weights	
			Outputs						Inputs		Rank	Score
			O_1	O_2	O_3	O_4	O_5	O_6	I_1	I_2		
			IS_9	IE_{21}	IE_{26}	IE_{28}	IP_{36}	IP_{42}	IS_4	IP_{34}		
Positions according to the weights in the *IWS*			4th	8th	1st	7th	6th	5th	2nd	3rd		
Positions according to the *CSW*			2nd	8th	4th	7th	3rd	5th	1st	6th		
Guanahacabibes N. P.	8	0.761	0.032	0.0005	0.9757	0.0010	0.0173	0.0217	0.4690	0.0047	9	0.78789
Viñales N. P.	15	0.474	0.0130	0.0001	0.6518	0.0013	0.0138	0.0249	0.3947	0.0011	12	0.61736
San Diego de los Baños	12	0.597	0.0900	0.0015	0.2490	0.0005	0.0177	0.0323	0.3150	0.0587	11	0.66242
Soroa-Las Terrazas	13	0.584	0.0145	0.0003	0.7898	0.0012	0.0194	0.0136	0.4200	0.0021	7	0.80803
Ciénaga de Zapata	1	1	0.0333	0.0006	0.4762	0.0009	0.0252	0.0352	0.4087	0.0059	2	0.90701
Hanabanilla	1	1	0.0299	0.002	0.2857	0.0003	0.025	0.0282	0.1961	0.0806	3	0.88120
Guajimico	14	0.482	0.0187	0.0004	0.4823	0.0012	0.0705	0.0197	0.4724	0.0058	13	0.61736
Topes de Collantes	10	0.726	0.0253	0.0002	0.2506	0.0018	0.0167	0.0202	0.4945	0.0002	14	0.61736
Alturas de Banao	6	0.824	0.0353	0.0002	0.6604	0.0008	0.0602	0.0251	0.45	0.0025	10	0.78152
Caguanes N. P.	1	1	0.0282	0.0019	0.3226	0.0014	0.0265	0.0301	0.0442	0.4348	6	0.84793
Mayarí	9	0.754	0.0223	0.0009	0.8977	0.0007	0.0196	0.0189	0.4225	0.0099	8	0.79092
Desembarco del Granma N. P.	4	0.982	0.0416	0.0019	1.1167	0.0004	0.0263	0.0413	0.3499	0.0856	15	0.61736
Marea del Portillo	11	0.618	0.0920	0.0002	0.3436	0.0012	0.0160	0.0163	0.4896	0.0009	5	0.85949
Baconao	5	0.965	0.0291	0.0003	0.3016	0.0017	0.0248	0.0221	0.5455	0.0008	1	1
Alejandro de Humboldt N. P.	7	0.789	0.0226	0.0002	0.7591	0.0015	0.0204	0.0237	0.5028	0.0005	4	0.87836

CONCLUSIONS

This research constitutes a contribution toward the use of Data Envelopment Analysis in the creation of CI applying two proposals that use the advantages of DEA for support the decision-making process. Firstly, a proposal is made that permits the use of different weights for each destination. This approach is supported by the advantage of DEA searching for the combination of the best set of weights for each destination, thereby granting each destination the freedom to award high importance to those topics in which a better score is attained than those of the remaining units. The second method proposes a common set of weights that guarantees the attainment of all the constraints included in the model. Additional constraints are proposed for both approaches, aimed at guaranteeing the incorporation of all the topics considered relevant in sustainability measurement that are represented by the indicators used.

The results attained by each of the two methods are similar, and are corroborated by statistical methods such as Spearman's Rho correlation. However, in spite of the statistical significance of the rankings, the ranking with the weights selected by each destination includes incomparability due to the presence of more than one efficient unit, that is, different destinations with score 1 for the global measurement. The elimination of this issue results in an advantage for the method that uses a common set of weights. Therefore, this study helps to demonstrate that the discriminatory power of models with common weights is higher.

The findings support the usefulness of DEA in destination sustainability. Furthermore, in spite of the differences between the results, the proposed method possesses great explanatory power, which constitutes a desirable characteristic for composite indicators, thanks to the ease of its decomposition. This so-called "Back to the detail" step guarantees the transparency of the composite indicator, ensures that it can be decomposed into its underlying indicators and/or values. This decomposition feature also provides an asset for the practical application of the proposed method in supporting the stakeholders, since not only does it enable the identification of the indicators that contribute the most to the sustainability of each destination, but also to the identification of their strengths and weaknesses that pinpoint those factors that represent the greatest constraints to their sustainability.

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INTO THE WEEDS OF HOTEL B2B SALES: WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO BUYER/SELLER RELATIONAL-EXCHANGE SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

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ABSTRACT

The largest USA hotel corporations have radically reinvented B2B sales. Four *Relational-Exchange Strategies* have been developed to cost-effectively address the specific characteristics of different buyers. This paper refines a previously conceptualized model and specifically addresses one of the four strategies: *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy*. The paucity of literature necessitated an exploratory case study. Relevant stakeholders were purposely selected and interviewed. Data collected were content analyzed. Successful relational-exchange is enhanced by *coordination and cooperation: the dimensions of organization* to execute strategy. Coordination and cooperation are integral to *Fayol's Theory of Administration*, which is still relevant. This refined model guides practitioners and researchers.

Key Words: hotel B2B sales; relational-exchange; Theory of Administration; coordination and cooperation; relational strength; USA

INTRODUCTION

To an ant a lawn is a forest. Dear Reader, what is your theoretical stance? Myopia or hypermetropia? Nearsighted, farsighted, balanced, or blind? Vision of the landscape is relative to one's a priori and mentally imprinted models. Accurate vision is essential to navigating a changing reality.

Cooperative Advantage or *Competitive Advantage*? Either, neither, both or a synthesis? Are these narrow and previously arguably unchallenged theoretical views out of focus and inadequate for our current times? Some say yes, as the business system relationship topography has evolved from static to dynamic. Actors in business systems have evolved from vertically integrated entities to a panoply of disaggregated allied actors linked by relational-exchange - all engaged in a drive to achieve self-interest. Can today's dynamic environment be studied in crisp focus using yesterday's theoretical lenses? Value-creation is achieved today by a business system's simultaneously interacting to *cooperatively* expand the total value-pie and *competitively* dividing this value-pie once created.

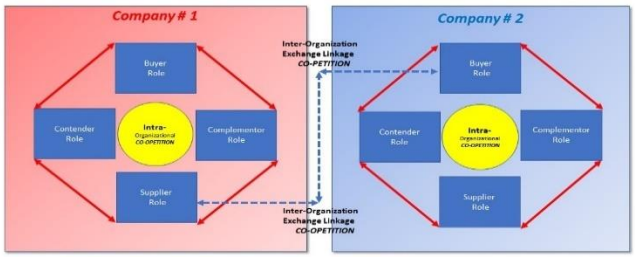

Figure 1: Value-Exchange Network
Adapted from: Fernandez et al. (2019)

A business system can be viewed as a *Value-Exchange Network* composed of multiple business entities. Each entity within the network has a definitive role-set: *Buyer, Supplier, Contender, or Complementor* (Figure 1).

Roles are activities performed from each entity's vantage point. In a network, entities connect internally, *intra-organizational*, and externally, *inter-organizational*, through *engagement links.* Linkages can connect one role with another or simultaneously connect multiple roles. To fulfill *inter-organizational* engagement linkage, each business entity internally structures and coordinates *intra-organizational* roles and activities. In Figure 1, an inter-organizational engagement link, (arrows) from Company #1 (*Supplier* role) to Company #2 (*Buyer* role), delineates the role-to-role (supplier/buyer) focus of this paper.

Thus, at any time and/or simultaneously, one or more roles (from the vantage point of engaging entities) can be in-play. Each business entity simultaneously links and engages both externally (inter-organizationally) and internally (intra-organizationally). The purpose of role interaction activities, within the *Value-Exchange Network*, is to first co-create value and then to distribute the value created. Relationships, both external and internal along these connective engagement links, are simultaneously, a tension between varying mixes of *Cooperation,* to co-create value, and for *Competition* to distribute value. This phenomenon has been termed, *Co-opetition* (Fernandez, Chiambaretto, Le Roy, & Czakon, 2019*).* Today, a business system is not war OR peace, but simultaneous *War AND Peace.*

Co-opetition is synonymous with *Relational-Exchange*. Relationships, during exchange and engagement between business entity roles, blend into a varying mixture along the cooperation/competition continuum. Entity decisions to engage are both *Strategic* (Entities decide, select, and engage with other entities) and *Tactical* (Situational – once either intra-organizational and/or inter-organization engagement is strategically underway, varying forms of "negotiation methodologies" will be deployed contingent upon the situation: *Transactional, Consultative, Collaborative, and Strategic*). (Figure 2).

This paper focuses on relational-exchange (co-opetition) engagement between two distinct roles (Figure 1) between two engaging entity companies: (1) *Supplier* role in Company # 1 – a hotel corporation with dissimilarly purposed divisions and (2) *Buyer* role in Company # 2 – another entity with a need for group meeting space. For example, one supplier hotel (within a multiple brand corporation) supplies upscale meeting venue space to an external buyer entity specifying complex and upscale product/service. Another hotel in the same multi-branded corporation might be a supplier of lower scale and less complex meeting venue space and would be linked with an external entity buyer requiring such a product/service. This is a classic buyer/seller situation.

This paper focuses on a *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy.* This strategy is only one of the four distinct *Relational-Exchange* strategies (*Transactional, Consultative, Collaborative,* and *Strategic*) that can be observed in value-exchange between a multi-branded hotel corporation engaging with a wide array of external buying entities. Figure 2 demonstrates that in a *Strategic* relational-exchange strategy, the engagement linkage and *Relationship Strength* between supplier role and buyer role is *cooperation-dominant* on a cooperation/competition continuum. This means that there is more *cooperation* in the relational-exchange mixture than *competition*. Conversely, a *Transactional* relational-exchange strategy engagement is *competition-dominant*.

Due to limited space, this paper details only the cooperation-dominant, *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy* as it is specifically applicable to hotel B2B strategic relational-exchange. This paper's detail outlines the full array of factors required for success in executing the *Strategic* strategy, as well as factors for execution failure. Each of the four distinct *Relational-Exchange* strategies have idiosyncratic requirements for successful execution; these factors will be explicated in the authors' future research.

Research question

The research question is: "What factors contribute to the success and failure of hotel B2B relational-exchange (in the USA)?"

Significance and contribution of the study

Now, to the "so what" question. With scant research on value-exchange in the hotel business and even less specifically addressing hotel B2B value-exchange, this paper provides a roadmap to understand the changing landscape. It is a *dynamic* picture of value-exchange from the perspective of self-interest roles and activities (both intra- and inter-organizational value-exchange linkages) played within the business *Value-Exchange Network*

(Figure 1). This perspective differs from earlier *static* examinations of external-to-the-firm business system entities – often viewed as a static *other*. The dynamic view accounts for actions played-out in the fulfillment of various roles both intra- and inter-organizationally. This view acknowledges that any single business entity - corporate, strategic business unit (SBU), division, or local levels, is bounded by the context of Figure 1 *roles.* All simultaneously play or engage intra-organizationally and inter-organizationally, thus forming a complex, dynamic, and holistic *Value-Exchange Network*.

The specific contribution of this paper derives from a detailed examination of one dyadic engagement link – Figure 1's arrows connecting *Company #1* with *Company #2.* The specific engagement is a linkage of one of four possible company's roles (Company 1's *supplier* role in B2B markets – in this study a hotel corporation) linked with one of a possible four roles of another company (Company 2's *buyer* role in B2B markets - in this study, a corporation purchasing group meeting space for a planned future conference). This study's resulting roadmap – the *Hotel B2B Relational-Exchange Model* (Figure 2) provides guidance to both hotel industry practitioners and scholars for a more nuanced understanding of the B2B sales – value-exchange.

This study advances theory and practice in several additional ways. Notably, it presents a rigorous model that is practically actionable, while anchored in theory (cf. Mora Cortez & Johnston, 2017). It integrates a diverse and fragmented literature in a more comprehensive whole, enhancing understanding of continually evolving B2B relational exchange (cf. Corley & Gioia, 2011; Mayer & Sparrowe, 2013). It demonstrates that Fayol's (1916 [2013]) forgotten *Theory of Administration* is still relevant in explaining a contemporary phenomenon.

The hotel business context

The USA hotel industry is the focus of this study. The USA hotel industry is preeminent in the world markets. Its estimated value in 2020 is US $672.33 billion and its forecast in 2023 is US $765.52 billion. China's hotel industry is a distant second with an estimated 2020 value of US $260.6 billion and forecast in 2023 at US $338.6 billion (cf. FitchSolutions, 2019a, b). These figures are in-line with those provided by Euromonitor (2022a, b). In the US, the Covid recovery of B2B group business is slower than B2C transient business especially in luxury and upper-upscale level properties (Euromonitor, 2022a). While, in China, the Covid recovery is hampered by ongoing government lockdowns and restrictions (Euromonitor, 2022b).

The most sophisticated hotel businesses are arguably USA based. And, the largest are corporations globally deployed and sub-divided into multiple strategic business units (SBUs), multiple branded divisions (the world's largest has 32 brands), and with each division's brand represented around the world by local hotel properties. Note: Corporate brands are usually represented on a four or five level scale – upscale luxury to downscale economy. Thus, in this paper, hotel B2B sales (relational-exchange), is viewed from a corporate vantage point – not a single local hotel vantage.

Hotels primarily sell or supply value (products/services) to two generic types of customers: (1) *Business-to-Consumer* (B2C) markets – individual customers and (2) *Business-to-Business* (B2B) markets – group customers. Hotel corporate brand divisions and representative local hotels within these divisions vary in the characteristic percentage mixes of these two types of served customers. The range of variation can be from zero percent B2B customers in an economy brand to approximate 70% B2B in a luxury brand. B2C customers are predominantly and cost-effectively acquired by non-personal means, for example through online travel agencies (OTA) such as *Expedia* or directly through corporate hotel websites. Conversely, B2B customers are more expensively acquired and mediated by personal means, for example, sales and marketing people utilizing both face-to-face (F2F) means combined with electronic communication and channels.

Hotel B2B sales is, at its core, value-exchange. Value is exchanged between suppliers and buyers. *Suppliers* include a B2B supplier salesforce, such as a key account team (*strategic* and *collaborative* relational-exchanges) or local hotel property level individual salespeople (*transactional* and *consultative* relational-exchanges). *Buyers* are a varying range of B2B meeting and convention planners and decision-makers who purchase meeting space and ancillary services from hotels and other venues (cf. McNeill, 2017). This study focuses on *one* of the possible four relational-exchange strategies (Figure 2): *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy* as executed by *Strategic* or *Key Account Manager* (title names vary*)* leading an account team. Synchronized with their counterpart, *buyer* teams, these *supplier* teams jointly execute a long-term strategic relational-exchange strategy in a coordinated way which enhances the total co-created and, eventually, distributed value (McNeill & Nienaber, 2018a; Sheth, 2017).

So, *into the weeds of hotel B2B sales*!

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The *Business-to-Business* (*B2B) sales* landscape is changing (Moncrief, 2017; Steward, Narus, Roehm, & Ritz, 2019; Storbacka, Ryals, Davies, & Nenonen, 2009). On one hand, the term, *sales,* is too narrow. The term does not fully reflect its meaning, namely *value-exchange* (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000; Fayol, 1916 [2013]; Rackham, 2012; McNeill & Nienaber 2018a). On the other hand, the broader and more accurate term, *exchange,* and particularly, *relational-exchange,* is evolving (Fernandez et al., 2019; Handfield, 2019; Steward et al., 2019). Specifically, hotel B2B relational-exchange is dramatically and in real time morphed by technological progress (Handfield, 2019; Steward et al., 2019; Yang, Jiang, & Xie, 2018; C. Yin, Goh, & Law, 2019).

An effective response to change calls for a systematic body of knowledge. In the case of (hotel) B2B relational-exchange this body of knowledge is sparse (Mora Cortez & Johnston, 2017; Rackham, 2012; Roberts & Shea, 2017; Sheth, 2017). An efficacious response to change is hampered by a longstanding *theory-practice divide* (Hadjikhani & LaPLaca, 2013; Lilien, 2016). This divide is further exacerbated by: (1) confusion in the academic literature and (2) incomplete scholarly explanations that are not translated into practical terms (McNeill & Nienaber, 2018b, 2019). Moreover, hotel B2B relational-exchange is a neglected domain of research in the both academic and practitioner literature (McNeill & Nienaber, 2018a, 2019; C. Yin et al., 2019). This omission is strikingly strange since B2B relational-exchange is a significant source of hotel revenue (cf. AHLA, 2022; McNeill & Nienaber, 2018a; 2019). The ineffectiveness and high failure rate of B2B relational-exchange restricts top-line revenue. This, in turn, inhibits hotel profitability and compromises sustainability.

Building upon the co-authors' earlier published research, this study refines their previously conceptualized *Hotel B2B Relational Exchange Model* (Figure 2*).* This model was synthesized from state-of-the-art business-to-business (B2B) sales systems practiced by the largest and selected USA hotel corporations. B2B sales are fueled by relationships and buyer/seller relationship strength and intensity in these exchanges vary depending upon idiosyncratic factors demanded by each buying/selling situation. These situations require at least four distinct relational-exchange strategies: *Transactional, Consultative, Collaborative,* and *Strategic* (McNeill, 2017; McNeill & Nienaber, 2018b, 2019).

Planning a relational-exchange strategy is one thing but execution is another. Relational-exchange efforts are reported in the literature to have a high failure rate (Fernandez et al., 2019; Hadjikhani & LaPlaca, 2013; Storbacka et al., 2009). This study attempts to answer why relational-exchange strategies succeed or fail.

B2B relational-exchange is a *cooperative corporate strategy.* The literature uses a variety of labels to identify this form of relational-exchange strategy, albeit in various structured forms. These include joint ventures, networks, collaboration, management contracts, franchising, licensing, strategic alliance, and co-opetition (cf. McNeill & Nienaber, 2019a; Seran, Pellegrin-Boucher, & Gurau, 2016). However, in this study the terminology, *cooperative corporate strategy,* does not connote direct ownership between interacting entities – for example, entities do not directly link through jointly owning each other's equity shares. B2B relational-exchange linkages in this study are voluntary engagements between business entities or formally linked by performance contracts. Here multiple entities - each possessing differing and overlapping interests - purposefully and voluntarily interact with each other. These interactions vary in relationship strengths and degree of integration (Figure 2). The purpose of these interactions is to first co-create and then to distribute value as entities pursue both mutual and individual goals. The resultant co-created value and final distribution can be economic, functional, psychological, and/or a combination (cf. McNeill & Nienaber, 2019). Thus, relational-exchange is a simultaneous embodiment, albeit with varying percentage mixtures, of cooperation and competition i.e. *co-opetition.* This view is congruent with that of Fernandez et al. (2019).

It is argued that a relational-exchange strategy, well-conceived and executed, is potentially a means of improved organizational performance for all entities participating in Figure 1's *Value-Exchange Network* (Dadfar, Dahlgaard, Brege, & Arzaghi, 2014; Fernandez et al., 2019; Le Roy & Czakon, 2016). However, the right relational-exchange strategy must be matched with the right exchange situation (Figure 2). For example, a cooperation-dominant strategy, *Strategic*, is ideally suited to complex situations, products, and services (Fernandez et al., 2019; Le Roy & Czakon, 2016; McNeill & Nienaber, 2019). Nevertheless, execution failure is always a possibility. Due to the ever-

present existence of competition, even in a cooperation-dominant relational-exchange strategy, managerial unawareness, or ignorance of this simultaneous tension between cooperation and competition frequently generates failure. Factors leading to success or failure of B2B *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy* – the focus of this paper - is now discussed.

Strategic relational-exchange strategy success factors
The first consideration in the successful execution of a strategic relational-exchange strategy is a deep understanding of the strategy at inter-organizational, intra-organizational, and individual levels. Support by top-management of all participating entities is mandatory (McNeill & Nienaber, 2018a). Accordingly, managing the strategy over the relational life cycle is critical in achieving success. This requires attention to multiple considerations at both the strategic and operational levels (Le Roy & Czakon, 2016; McNeill & Nienaber, 2018a; Seran et al., 2016). These considerations include, but are not limited to: (1) an array of stakeholders with varying roles, responsibilities, and competencies; (2) partner and team member choice; (3) organizational design; (4) organizational culture; (5) policies and procedures for governing the relationship; (6) appropriate sharing and protecting of resources, particularly information and knowledge; and (7) copacetic interpersonal relationship, especially communication and sanctions (Dadfar et al., 2014; Fawcett, McCarter, Fawcett, Webb, & Magnan, 2015; Fernandez et al, 2019; Handfield, 2019; Koponen, Julkunen, & Asai, 2019; Le Roy & Czakon, 2016; McNeill & Nienaber, 2018a). Some scholars state effective coordination is a factor leading to successful relational-exchange (cf. Fernandez et al., 2019; C. Yin et al., 2019). If any of these considerations is not properly managed, conflict arises and becomes a main source of failure.

Strategic relational-exchange strategy failure factors
General strategy execution failure in hotels, according to Köseoglu, Yazici and Okumus (2018), arise from several common deficiencies. The most prevalent factors affecting general strategy execution failure include an absence of comprehensive strategic analysis in decision making, exclusion of key stakeholders in planning, and the lack of a comprehensive strategic plan. *Specific* factors responsible for failure of *cooperative corporate strategies* (including the *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy*) are condensed into a single composite theme: When ennui sets-in and value-exchange network actors (intra- and inter-) sense a muddled cloud of dissatisfaction with the relational-exchange strategy – "everything is a mess!"

Specific factors comprising the composite theme include: (1) ambiguity with *co-opetition* intrinsic to all relational exchange – the simultaneous presence of cooperation *and* competition perplexes many; (2) interaction difficulties, including poor communication and conflict handling; (3) an unwillingness of decision-makers to accept vulnerabilities and a reluctance to make investments and take risks required to create a favorable environment for the strategy to succeed, resulting in low-trust; (4) faulty partner selection; (5) lack of top management support; (6) leadership, business acumen, and analytical skills deficits; (7) unrealistic expectations about the outcomes of the strategy; (8) unclear expectations about roles, responsibilities and accountabilities; (9) resource allocation challenges, including appropriate information and knowledge sharing; (10) ineffective governance, including stifling policies and procedures; (11) inability to cope with the dynamic nature of the strategy; (12) resistance to adapt to change; (13) inappropriate competition between partners; (14) perceived unfair distribution of value; (15) misalignment and inter-organizational adaptation/breakdown, including poor systems connectivity; (16) the cost of the strategy is higher than expected; and (17) increased stress levels for individual team members, which is already high in the hotel industry (Cygler, Sroka, Solesvik, & Dębkowska, 2018; Dadfar et al., 2014; Fawcett et al., 2015; Fernandez et al., 2019; Handfield, 2019; Koponen et al., 2019; Kumar 2014; Le Roy & Czakon, 2016; McNeill & Nienaber, 2018a; Seran et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2018; C. Yin et al., 2019). Some authors point out that absence of or misaligned coordination also causes the failure of *cooperative corporate strategies,* such as a B2B *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy* (cf. Abou-Shouk, 2018).

In sum, success and failure factors either advance or restrict cooperation and coordination that are essential in B2B *Strategic Relational-Exchange* - a *cooperative-dominant* strategy.

Structural dimensions of organization to execute strategy
Both cooperation and coordination can be improved by the *structural dimensions of organization*, which simultaneously improve strategy execution (cf. Skivington & Daft, 1991). The *structural dimensions of organization* consist of two interrelated elements, namely, *framework* and *processes*, which enhance coordination and cooperation, respectively. *Framework* presents structure, which specifies roles and responsibilities, stipulating required competencies, clarifying accountability, articulating policies and procedures, and establishes systems,

which boost resource allocation. *Processes* orchestrate interaction, specifically communication and sanctions. Sanctions are incentives or penalties impacting relationships among participating entities. *Structural dimensions of organization,* thus, is a mechanism top management uses to create an environment that is favorable or, unintentionally, unfavorable for strategy execution. Coordination and cooperation, as general management tasks, are part of Fayol's (1916[2013]) *Theory of Administration*.

Coordination, in terms of Fayol's theory, aims to harmonize the activities of a business to facilitate its functioning and its ultimate success. Coordination provides in all the necessary requirements, in appropriate amounts to promote decisive and efficacious participation amongst all actors within the *Value-Exchange Network* (Figure 1). These requirements are contingently provided according to changing circumstances to ensure organizational success. Coordination requires that actors and their activities within the *Value-Exchange Network* are apportioned in proper positions and proper proportions which implies adapting means to ends. Effective coordination requires clear communication based on accurate and timely information, which is integral to cooperation.

Cooperation originates from the general management task, termed *command,* in Fayol's (1916[2013]) *Theory of Administration.* Cooperation aims to activate or set into motion the business, or relationship. This task is assigned to persons in the various positions of accountability across the organizations. Cooperation endeavors to optimize the talents of every actor in the *Value-Exchange Network* in pursuit of organizational success. Successful cooperation demands personal and general management/leadership competencies. These include, but are not limited to: (1) a thorough knowledge of the situationally appropriate relational-exchange strategy agreement and governance structures that obligate the organization and its employees, including those participating in the relational-exchange agreement/s; (2) selecting and deselecting the right people to participate in the relational-exchange agreement/contract; (3) ensuring that unity, innovation and loyalty prevail among actors within the *Value-Exchange Network*; and (4) allotting rewards and/or punishments. Effective functioning organizations inspire cohesive and aligned actor behavior.

METHODOLOGY

The model guiding interviews. This paper is part of an ongoing and larger iterative research project. The *Hotel B2B Relational-Exchange Model* (Figure 2) was developed in earlier studies by the authors (McNeill & Nienaber, 2018b). An abbreviated and adapted version is presented here as it was shared with interviewees to guide each interview. The model is briefly explained below.

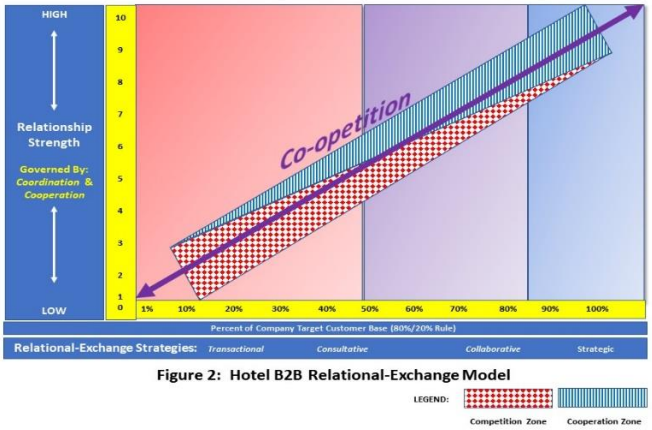

Figure 2: Hotel B2B Relational-Exchange Model

Relationship strength. On the Y-axis, Figure 2, from low (*competition-dominant*) to high (*cooperation-dominant)* indicates the rising (intra- and inter-organizational) complexity and interaction of coordination and cooperation between actors in the *Value-Exchange Network* (Figure 1). *Relationship Strength* along the Y-axis is governed by characteristics and activities – as explained in the previous literature section – necessary to achieve any indicated level of *relationship strength*.

Relational-exchange strategy. On the X-axis, Figure 2, the four distinct *Relational-Exchange Strategies* are located.

Integrative two-way arrow. This arrow indicates the presence of *co-opetition* - varying mixtures of cooperation and competition that fluctuate in mixture percentages up and down the two-way arrow. For example, in the middle of this arrow, cooperation and competition are in an approximate 50%/50% state.

Reading the model. The upper-right end of the arrow indicates that *co-opetition* is *cooperative-dominant*. This might be a 95% cooperation to a 5% competition mix. Additionally, intersecting a line drawn from the upper-right end of the arrow to the Y-axis (Relationship Strength), indicates that there is a high and complex interaction of coordination and cooperation mechanisms in play. Also, simultaneously drawing a line from the upper-right end of the arrow to the X-axis, indicates that the appropriate *Relational-Exchange Strategy* to be applied is a *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy.*

DESIGN OF THIS STUDY

Given a paucity of studies on this topic, an *exploratory qualitative case design* was deployed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Eisenhardt, 1989; R. Yin, 2014). This approach is appropriate for investigating complex phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Eisenhardt, 1989) such as relational-exchange. A purposive sample of 13 senior hotel industry practitioners, in the USA, were selected. These practitioners are functionally involved in and familiar with B2B relational-exchange. These participants had the best possible information on the topic and contributed to generating valid conclusions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; R. Yin, 2014). The average tenure of practitioners is approximately 25 years. There is no formal norm for an appropriate sample size in qualitative research although scholars suggest guidelines: For case studies, one to 10 and for interviews, three to 12 (Eisenhardt, 1989; Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). However, scholars are unanimous that interviews should be conducted until saturation occurs – i.e., no substantial new information emerges. Thus, the 13 selected practitioners conform with suggested norms for qualitative research.

Data were collected by means of *semi-structured interviews* and met ethical requirements. Semi-structured interviews provided an opportunity for in-depth understanding (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Guest et al., 2006; R. Yin, 2014) of the success and failure factors of B2B relational-exchange. The interviews were conducted at a time and place convenient to interviewees. Interviews averaged approximately one-half hour each. The interviews were conducted from 2017 through 2019. To gain insight from relevant industry participants, open-ended questions explored factors affecting B2B successes and failures as related to the context of relational-exchange strategies and relationship (interaction/engagement) strengths (Figure 2). Germane secondary sources augmented the researchers' interview notes to ensure trustworthiness (cf. Denzin & Lincoln, 2017).

The data collected were *content analyzed* to reveal the meaning of words and themes (Gibbs, 2018) and integration and interpretation of the themes (Gibbs, 2018). Thus, the research is *trustworthy*. It utilized a tried and tested research approach, the design and methods are appropriate to the research question, and the authors' analysis and interpretation is plausible (cf. Denzin & Lincoln, 2017).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Due to limited space, this paper presents condensed and key interviewee observations versus many direct quotes.

After the Figure 2 model was visually and verbally explained, the interviewees agreed that it accurately portrayed a picture of how the top USA hotel corporations structure their B2B relational-exchange strategies. They specifically named their own corporation's strategy equivalents: "Country-level Key Accounts" teams and "Global Key Accounts" teams which correlate with *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy*. They noted that effective execution of all four strategies (Figure 2) is only possible for resource-rich hotel corporations. Other less resource endowed corporations must select and niche into one or more strategy versus attempting to execute all four strategies.

The interviewees mentioned that these concurrent relational-exchange strategies need to be balanced according to an overall corporate strategy guided by policies. For example, top hotel corporations view B2B customers through the 80%/20% Pareto principle. *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy* focuses on the 20% of possible customers that drive 80% of the revenue. This requires using expensive face-to-face interaction means using key account management at the Country and Global levels. The key account manager interacts intra- and inter-organizationally

with relevant stakeholders. Top hotel corporations also address the 80% of possible customers that drive 20% of revenue. The 80% are cost effectively engaged using electronic and *transactional* relational-exchange strategies.

Interviewees also stressed that to facilitate cooperation and coordination, many traditionally *siloed* functions have converged and aligned: Sales and Marketing, Revenue Management/Optimization, and Customer Service/Success. And alignment is essential given simultaneous execution of the four relational-exchange strategies. Stakeholder alignment, cooperation, and coordination is especially important since the overall hotel corporate strategy is to eliminate a common complaint of most hotel B2B sales customers, "Why are so many different units of the same selling hotel corporation contacting me – I want a single contact; I'm too busy for this incompetence."

Interviewees mentioned that selection of targeted *Buyers*, especially the highly targeted 20% in *strategic* relational-exchange strategies, are carefully selected, by pre-defined criteria, and based on how well they fit the hotel's (*Supplier*/Seller organization) objectives.

Interviewees opined that exchange relationships aim at profit optimization, rather than revenue optimization. This requires close cooperation between the roles of hotel property-level revenue management and sales. Pricing, a legacy function of sales and marketing, remains today a point of contention (albeit slowly diminishing) between sales and revenue management. Some interviewees suggested that cross-training – sales and revenue management – might improve this situation. In addition, given the increasing computerization of the *Value-Exchange Network,* especially when executing a *Strategic Relational-Exchange Strategy*, more analytical skills are needed by all actors.

The responses of interviewees indicate that they understood the strategy of the organization (Figure 2) and the requirements for its successful execution. Observations included specific reference to roles and competencies of team members and policies – these form part of the *framework dimension of organization* and enhance *coordination*. In addition, interviewees mentioned the importance of both intra- and inter-organizational interaction, between and among the *Value-Exchange Network* (Figure 1). These form part of the *processes dimension of organization* and enhance *cooperation*.

CONCLUSIONS

The research question was asked: "What factors contribute to the success and failure of hotel B2B relational-exchange (in the USA)?"

Knowledgeable hotel industry interviewees conceptually validated the Figure 2 model. Regarding the success or failure factors in executing a *Strategic Relationship-Exchange* strategy, they partially commented on a portion of the full panoply of factors explicated in this study's literature review. Interviewees generally agreed with the key factors of successful execution. Both intra- and inter-organizational cooperation and coordination they observed to be crucial in successful *Strategic Relational-Exchange*. Cooperation and coordination are the mechanisms to execute strategy (Skivington &Daft, 1991) and are part of Fayol's (1916[2013]) *Theory of Administration*.

A *theoretical implication* of this research is that Fayol's (1916[2013]) *Theory of Administration* is still applicable. A *practical implication* derives from the refined *Hotel B2B Relational-Exchange Model* (Figure 2). Hotel managers have a map guiding them as they adjust to constant change.

The *significance* of this study includes that B2B sales comprise significant top-line revenue to the large hotel corporations studied and many smaller hotel corporations and independent hotels emulate these leaders. Improved B2B sales knowledge is a business strategy enhancer. The study adds insights for both practitioners and researchers.

The *limitations* of this study include a focus on the largest USA based hotel corporations. Also, the study interviewed limited *roles*/*functions* (sales and marketing people, executives, revenue managers) involved with the hotel B2B exchange/selling situation. Thus, it is *recommended* that the study be replicated with wider and more varied *role/function* interviewees. Also, all four of the identified *Relational-Exchange* strategies need to be examined for success and failure factors.

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CONSUMER ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS TOWARDS HOTEL GREEN PRACTICES: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL PROPOSAL

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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a conceptual model to identify the determinants of the attitudes and behaviors of consumers towards hotel environmental practices. This framework is based on the principles of the Expectancy-Value model. The attitude construct plays a central role in consumer behavior theories, and a great number of studies have focused on the structure and determinants of brand evaluation, as well as on persuasion and other approaches to modify individuals' attitudes. However, in the hospitality context, a limited number of studies are grounded on the EV model to explain consumers' attitudes and behaviors towards hotel environmental practices. Therefore, the proposed conceptual model considers that customers' attitudes towards environmental initiatives adopted in the hospitality industry are determined by customers' daily ecological behaviors, customers' perceptions of hotel environmental practices, and hotel green image. These attitudes, in turn, influence behavioral intentions which are, in the current study: the intention to visit, to recommend, to pay a premium price for hotel green initiatives, and the intention to adopt pro-environmental behaviors when staying at a hotel. It is also hypothesized that actual customers' pro-environmental behaviors during the hotel stay are positively influenced by customers' daily ecological behaviors, and by intention to adopt pro-environmental behaviors when staying at a hotel. In a future research, this model will be tested by using a sample of hotel customers, confirming, or not, its validity and suitability. The data will be gathered by means of a questionnaire, including the several constructs mentioned above.

Key Words: Conceptual model; consumer behavior; hotel pro-environmental practices; attitudes.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing concern with environmental aspects is one of the challenges the travel and tourism industries face. Tourism businesses, and particularly the hotel sector, aware of the effects of their activities on the natural environment, are progressively implementing environmentally friendly practices and embracing sustainability through operational and corporate strategies (González-Rodríguez et al., 2020; Bohdanowicz et al., 2011). The rise in energy prices, regulatory pressure, consumer expectations are, among other aspects, pushing hotel operators to prioritize environmental sustainability (Martínez et al., 2019).

On the other hand, as consumers are more conscious, interested and strict about environmental protection (ABTA – The Travel Association, 2022; Horng et al., 2017), it is important to understand the effect of hotel environmental practices on customer attitudes and behaviors. Since consumers' commitment and support is crucial in encouraging the adoption of such practices (Kim et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2012), more insights into how hotel customers perceive and what determines their attitudes and behaviors regarding hotel green practices are needed.

Despite substantial literature on the subject, customers' assessment of hotel green initiatives is unclear (e.g., Baker et al., 2014; Dimara et al., 2017), and customers' adoption of pro-environmental behaviors (PEBs) during their stay, intention to revisit, to recommend and to pay a premium price remains fragmented (e.g., Chen et al., 2019; Han et al., 2011). Additionally, the literature exposed weaknesses in earlier studies, specifically discrepancies between consumers' attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Han et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2010). This model aims at providing a more accurate assessment of consumers' behaviors towards hotel green practices, expecting to overcome the intention-behavior gap.

This paper provides a theoretical foundation for the empirical study of consumer attitudes and behaviors towards hotel environmental practices. The following sections include an overview of previous work, the methodology employed, a thorough presentation of the model, the relationships between the constructs, and a brief discussion of the model utility.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature analysis led to the conclusion that around 80% of the research is dedicated to the determinants of consumers' behaviors towards hotel environmental practices. It was found that, from the analyzed publications, 81% of these determinants are more linked to internal variables, and 19% to external variables. This conclusion is in line with the findings of Gao et al.'s (2016) meta-analysis. According to Engel et al. (1995), internal drivers are related to each individual characteristic and they are generally classified into two domains: (i) rational, which is based on logical reasoning or thinking; and (ii) emotional, which is based on personal feelings. External drivers are a result of the interaction with the external factors related to social environment (e.g., culture, family or reference groups), to marketing stimuli (e.g., product/service attributes, price and communication), or other stimuli (e.g., politic, technological). A comprehensive overview of concepts related to consumer internal and external drivers of pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors, is provided by several authors (e.g., Ajzen, 1991, 2005; Blackwell et al., 2001; Han, 2015; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Since attitudes are a relevant component in most of consumer behavior theories/models (e.g., Expectancy-value model, Theory of Reasoned Action, Theory of Planned Behavior), attitudes are, by far, the most researched drivers identified in the literature.

Despite a considerable number of theories of consumer behavior, the decision-making process is not straightforward, particularly in the environmental context (Jackson, 2005). Consumer behaviors towards hotel green initiatives have been researched under a diversity of theoretical models, most borrowed from theories in social and environmental psychology (Passafaro, 2020). Among theories, extended theoretical models, or a combination of theories, the literature review identified forty-two different theoretical basis. Still, it is beyond the scope of this research to analyze them.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and its extended models, is the prevalent theory identified in the literature review related to consumer behavior towards hotel environmental practices (e.g., Agag & Colmekcioglu, 2020; Bashir et al., 2019; Han & Kim, 2010; Teng et al., 2018). TPB is one of the most widely used social-psychological models within tourism, leisure and hospitality management research, in terms of feasibility, methodological suitability, and validity (Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020). According to Chen and Tung (2014), TPB provides a relevant framework for researching attitudes and consumer behavioral intentions towards hotel environmental measures, as it would be the first step in predicting whether consumers would choose green hotels. This theory has been consistently applied to predict micro levels of consumer behavior, focusing on specific consumer attitudes. For example, several authors used attitude towards staying at a green hotel to predict intention to visit hotels that adopt practices to protect the environment (e.g., Muniandy et al., 2019; Nimri et al., 2020) or to recommend green hotels (Jiang and Gao, 2019). Despite the relevant framework provided by the TPB for this field of research, Gao et al. (2016) suggested that it might not be beneficial to continue researching consumers' attitudes and behaviors under identical theoretical frameworks. Many studies have mentioned TPB limitations in explaining and predicting human behavior (Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020). The relevance of other variables related to attitudes and behaviors must be considered, since the intentions to revisit, to recommend hotel services and willingness to pay a premium price significantly impact hotel revenue, image, and reputation.

The present research is grounded on Fishbein's (1963) theory of attitude. According to this theory, afterwards renamed the EV model (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), individuals' evaluations of, or attitudes towards an object are determined by their beliefs about the object (Ajzen, 2012). This reasoning is consistent with the cognitive tenor of

most current social psychology theories to explain human behavior (Ajzen, 2008; Solomon et al., 2016). The most widely accepted theory of attitude development depicts the relationship between beliefs about an object and attitude towards the object in terms of an EV model (Ajzen, 2008). The terms "object" and "attribute" broadly to describe any distinct aspect of a person's environment. Thus, the EV model suggests that a person's overall attitude towards an object, such as a brand, a product or a service, is determined by the subjective values or evaluations of the attributes associated with the brand/product/service, as well as by the strength of these associations (Ajzen, 2008).

In the hospitality context, although few scholars have mentioned the EV model (e.g., Lee et al., 2011; Trang et al., 2019), several studies are grounded on the relationship between beliefs, attitudes and intentions to determine PEBs (e.g. Barber, 2014; Millar & Baloglu; 2011; González-Rodríguez & Díaz-Fernández, 2020). The study of Lee et al. (2011) aimed at identifying factors that influence consumers' eco-friendly decision-making process, and analyzing the relationships between these factors and behavioral intentions (visit intention and word-of-mouth intention). Trang et al. (2019) identified green hotel attributes and determinants that influence customers' intentions. Both studies confirmed the positive effect of perception of green hotel attributes on intentions. Specifically, expected outcomes for staying at a green hotel positively influenced visit intention and word-of-mouth intention (Lee et al., 2011), and pro-environmental perceived values positively affected the customer's intention to visit a green hotel and intention to practice environmentally friendly actions during hotel stay (Trang et al., 2019). Therefore, this study extends the original framework of the EV model, proposing the inclusion of critical constructs to maintain the fundamental process of attitude-intention-behavior.

METHODS

This study applied a systematic literature review – performed according to the procedures defined by Pickering et al. (2015) - to compile and analyze the existing knowledge on consumer behavior towards hotel green practices. A qualitative research approach based on content analysis (Saunders et al., 2019) was conducted allowing, among other aspects, to identify: i) the research gaps; ii) the main factors influencing consumer attitudes and behaviors; iii) and the main theories, and conceptual models used in this research field.

Attitudes and behaviors hotel customers regarding environmental initiatives were based on conceptualizations of consumers' pro-environmental behaviors, perceptions of hotel green practices, attitudes towards patronizing a green hotel, and behavioral intentions. In measuring the constructs, i.e., internationalizing the concepts, to make them measurable (Hair et al., 2014), their dimensions were determined and then transformed into observable components. Hence, the measurement of the constructs of the research model comprised the identification of concepts, dimensions, variables, scales, and relevant sources for the questionnaire development.

This model will be empirically tested by administering a survey questionnaire to hotel customers, and then examined through multi-variate analysis methods.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The conceptual model (Figure 1) considers that customers' attitudes towards environmental initiatives adopted in the hotel sector are determined by customers' daily ecological behaviors, perceptions of hotel environmental practices, and hotel green image. These attitudes, in turn, influence behavioral intentions which are, in the current study: the intention to visit, to recommend, to pay a premium price for hotel green initiatives, and the intention to adopt pro-environmental behaviors when staying at a hotel. It is also hypothesized that actual customers' pro-environmental behaviors during hotel stay are positively influenced by customers' daily ecological behaviors, and intention to adopt pro-environmental behaviors when staying at a hotel. Actual customers' PEBs during their hotel stay are also analyzed as they are crucial to overcome the intention-behavior gap identified in the literature review (e.g., Han et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2010).

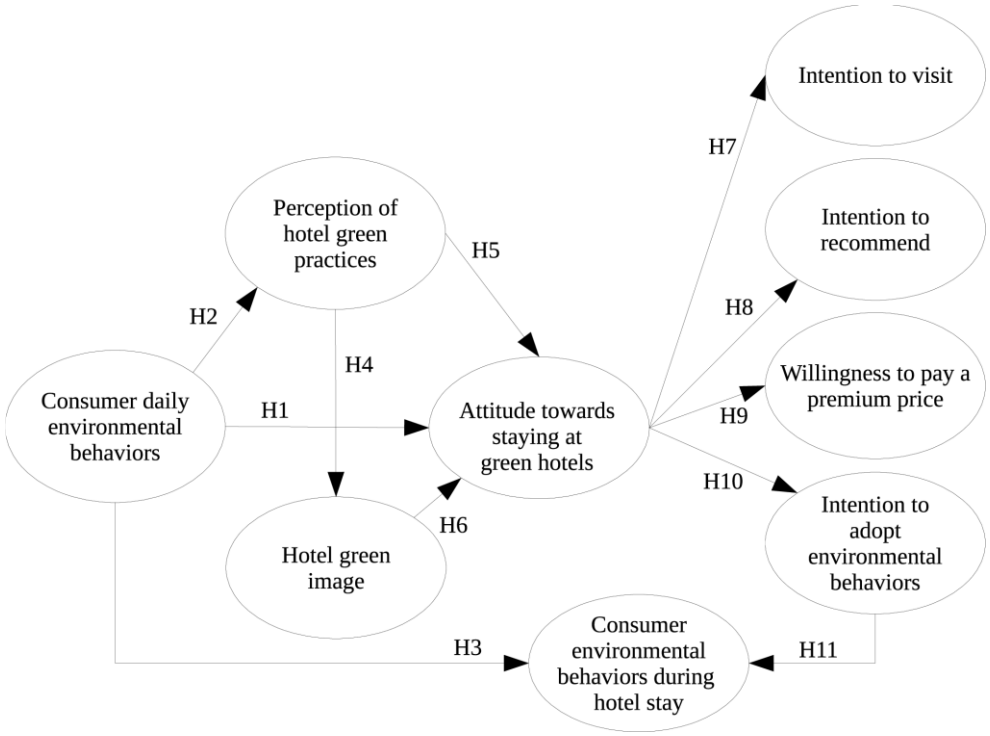

Figure 1: Conceptual model: customers' environmental behaviors towards green hotels

Consumers' daily pro-environmental behavior
The construct of consumers' daily PEBs analyses the effect of the habit of performing these behaviors on attitudes towards green hotels, and PEBs while staying at a hotel. This construct refers to daily actions that aim at minimizing human activities negative impact on the natural environment (e.g., reducing resource consumption). When an act is performed, the occurrence of previous experience exposes the power of habit and will influence future behavior when performed in a consistent context (Krosnik & Petty, 1995; Lam & Hsu, 2004).

Individuals' habits or household routines, along with other factors (e.g., infrastructure), can determine their PEBs (Stern, 2000). These daily habits reinforce the consistency of an individual's beliefs, feelings and behaviors. In the research field of consumer PEB, it is acknowledged that genuine environmental concern may be shown in everyday life, with customers who regularly engage in PEBs being more inclined to commit to green purchasing (e.g., Laroche et al., 2001; Paço & Raposo, 2010). According to Ajzen (2008), an attitudinal expression of environmental concern is the most common explanatory construct in PEBs. As a result, it is suggested that the level of environmental concern, translated into daily PEBs, significantly influences customers' attitudes towards green hotels. Likewise, as not all preferences are constructive, it is plausible that consumers will have stable preferences for some products or services when they are familiar and experienced with the product or service (Bettman et al., 2008). It is suggested that customers who frequently engage in pro-environmental behaviors will have supportive attitudes towards green practices and green hotels (Jiang & Gao, 2019).

Research in the hotel industry has demonstrated that the frequent evocation of an attitude and frequency of past behavior substantially affected behavioral intentions (e.g., Han, 2020; Moscardo, 2019; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). The study by Jiang and Gao (2019) found that daily PEB significantly influenced customers' attitude towards green practices. However, as limited empirical evidence exists on the influence of customers' daily PEBs on attitude towards green hotels, more evidence is needed. Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated:
H1: Consumers' pro-environmental behavior in everyday life positively influences the attitude towards green hotels.

Consumers' daily PEB is also associated with a greater predisposition to recognize and value hotel green initiatives (e.g., Millar et al., 2012; Prud'homme & Raymond, 2013). For instance, Millar et al. (2012) confirmed that the

greater the number of green activities performed at home, the greater the importance placed on green attributes. Prud'homme and Raymond (2013) found that individuals' responsible behavior at home influenced their hotel selection criteria, satisfaction, and intentions to return and recommend. Therefore, the current research assumes that consumers' daily PEB may determine individuals' perceptions of hotels green practices. In light of these observations, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H2: Consumers having more pro-environmental behaviors in everyday life tend to perceive better hotel green practices.

In the hospitality industry, consumers demonstrate their PEBs mostly by purchasing their stay in tourism accommodations that implement environmental practices, and also by cooperating with them (Preziosi et al., 2019). Therefore, in addition to consumers' PEBs on a daily basis, the conceptual model also analyses consumers' PEBs during a hotel stay, as it deems that they are this to be relevant to the research purpose.

It is expected that consumers who have daily PEBs will be more prone to adopt these behaviors during their hotel stay. For example, adopting these behaviors in everyday life positively influenced towel reuse behavior according to several authors (e.g., Dimara et al., 2017; Georgescu & Herman, 2020; Han et al, 2018). However, research suggests an inconsistency between customers' stated environmental intentions and their actual behavior (Barber et al. 2012; Bergin-Seers & Mair, 2009). Different reasons may explain this discrepancy. Regardless of consumers' stated purchase intentions, they may be more or less inclined to trade-off some attributes of value and quality for an eco-friendly product or service, depending on the product/service (Barber et al., 2012). Baker et al. (2014), and Miao and Wei (2013a) also confirmed that customers behave with greater environmental responsibility at home in a hotel. While hotel customers may be willing to implement PEBs during their stay, they may not be willing to forego convenience or accept lower levels of comfort and luxury (Manaktola & Jauhari 2007). Standard green practices, such as linen reuse programs, detract the "pampering experience" (Baker et al., 2014, p. 90). Hence, the third hypothesis is suggested:
H3: Consumers' pro-environmental behavior in everyday life positively affects customers' environmental behavior during their hotel stay.

Perception of hotel green practices
Perception can be defined as the transformation of information acquired from the environment into experiences of objects, events, sounds, tastes, and other sensations (Roth, 1986). This dynamic process that continuously selects, organizes, and interprets the information provided by our senses, enables individuals to instantaneously understand the meaning of objects and stimuli they encounter (VanRullen & Thorpe, 2001). The mechanisms in which objects are perceived are subjective, as they are influenced by existing beliefs, attitudes, and previous experiences (Jansson-Boyd, 2010). According to Zeithaml (1988, p. 14), perceived value is defined as "the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given (...)". Although what is received varies among consumers, the value represents a trade-off of the most important attributes that consumers perceive in the product/service relative to the sacrifice they perceive by expending money, time or effort (Zeithaml, 1988). This holistic concept is used to measure consumers' cognitive and utilitarian perceptions related to the acquisition/consumption of a product/service. Since a positive perceived value is associated with the perception of a product/service high value, it may generate a good experience which, in turn, may develop a favorable attitude towards that product/service (Hwang & Hyun, 2017; Lyu & Hwang, 2017). Hence, it is expected that a positive perception of hotel green attributes (a cognitive component of attitude) will positively influence other components of attitudes.

It is widely acknowledged that by making a concerted effort to improve customers' environmental perceptions, the value of a company would increase, favorably influencing or reinforcing the company overall image in customers' minds (Hartmann & Ibáñẽz, 2006). The hospitality literature shows that customers' perceptions of hotel green practices also influence the hotel image. Martínez Garcia de Leaniz et al. (2018) confirmed that a positive perception of hotel environmental initiatives enhances the green image of certified hotels. But this positive effect is not limited to certified hotels, as evidenced by González-Rodríguez et al. (2020). Notwithstanding, as the number of studies that analyze the relationship between perceptions of environmental practices and the hotel image is considered insufficient, the following hypothesis is suggested:
H4: Perception of hotel green practices positively influence the hotel green image.

In the existing literature, environmental attitude is commonly understood as an attitude towards the value of environmental protection (Lee, 2009). Therefore, consumers who perceive more value in products/services with green attributes, will have a more positive attitude regarding these products/services (Chen, 2015). In the hotel industry, consumer's perception of hotel environmental initiatives has been researched as an antecedent of customer satisfaction (e.g., Merli et al., 2019; Moise et al., 2019; Yusof et al., 2017), which has been understood as an essential incentive for their intentions and, consequently, their PEBs. On the other hand, the positive influence of green practices is not universally acknowledged in the literature. Kasim (2004a) found that customers were uninterested in the environmental attributes when choosing a hotel. Some non-green hotel characteristics were shown to be preferred by tourists over ecologically friendly alternatives (Kasim, 2004b). Furthermore, to the authors' best knowledge, few studies have researched the effects of the importance of hotel environmental practices on attitudes towards green hotels. The study of Trang et al. (2019), did not support the positive influence of a pro-environmental perceived value on a pro-environmental attitude.

Since these findings contradict the assumption that customers' attitudes towards green hotels are based on the evaluation of product attributes (Chen, 2015; Robinot & Giannelloni, 2010), it is relevant to analyze the relationship between perception of hotel green practices and attitude towards green hotels. Sustained on the theoretical EV model (Fishbein, 1963), consumers have positive or negative feelings towards green hotels due to their cognitive expectations related to the perceived value of hotel green attributes. Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is derived:
H5: Perception of hotel green practices positively influence the attitude towards staying at green hotels.

Hotel green image
Hotel green image is another cognitive component of attitude. Corporate image, often known as organizational or institutional image, is one of the most relevant intangible assets influencing consumer behavior (Han et al., 2009; González-Rodríguez & Diaz-Fernández, 2020; Penny, 2007). *Green brand image* is defined as a set of brand perceptions in a consumer's mind linked to environmental commitments and concerns (Chen, 2010). Thus, a hotel green image can be described as customers' perceptions of hotel environmental responsibility, comprising functional, symbolic and experiential benefits (Park et al., 1986). The concept of the green image has become particularly relevant because customers are more conscious of the impact of environmental problems. Hence, hotel businesses adopt environmentally friendly initiatives, and affiliate with environmental organizations to achieve a high level of green certification and promote their green image (Yadav et al., 2016; Trang et al., 2019).

Within the hospitality research field, corporate image is one of the most common constructs because it influences customers' attitudes and behavioral responses to products/services (e.g., Gao et al., 2016; Martínez et al., 2019). Several authors have analyzed the effect of hotel image on customer satisfaction (e.g., Martínez, 2015; Yarimoglu & Gunay, 2020). However, the focus has been on the influence of a hotel green image on customers' intentions and buying behaviors. The positive influence of hotel green image on the intention to visit or revisit an environment-friendly hotel was supported by numerous scholars (e.g., Chung, 2020; González-Rodríguez et al., 2020; Tanford et al., 2020). Han et al. (2011) and Martínez et al. (2019) also found the positive effect of a green image on customers' intention to recommend and willingness to pay a premium price for hotels with environmental practices. However, few studies have analyzed the effect of green image on attitude towards staying at green hotels. One exception is the study of Han (2020), which uses the image of green purchases as a predictor of attitude towards green purchases. But the items used by this author to measure the green image construct are not the ones applied by several studies (e.g., González-Rodríguez et al., 2020; Martínez, 2015; Wu et al., 2016), which intend to capture the reputation and the credibility concepts. Considering these observations, more research on the relationship between green hotel image and attitudes towards green hotels is required. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H6: Hotel green image positively influence the attitude towards green hotels.

Attitude towards green hotels and behavioral intentions
In the research field of hospitality, customers' attitudes towards green hotels are an important determinant of purchasing decisions and related behaviors (Baker et al., 2014; Line & Hanks, 2015). Customers' attitudes towards green hotels are formed based on their evaluation of product /service distinctive attributes and their emotions towards the patronage of green hotels, which contribute to the overall understanding and experience. Many studies have analyzed customers' attitudes regarding green hotels (e.g., Baker et al., 2014; Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007; Yarimoglu & Gunay, 2020). Nevertheless, some of these studies do not analyze attitudes towards a specific behavior, which could compromise the ability to predict the specific behavior under investigation, such as the intention to stay

at a green hotel. According to Ajzen (1991), people tend to have favorable attitudes when they are more inclined to engage in that particular behavior.

Behavioral intentions, when properly measured, are one of the most important determinants in predicting consumer behavior (Ajzen, 2005). Intentions to buy a specific product are presumably frequently employed as substitutes for behavioral measures. The predictive validity of behavioral intentions has been proven in numerous research (Ajzen, 2008). Therefore, building favorable consumer intentions is a critical goal for hospitality businesses, as they will lead to customer loyalty, which results in higher revenue (Han & Back., 2008; Han et al., 2019). Customer loyalty is the commitment to repurchase or re-patronize a product/service, ensuring consistency in the future of the same brand, regardless of situational influences or marketing strategies (Oliver, 1999, p. 42). Scholars have researched consumer behavioral intentions by analyzing three key dimensions: the intention to purchase/repurchase products or services; the intention to recommend the company products/services; and the intention to pay more for these products/services (Gao et al., 2016; Zeithaml et al., 1996).

Consistent with previous studies, in this research, intentions refer to hotel customers' intentions to visit a green hotel, intention to engage in positive word-of-mouth, willingness to pay a premium price for green hotel practices, and intention to adopt PEBs during their hotel stay. Following the research line of several scholars (e.g. Chen & Tung, 2014; Han et al., 2015), this research model analyses the relationship between customers' attitudes towards patronizing hotels with environmental practices (a cognitive and affective component of attitudes) and behavioral intentions (a conative component of attitudes).

Among all behavioral intentions, visit intention is the variable that has attracted the most research interest. Therefore, different determinants of visit intention were identified in the literature review, such as consumers' behavioral beliefs, environmental values, subjective norms and perception of hotel green practices. However, attitude towards staying at a green hotel was the most influential determinant of consumers' visit/revisit intention. Several studies supported that attitude towards visiting/revisiting a green hotel positively influences the visit/revisit intention (e.g., Agag & Colmekcioglu, 2020; Ahn & Kwon, 2020; Chuang et al., 2018; Jiang & Gao, 2019; Yarimoglu & Gunay, 2020). Considering these observations, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H7: Attitude towards green hotels positively influence the intention to visit green hotels.

The intention to recommend or to spread word-of-mouth (WOM) is commonly described as interpersonal communication among consumers (Gao et al., 2016). Nowadays, WOM is particularly prominent in social media (Mohammed & Al-Swidi, 2019). Customers' endorsement of environmental practices is crucial to foster the adoption of such practices in the hotel sector. Therefore, customers' intention to recommend green hotels has been widely researched (e.g., Chen et al., 2019; Preziosi et al., 2019; Tanford et al., 2020). However, most studies focused on the influence of perception of hotel green practices, hotel green image, customers' environmental values, and customers' satisfaction on WOM intention. The positive influence of attitude towards visiting a green hotel on WOM intention was supported by Jiang and Gao (2019), but more evidence is needed to support this relationship. Thus, the following hypothesis is put forth:
H8: Attitude towards green hotels positively influence the intention to recommend green hotels.

The determinants of customer's willingness to pay a premium price (WPPP) when staying at a green hotel have been widely researched. This subject is of great interest to hotel businesses, because a better understanding of the aspects that influence customers' WPPP could, for instance, enhance the effectiveness of hotel communication strategies. However, WPPP intention for green hotel practices produced inconclusive results. Some studies support that consumers are prepared to pay an extra price (e.g., Han et al., 2011; Kang et al., 2012; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2018), while others demonstrate the opposite (e.g., Han & Chan, 2013; Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007) or produced mixed results. For instance, Baker et al. (2014) confirmed the positive effect of consumers' environmental values on WPPP, but perceptions of luxury and comfort attributes have the opposite influence. Considering that few studies have analyzed the relationship between attitudes towards staying at green hotels and WPPP intention, this study suggests the research hypothesis:
H9: Attitude towards green hotels positively influence the willingness to pay a premium price at green hotels.

The research model also analyses the effect of attitude towards staying at green hotels on customers' intention to cooperate with green hotel practices during their stay. On the other hand, an individual who declares an intention to act is more likely to do so than someone who does not express such intention (Choi et al., 2009; Lee & Moscardo,

2005). The intention has also been linked to PEB, as evidenced in several studies (e.g., Kaiser et al., 1999; Han et al., 2011). Few authors have examined the relationship between attitude towards staying at green hotels and customers' intention to adopt green hotel practices during their stay. One of the exceptions is the research of Teng et al. (2018), which found a positive influence of between these variables. Most studies have analyzed consumers' intention to behave in an environmental way from different perspectives, particularly considering factors such as consumers' environmental values and beliefs, and green marketing. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H10: Attitude towards green hotels positively influence the intention to contribute to the implementation of the requested green hotel initiatives.

Intention to adopt environmental behaviors has a positive effect on customers' environmental behavior performed during hotel stay
Hospitality research has evidenced that guests who are more willing to engage in PEBs are more likely to acquire future positive intentions towards green hotels (e.g., Ham & Han, 2013; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2018; Verma & Chandra, 2018). Therefore, it is suggested that consumers' intention to implement PEBs – such as reusing towels or saving on energy by turning down temperature controls when leaving their room – will lead to adopting PEBs in future hotel stays. For example, Baca- Motes et al. (2013) demonstrated that when customers made a brief but explicit commitment at check-in and received a lapel pin to indicate their commitment, they were over 25% more likely to hang at least one towel for reuse, and the overall number of towels hung increased by over 40%. This result demonstrates how a well-designed intervention – in this case, appealing to customers' commitment – can significantly influence consumer PEBs. The determinants of customers' PEBs during their stay are explored by other researchers, focusing essentially on the influence of communication strategies (e.g., Gössling et al., 2019; Terrier & Marfaing, 2015). Furthermore, it is also acknowledged that most studies examined a specific behavior, focusing largely on towel reuse. Therefore, it is relevant to analyze other customers' PEBs. This study looks into several dimensions of customers' PEBs during their hotel stay (mobility and transportation, energy and water conservation, waste avoidance, and consumerism) to analyze if they are influenced by their intention to adopt such behaviors during their stay. Thus, it is suggested the hypothesis:
H11: Customers' intention to adopt pro-environmental behaviors positively affected customers' pro-environmental behaviors performed during their hotel stay.

CONCLUSION

The conceptual framework – built on the principles of the Expectancy-value model – extends the original framework from Fishbein (1963), by proposing the inclusion of critical constructs to maintain the fundamental process of attitude-intention-behavior. Therefore, the proposed conceptual framework considers that customers' attitudes towards environmental protection initiatives adopted in the hotel sector are determined by consumers' daily PEBs, perceptions of green hotel practices, and the hotel green image. These attitudes, in turn, influence intentions (intention to stay, recommend and pay a premium price for hotel green initiatives, and intention to adopt PEBs during the stay) and actual PEBs during the stay.

It has been acknowledged that the method of measuring consumers' PEBs – usually through stated respondents' intention to adopt these behaviors or self-reported PEBs – is not the most reliable, as consumers tend to answer questions in a manner that others will consider favorably (Polonsky et al., 2011). In hospitality, few studies have attempted to overcome this problem of social desirability bias regarding customers' PEBs. Thus, actual customers' PEBs during their stay will be analyzed as they are crucial to overcome the intention-behavior gap. To achieve this, the study compares the results from a self-administered questionnaire with a survey based on structured observations of actual customers' PEBs. Consequently, it is expected that this conceptual framework will contribute to a better understanding of the determinants of consumers' attitudes and behaviors towards hotel environmental initiatives, thus supporting the development of effective marketing strategies.

The model proposed does not integrate other variables that could influence the behaviors, namely variables related to consumers' profile – such as socio-demographic or travel characteristic. The decision not to include these variables is twofold: the influence of these variables was not significant in most of the previous research (e.g., Dimara et al., 2017; Fuentes-Moradela et al., 2019; Han et al., 2011; Prud'homme & Raymon, 2013); and it would increase the complexity of the structural equation modeling analysis.

The analysis of actual PEBs implemented by customers during their stay is suggested as a future line of research. Aiming at addressing the intention-behavior gap, it is recommended that these behaviors should be based on observation of actual customer PEBs, in the natural consumption context, rather than on self-reported PEBs. It is also acknonowledged the relevance of testing the model through an empirical study.

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A PANORAMIC VIEW OF INTERNATIONAL ARTICLES ON GLAMPING TOURISM WITH VISUAL MAPPING TECHNIQUE: CASE OF SCOPUS DATABASE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research is to determine the trend and development of glamping over a 15-year period (2008-2023) in the international literature. For this purpose, the bibliometric analysis method, which is one of the quantitative research methods, has been used in the study. The data regarding the 17 articles (as of 15.01.2023) that contain the concept of glamping in the titles, keywords, and abstracts, were retrieved from the Scopus database. In the analysis of the data, Biblioshiny, a web interface provider application and open source software design for Bibliometrics R-package (R-Studio software), bibliometrics library, and bibliometrics have been used in accordance with certain parameters. When some of the findings that came out as a consequence of the analysis have been analyzed, it can be observed that there are 17 articles on glamping in 17 different journals, the most of articles are multi-authored, the most articles were published in 2021, the journal that published the most articles is Tourism Management, the authors are Ana Brochado and Christopher A. Craig, and the affiliation is Murray State University. Furthermore, in the author collaboration network analysis, it has been found that 10 different clusters have been formed. When the collaboration among countries has been considered in terms of the emergence of articles on glamping, it has been found that Canada, Poland and the United Kingdom are the ones that have the highest level of collaboration with other countries. Since no studies have been encountered in the Scopus database that examine the subject of glamping from a bibliometric point of view, it is thought that this research is original, and the results of the study are important in terms of visually mapping the development process of research on glamping at the international level and conveying it to the reader and shedding light on the studies to be conducted in the future on this subject.

Key Words: Glamping, Bibliometrics, Visual Mapping Technique, Scopus, R-Studio.

INTRODUCTION

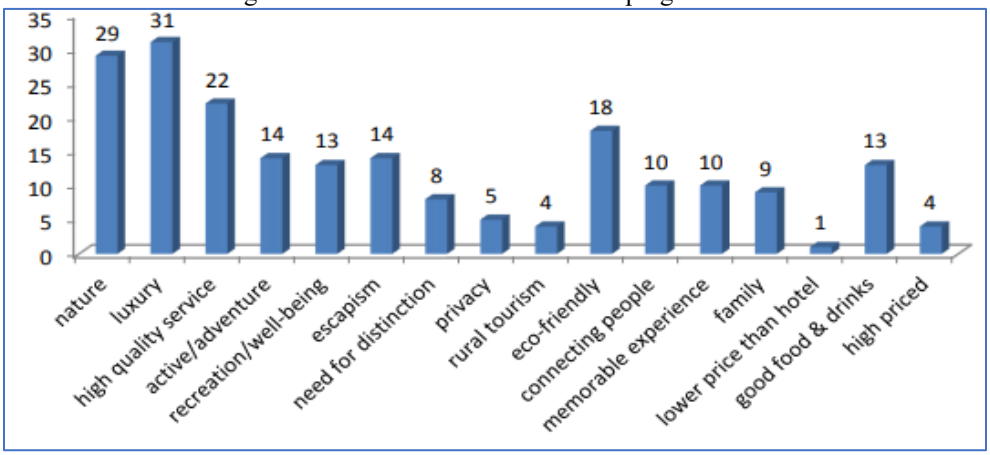
Bibliometric research reveals the current status of a discipline or sub-discipline, its course of development, its trajectory, and its contribution to that field or discipline. One of these disciplines is tourism. In order to demonstrate the maturity level of tourism, bibliometric studies have been conducted in the field of tourism to determine the intellectual structure, academic infrastructure, knowledge domain, or social structure of the field and to prioritize the most productive academicians, institutions, and studies (Köseoğlu et al., 2016). Different sources such as dissertations (Bao, 2002), journals (Benckendorff & Zehrer, 2013) and articles (Duran-Sanchez et al., 2016) could be used for performing bibliometric analysis. In the bibliometric research carried out within the context of different parameters, the number of publications of the studies in the relevant field by years; authors, journals, institutions, and countries that contribute the most to the field; the most frequently used keywords in the studies, citation analysis for references and co-occurrence network analysis can be used to examine the field in depth. Therefore, new ideas could be presented to the researchers who will work in the field in the following years (Aylan, 2021). In this study, the international articles written on glamping scanned in the Scopus database have been evaluated through bibliometric analysis. It can be stated that the glamping sector, as a developing niche market, is also of great economic importance. For example, according to the research conducted by Grand View Research, the global glamping market reached a market size of 1.88 billion US dollars in 2020, and it is expected to reach a turnover of 5.41 billion dollars from 2021 to 2028 (Grand View Research, 2021). Glamping, a new tourism trend, is a mix of glamping and camping. As a new trend driven by a growing demand for travelers-tourists who want to experience the positive aspects of camping without the discomforting negatives, it aims to provide its guests with a high level of service that focuses entirely on comfort. Luxury camping, which has recently given outdoor enthusiast tourists an upgrade in relaxation and recreation (R&R), is defined as a glamorous camping for a new kind of accommodation-travel. In this research, the development and intellectual structure of glamping, which is a relatively new type of tourism, over the last 15 years have been tried to be revealed through the visual mapping method, one of the

bibliometric research types. In the literature review, it is considered that this research is unique since there are no studies that examine the subject of glamping from a bibliometric perspective, and the results of the study are important in terms of conveying the development process of research on glamping at the international level to the reader by mapping the development process of glamping in a visual sense and shedding light on future studies to be carried out on this subject.

GLAMPING

The concept of glamping, which is a combination of the English words “glamorous” and “camping”, is generally defined as a luxury camping activity (Brooker & Joppe, 2013:1; Pereira, 2013: iv; Vreš & Vreš, 2015). : 42). Glamping, which is also defined as an outdoor recreational activity type that offers various activities in nature to tourists, starts with people moving away from their places of residence with the desire to be intertwined with nature. While doing this, it is possible to receive high-quality food and beverage services in addition to luxury accommodation, without giving up the luxury life and accommodation opportunities they are accustomed to, and it is possible to participate in recreational activities such as adventure and renewal in the context of sustainability (Birdir et al., 2015: 172). Glamping tourism, which has an unspoiled nature at its focal point, is accepted as an environmentally friendly type of tourism. Businesses that provide services with this mentality, while providing their services, mostly serve the products they have produced, along with natural and environmentally friendly additive-free products as much as possible. In addition, this type of business gives importance to recycling (Sakacova, 2013:23-24). The history of glamping dates back to the Ottoman Empire period. During the Ottoman period, the Otağ-ı Hümayuns (Ottoman tents), which were designed to match the luxury of the sultan's palace, with the items that the sultans carried with them on their expeditions, can be expressed as an example of luxury camping (Birdir et al., 2015:171; Olcay & Turhan, 2017:982). According to another view, the starting point of glamping is considered to be the beginning of the 20th century. In the early 1900s, American and European travelers brought Persian carpets and comfortable beds in their safari tents during their safari trips in Africa, and the private cooks, guides, maids, and janitors they took with them to prepare meals show the importance they attach to luxury. With this practice, the open-air accommodation they experienced in wildlife safaris at that time turned into luxury accommodation. (Birdir vd., 2015: 171; Brooker & Joppe, 2013:4;Olcay & Turhan, 2017:982).

Figure 1. The Characteristics of Glamping Tourism



Source: Sakacova, 2013:23.

Although glamping as a concept has emerged relatively recently in the field of academic literature, there are several accommodation types of glamping. These include (Ergüven vd., 2015):

- Tents (Luxury tents, bell tents, domes, tipis, safari tents);
- Cabins (A-Frame cabins, log cabins, cottages, igloos, treehouses, etc.);
- Others (Towers, islands, houseboats, villas, restored old places, etc.)

Sakacova (2013) states that there are push and pull motivations regarding the motivation factors of glamping tourists. According to her, the most important push factor for glampers is attachment. She also states that the bonds

between family members or friends participating in glamping are strengthened. Other motivational push factors, she states, are the desire of glampers to socialize with other glampers, to get to know new people and new environments, the need for rest, relaxation, and peace, and the desire to get away from daily routine life. In addition, to push factors, she also mentions the factors that attract glampers and lists these motivation factors as being close to nature, experiencing beautiful places, and pursuing special interests (skiing, fishing, rock climbing, etc.) and the need for solitude/privacy.

The target group of glamping, which is offered as an alternative to mass tourism and accepted as a special interest tourism, is individuals with high income and environmental awareness (Ergüven et al., 2015: 256). Considering the characteristics of individuals participating in glamping, which is a combination of camping and luxury vacation, they are listed as follows (Yıldırım & Erkılıç, 2019:481);

- Families and couples,
- Wildlife lovers,
- Peace-seeking individuals aged 50 and over,
- Those who want to have a holiday by integrating nature and camping with luxury and without worrying about the problem of camping equipment,
- Individuals who prefer adventure, freedom and independence,
- Individuals who prefer their families to be safe and intertwined with nature,
- Those who want to get away from the stress of daily life,
- Those who want a nature-themed holiday away from the standard holiday concept,
- High-income individuals,
- Those who want to have direct contact with nature,
- Individuals who adopt the Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS).

BIBLIOMETRICS

The concept of bibliometrics, which was first introduced by Alan Pritchard in 1969, became almost - but not completely - universally accepted by librarians and epistemologists within a short period of approximately a decade, and in turn, the new term was frequently cited (Wittig, 1978: 240). Pritchard (1969:348) defined bibliometrics as the scientific application of statistical and mathematical methods to books and other communication media. These mainly include books, monographs, reports, dissertations, and articles in periodicals, and today also e-books and e-journals and - in the broadest sense - the Web (Glänzel, 2003:11). Articles published in journals and citations are statistically analyzed in bibliometrics, which is a quantitative analysis method in general (Godin, 2006; De Nicola, 2009). Bibliometrics deals with the study of different elements of academic studies by means of quantitative analysis and statistics. Bibliometric analyses can be performed in two ways: descriptive and evaluative. As an example of descriptive bibliometric analysis, determining the number of articles published in a specific year can be given, and as an example of evaluative bibliometric analysis, performing citation analysis to reveal how the article influenced the studies that followed it (McBurney & Novak, 2002: 40). Cobo et al. (2011) states that bibliometric methods have two main areas of use and they are performance analysis and scientific mapping. Performance analysis aims to evaluate the research and publication performance of individuals and institutions. Scientific mapping aims to reveal the structure and dynamics of scientific fields. This structure and development information is useful when the researcher's purpose is to review a specific research line. Bibliometric methods have added quantitative rigor to the subjective evaluation of the literature. Zupic and Čater (2015) divided bibliometric studies into three groups: (i) review studies, (ii) evaluation studies, and (iii) relational studies. Review studies include meta-analysis, qualitative approaches, and systematic review studies. Evaluation studies consist of productivity measures, impact measures and hybrid measures. The last group includes relational techniques, citation analysis, bibliographic analysis, common word analysis, and co-authorship analysis. It is evident that bibliometric studies have been conducted in various fields of science. And tourism is one of these fields. The fragmented, scattered, and eclectic structure of tourism research in tourism academia has prepared the ground for conducting bibliometric studies in order to demonstrate the maturity level of tourism, to define the intellectual structure, academic basis, and social structure of tourism literature (Benckendorff & Zehrer, 2013:121-122).

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to reveal the intellectual structure of the articles on glamping. For this purpose, international articles on glamping indexed in Scopus database between 2008-2023 were analyzed with visual

mapping technique which is one of bibliometric methods using R-Studio software. Visual mapping technique is actually one of the approaches and tools used by the science mapping discipline. Science mapping technique is a kind of bibliometric analysis which has different stages such as data acquisition, preprocessing, net extraction, normalization, mapping, analysis and visualization. At the end of this process, the analyst must interpret the results and derive some results from them (Cobo et al., 2011). Visual analysis needs scientific databases that enable the dissemination of science. The main sources most accepted by scientific circles are Web of Science, Scopus and PubMed. Data of the study consist of 17 documents (articles) obtained by searching Scopus database. While documents were being searched, parameter TITLE-ABS-KEY (glamping) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar") was used. Thus, a total of 17 articles were reached by filtering the articles with glamping in the titles, abstracts and keywords. In addition to descriptive data analyzes were implemented to data. Bibliometrix R-package (RStudio software) bibliometrix library and Biblioshiny were used in the implementation of the aforementioned analyzes. For the aim of study, the research questions below were tried to reply:

1. How is the distribution of the publication numbers of the articles published on glamping by years?
2. How is the single and multiple author distribution of the articles published on glamping?
3. Which journals are the most productive on glamping?
4. Which journals are the most cited on glamping?
5. Which papers are the most cited on glamping?
6. What are the most frequently used keywords in articles on glamping?
7. Who are the most productive authors on glamping?
8. Which universities are the most productive on glamping?
9. How is the cooperation between the countries where the authors on glamping are located?

RESULTS

Table 1. Main Information About Data

Description	Results
Timespan	2008-2023
Sources (Journals)	17
Documents	17
Document Average Age	3.82
Author's Keywords	58
Average citations per documents	7,529
Authors	35
Authors of single-authored documents	6
Co-Authors per Doc	2.18
References	764

In Table 1, it is seen that there have been 17 articles on glamping published for 15 years (between 2008-2023) in 17 different journals by 35 authors. Average citations per documents are 7,5. The number of articles with multiple authors (n = 29) is considerably higher than the number of publications with a single author (n =6).

Figure 2. Annual Scientific Production of Articles

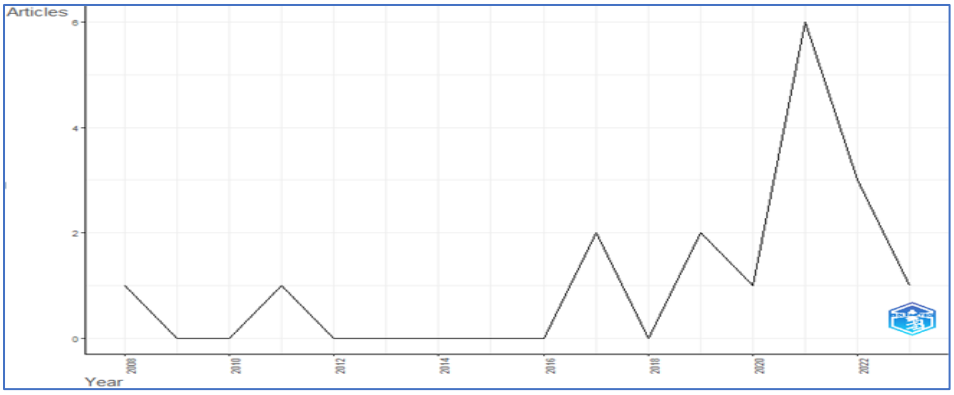


Figure 2 shows the publication numbers of the articles about glamping by the years. According to the figure, the first article themed glamping was publicated in 2008 (n:1). The second article was published three years later in 2011 (n:1). The highest number of publications on glamping were published in 2021 (n = 6) (Figure 1).

Figure 3. Most Productive Authors on Glamping

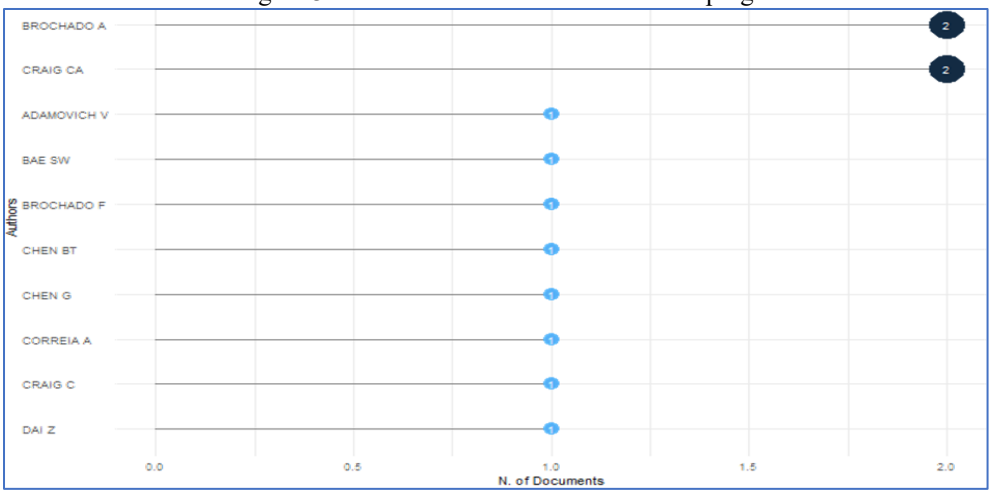


Figure 3 shows the top 10 authors, publish the most articles on glamping. As seen in Figure 3, Ana Brochado and Christopher A. Craig are the most productive authors, have 2 articles. All the other outhors have 1 articles on glamping.

Figure 4. Most Cited Journals on Glamping

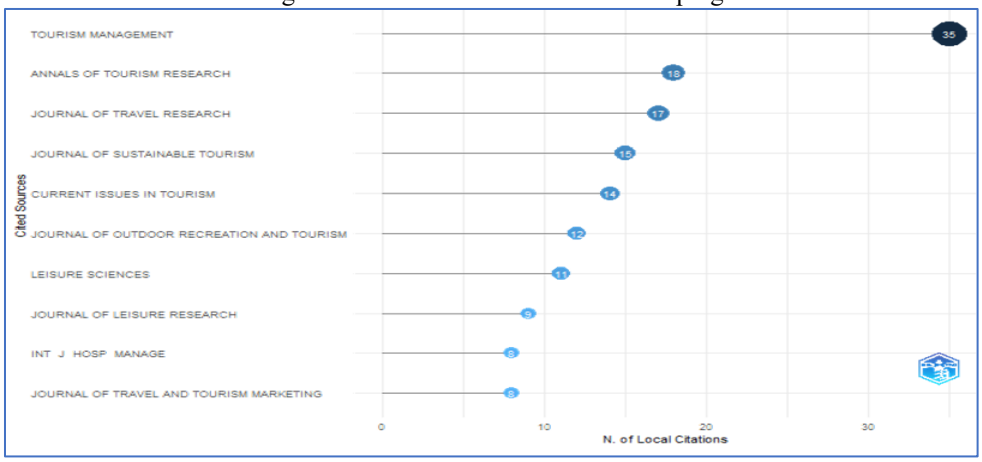


Figure 4 shows the most cited journals about glamping. According to the figure, Tourism Management is the most cited journal with its 35 citations among all journals. The second one is Annals of Tourism Research (n:18) and the third journal, has most citation on glamping, is Journal of travel research (n:17). Then, the other most cited journals are respectively Journal of Sustainable Tourism (n:15), Current Issues in Tourism (n:14), Journal of Outdoor ecreation and Tourism (n:12), Leisure Sciences (n:11), Journal of Leisure Research (n:9), International Journal of Hospitality Management and Journal of Travel and Tourism Research n:8).

Figure 5. Most Cited Documents on Glamping

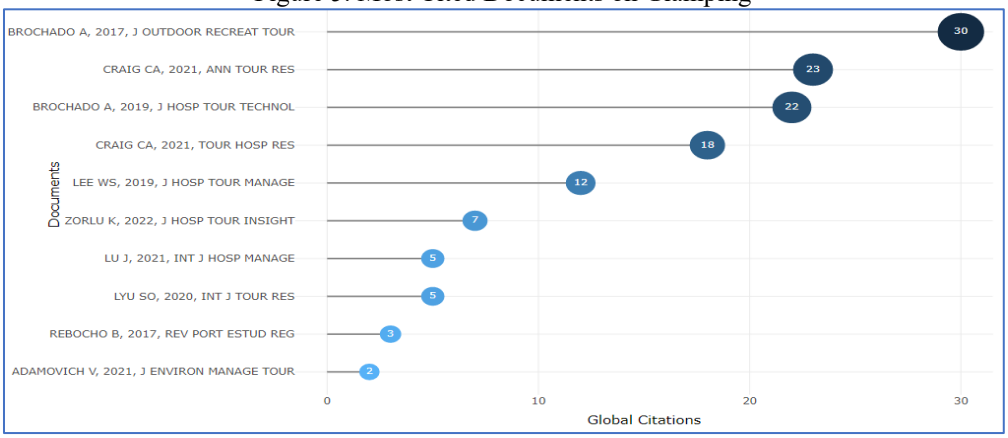


Figure5 shows the most cited articles on glamping. As seen Figure 5, the most cited paper about glamping is "Comfortable experiences in nature accommodation: Perceived service quality in Glamping" (n:30) was written by Ana Brochado & Cristina Pereira and published in Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism. The second most cited paper is "Camping, glamping, and coronavirus in the United States Author links open overlay panel" (n:23), was written by Fernando Brochado & Christopher A. Craig in Annals of Tourism Research. The third most cited paper is "what makes a glamping experience great?" (n:22) was written by Ana Brochado & Fernando Brochado in Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology.

Figure 6. Number of Keywords Used in Articles Themed Glamping



Figure 6 shows the most frequently used keywords in papers themed glamping. When the figure is viewed, it can be seen that, keywords used most frequently are glamping (12 times) and camping (5times). Then tourism (3 times), content analysis (twice), covid-19 (twice), outdoor tourism (twice) are other most used keywords.

Figure 7. Author Collaboration Network of Articles Themed Glamping

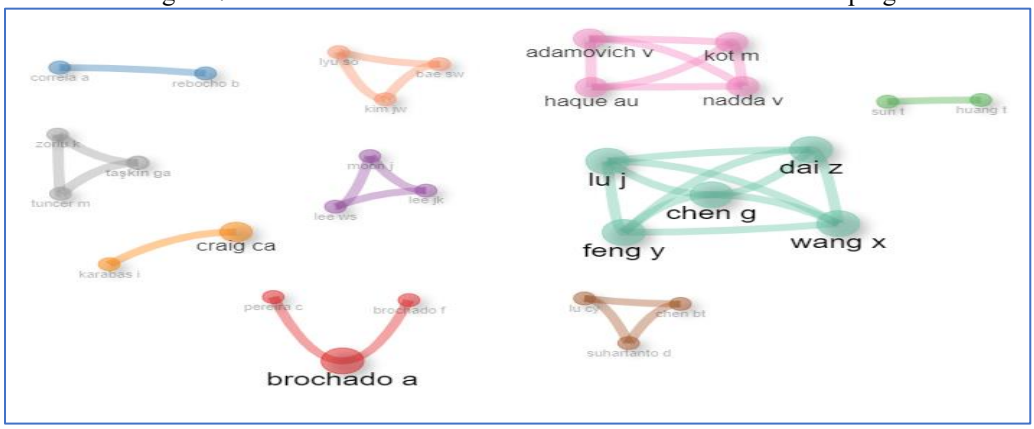


Figure7 shows the collaboration network for groups of authors collaborating on glamping. When the figure is viewed, it is seen that there are 10 different collaboration clusters. The green and pink colored clusters have the most common collaboration. In the green cluster, it is seen that J.Lu, Y. Feng, G. Chen, Z Dai and X Wang wrote joint articles. In the pink cluster, it is seen that V. Adamovich, M. Kot, Au Hague and V. Nadda have jointly published articles on glamping.

Figure 8. The Most Productive Schools on Glamping

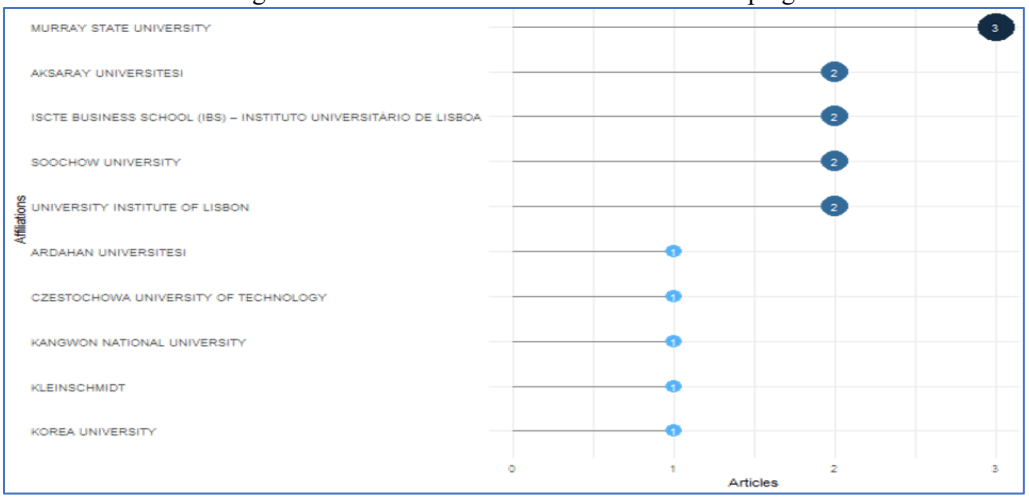


Figure 8 shows the most relevant 10 schools on glamping. According to the figure, Murrey State University, has three papers, is the most relevant school on glamping. Then, Aksaray University, ISCTE Business School, Soochow University and University of Lisbon are the second one with 2 articles on glamping.

Figure 9. Collaboration Network Between Countries in Glamping Articles

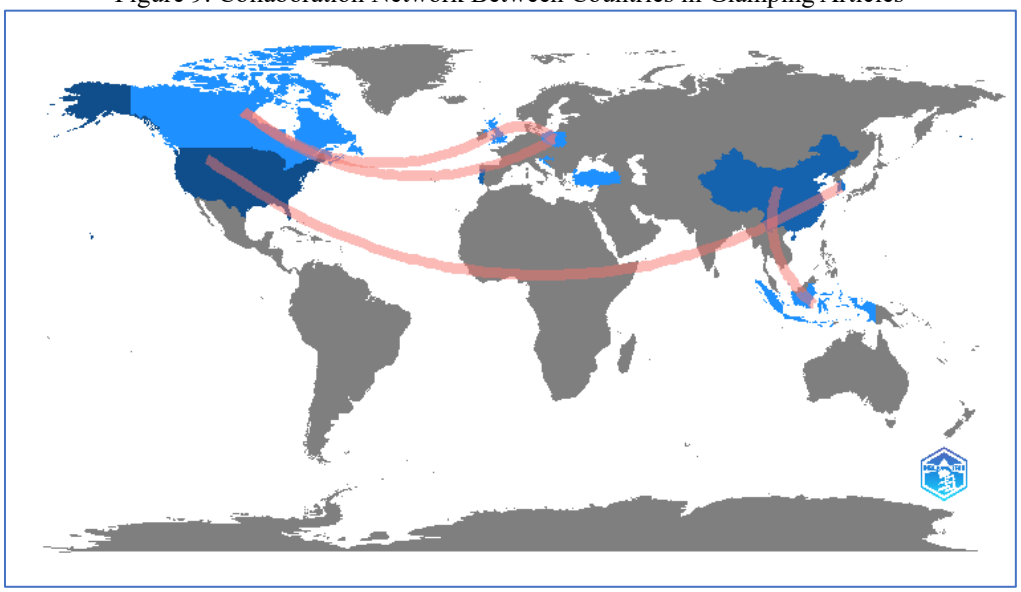


Figure 9 shows the international collaboration emerged in the preparation of articles on glamping . According to figure, the most collaborationist countries are is Canada, Poland and United Kingdom. They have totally both 2 collaborations . China has 1 collaboration with Indonesia and USA has 1 collaboration with Korea.

CONCLUSION

Publications such as scientific articles, books, and papers presented at scientific meetings are discussed in bibliometric researches, which provide detailed information about the development, trend and current status of a science field or discipline. The study area can be discussed in depth in bibliometric researches, within the scope of different parameters such as the number of publications by years of the studies in the subject area, Journals, institutions, collaborations between countries, the most frequently used words in the titles of the studies. Thus, new ideas are presented to researchers who will work on that field in the future. Accordingly, the aim of the research is to reveal the trend and development of the articles on "glamping" in the Scopus database for the last 15 years (2008-2023). Bibliometric analysis was carried out using different parameters on the international articles published on "glamping" between the mentioned years in line with the purpose of study. As a result of the bibliometric analysis, it was seen that the first article about glamping was published in 2008, and there were 17 articles in 17 journals in total. It has been determined that multi-authored papers are more than single authored papers. Tourism Management is the most relevant and the most cited journal on glamping. Murray State University is the affiliation, published the most articles on glamping. The most cited documents on glamping is “Comfortable experiences in nature accommodation: Perceived service quality in Glamping” by Ana Brochado & Cristina Pereira.

The terms “glamping” and “camping” are the most frequently used author keywords in documents about glamping. When the collaboration among countries has been considered in terms of the emergence of articles on glamping, it has been found that Canada, Poland and the United Kingdom are the ones that have the highest level of collaboration with other countries. As a result, in the study, the academic development process of the glamping field was tried to be revealed. The inclusion of the countries, universities and author information in this field will enable the authors who will work on this subject to cooperate internationally. In this direction, the study is a roadmap for authors who want to do research on this issue. This study is limited only to articles on glamping in the Scopus database. Bibliometric analyzes can be made not only for articles but also for other scientific publications such as books and papers in different databases for the further researches on glamping.

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DIGITAL RECREATION APPLICATIONS IN METAVERSE NETWORK

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ABSTRACT

The development of science and technology is changing the world rapidly and dynamically. Various supporting factors and important aspects in human life force people to adapt more quickly to the development of science and technology. The concepts of virtual and augmented reality, which have emerged with the rapid development of the internet and technology in recent years, have led to a transformation in people's leisure habits as well as in many areas. Thanks to virtual reality applications, people have the opportunity to do many recreational activities in a completely digital environment. The tourism and recreation sector is one of the sectors that has begun to be affected by the development of virtual and augmented reality technologies in recent years. People can engage in recreational activities to make use of their spare time in the metaverse, which is a universe where people live independently from the real and physical world. From this point of view, the purpose of this study is to examine digital recreation activities in the metaverse realm. For this purpose, the research was designed with the qualitative research method and secondary data was used. In the study, application examples of digital recreational activities were investigated, and as a result of the data obtained, digital recreation activities applied in the metaverse world were classified under the categories of cultural, nature-based, sportive, artistic and entertainment.

Key Words: Metaverse, Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Digital Recreation.

INTRODUCTION

Today, individuals benefit from electronic applications in addition to participating in activities that require physical effort, and can spend their free time at home or in other places with electronic devices in their daily lives Technological devices, occupy a large place in human life, have also guided individuals in terms of leisure time with the peak of technological development in the first quarter of the 21st century. Curfews imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has become the agenda of the world in recent years, especially in 2019, have led people to recreational activities that they can do at home. People have performed recreational activities through electronic devices such as game consoles, computers, internet, virtual glasses etc. In a sense, they were interested in electronic leisure activities. The concept of electronic leisure time, which has different definitions in the literature, is a relatively new concept. According to Nimrod and Adoni (2012: 32), the concept of electronic leisure includes many activities such as games, online training and shopping, dating, writing on blog pages, and the time spent with such activities is "online leisure", "cyber leisure time", “virtual leisure” or, in simpler terms, electronic leisure (E-leisure). Recreation is the activities that people participate voluntarily in their spare time for entertainment, relaxation and satisfaction motivations. The concepts of virtual and augmented reality, which have emerged with the rapid development of the internet and technology in recent years, have led to a transformation in leisure habits as well as in many areas. People have the opportunity to do many recreational activities in a completely digital environment thanks to virtual reality applications. They can participate in different activities such as dancing with their avatars, meeting with their friends through the metaverse application on the axis of virtual reality. In addition, augmented reality applications have allowed people to participate in digital recreational activities by combining the real and virtual environment. In plain terms, the Metaverse is the next iteration of the internet; a decentralized network of virtual spaces where users can socialize, learn, and play. Leveraging other emerging technologies (5G, blockchain, artificial intelligence), and shifting from 2D graphics on flat screens to 3D graphics in HMDs, the Metaverse will enable the creation of an interactive and virtual equivalent of our physical world (in terms of people, places, and

things) that we will be able to explore through extended reality (XR) platforms (Pimentel et al., 2022:2). Digital recreation activities encountered in the metaverse were discussed in this study. The concepts of digital recreation and metaverse are explained in the literature part of the study, and examples of cultural, nature-based, sportive, artistic and recreational recreational applications obtained from secondary data are given in the findings section.

DIGITAL RECREATION

Developing technology has led to many changes in both working and daily life. These changes are also experienced in the field of tourism and recreation. Some of these changes are the technological opportunities that people benefit from during the holiday process (including the holiday choice and decision-making process) and participating ways to recreational activities. While people make use of travel agencies or the internet pages of hotels to obtain information in the process of purchasing a holiday in advance, today they can examine the hotel business in detail, thanks to applications that include 360º panoramic views of other units of businesses, especially hotel rooms Recreation is the activities that people participate voluntarily in their spare time for entertainment, leisure and satisfaction motivations. The concepts of virtual and augmented reality, which have emerged with the rapid development of the internet and technology in recent years, have led to a transformation in people's leisure habits as well as in many areas. Thanks to virtual reality applications, people have the opportunity to do many recreational activities in a completely digital environment. For the purpose of making use of people's free time, resting, rejuvenating physically and mentally, spending quality time, activities like doing sports, competition, traveling or sightseeing, reading books, playing games, artistic activities, etc. with technological tools such as computers, smart mobile phones, VR-BOX 3D glasses, game consoles, joysticks, etc can be evaluated within the scope of digital recreation.

When looking at the most widely known digital recreational activities, it is seen that there are virtual museum trips and virtual tours. Apart from these activities, virtual tours of natural beauties such as caves, waterfalls, canyons, mountains, and cultural places such as ancient cities, castles, towers, churches, mosques, etc. are also carried out. In addition to virtual tours, many digital recreational activities such as cycling, walking, bird watching, boxing, and fitness can be done virtually but with a sense of reality (Aylan & Aylan, 2020:2751).

METAVERSE

Meta is Greek for beyond, and verse represents the totality of something. In this way, the Metaverse alters the human experience, using technology to go beyond our physical reality (Pimentel et al.,2020). Metaverse is a concept that allows creating virtual communities beyond commerce and entertainment. It is a new generation Internet that encompasses a three-dimensional virtual space where users can interact through their avatars and is described as the "digital big bang" in cyberspace (Lee et al., 2021; Lee, 2022 ; Seok, 2021). When examined use of the word metaverse, it is seen that this concept, which has become popular today, was used for the first time 30 years ago.

It was first expressed in the dystopian science fiction novel “Snow Crash” written by science fiction writer Neal Stephenson in 1992. This term was also expressed as "cyber space" in William Gibson's science fiction novel "Neuromancer" published in 1984. Although it is handled in a more utopian (ideal place) or dystopian (bad place) dimension away from today's point of view, the motivation to combine the real and the virtual at the moment shows that this concept will be talked about for years and will cause interactions. A few later innovations have enabled the metaverse universe to grow very rapidly in addition to the "Snow Crash" and "Neuromancer" novels in the history of the virtual world. According to the Newzoo (2021) metaverse report, it is stated that it is important for the development of this universe that the companies named “Active Worlds and Worlds Chat”, founded in 1995 in the history of the virtual world, combine 3D technology with the user-generated content (UGC) and these two companies continue to work online. Animal Crossing, which was founded in 2000 and premiered in 2001 for the Nintendo Game Cube, is an important social simulation game that is considered the first among online games and is considered the gateway to the metaverse. "Second Life", which was founded in 2003 and has the world's largest 3D virtual world infrastructure, represents one of the most important milestones in the history of the virtual world, as well as being an important gateway to the metaverse universe. In the literature review on current academic studies, it is possible to come across many studies on the working mechanism and infrastructure of "Second Life". The online game platform Roblox, which was also launched in 2006, still continues its activities as an important gateway in the metaverse ecology (Celik, 2022).

Zuckerberg (2021), CEO of Facebook Inc., whose name has recently changed to Meta, states that Metaverse will offer a sense of presence/side-by-side, as well as experiences such as meeting with friends/family, shopping, working, having fun, as well as today's computers and He states that beyond how we think about phones, different experiences can be experienced, teleporting to the office, work or your family's home in the form of a hologram. In the context of these views, It is possible to define metaverse as a cyber social plane which offers a new reality, a world of meaning and cooperation opportunities from a communication perspective; providing infrastructure and interaction opportunities for cultural, intellectual and economic production; different advanced technologies are used simultaneously and in an integrated manner (Kus, 2021:248).

Metaverse enables users to experience a 3D virtual universe in addition to being a type of world created in the virtual universe. This 3D virtual universe; It connects the user with a number of tools, including VR and AR glasses. It is seen that users are associated with their avatars in virtual universes. The simulation of human senses such as seeing, hearing, touching and smelling is created with the help of interface technologies for the concrete perception of the virtual environment. Users are allowed to exceed the physical limits of their bodies as much as possible In virtual worlds accessed with avatars.

Metaverse is the existence of physical realities in virtual worlds, and the creation of digital people and objects using tools such as virtual, augmented and mixed reality. The most real-like experiences are offered by simulating people's senses. It was created as a way for individuals to establish concrete communications with each other and with virtual objects through real-time interactions (Cilesiz & Aydın, 2022). Metaverse not only satisfies people's instincts regarding social interactions and embodies their real-world experiences, but also provides them with a wide range of expression areas with their avatars, a new personality different from their real-world selves.

These important qualities of the metaverse have caused many fields to see the metaverse at the top of their last line of business. As a matter of fact, in recent years, business scopes have moved from offline to website-based online, and today, there is an expansion to metadata warehouses via website (Um et al., 2022). Metaverse offers a universe where people can do recreational activities individually or with a group and enjoy it as much as they do in real life, drain their energy, and provide effective learning and socialization. Individuals can do all of their leisure time activities in daily life using technology, and they experience the feeling of staying in real life together with activities such as shopping, attending concerts, visiting museums, spending time with their friends. The metaverse, which confronts us as a world where the human-specific boundaries of daily life have been removed, is considered a revolution in technological developments and it is predicted that it can have a powerful effect on changing human life and behavior (Aylan, 2022). According to some researchers, the increasing popularity and popularity of the metaverse is related to the Covid-19 pandemic. The transition to the digital world, which offers solutions without depending on the physical world and different variables, has accelerated with Covid-19 and the continuity of non-face-to-face communication during the pandemic period has accelerated the development of the metaverse (Kang, 2021; Lee, 2021). It is possible to find the equivalent of different institutions in daily life in Metaverse. For example, the current presence of churches operating in virtual reality and the mission statement of churches established in the Metaverse, such as VR Church (vrchurch.org), are the same as traditional churches. It is free from regional limitations, participants can vary in faith, and holy places for Christians can be visited in virtual reality (June, 2020). In addition to churches, daily cultural and artistic activities can also be transferred to Metaverse. For example, there are hundreds of permanent galleries and museum areas, works of art are exchanged and players decorate their homes in the game with these works in the game called Second Life (Tasa, 2009). Another example, people go to the concerts of the artists they love and are fans of, in the real world, listen to them and have fun in the metaverse. For example, an electronic music producer named Marshmello gave a concert in the game called Fortnite, in which the players took part as audience. This event was described by the technology magazine Wired as the future of the Metaverse (Rubin, 2019).

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine digital recreation activities in the metaverse realm. For this purpose, the research was designed with the qualitative research method and secondary data was used. In order to obtain the findings, the literature and the websites of VR technology companies were used. Applications, web pages, forum sites and blogs of many companies were examined. The digital recreation applications obtained through these examinations and used in the metaverse are classified in 5 different categories. These categories are nature-based cultural, sportive, artistic and entertainment-based digital recreation activities.

RESULTS

Nature Based Recreational Activities in Metaverse

- *Taking a walk*

Using the hands or even just the fingers to move (joystick) leads to a very artificial interaction in the virtual world. The virtual reality treadmill Omni One is an example that takes this experience to the next level. the device, encourages exercise while playing games, allows users to walk or run 360 degrees in virtual environments. Ekto VR's futuristic bots, which look like they came out of science fiction movies, also help to explore and experience the virtual world in a more natural way. The bottoms of Ekto VR's custom boots have a series of motorized wheels that spin in opposite directions at the speed the user walks. Human brain feels like it has come a long way hank to these wheels, but they count down with a movement similar to Michael Jackson's famous moon walk in reality.

Picture 1.Walking with VR tools in metaverse



Source: https://bigumigu.com/haber/futuristik-botlarla-metaversete-sonsuz-yuruyus-deneyimi/

Cultural Recreational Activities in metaverse

– *Museum tour in Metaverse (the metaverse-native nft museum)*

Several entities have come forth in recent months with ambitious plans to construct sprawling metaverse museums, virtual walls bedecked with NFTs. For example, the team at RaveSpace announced in late 2021 their plans to launch Musee Dezentral, “the world’s first Blockchain-built virtual NFT museum. The project promises to disrupt the traditional process of art curation, giving users the opportunity to feature their own NFTs in the museum’s collection, and allowing the museum to evolve organically. Pixlr Genesis also pronounced their intent to build the world’s preeminent digital art museum, with plans “to rival the Louvre, MOMA and National Gallery (Cuseum, 2022).



Picture 2. Museum visit in metaverse

Source: https://cuseum.com/blog/2022/3/7/will-museums-cultural-institutions-find-a-place-in-the-metaverse

- *Machu Picchu Ancient City Tour*

Picture 3. Visiting to Machu Picchu Ancient city in Metaverse



Source: https://virtualizationreview.com/articles/2022/03/17/cloud-quest.aspx

The magical powers of Virtual Reality (VR) transform us into the past, present, and future. Since most of us cannot journey to the ancient Peruvian heritage site of Machu Picchu, you can virtually receive blessings by the spirits of shamans past as you fly into a 3D sacred world, a surrealistic tour of the mountain citadel above Pachamama, Mother Earth.

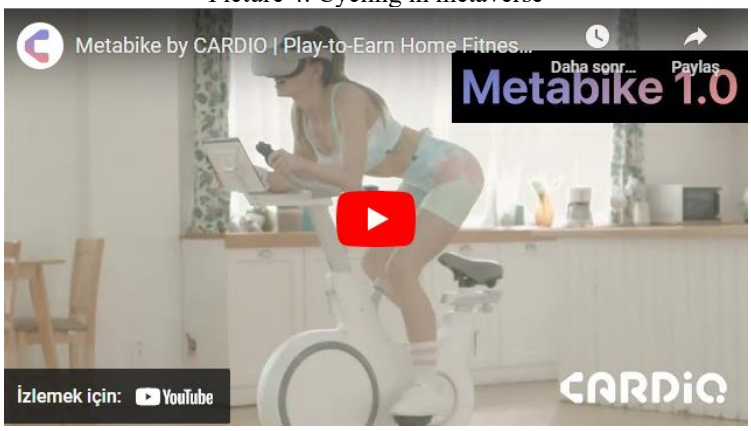
An omniverse or metaverse bridges our experiences between the digital realm and in real life (IRL). The Boca Museum of Art magnificently exhibits rare curated treasures, bejeweled costumes, and cultural artifacts from Machu Picchu and the Golden Empires of Peru which had never before been displayed outside of Lima. If you find yourself in Boca Raton, Florida before March 6, 2022, you can also virtually experience those heavenly worldviews of Machu Picchu, transformed in a special motion VR chair created by global Location-Based Entertainment (LBE) company Cityneon.

Thanks to a beyond-consumer HP headset, you take on superpowers to pass between worlds into the 3D digital representation of the UNESCO World Heritage site, created with Unity Technologies! HP's headset features high-resolution six degrees of freedom (6-DOF) while the VR chairs offer full-motion 360-degree rotation, specially equipped with multi-sensory stimulation such as haptic feedback on the seatbacks and scent dispensers to smell jasmine plus other scents. All together, this becomes a truly immersive VR experience to traverse into this mysterious city, like a condor rising up to 7,000 feet above sea level in the Andes Mountains (Hum, 2021).

Sportive Recreational Activities in Metaverse

- *Cycling*

Picture 4. Cycling in metaverse

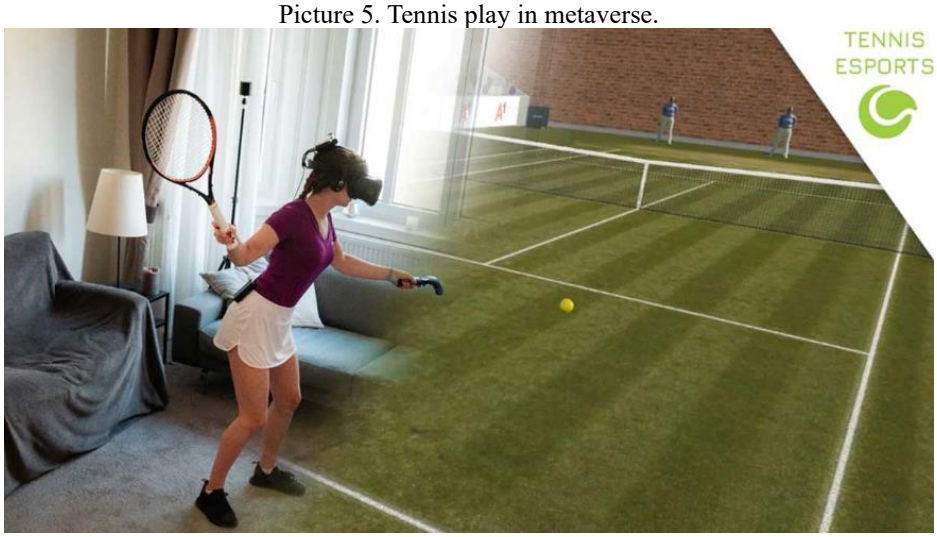


South Korean Cardio Healthcare, which produces accessories for fitness and sports under the Cardio brand, introduced Metabike, the world's first exercise bike integrated into its own metadata. A smart TV or tablet with

special applications can be used together with Metabike to “enter” the Cardio HUB meta database. Metabike uses special game controllers and pedals that track actual speed, torque and distance traveled during training. In the future, Metabike will be able to work with the Metarun treadmill, which is used in test mode in South Korea's fitness centers (Teknomers, 2022).

-*Tennis*

Picture 5. Tennis play in metaverse.

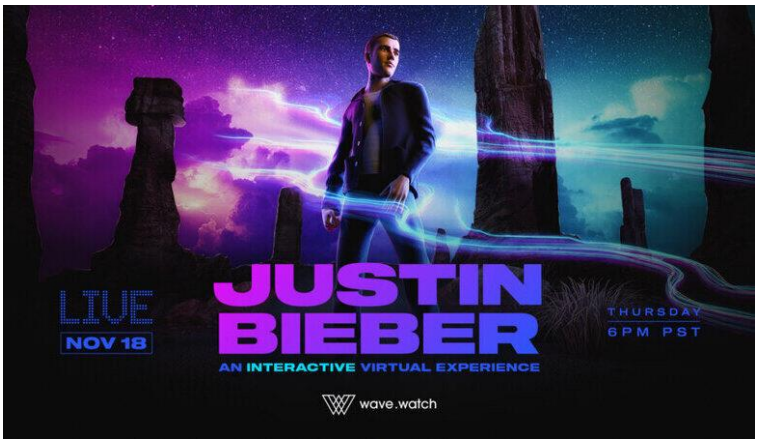


Tennis Esports is a full-featured platform for training and playing tennis in virtual reality. The Tennis Esports app makes it possible to practice and play tennis in the metaverse, very close to real tennis on the real court and completely lifelike beyond the limits of distance. Here you can choose an area as large as a half tennis court, where you can run and hit the balls with a real tennis racket, just like on a real tennis court (courtemax, 2022).

4. Entertainment Based Recreational Activities in Metaverse

- *Going to concert*

Picture 6. Virtual concert in Metaverse



Source: https://ew.com/music/justin-bieber-metaverse-virtual-concert-trailer/

In the Metaverse, virtual humans are no longer bound by physical limitations. An artist can instantly change outfits at a virtual concert or transform the stage from a space realm to an underwater world. As more people enter the Metaverse and more virtual pop stars enter our world, the lines between physical and virtual reality are blurring more and more every day. Virtual concerts taking place within the Metaverse are the next step in the evolution of the music industry. The coronavirus has forced many artists to give virtual concerts instead of live stage performances in

2020. While this may seem like a new development, virtual pop stars like Hatsune Miku have been selling both offline and online concert venues for years. The human counterparts of virtual artists are only beginning to understand the untapped potential of virtual concerts. Virtual metaverse gigs take place within the Metaverse, a term that describes all sandboxes shared online. The appeal of a virtual concert is similar to a live concert. Some of the celebrities who gave virtual concerts are as follows; The Weeknd, Travis Scott, Ariana Grande, Kai Roblo, Kizuna AI (Bogday, 2021).

Artistic Recreational Activities in metaverse
- *Exhibition*

Picture 7. Art exhibition in metaverse



*y*Source: https://www.haberturk.com/video/eglence/izle/is-sanatin-metaverseteki-sergisi-devam-ediyor/760630

While the restoration work continues in its historical building in Beyoğlu, which will host the rich painting collection that Türkiye İş Bankası has created since the 1940s, the NFT exhibition, which is prepared with a special selection of the works that took place under the roof of the Museum, met with art lovers at Metaverse. “The exhibition, called “A Stroll on the Bosphorus with Paintings”, was presented on the Decentraland platform, which uses the blockchain infrastructure and is established in a decentralized structure. In the exhibition, Paintings by master painters such as such as Hikmet Onat, Şeref Akdik, Zeki Faik İzer, Feyhaman Duran, İbrahim Safi, İbrahim Çallı, Cevat Erkul, Hulusi Mercan, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, Halil Paşa, who are in the İşbank Painting Collection, depict the blues and shores of Istanbul, depicting the blues and shores of Istanbul were presented to the visitors as NFT between 8-20 April 2022 (Türkiye İş Bankası, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Metaverse, which is known as a virtual channel where users can enter, run and work, socialize, visit friends, study, play games, travel, shop and network with VR and AR glasses, is also used as a great digital recreation tool today. In this virtual world, people can spend their free time doing different recreational activities. In this research, it was tried to reveal what recreational activities people participate in metaverse. Digital recreation activities applied in the metaverse were determined By reviewing the literature, VR and AR technology companies' web pages, forums and blogs. These activities were divided into 5 categories as nature-based, cultural, sportive, artistic and entertainment-based digital recreation activities. Walks for nature-based activities, museum and ancient city tours for cultural digital recreation activities, cycling and tennis for sportive digital recreational activities, concerts for entertainment-based recreational activities, and painting exhibition visits for artistic recreational activities are given as examples seen in Metaverse. Digital recreation activities seen in the metaverse are mentioned in this study. Users' motivation to enter the metaverse can be examined in future research.

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TRAVELLERS BEHAVIOUR AND PERCEPTION OF RISK DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC; A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF SWITZERLAND AND URUGUAY.

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ABSTRACT

Summer vacations are one of the most important times of the year for families who decide to travel, as national school schedules determine the holiday period. Although the objective situation in the holiday planning period may differ in the two hemispheres in terms of the phases of the pandemic, this research aims to find out whether the same is true for subjective aspects such as pandemic risk, obstacles to travel and willingness to travel. This study compares these subjective aspects by surveys applied to both countries during the planning period of the summer holidays, using logistic regression, using as the dependent variable both countries.

INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of COVID-19, which was first announced in December 2019, emanating from Wuhan city in the Hubei Province of China, has been well-documented, and after three years is still very much on the minds of many people associated with the hospitality and tourism sectors.
Within one month of the outbreak being made public, the World Health Organization (WHO) named the respiratory disease Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) (that was caused by the 'SARS-CoV-2' virus). The disease spread rapidly and within three months (by March 2020) it was found in more than 70 countries. By the middle of March, there were a reported 191,127 COVID-19 cases throughout the world with 74,760 cases in Europe alone (World Health Organization, 2021a). This was the first time in over a century that so many countries had been so affected by such a serious and highly transmissible respiratory disease.
Presently, although the short-term effects of the virus seem to have been alleviated, it has not disappeared, and the longer-term consequences still have to be evaluated and taken into account by both tourist providers and consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism is highly sensitive to situations that imply a threat to the tourist (Faulkner & Vikulov, 2001). The literature on tourism economics shows a high elasticity of consumption (Liu & Mair, 2023). People may often modify their decisions to travel, by reducing or postponing the consumption of tourism to avoid risks. In particular, the economic activity of tourism is especially susceptible to measures to counter pandemics due to restricted mobility and social distancing (Gössling, Humpe, Fichert, & Creutzig, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic is into its fourth year, and during this time, there have been many studies investigating the impacts of the pandemic on tourism. One of the topics that has attracted a great deal of interest from researchers is the initial changes in consumer preferences for tourism products and services under the COVID-19 pandemic. Luo, Hu, Wan, and Yi (2023) document examples showing how the behavior of tourists is affected in various aspects. Psychology research shows that one of the most widespread solutions to regulate negative emotions is the adoption

of strategies oriented to *variety-seeking intentions*. During the pandemic, travelers who perceive a greater threat undertake this kind of strategy in order to cope with non-desired situations such as limited individual freedom conditions (Kim, Park, Kim, Lee, & Sigala, 2022, p. 1652). In this vein, tourists tend to avoid traveling to high-risk destinations and prefer destinations closer to home (Li, Gong, Gao, & Yuan, 2021). Other authors demonstrate how the pandemic affects tourism phenomena, such as tourist xenophobia (Kock, Nørfelt, Josiassen, Assaf, & Tsionas, 2020; Park, Kang, Choi, & Han, 2020).

The effects of the pandemic phases not only influences travelers' behavior but also forces providers to adopt different strategies depending on that timing. Le and Phi (2021) adapted crisis phases proposed by Faulkner and Vikulov (2001) to the COVID-19 pandemic by outlining five phases. Phase one is "pre-event and early symptom" when the outbreak is limited to zero or few cases in a local area; "emergency" is the second phase when there is a significant rise in both local cases and government rules in health and safety regulations. "Crisis" is the following phase, when there are widespread local infections and the government mandates lockdowns and other strict regulations. The fourth phase is the "Recovery" or "New normal" condition (Le & Phi, 2021, p. 3) when there is a decline in local infections and the increase of bookings for domestic travelers and finally, the fifth phase is one where there may be either a resolution phase or a second wave of infections.

There are several studies relevant to Covid and vacation choice that have analysed situations in Italy, Brazil, Germany, Portugal and France. Roccetti and Casini (2021) studied the case of summer tourism 2020 in Italy. Italians traditionally tend to go on vacation in that specific period. In the year 2020, the number of infections remained low in the first months of the year, giving the illusion that the worst was over, and that illusion coincided with the summer holidays, as was in the Swiss case (please see figure 1-A). The authors show that infections began to rise gradually in late July, sharply in August, and ended up being an order of magnitude higher in early September, surpassing the numbers found at the start of the pandemic. The authors contend that the first bump in the second wave could have been a consequence of the summer vacations, and this happened because, despite the situation, the Italians embarked on domestic tourism, so the perception of risk does not seem to have influenced their decisions to take their vacations. The same hypothesis is valid for Switzerland, which reached the maximum of the second wave in November 2020 (please see figure 1-B).

In the case of Portugal, during the summer of 2020 domestic tourism partially cushioned the negative impacts of the drop in international arrivals (Marques, Guedes, & Bento, 2022). Taking into account the perceived risk of agglomeration, the authors expected that low tourist density destinations would benefit from changes in tourist preferences. The study shows that the preference for tourism in rural areas increased substantially and those regions better positioned to offer rural accommodation experienced a stronger and more lasting recovery in domestic demand.

Lebrun, Corbel, and Bouchet (2022) conducted an exploratory study to understand the impact of COVID-19 on French tourists' intention to travel during the 2020 summer vacation period. They found that the pandemic had increased tourists' intention to travel more regionally: 89% of the respondents who intended to travel would do so within France. So, Covid 19 seemed to promote local tourism. Atout France (2021) confirmed these latter findings as they found 94% of those who had traveled had actually stayed in France in summer 2020.

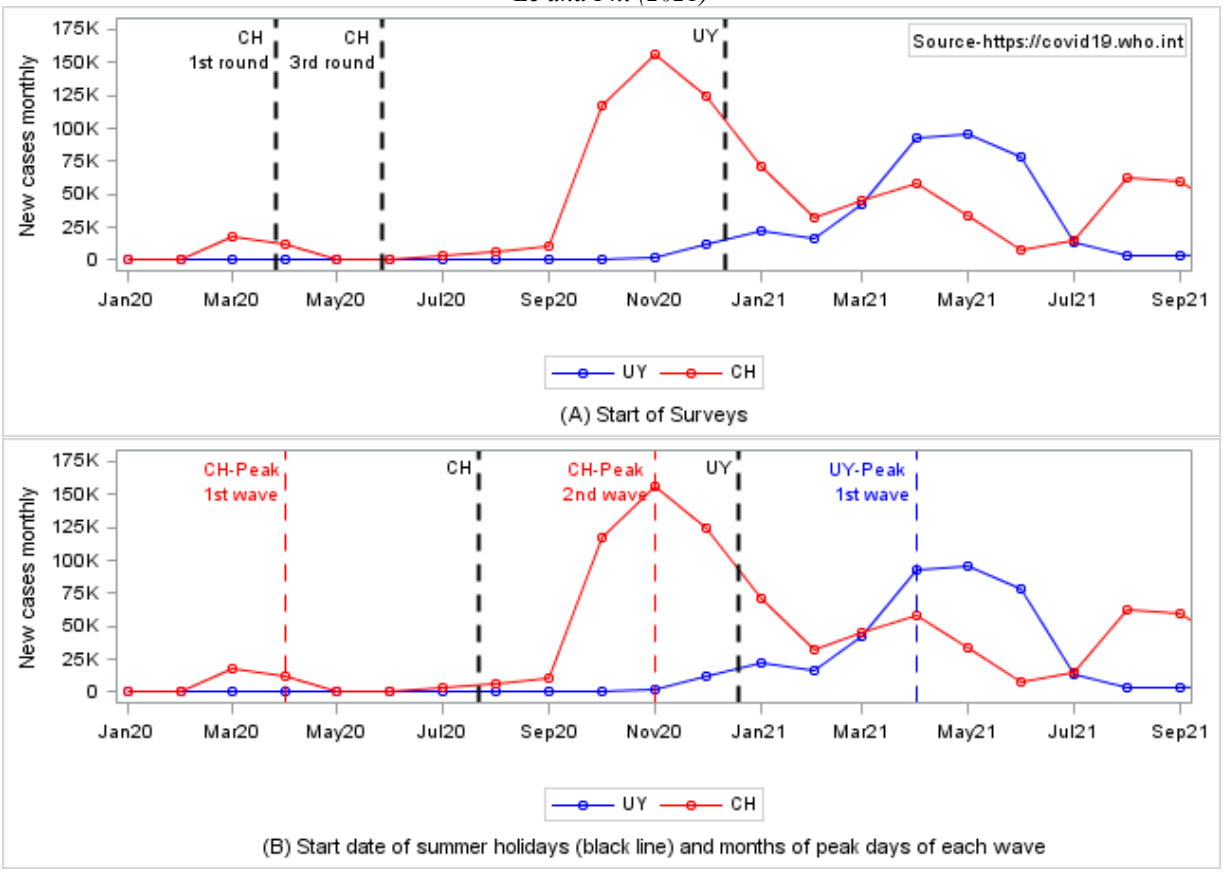
Figure 1 shows the evolution of new COVID-19 cases for Switzerland and Uruguay: the last sub-figure shows the phases of the COVID-19 crisis in both countries, following Le and Phi (2021) classification. Between March and June 2020, Swiss residents like other Europeans considering a summer vacation were still unsure if they would be able to leave the area they lived in, considering the global spread of the pandemic. In addition, given the number of confirmed cases and deaths, they were also likely to question whether they should take a trip, given the risks of traveling to particular destinations, in terms of, for example, transportation, accommodation, visits, health care capabilities, and the number of other tourists and residents present.

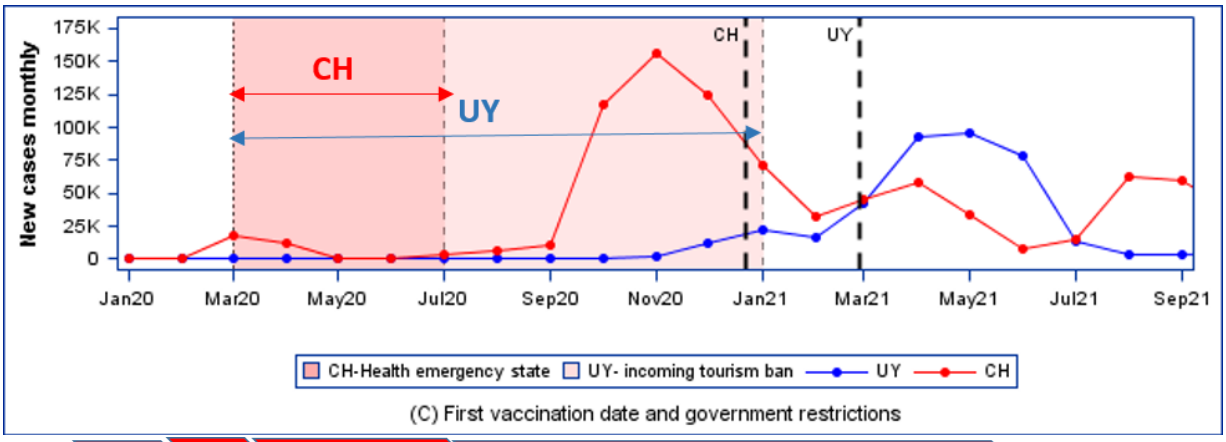
In the case of Uruguay, summer takes place six months later than in Europe. Before the start of the season, at the end of November and the beginning of December as may be seen in figure 1-B, there was a contagion outbreak in Uruguay during the Emergency and Crisis phase, shown in figure 1–D that prompted some control measures, such as the closure of borders, as seen in figure 1–C and restrictions on public spaces. As stated above, it is expected that perceived risk could affect travel behavior (Fuchs & Reichel, 2006) and intention to travel (Floyd & Pennington-Gray, 2004).

However, during the pandemic, especially at the end of the first wave and before the start of the second, many countries experienced an increase in domestic tourism. This period coincided with the summer holidays, which, due to their length and because they are associated with school holidays, are the most popular of the year. The increase of domestic tourism is in line with the "Recovery" phase for the Swiss given that the first wave was behind them and consequently the peak day of infections (first part of April 2020 (please see figure 1–B). In the souther hemisphere, Uruguayans were beginning the first wave that reached its peak only in April 2021, one year after Switzerland and after the southern summer holidays were over: this country was going from the Emergency phase to the Crisis one.

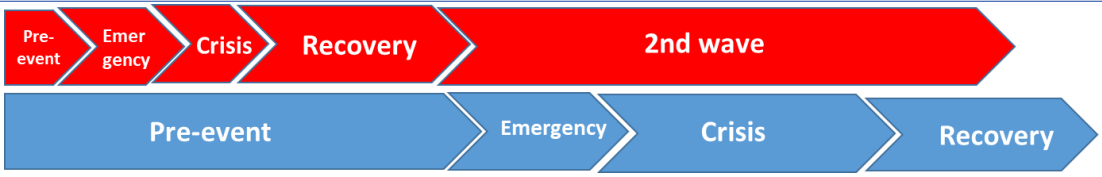
The studies referenced above show empirical evidence of travelers' behaviour; on the one hand may be seen the important role of the pandemic's risk perceptions and the resilient factor of summer holidays towards travel barriers; and on the other hand, the corresponding crisis phase.

Figure 1: Time series of new COVID-19 cases monthly for the two countries under study. The sub-figures A to C show important aspects of the pandemic. Sub-figure D shows the phases of pandemic following the classification by Le and Phi (2021)





(C) First vaccination date and government restrictions



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

(D) Timing of Covid-19 pandemic phases UY CH

This study analyses the impact that COVID 19 had on the desire to travel, comparing Uruguayan and Swiss residents at the beginning of the summer season in each region. The pandemic situation and the level of awareness of COVID 19 was different across the two countries at the time of responding to the surveys, despite the fact that it was before the summer holidays in both cases (please see figure 1-A).

Previously, (Brida, Mogni, Scaglione, & Seijas, 2021, 2022), conducted two studies on the same survey data in Uruguay. In the first study a factor analysis was performed and in the second a cluster analysis. The results of the studies showed that there are differentiated groups in sociodemographic terms that behave differently in terms of risk perception and pandemic control measures, while their desire to travel is high.

In the case of Switzerland, the situation was the decline of the first wave of covid which reached its peak in early April 2020, before the beginning of the summer holidays (Cellule enquête TAMEDIA, 2020). Uruguay was in the Emergency phase, with the beginning of a significant increase in local cases for the first wave, the peak of it was reached only after the end of the summer vacations: April 2021 (please see figure 1-B) (Swissinfo.ch, 2021). In both regions there was still no access to vaccines.

This research illustrates the implicit role of the availability of the vaccine as a token to describe the COVID-19 situation. At the time of the Swiss first round of vaccine distribution, Moderna and Pfizer were leading COVID-19 vaccine's phase I/II clinical trial data (Mulligan et al., 2020) (Fig 1-A&C). Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine was validated on 31 December 2020 (World Health Organization, 2021a) and Moderna on the 30 April 2021 (World Health Organization, 2021b). The Swiss vaccination program was officially launched in January 2021 (Federal Office of Public Health, 2020) and in Uruguay on the 1st March 2021 (Montevideo Portal, 2021).

From the point of view of the timing, the analysis will take as a reference the summer school calendar holiday which is one of the structural constraints limiting the temporal dimension in the travel planning process (Dellaert, Ettema, & Lindh, 1998). In Switzerland the survey was launched between 4 weeks to 8 weeks before the school summer holiday depending on the Cantons (States).

Turning to the pandemic phases, Figure 1-D shows that from March to June Swiss residents were leaving the crisis phase and entering the recovery phase, and the Swiss Federal Council was still governing under a health emergency regime, which was only terminated on 19 June 2020. In the case of Uruguay, at the end of November and the

beginning of December (please see figure 1-B), before starting the season, the country was in a phase of Emergency and Crisis (please see figure 1–D) that prompted some control measures, such as the closure of borders (please see figure 1– C) and restrictions on public spaces.

The aim of this research is to shed evaluate the differences or similarities in the perception of subjective pandemic factors between the two countries under study given that their residents were involved in the same annual ritualistic activity, namely preparation for the summer holidays but with different objectives during the pandemic phases.

METHODOLOGY

Data gathering

The Institute of Tourism (ITO) of the HES-SO Valais-Wallis conducted a survey in three rounds between March 2020 and the end of May 2020 inquiring about the level of desire to travel in order to monitor the evolution of tourism demand by the sample. The sample was recruited through CloudResearch (CloudReasarch, 2015). This research concerns only observations belonging to Swiss residents' for the first and third rounds.

Samples' descriptions

Table 1 shows significant differences for all the socio-professional variables across the three samples. In relation to gender, in both Switzerland (CHE)'s samples males are overrepresented whereas for Uruguay (URY)) the opposite happens. The upper middle age segment (46-55) is overrepresented for URY whereas retirees are overrepresented for CHE for the first sample. University bachelors' degree is overrepresented for URY whereas for CHE the overrepresented segments are "secondary school or less" in both samples along with "high school" only in the first CHE sample. From the point of view of professional activity, self-employed and employed/state employee is overrepresented in URY and skilled workers, others and 100% stay at home are overrepresented in CHE for the two samples.

Table 1: Sample description and homogeneity across sub-samples test using Ch2, figure in bold indicates significant overrepresentation

Age						
	T1/CHE		T3/CHE		URY	
	N	% cit.	N	% cit.	N	% cit.
Less than 26	33	9.50%	18	7.60%	21	5.90%
26-45	140	40.30%	102	43.00%	159	44.70%
46-65	***<u>101</u>***	*29.10%*	89	37.60%	137	38.50%
66 and +	**<u>73</u>**	**21.00 %**	28	11.80%	***<u>39</u>***	*11.00%*
Total	347	100.00 %	237	100.00 %	356	100.00 %
p = **<0.01** ; Chi2 = **22.92** ; dof = **6 (VS)**						
Highest education level						
Secondary school or less	**<u>73</u>**	**21.00 %**	**<u>65</u>**	**27.40 %**	***<u>2</u>***	*0.60%*
High school	**<u>106</u>**	**30.50 %**	60	25.30%	***<u>40</u>***	*11.20%*
Bachelor's degree	***<u>90</u>***	*25.90%*	***<u>54</u>***	*22.80%*	**<u>227</u>**	**63.80 %**
Master or Doctoral studies (PhD)	78	22.50%	58	24.50%	87	24.40%
Total	347	100.00 %	237	100.00 %	356	100.00 %
p = **0.00 ;** Chi2 = **200.88 ;** dof = **6 (VS)**						
Gender						

Male	**19 8**	**57.10 %**	**11 8**	**49.80 %**	***94***	*26.40%*
Female	***14 8***	*42.70%*	***11 9***	50.20%	**26 1**	**73.30 %**
Other	1	0.30%	0	0.00%	1	0.30%
Total	34 7	100.00 %	23 7	100.00 %	35 6	100.00 %
p = **<0.01** ; Chi2 = **72.72** ; dof = **4** (**VS**)						
Professional activity						
Self-employed	***38***	*11.00%*	***18***	*7.60%*	**85**	**23.90 %**
Senior executive/senior official	32	9.20%	20	8.40%	30	8.40%
Employee/state employee	***98***	*28.20%*	88	37.10%	**15 6**	**43.80 %**
Skilled worker	**30**	**8.60%**	**25**	**10.50 %**	***3***	*0.80%*
Other	**44**	**12.70 %**	**36**	**15.20 %**	***13***	*3.70%*
Currently unemployed	26	7.50%	16	6.80%	***13***	*3.70%*
Retired	**79**	**22.80 %**	34	14.30%	56	15.70%
Total	34 7	100.00 %	23 7	100.00 %	35 6	100.00 %

p = **0.00** ; Chi2 = **105.76** ; dof = **12** (**VS**)
Note :
overrepresented categories in bold
underrepresented categories in bold and italic

Data Analysis Methodology
The study used a twofold methodology to show significant perception differences across countries highlighting the risks associated with Covid 19 and barriers to travel. Firstly, explanatory factor analysis was used to show the structure and strength of the independent variables included in the analysis and to estimate the Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA); secondly, logistic regression was utilized in order to evaluate the weight of each explanatory variable on the discrimination of the two countries under study. The statistical software used was SAS Institute Inc. V9.4; proc factor routine (SAS Institute Inc., 2014, Chapter 37) for factor analysis.

The dependent variable logistic regression *y* is a binary one following a binomial distribution more precisely a Bernoulli distribution representing both countries of residence, Uruguay and Switzerland:

$$y \sim Bin(1,\pi) \quad E(y) = \mu = \pi \quad Var(y) = \pi(1-\pi)$$

The ratio is called the odds and indicates the proportion of how likely the occurrence of the event is, in proportion, compared to the no-event and the log transform of the odds is called the logit values (Hair et al., 2006).
The logistic regression model consists on the estimation of the coefficients for the *r* explanatory variables using either the logit value or the odds values as dependent measure.

$$\ln\left(\frac{\pi}{1-\pi}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \cdots + \beta r x_r \quad : \text{logit}$$

$$\left(\frac{\pi}{1-\pi}\right) = e^{\beta_0+\beta_1 x_1+\beta_2 x_2+\cdots+\beta r x_r} \quad : \text{odds}$$

Stepwise selection processes are used on explanatory variables having as *p-value* threshold for variable entry an of 0.2 and 0.25 for staying.
This research reports the following classical goodness of fitness (GoF): likelihood ratio $\chi 2$ or deviance (Stokes, Davis, & Koch, 2000) and the Hosmer , Lemeshow GoF Test (Hair et al., 2006) and Area Under the Curve (AUC) of Receiver Operating Characteristic curves (ROC) (Fawcett, 2006; Heller & Jong, 2008). If the AUC is near 0.5, then the model is not performing better than random and the closer to 1 the better the reliability of the model (Gönen, 2006). SAS Institute Inc. V9.4 software *proc logistic* routine (SAS Institute Inc., 2014, Chapter 60) for calculation of logistic regression whereas for factorial analysis *proc factor* routine (SAS Institute Inc., 2018, p. 2720).

RESULTS

Analysis of risk perception

Risk perception group: *Your point of view on the current situation. "Do you agree with the following statements?" 1="Strongly disagree" to 5="Strongly agree".*

	Mean	StDev	N	Mean	StDev	N	Mean	StDev	N
	The current coronavirus situation worries me.			The coronavirus is only a new form of influenza.			I think that what is currently happening in connection with the coronavirus is very alarmist.		
T1/CHE	4.08	0.93	347	2.45	1.19	347	**2.99**	1.25	347
URY	**4.37**	0.79	356	2.37	1.07	356	***2.77***	1.2	356
Overall	4.23	0.87	703	2.41	1.1	703	2.88	1.22	703
Anova	p = <**0.1%** ; F = 19.18 (VS)			p = 34.0% ; F = 0.92 (NS)			p = **1.6%** ; F = 5.80 (S)		
	The coronavirus is only a new form of influenza.			The coronavirus is completely out of control.			Tourism is largely responsible for the spread of the coronavirus.		
T1/CHE	2.45	1.19	347	**3.44**	1.05	347	**3.31**	1.15	347
URY	2.37	1.07	356	***2.97***	1.01	356	***2.64***	1.07	356
Overall	2.41	1.1	703	2.88	1.22	703	2.97	1.16	703
Anova	p = 34.0% ; F = 0.92 (NS)			p = <**0.1%** ; F = 35.67 (VS)			p = <**0.1%** ; F = 64.95 (VS)		
	Tourism will be massively affected by the coronavirus in the near future.								
T1/CHE	4.21	0.86	347						
URY	4.16	0.82	356						
Overall	4.18	0.84	703						
Anova	p = 49.0% ; F = 0.49 (NS)								

Preventive behaviours: How Covid has changed your habits? "Do you *agree with the following statements?" 1="Strongly disagree" to 5="Strongly agree".*

	Mean	StDev	N	Mean	StDev	N	Mean	StDev	N
	I currently avoid traveling by plane or boat.			I currently avoid traveling within my country of residence.			It is still too early to think of a future holiday.		
T1/CHE	4.13	1.12	347	**3.82**	1.24	347	**4.02**	1.14	347
URY	4.31	0.91	356	***3.01***	1.27	356	***3.45***	1.18	356
Overall	4.22	1.02	703	3.41	1.32	703	3.73	1.19	703
Anova	p = **<0.1%** ; F = **19.18** (VS)			p = **<0.1**% ; F = **71.65** (VS)			p = <**0.1**% ; F = **42.50** (VS)		

Data description
The following question measures the willingly to travel “What impact did the coronavirus crisis have on your desire to go on holiday? Please rate from 0 to 100 your desire to go on vacation. 0 meaning "no desire to take a vacation", 50 "neutral" and 100 "very much desire to take a vacation". The overall mean, meaning two rounds for CHE and URY) is 56.07 (std=33.74). The first CHE sample has a mean (48.7, std=34.24) significantly lower than the overall mean (56.1) and the contrary happens for the URY one , which is significantly higher (65 std=33.57). Finally for the second CHE sample its mean is 65 (std=30.71) which is not significantly different from the overall mean.Table 2: Relevant values for variables measuring risk perception and Preventive behaviours with the Anova test, means in bold indicate significantly higher and in bold italics significantly lower than the overall mean

Table 2 shows the means and corresponding ANOVA test results for the variables measuring the perception of pandemic risk between the two countries. The statement having the highest level of agreement is “the concern for the current situation”, URY shows a very significant level of agreement higher than the overall sample (4.4 vs 4.2). The second statement is “Tourism will be massively affected by the coronavirus in the near future” shows no evidence of difference of agreement across countries. For the statement about the lack of control of the coronavirus, the CHE sample shows a very significant level of agreement higher than URY (3.4 vs 2.97). There is a similar analysis for the fourth statement about the responsibility of tourism in the spread of the pandemic (CHE=3.3 vs URY=2.64).

Skeptical statements about the coronavirus have the lowest level of agreement: “very alarmist situation” (overall mean = 2.8) and the consideration of “Covid as a new form of influence” (2.4). For the latter statement there is no evidence of significant differences across countries whereas for the former the differences are significant: CHE shows higher levels of skepticism (2.99~3) than URY (2.8) about the level of alarmism of the situation.

There is no evidence of differences across the two countries with the overall average about the avoidance of travel by plane and ship having a very high level of agreement in the avoidance of this behaviour. In the case of the avoidance of travelling within the residence country and the projection to future holidays Swiss residents present a significantly higher level of agreement than the whole sample and the opposite is the case for Uruguay residents for both behaviors.
Factor analysis shows the adequacy of the data as the overall MSA is 0.72 and the minimum value for each variable is 0.56. These values show the adequacy of the sample as all of the values are greater than 0.5 which is the minimum required (Hair et al., 2006, p. 115).

Analysis of travel barriers
Data description
The travel barrier that shows the lowest effect is the filling of a health form: the CHE sample’s level is very significantly higher (2.7) than the overall (2) one and the opposite happens for the URY sample (1.6). There is the same result with the second most effective barrier namely the obligation to present a recent negative test (CHE=2.9, URY=2.3). The obligation of a health test in the destination country and the vaccine obligation has very similar overall levels (both 2.9) and shows no significant difference across the countries. This result close to 3, on the neutral scale value, shows hesitation about vaccines in both countries. It is worth noting that in the case of Switzerland, at the moment of the inquiry, no vaccine had gone through phase III protocol whereas for Uruguay at the inquiry time, this fact had happened 5 months before (on the 14 th July 2020, please see figure 1). Finally, the barrier which had the highest level of effectiveness is the quarantine at the destination country; the CHE are very significantly sensitive to this barrier (3.9) higher than the overall mean (3.6) and (3.4) for URY. The barrier which rises a greater cancel hesitation is the vaccine obligation and all others barrier there show limited potential cancelation effect in both countries, as their means are smaller than 3, the neutral value.

Table 3:Relevant values for variables measuring travel barriers with the Anova test, means in bold indicate significantly higher and in bold italics significantly lower than the overall mean.
Travel barriers : Impact of the current situation on your travel plans. "If your trip was subject to the following measures, would you choose NOT to go?" 1="I would definitely still go." to 5="I would certainly cancel the trip".

Mean	StDev	N	Mean	StDev	N

	Obligation to fill in a health form			Quarantine on arrival in the country of destination.		
T3/CHE	**2.65**	1.25	237	**3.88**	1.27	237
URY	***1.63***	1.05	356	3.41	1.45	356
Overall	2.04	1.24	593	3.60	1.40	593
Anova	p = <0.1% ; F = 113.91 (VS)			p = <0.1% ; F = 30.36 (VS)		
	Obligation to present a recent negative test for coronavirus.			Obligation to undergo a health test in the country of destination.		
T3/CHE	**2.95**	1.25	237	2.95	1.33	237
URY	***2.32***	1.37	356	2.32	1.37	356
Overall	2.57	1.39	593	2.57	1.39	593
Anova	p = 0.01% ; F = 16.07 (VS)			p = 100.0% ; F = <0.01 (NS)		
	Obligation to be vaccinated (as soon as a vaccine exists) and to show one's vaccination record.					
T3/CHE	2.91	1.38	237			
URY	2.89	1.52	356			
Overall	2.90	1.46	593			
Anova	p = 49.0% ; F = 0.49 (NS)					

The following question shows the Covid financial effect on respondents' income "Due to the coronavirus crisis, your income has: 1="Significantly decreased." to 5="Significantly increased." The overall mean, (meaning two rounds for CHE and URY) is 2.53 (std=0.75). The CHE sample has a mean (2.57, std=0.7) and for the URY one (2.5 std=0.78). So the effect on the income due to the Covid situation displays no significant difference across the countries, showing in both cases a mean neutral level around 2.5.
Factor analysis shows the adequacy of the data as the overall MSA which is greater than 0.5 and shows the overall adequacy of the sample even though the variable of measuring the Covid's effect on Revenues is 0.35.
A logistic model was undertaken, but due to space limitations is not available in this paper - please contact the authors for more details.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The study, which is believed to be the first of its kind comparing northern and southern hemisphere residents, may be very useful for travel industry professionals who could use the insights in comparing travel behaviours from residents of different countries. The willingness to travel is similar in both countries, demonstrating the importance of summer holidays in both countries. In terms of barriers to travel, some issues could potentially have a similar level of acceptance and in both countries travel possibilities have already been announced at the national level and for CHE at the EU level.
The findings from the study may also be useful for regional and national governments when determining the messaging and communications to residents and international travellers

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MOBBING IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY. RECENT EVIDENCE FROM GREECE

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ABSTRACT

The present work examines and reviews the current knowledge concerning work harassment, mobbing and sexual harassment in the hospitality industry in Greece. Having access to the recent data for the years 2021 and 2022, the authors conduct a qualitative research on how the Hellenic Labour Inspectorate, dealt with the accusations applied by the victims of workplace mobbing. The authors examined victims' and abusers' profiles, aiming to find out the reasons that provoked this criminal attitude as well as the dimensions of mobbing phenomenon. Further studies should be applied concerning employers' attitude towards moral and sexual harassment at workplace.

Key Words: mobbing, work harassment, hospitality industry, hotels

INTRODUCTION

Over the last twenty years or so research over mobbing, bullying emotional abuse and harassment at work, as a distinct from harassment based on sex or race and primarily of a non-physical nature, has emerged as a new field of study in Europe, Australia, South Africa and the USA. Heinz Leymann (Leymann, 1986,1990,1992) introduced the word «mobbing» being aspired by the aggressive behavior among school children, aimed at evicting out individual children for negative treatment, to pioneer systematic studies of similar types of behavior in the world of work. Much earlier Konrad Zacharias Lorenz (Lorenz, 1968) an Austrian zoologist, ethologist and novelist observed the attitude of animals in the wild nature, beating and mistreating on daily basis members of their team, aiming to singling out the unwanted animals.

In the 80's these immoral attitudes were examined in the workplace first in Scandinavia by Stale Einarsen and later in the USA by Loraleigh Leashly (Leashly, 1998) and Carroll Brodsky, (Brodsky, 1976) focusing in the hostile behaviors that may be relevant to workplace bullying emotional abuse, mistreatment. By all means a hostile work environment, in which insulting or offensive remarks, persistent criticism, personal abuse, or even physical abuse and threats prevail, is a reality for many employees in both public and private organizations.

Mobbing, or workplace bullying, is unfortunately a common issue in many industries, including the hotel industry. It can take many forms, including verbal abuse, exclusion, intimidation, and even physical violence. In the hotel industry, mobbing can occur between colleagues, between management and employees, or between employees and customers. For example, a manager may consistently belittle and criticize an employee in front of their coworkers, or a group of employees may exclude and isolate a new employee.

Mobbing can have serious consequences for both the individual being targeted and the hotel as a whole. It can lead to decreased job satisfaction, increased turnover, and a negative impact on the hotel's reputation and bottom line. To prevent and address mobbing in the hotel industry, it is important for hotels to have clear policies and procedures in place for reporting and addressing incidents of workplace bullying. Managers and supervisors should also receive training on how to identify and address mobbing behavior, and employees should be encouraged to speak up if they experience or witness bullying.

These personal negative feelings and attitudes contribute to low business performance indicators, such as high turnover rate and little profitability. Needless to say, that the high prevalence of violence forms a negative image for the tourism and hospitality industry in general. Although, the hospitality industry adds net income to the world economy, creating new jobs each year exponentially (Alola et al. 2019), and has shown tremendous growth, it still faces challenging working conditions. Recent studies (Einarsen et al 2004 ,2009) defined mobbing in the tourism sector as repeated and unwanted actions or practices with the intention to humiliate, punish, evict, and frighten a targeted subject.

The present work examines and reviews the current knowledge and conditions concerning work harassment, mobbing and sexual harassment in the hospitality industry in Greece. Having access to the recent data and reports for the years 2021 and 2022, the authors conduct a qualitative research on how the Hellenic Labour Inspectorate, dealt with the accusations applied by the victims of workplace mobbing. The profile of the victims i.e. age, gender, workplace positions, educational levels might be or not relevant with the misbehavior they faced. Moreover, the authors examine the abuser's profile, aiming to find out the reasons that provoked this criminal attitude.

The study is consisted of three main parts. The first part includes the literature review where the terms of violence and harassment at workplace are clarified by the presentation of previous studies. It also includes the definition of anti-bullying policies and the relevant research on this topic along with recent findings with regard to hospitality industry and mobbing. The second part includes the research tool and the general context of the study, that is to say the working environment of hospitality sector in Greece and the official organizations for the implication and supervision of labor laws in the particular country from the second semester of 2021. It also includes the presentation of the elements and findings that derived from the analysis of data and relevant documents. The final section provides a core of actions, policies and agenda rules, along with the recent law applied in Greece in June 2021, that can potential contribute as intervention tools against mobbing .

LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining bullying, mobbing and moral harassment

Workplace harassment arises when a senior manager or a coworker displays unwanted aggressive behavior against a subordinate, a colleague or rarely to a supervisor (Keashly & Jagatic, 2003). In addition, it relates behavior appearing in the work environment in which superiors abuse their professional authority, including their positions or interpersonal relationships, causing mental or physical pain to their subordinates (Rospenda & Richman, 2004).

Moral and psychological violence is nothing more than psychological violence perpetrated either by one person or by a group of persons, against one person or, similarly, against a group of persons. In essence, it refers to a sequence of offending behavior which, while prima facie not related to each other, is part of an overall picture of humiliation and humiliation of the victim (Leymann 1996). It is characterized as an extreme form of stress building in the workplace (Zapf, Knorz and Kulla 1996). The particular method aims at a systematic, long-term and insidious tactic with many repetitions, which aims at the psychological and occupational annihilation of the worker (Leymann 1966, Einarsen and Skogstad 1996, Zapf 1999).
In many cases, when the violence comes from the administration and there is a lot of tension and pressure on the worker, cases of suicide are found related to the workplace circumstances. (Karakioulafis, 2011).

Forms of workplace harassment introduce body touch (e.g. assault or physical harm), emotional attacks (e.g. threats, insults, or use of abusive language), and withdrawal from the relationship by isolation, and excessive demands, such as engage in behaviors that are impossible to perform, in difficulty or amount of tasks, assigning duties that are

beyond the subordinates' capabilities and experience, and infiltration into individual domains, where the superior intervenes excessively in private matters (Einarsen, 2000).

Various cultures and languages define "Bullying at work" in different ways and shades. The current review adopted the definition provided by Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (2003, p. 3): "*The systematic mistreatment of a subordinate, a colleague, or a superior, which, if continued, may cause severe social, psychological and psychosomatic problems in the victim*". The bullying reflects a structural imbalance of strength among the victim and the bully(s) (Einarsen et al., 2003).

'Mobbing' is a bullying status when a club of individuals offends one victim (Hoel & Einarsen, 2003). It is more severe than abusive supervision, including repetitive and deliberate acts of offensive nature toward others, creating an oppressive work environment (Rai & Agarwal, 2016). In the long run, the definition 'bullying' was widely used in English-speaking countries, while "mobbing" was preferred in German-speaking countries. In contrast, in France and Belgium, researchers have used the term "moral harassment" (Einarsen et al., 2000). Moreover, other terms such as 'abusive behavior,' 'emotional abuse,' 'workplace harassment,' and 'workplace trauma' have also been used in the USA (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008). However, all these terms tend to refer to the same paradox. The present review follows also Bentley et al.'s (2012) definition, which is "a situation where one or several individuals perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or more persons persistently over a period of time, in a situation where the targets have difficulty defending themselves against these actions" (op.cit., p. 352). Key features of bullying at work are (1) an imbalance of power between the two parties involved, (2) repeated negative actions or practices over an extended period, (3) directed at one or more people, which are (4) unwanted and (5) cause distress and/or damage (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008).

Anti-bullying policy

An anti-bullying policy is the most common organizational intervention to address workplace bullying (Hoel, 2013; Richards and Daley, 2003; Salin, 2003). Anti-bullying policies present important visible standards for interpersonal behaviour, signaling recognition that bullying is unethical and highlighting employees' rights not to be exposed to it. Yet, there are very few attempts to evaluate their effectiveness.

It has been demonstrated that the presence of a policy is a significant predictor of lower rates of workplace bullying (O'Connell et al., 2007), and employers with a robust policy in place are less likely to lose a case against them on Power and inaction 267 ground of bullying or harassment (Rockett et al., 2017); yet, qualitative studies have found negative experiences even in organizations with an anti-bullying policy (Hodgins and Mannix McNamara, 2019; Hodgins et al., 2018; Vickers, 2012), indicating that it is not a straightforward relationship. Policy may be better, broadly speaking, than no policy, but how it is implemented depends on a range of factors. A cynical view is that policy may reduce litigation against the organization, which in fact protects the organization rather than the employee.

However, it may be unfair to impute such negative motivations on all senior managers, and it is fair to say that anti-bullying policies are complex interventions (Cambell et al., 2000) in complex settings, i.e. there are many contextual and implementation factors at play. For example, awareness of policy is a pre-requisite for use, yet organizations do not always inform staff of the availability of a policy. Only 67% of the Finnish municipalities gave information on their policy to staff, and only 27% provided training for managers (Salin, 2003). In a study of two Irish public sector organizations, one-quarter did not know or had incorrect information about their organization's policy (Hodgins, 2004). More importantly, employers may well be remiss in following their own policies (Ferris, 2004; Hoel, 2013; Namie, 2012; O'Higgins and Kiernan, 2015). While 38% of the targets in a US study reported the presence of an anti-bullying policy, for 35% of these, it was applied unevenly or was considered too weak (Namie, 2012). In a UK study, only 30% of the respondents felt their organizational policies were effective for addressing bullying, while 27% felt procedures were not effective (Evesson and Oxenbridge, 2015). To the extent that formal action can be taken as an indicator of confidence in the organizational system (Shallcross et al., 2013), it is worth noting that very few employees who believe they are bullied take formal action (O'Connell et al., 2007; Task Force on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying, 2001). Low confidence may be well placed; a study of public service personnel in Australia found that of 155 complaints received between 2010 and 2016, 72% were unsubstantiated (Crimp, 2017).

Hospitality industry and mobbing

According to Ram 2018, the hospitality industry has the highest ratio of reported incidents of bullying and harassment among all sectors (Ram, 2018). A labor union in Australia, called United Voice, claimed that 86% of the respondents in their survey of employees in the hospitality industry had reported feeling insecure in their workplace (Bowling, 2017). While such a negative feedback has been reported about working conditions in the hospitality industry, hospitality scholars and leaders alike emphasize that employee welfare and human development is paramount for the development and promotion of the hospitality industry (Rivera, 2017).

The unfavorable working conditions in the hospitality industry might exacerbate a hostile environment in the workplace that may result in bullying incidents (Anasori et al., 2020). Hershcovis et al. (2015) reported that a stressful working environment is the optimal condition in which mobbing will appear. Higher workload (Baillien et al., 2011) and job stressors (De Cuyper et al., 2009) are also familiar to exercise a critical influence on the occurrence of harassment or offensive behaviors in the workplace. Employees in hotels have exposure to more harmful and stressful situations compared with other services because they work within constrained spaces under the culture of "orders from managers should be obeyed without fail" (Bentley et al., 2012). According to Kitterlin, Tanke, and Stevens (2016), verbal abuse, sexual intimidation, and harassing behaviors are considerably more frequent in the hospitality service industry than in the non-hospitality service industry.

Various studies focus on workplace harassment in the hospitality industry, for example Bloisi and Hoel (2008) recommended that the social interactions/standing of cooks should be improved in hotel kitchens, consistent education and training programs should be conducted at the organizational level, and employers should display interest and support for reducing violence and harassment in kitchens. Moreover Mathisen et al. (2008), claims that workplace harassment in restaurants is a common issue responsible for job dissatisfaction and subsequent reduction in creativity among employees, and it substantially increases negative effects, such as burnout and turnover intent. It is wise to mention that, Mathisen, Einarsen, and Mykletun (2010) supported that managers with severe neurosis harass their subordinates or colleagues more often than those without neurosis, and that superiors' stress represents a significant factor that could increase harassing behaviors. With accordance to Bentley et al. (2012), 10% of all employees in the travel business experience workplace harassment: those who are harassed show lower levels of self-evaluation and thus experience higher stress and increased intent to leave the organization than those who have not been harassed.

Ali et al. (2015) found that employees in the hospitality industry regularly deal with various people in the provision of services and are exposed to several types of harassment in their workplace; further, physical harassment and aggressive behaviors are important reasons why hotel employees leave their jobs. Yap and Ineson (2015) claimed that employees face several types of harassment during internships in the hospitality industry, resulting in negative emotions and deteriorated physical health. Likewise, Holm et al. (2015) observed that harassment by superiors or colleagues as perceived by employees in a hotel or restaurant has a significant consequence on their negative performance, and Cho, Bonn, Han, and Lee (2016) reported that workplace harassment as experienced by restaurant employees reduces their service performance and financial income of the business.

According to Kusluvan (Kusluvan et. al, 2010) in hospitality and tourism businesses the impact on production is greater. The tourism industry, in contrast to purely commercial enterprises, does not simply offer a material good to the customer, but in combination with an intangible service based mainly on the employee's personality (Chen 2013). That is, quite simply, in the case of the hotel product guests do not put a coin in a vending machine to get a soft drink. Here the product is offered and prepared by a worker in a specific environment (Gumbus and Lyons 2011) where not only the satisfaction of the thirst need from the drink is sought, but also the satisfaction of the customer's additional expectations. Thus, the effects on the production of the hotel product, mainly due to its dual nature, is more affected than any other product of the other business branches, since the personality, character, behavior of the hotel employee are also traits and skills of his professional profile. However, it is not only the quality of the produced product that is damaged by workplace mobbing, as it is the result of a multitude of psychological and physical damages, (Brees et al., 2013) such as anger outbursts, work stress, alopecia, intense sweating, sleep disorders, frequent changes in the working environment and the transfer of these problems to the family environment, resulting in the disruption of domestic peace.

Unquestionably mobbing in the hospitality industry ruins the image of the hospitality tourism image, causes to employees' distress and exhaustion, not to mention the sickness absenteeism phenomenon, where fewer people are left with more work, in a climate of uncertainty (Rivera et al 2016). The existence of mental and moral harassment

has contributed decisively to the burden of the quality of working conditions. It is one of the most basic forms of workplace harassment (Zapf 1999) with a highly corrosive and toxic effect on the modern work environment (Sandvik et al. 2008). The effects of this phenomenon are so negative on health, safety, the quality of the work produced as well as on the dynamics of the competitiveness of businesses within the capitalist arena of everyday life (Papalexandri 2011).

METHODS, CONTEXT AND FINDINGS ANALYSIS

Content analysis

As the particular study is a first attempt for examining the mobbing phenomenon in the hospitality sector in Greece, the content analysis was preferred since it combines qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Since two of the authors work officially in the field of monitoring and prevention of violence and harassment at workplace, the provision of data was immediate and accurate. The authors have also witnessed and, in many occasions, have handled labor disputes so they had the opportunity to study profoundly many reported cases and testimonies of violence and harassment in the work environment. Three types of document sources were used for the content analysis: (a) the annual data of the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Workplace, (b) reported charges related with the mobbing at workplace, provided by two central Regional Directorates of Labor Relations Inspection and (c) reported accusations of work harassment in hospitality sector, provided by the Hotel Employees' Union of Heraklion, Crete. Confidentiality was preserved in the process of acquisition and elaboration of accusations and testimonies.

The new role of the hellenic labour inspectorate (h.l.i.)

Violence and harassment were until recently a taboo subject in the workplace, a fact that was reflected in the design and content of the institutional framework. As society changes and more and more voices are heard demanding a decent job that will fulfill certain qualitative conditions, the issue of violence and harassment now has been in prime concern by official bodies in order to investigate its dimensions and the forms of its manifestation and then be limited or eliminated through the design and implementation of appropriate strategies and measures.

The Labor Inspection Body is called upon to compensate and bridge the subjective interpretations of the manifestations of violence and harassment with the applicable rules required by the legal framework and good morals, through its contribution to the elimination of such phenomena and to motivate victims of such behaviors to proceed to complaint and effective treatment of the damage suffered.

Labor Inspectors are called upon to take action to prevent and manage working conditions that pose psychosocial risks for workers, acting as links between the mandates and dictates of the legislative framework for the implementation of policies aimed at preventing and dealing with psychosocial risks and employers who are obliged to ensure the implementation of these rules. Therefore, the role of the modern Labor Inspector is more expanded as it is not only limited to the detection of violations and the imposition of fines, but is called upon to inform, educate, advise and guide employers and workers in order to create the right environment that will bring profits in the business while at the same time it will contribute to safeguarding and strengthening the mental, spiritual, physical health and well-being of the employee (Weissbrodt, Arial et al., 2018).

At the present time Greek businesses submit their anti-mobbing policy and in the absence of it, a fine is guarantee. The implementation of the Greek labor law 4808/21 imposes the operation of an anti-bullying policy for every business above 70 employees. The anti-bullying policy must be approved by the local Hellenic Labour Inspectorate. In addition, enterprises with more than 20 employees are obliged to apply an internal policy against violence and harassment (Law 4808/21, article 9) so as to show their willingness to combat mobbing at work. The aim of those regulations is to encourage enterprises in Greece to acquire a philosophy and a specific attitude and behavior where the employee will feel safe and in case he/she has been a victim, will feel comfortable expressing himself/herself and confiding in his/her superiors.

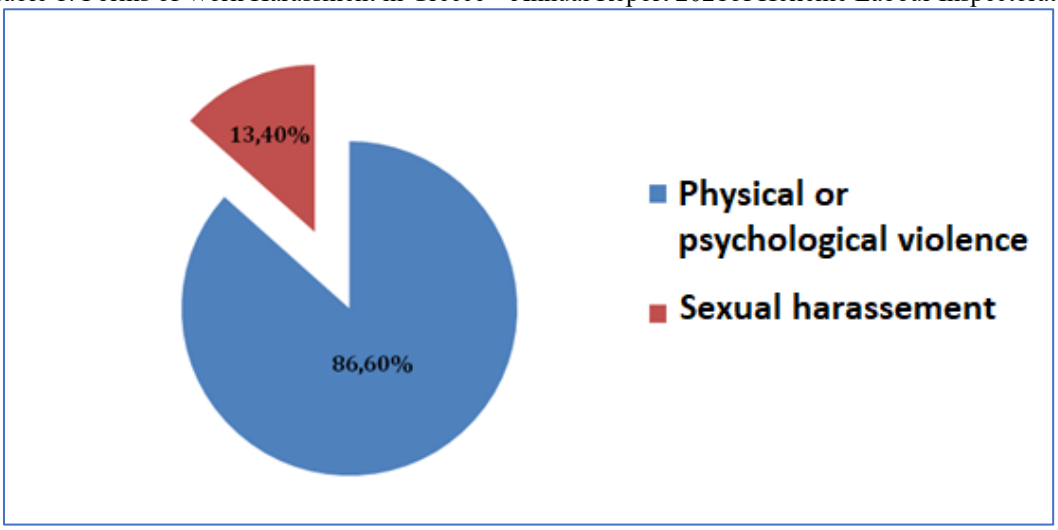
The mobbing phenomenon in 2021

According to the annual report for the year 2021 from the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Work, 37 local Inspection dept.'s around Greece declared complaints about labor disputes regarding violence and harassment at work have been forwarded to the Department since 05/7/2021, when its operation actually began, and until 31/12/2021 (reference year).

Labor Relations Inspection Departments across the territory corresponded to a total of ninety-seven (97) related applications for labor disputes and one hundred and one (101) applicants. Regarding the gender of the complainants, sixty-eight (68) were women and thirty-three (33) were men, and regarding the subject of the complaint, eighty-four (84) were related to incidents of violence, verbal, physical and psychological and harassment in general, and all thirteen (13) in cases of sexual harassment. Of the ninety-seven (97) labor dispute applications, seventy-seven (77) have been processed and twenty (20) are ongoing, while in sixty-three (63) of them the issue is related to violence and harassment caused by the employer himself and in the other thirty-four (34) the complainant is another employee (supervisor, shift manager) or another person.

The sectors of business activity where most incidents are reported concern catering, trade, hotels, electricity distribution, production, product manufacturing, IT services, entertainment. The vast majority of labor disputes concern incidents of violence, verbal, physical, psychological and in general harassment according to the new concepts and responsibilities introduced by articles 4, 17 and 18 of the recent labour Law 4808/2021 and at a rate of 86.6% against 13, 4 % of the corresponding cases of sexual harassment (Table 1).

Table 1: Forms of Work Harassment in Greece – Annual Report 2021of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate



It is noteworthy that 33% of the complainants - "affected" are men, while the female gender occupies the first place with a percentage of 67% (Table 2). It was also noticed that 65% of the alleged persons of harassment are owners, employers or employers' representatives, managers and supervisors whereas 35% of the alleged persons are colleagues or employees (Table 3).

Table 2: Complainants' Categorization according to Gender- Annual Report 2021of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate

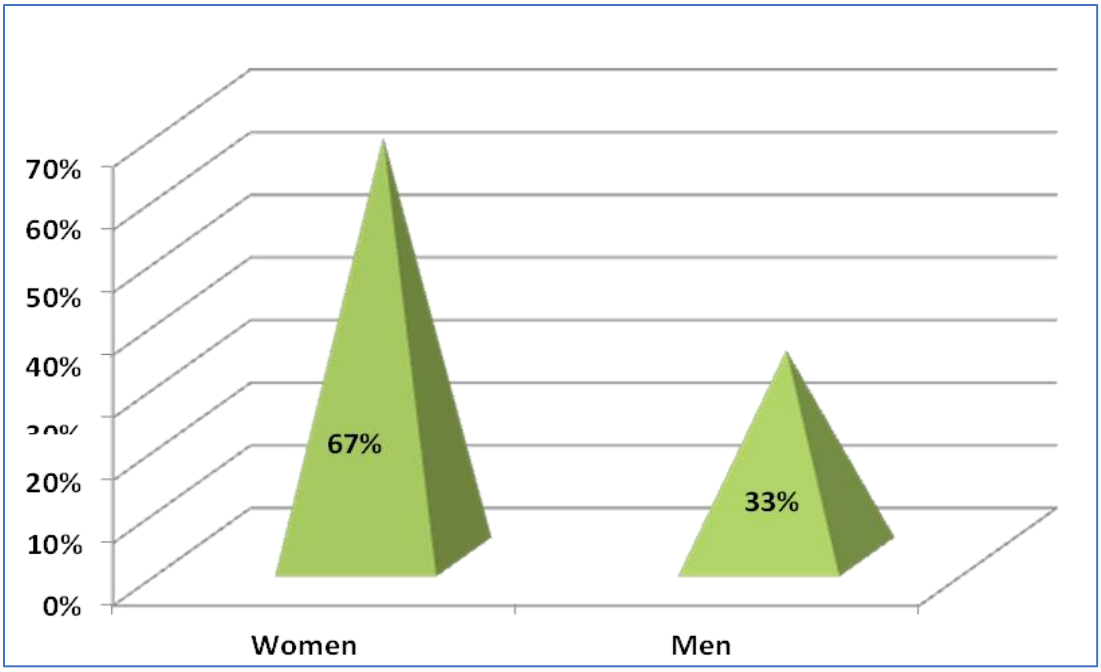
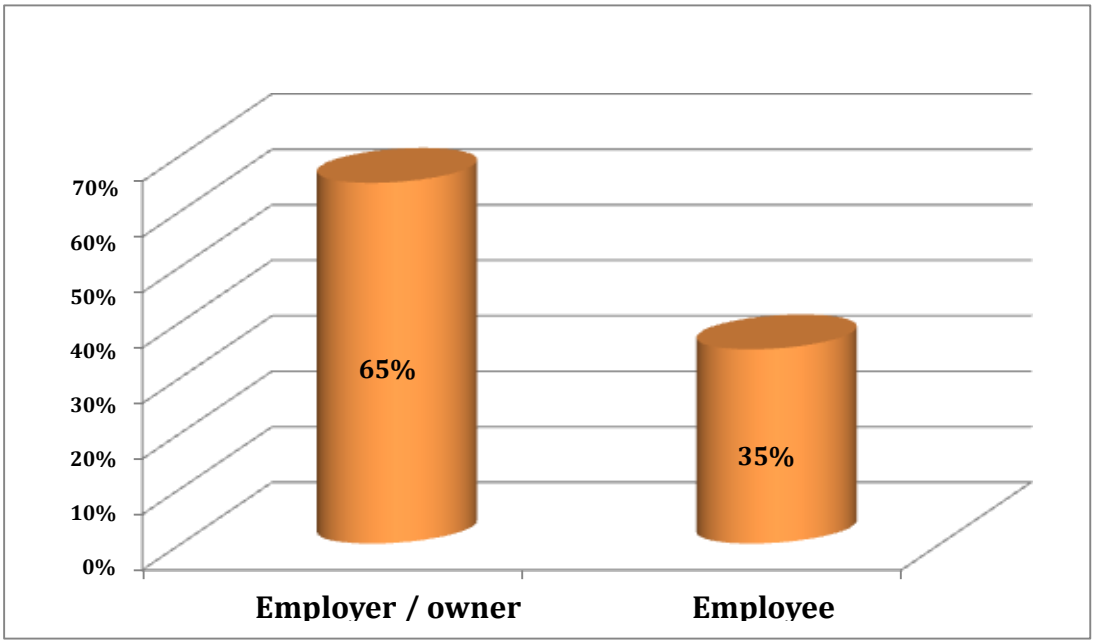


Table 3: Rates of alleged persons' work positions.

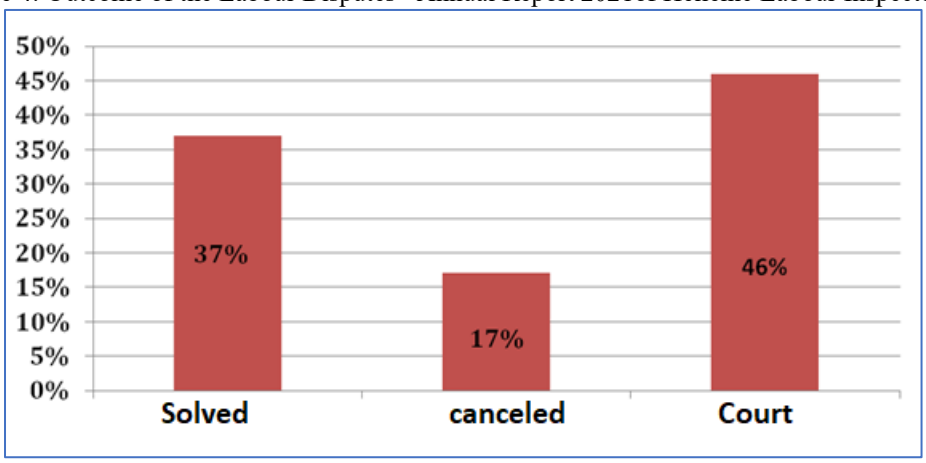


Management, conduct, outcome of audits and labor disputes during 2021

A special procedure is foreseen by the Labor Inspectorate, which refers to the management of registered complaints submitted to the Inspectorate about the violation of the legal provisions that regulate the prohibition of violence and harassment at work. The affected person has the choice to apply for a labor dispute related to violence and harassment (articles 4,12,13) either to the manager at the Head of the competent Regional Directorate of Labor Relations Inspection, or to manager at the Head of the competent Department, who are responsible to conduct the dispute resolution process.

Twenty-eight (28) cases have been resolved by taking the appropriate and corresponding measures by the police, according to Law 4808/21, relevant recommendations to the police for a work world without violence and harassment and their relative monitoring by the competent inspectorate, i.e. a percentage of 37% of all processed labor disputes with prospects for an increase, as the outcome of the results of other labor disputes is expected at a percentage of 20.6%. Thirteen (13) cases have been aborted - a rate of 17% - either due to non-appearance of the complainant during the scheduled discussion, or due to a written statement of the latter, or because specific incidents of violence and harassment were not further analyzed during the discussion, so that to be subject to the special procedure of article 18 of Law 4808/2021. In thirty-six (36) cases - a percentage of 46% - a reasoned recommendation to appeal to the competent courts has been recorded due to conflicting claims on contested factual and legal issues (Table 4).

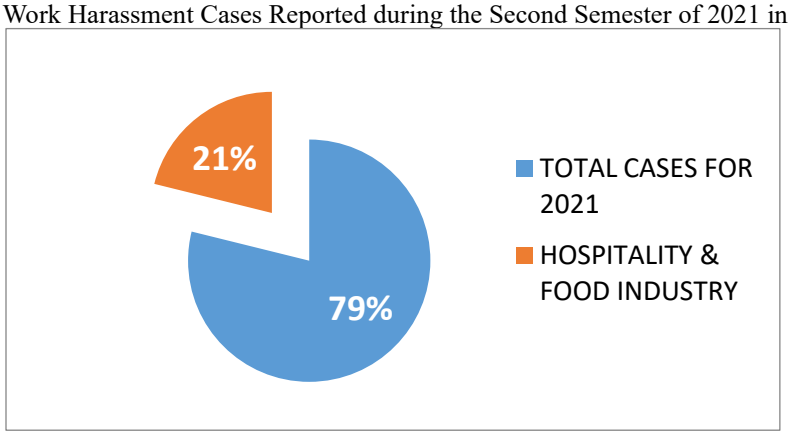
Table 4: Outcome of the Labour Disputes - Annual Report 2021of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate



Cases of mobbing issues in the hospitality industry in 2021

As stated in the annual report 2021 of the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Work, 21% of the work harassment cases declared refer to the hospitality and food service industry (Table 5).

Table 5: Work Harassment Cases Reported during the Second Semester of 2021 in Greece.

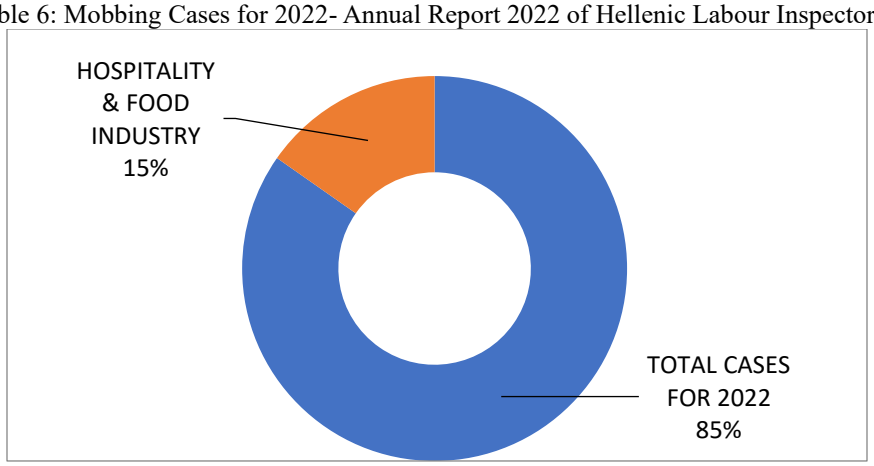


The percentages tend to increase rapidly for the year 2022. The particular department started to accept accusations of work harassment from June 2021 since the new labour law 4808/21 was applied and established the above department. Moreover in 2021 it was not widely spread in the public the operation and the role of the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Work. The authors considered not to compare years 2021 and 2022 since the year 2021 doesn't represent the actual size of the work harassment epidemic. Therefore the findings of 2022 will be presented autonomously.

Work harassment epidemic in 2022

With accordance to the official records of the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Work, individuals had submitted 172 accusations of work harassment in Greece in 2022. Among them 31 cases represent mobbing at the hospitality and food service industry. At the Table 6, it is noticed that 15 % of the total work harassment submissions are related to the hospitality industry for the year 2022

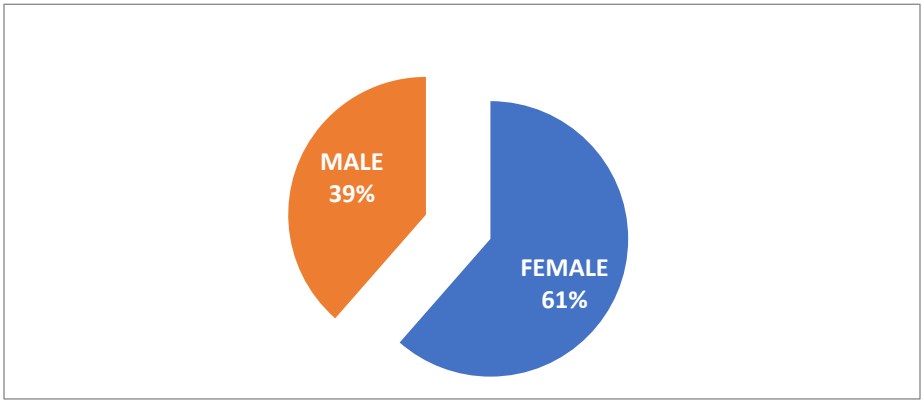
Table 6: Mobbing Cases for 2022- Annual Report 2022 of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate



Unformal sources from the Hotel Employees Union in Iraklion Crete, underlines the fact that decades of incidents do not see the light of publicity at the formal government agencies. Small communities discourage employees from expressing official the mobbing they are facing. Seasonal work in the hospitality industry, uncertainty for the future level of reservations lead victims to endure psychological sufferings rather that fighting to extinguish the problem.

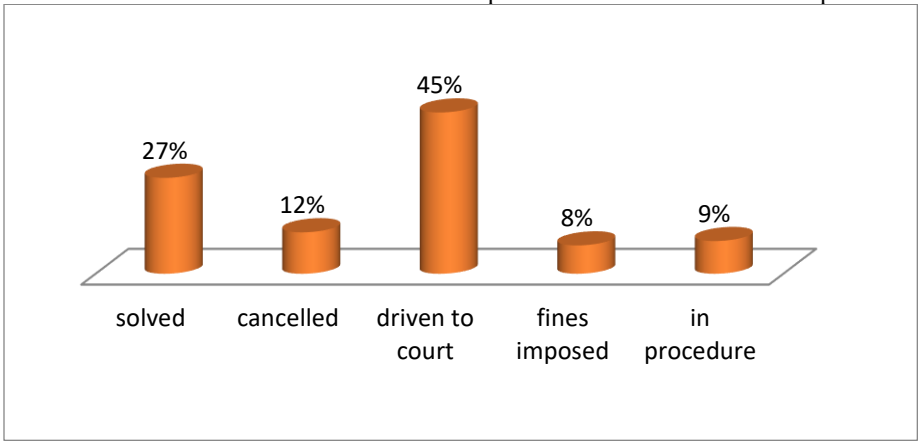
Since most of the data for the year 2022 are under process, it's remarkable to notice some vital outcome. Concerning the gender of the victim 61% of the cases represent female victims, whereas men might be a minority with a respectable percentage of almost 40% (Table 7)

Table 7: Rate of Victims' Gender – Annual Report 2022 of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate



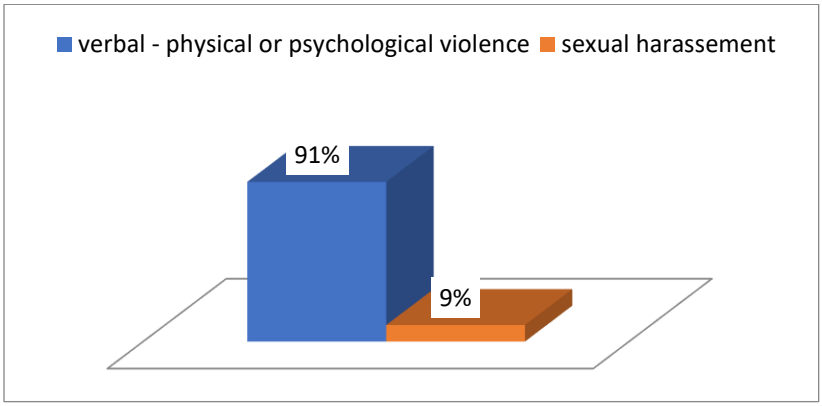
It's remarkable to acknowledge (table 8) that 27% of the cases submitted by civilians were solved effectively in a few weeks, 12% were cancelled, and almost half of them couldn't reach a solution and were driven to court. An amount of 25,150 euros was imposed to business which didn't have developed and anti-bullying policy and some others are still in procedure.

Table 8: Work Harassment Cases- Annual Report 2022- Hellenic Labour Inspectorate



With reference to the types of the harassment (table 9) only 9% of them suffer a sexual violence. Though, authors share the strongest conviction that sexual harassment is not expressed officially, especially among small community groups.

Table 9: Forms of Harassment



Hotel employees' union of Heraklion prefecture

Apart from the official data, provided by the Hellenic Labour Inspectorate, authors approached the president of the Hotel Employees' union of the Heraklion Prefecture Mr. Nikolaos Kokolakis who willingly assisted and gathered from December 2022 to March 2023 the number of 27 accusations of work harassment in the hospitality industry.

Heraklion is the capital of Crete and one of the Mediterranean region's most fascinating and vibrant cities. Heraklion is the largest region of Crete and a major tourist destination in Greece and Europe. Tourism is one of Crete's primary industries, with 5,287,600 international visitors and 4,573,656 international visitor hotel arrivals in 2019, of which about 44% visited the region of Heraklion. Tourism is a major economic source for the region of Heraklion. The total direct revenue from tourism for 2019 was 3.6 billion euros. Heraklion also has the biggest port on the island in regard to cruise passenger numbers, with 307,043 arrivals in 2019. More than 1.7 million passengers arrived by ferry in the same year, either for tourism or other purposes. The port has an annual passenger capacity of up to 0.5 million for cruise tourism, hosting up to 5 cruise ships at once. While boosting Heraklion's economy, this growth is unavoidably linked with operational difficulties and challenges to the city's social, cultural and environmental resources.

All the above inputs led to acknowledge that the evidence from the above union is a significant key to the whole study. The analysis of the data collected will be a trigger for a new research of the authors, examining also the

reason of the victims' reluctance to declare officially the work harassment they face. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that 64% of the complaints supports the opinion that the hotel managers are aware of the mobbing incidents and do nothing to combat it, underestimating the importance of it. Another astonishing element of the data is that 39% of the mobbing cases were conducted by female supervisors (housekeeping dept.'s) to female employees.

CONCLUSIONS – SUGGESTIONS

Both, from the complaints examination and from the international literature, it appears that the abuser, like the victim, does not have a specific gender, since both men and women can perfectly play the role of the abuser even if they were once victims themselves. Also, it derives from the examination of the relevant reported cases and data that victims' reluctance to openly express mobbing incidents is the biggest obstacle for the agencies involved to examine and provide an effective solution to the alleged incident. This reluctance gives ground to the spread of the phenomenon, as the bad example easily finds imitators. It is important then for employees to protest and report when they receive repeated attacks of any kind (physical, verbal, body language, etc.) either to their manager, or to the Labor Inspectorate and the Ombudsman. Workers' hesitations to express the drama they experience, give grounds to every abuser to continue his reprehensible work. So, there is a constant repetition of mobbing behaviors by the perpetrators since impunity not only motivates them to continue, but also to find colleagues who reproduce the same behaviors.

Concerning the sexual harassment in hotels, in some cases it was not easy for the receivers' of inappropriate behaviors to express their claims without getting confused, since the alleged persons often claimed that, what was considered as an incident of sexual harassment, it was just a misunderstanding, caused due to the different culture background. Even in occasions with repeated misbehavior from a harasser against his/her colleagues, the substantiation of his/her guilt was not an easy task as lack of proofs is a common feature in most of these cases.

Another important clue that came to light was the general managers' indifference. The manager of a business has the duty to investigate reported instances of work harassment. However, it was noticed that most of the managers in hospitality sector did not give any or enough attention to employees' complaints about cases of violence or harassment. The usual excuse for their indifference on these matters is that they have to handle a lot of tasks and duties in a confined time. Thus, they underestimate the significance of the problem and prefer to ignore employees' complaints about supervisors' and senior managers' insulting and indecent behavior.

But it is not only managers' indifference which leads to the escalation of violence and harassment in hotels; it is also the colleagues' apathy. Even when the abuser expressed his/her harassing behavior against his/her victim in front of colleagues' eyes, they want to have no interference. The phrase: *"They pretend that nothing is happening"*, has been referred many times in complaints' reports, when they are asked about colleagues' attitude. The result of reluctance and indifference is the delay in the investigating process of incidents of violence and harassment and, consequently, the loss of proofs and evidence and the weakness of complaints' credibility.

In order to limit and suppress workplace harassment, it is necessary to take action by the victims themselves, but also by their colleagues who must react to the gross injustice and address the appropriate agencies to resolve and - above all - prevent such negative incidents. Employees should feel protected and not ignored by their general manager and feel convenient to submit a possible mobbing action. Mobbing in most cases can be solved and cured at the internal environment of the company and this is the issue that authors want to speak out.

With reference to the New Greek Labour, the employer apart from sharing an anti-bullying policy, should also apply a procedure so as to investigate and eliminated incidents of work harassment in the business. The authors share strongly the perception that employers should be the defenders of mobbing occasions in their own business by applying effective policies and transparent procedures. Employers should strive to ensure that employees understand its policies and procedures, as well as its commitment to preventing and correcting inappropriate conduct in the workplace (Graves et al., 2021). Special treatment should be taken not to disadvantage the victim of the alleged harassment in order to avoid the perception of retaliation (McTernan et al., 2013).

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IMPACT OF COMPENSATION MANAGEMENT ON CO-WORKER RELATIONSHIPS: RESEARCH IN FOOD AND BEVERAGE ENTERPRISES

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ABSTRACT

A positive co-worker relationship in organizations can lead to better performance and higher productivity. This can ultimately result in increased compensation for all involved. Thus, organizations need to manage compensation in a way that promotes positive co-worker relationships. This research aimed to investigate the effect of compensation management on co-worker relationships in organizations. Survey data were collected from randomly selected 291 employees working in 18 different food and beverage production enterprises operating in Konya, Turkey. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, explanatory factor analysis, and linear regression analysis techniques. Findings revealed that compensation management has a significant impact on co-worker relationships.

Key Words: compensation management, co-worker relationships, food processing enterprises

INTRODUCTION

Compensation management is an important instrument of human resource management to contribute to organizational effectiveness because it influences the behavior and productivity of employees (Adeoye & Fields, 2014). Compensation management is concerned with the formulation and implementation of strategies and policies that aim to compensate people fairly, equitably, and consistently in accordance with their value to the organization (Reddy, 2020). Thus, it influences the decision of potential employees to join an organization and also determines the employer-employee relationship after employees become a part of the organization.

Co-worker relationships play a significant role in the success of organizations. Because, positive relationships between co-workers promote collaboration, job satisfaction, communication, support, creativity, and innovation (Carmeli & Gittell, 2009). Compensation management involves designing and implementing a compensation system that attracts, retains, and motivates employees. Thus, compensation management practices can impact co-worker relationships by creating a sense of fairness and equity, fostering a sense of competition or collaboration, influencing employee turnover, and influencing employee motivation and performance.

The research on the relationship between compensation management and co-worker relationships is limited. While some studies have found that a fair and transparent compensation management system can promote positive co-worker relationships, other studies have not found a significant relationship between the two. More research is needed to understand how compensation management practices can be implemented in a way that promotes positive co-worker relationships and improves overall organizational performance. Thus, this empirically designed research aimed to investigate the effect of compensation management on co-worker relationships.

COMPENSATION MANAGEMENT

Compensation is the remuneration an employee receives in return for their contribution to the organization. It is an organized practice that balances the work-employee relationship by providing monetary and non-monetary benefits to employees. The remuneration package encompasses bonuses, profit sharing, overtime pay, recognition rewards, and sales commission. Compensation is an integral part of human resource management which helps in motivating employees and improving organizational effectiveness, as it seeks to address the long-term issues relating to how people should be valued for what they desire to achieve (Daniel, 2019; Patnaik & Padhi, 2012; Reddy, 2020).

Compensation is a kind of psychological contract between individuals and organizations, and thus affects the attraction and retention of talented employees (Duanxiang, 2010). For the workers, wage provides the means of satisfying their wants and needs (Akpan et al., 2022). Thus, well-designed compensation leads to job satisfaction,

motivation, high performance, low absenteeism, and low turnover (Reddy, 2020). The implementation and maintenance of a carefully planned and structured compensation management system by organizations frequently result in the attraction and retention of highly committed and motivated employees. This is because such individuals hold positive perceptions about their job, and are thus content and fulfilled in their role, thereby demonstrating increased dedication towards the accomplishment of corporate objectives. Moreover, such highly motivated employees are more inclined to maintain long-term affiliations with the organization they work for (Daniel, 2019).

Employee compensation encompasses more than just a monetary salary; rather, it refers to the comprehensive array of benefits, incentives, and bonuses conferred upon staff in recognition of their contributions to the organization. Effective management of compensation plays a significant role in enhancing organizational productivity. The compensation system is formulated on the foundation of job tasks and the corresponding level of skill and expertise possessed by the employee (Reddy, 2020).

The concept of compensation can be classified into two groups, namely direct compensation and indirect compensation. In the realm of human resource management, direct compensation pertains to pecuniary incentives proffered and dispensed to personnel as compensation for their labor rendered to the establishment. Ensuring the alignment of direct compensation with prevailing industry norms affords employees the certainty that equitable remuneration is being awarded. Direct compensation is typically made up of salary payments and health benefits, including bonuses, profit sharing, overtime pay, recognition rewards, sales commission, house rent allowance, conveyance, leave travel allowance, special allowances, bonuses, etc. Indirect compensation, also known as fringe benefits, focuses on the personal motivations of each person to work. It refers to non-monetary benefits offered and provided to employees instead of the services provided by them to the organization. The benefits encompassed in the package offered to employees are diverse, encompassing training courses at no cost, subsidized daycare, potentially favorable prospects for professional advancement or lateral moves within the company, a commendation from the public, agency to effect changes in the workplace, opportunities to serve others, leave and overtime policies, corporate car policies, hospitalization coverage, insurance plans, travel allowances during leave, retirement provisions, and vacation residences, among other offerings (Akpan et al., 2022; Reddy, 2020).

Compensation management is a process to reward the hired employees in line with the organization’s vision, mission, and strategies. The procedure involved in this undertaking comprises five fundamental phases, which are as follows: the formulation of the organization's strategy, determining the compensation policy, conducting job analysis and evaluation, analyzing the impact of contingent factors, formulating and executing the compensation plan, and eventually, evaluating and reviewing the outcome. The concept of compensation management encourages employees to work harder, while concurrently fostering a competitive atmosphere within the enterprise. The management of compensation serves to establish and uphold a fair and impartial arrangement for remuneration and salary levels. The encompassing process entails the evaluation of work, conducting a comprehensive survey of compensatory wages and salaries, implementation of profit-sharing mechanisms, and measures to effectively govern the costs associated with remuneration (Adeoye & Fields, 2014; Daniel, 2019).

Workforce characteristics, organizational size, union presence, industry, geographic location, organizational structure, and corporate strategy account for employee pay differences. Beyond these factors, organizational context also influences an organizational compensation system. Decisions about an organization’s compensation system are shaped by fit with organizational context and its implications for organizational effectiveness. As a result, the systematic variation in compensation systems exists across organizations within the same industry (van Jaarsveld & Yanadori, 2011).

Compensation management has four aims mainly: efficiency, equity, obeying the rules, and complying with ethical standards. The aim of ensuring justice is related to the reflection of performance, contribution, and experience in wages as a result of fair evaluation of employees. It is related to justice that the employees receive fair wages for their efforts and responsibilities and that this wage they receive is compatible with the enterprise, the region, and the sector. Compliance with all kinds of laws, regulations, and rules on wages and the purpose of complying with the laws of wage remuneration; ensuring different wage equations and organizational justice and informing those concerned can be achieved to comply with moral principles in wage (Demir & Acar, 2014)(Demir & Acar, 2014). This means that when employees feel they are not being rewarded as expected, it will decrease their job satisfaction, and their motivation may suffer, leading to low motivation, low performance, and low commitment (Daniel, 2019).

CO-WORKER RELATIONSHIPS

A co-worker (also called colleague or peer) is someone who works with but is not in a higher position (Colbert et al., 2016). A peer is defined as a person who is a member of the same social group, usually of the same age, class, or status (Colbert et al., 2016; Reitz et al., 2014; Tran et al., 2018) Similarly, Kram and Isabella (1985) define peers as people who have the same job, the same salary, and responsibility at the same organizational level.Kram and Isabella (1985)

A co-worker relationship is a type of informal relations place because employees hav in the workplace. Co-workers have no formal authority, but they do have the power to influence each other. This is an important source of emotional support in the workplace because employees have a more common understanding with their peers than people outside the organization. In addition, peer relationships differ in quality of relationships. Employees with the same marital and family status are more inclined to interact with each other. The degree of friendship also varies with communication, as in close friendship, employees are more engaged than acquaintances and communicate openly (Sias, 2005)

Employees often have more peers compared to their supervisors. Similarly, there are fewer hierarchy differences in peer relationships. Employees communicate with each other easily, receive support, and collaborate. Peer relationships; perform some functions, such as career development functions, psychosocial functions, and special qualities. The career development function encompasses knowledge sharing, which allows employees to receive individual and technical information for the work to be done. Career strategy helps employees better understand their careers and can discuss career dilemmas. In career development functions, peers receive and give feedback to evaluate their performance. Those working in psychosocial functions inspire a sense of confidence and competence in co-workers, as they reflect high levels of trust, explanation, and friendliness (Kram & Isabella, 1985).(Kram & Isabella, 1985)

Co-workers who have good relationships are more likely to share ideas, provide feedback, and work together toward achieving organizational goals (Cross et al., 2002). Employees who have positive relationships with their coworkers are more likely to enjoy their job, feel a sense of belonging, and stay with the organization longer. This leads to reduced turnover rates and increased employee retention, which is crucial for organizational success. Good relationships between co-workers facilitate open communication, which helps to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). Co-workers can provide support and assistance to each other during challenging times, which can help to reduce stress and burnout and improve job satisfaction. Co-worker relationships also contribute to creativity and innovation in organizations. When employees have positive relationships with their co-workers, they are more likely to share ideas and collaborate on new projects. This can lead to increased creativity and innovation, which is essential for organizational growth and success. Carmeli and Gittell (2009) found in their study that high-quality relationships between co-workers lead to psychological safety, which promotes learning from failures and innovation.

COMPENSATION MANAGEMENT AND CO-WORKER RELATIONSHIPS

Organizations should carefully design and implement their compensation system to ensure that it promotes positive co-worker relationships and supports organizational goals. Because compensation management can impact co-worker relationships by creating a sense of fairness and equity among employees. When employees perceive that their compensation is fair and equitable, they are more likely to have positive attitudes towards their co-workers and the organization. A study by Heneman and Schwab (1985) found that perceived fairness of compensation was positively related to job satisfaction and commitment. On the other hand, when employees perceive that their compensation is unfair or inequitable, it can lead to resentment and negative attitudes towards co-workers and the organization.

Compensation management can impact co-worker relationships by fostering a sense of competition or collaboration among employees. A compensation system that rewards individual performance can create a competitive environment where employees compete against each other. This can lead to negative co-worker relationships, such as backstabbing or sabotage, as employees strive to outperform each other. On the other hand, a compensation system that rewards team performance can foster collaboration among employees and lead to positive co-worker relationships (Milkovich et al., 2016).

Compensation management can impact co-worker relationships by influencing the level of employee turnover. A compensation system that provides competitive pay and benefits can help to attract and retain high-quality employees. This can lead to positive co-worker relationships as employees are more likely to work with colleagues they respect and value. On the other hand, a compensation system that provides inadequate pay and benefits can lead to high turnover rates, which can negatively impact co-worker relationships. High turnover rates can create instability and uncertainty, which can lead to distrust and resentment among remaining employees (Rynes et al., 2004).

Compensation management can impact co-worker relationships by influencing employee motivation and performance. A compensation system that rewards high performance can motivate employees to work harder and achieve better results. This can lead to positive co-worker relationships as employees appreciate and respect each other's contributions. On the other hand, a compensation system that does not adequately reward high performance can lead to dissatisfaction and demotivation, which can negatively impact co-worker relationships.
In conclusion, compensation management has a significant impact on co-worker relationships in organizations. Compensation management can impact co-worker relationships by creating a sense of fairness and equity, fostering a sense of competition or collaboration, influencing employee turnover, and influencing employee motivation and performance (Weiss, 2002). Therefore, organizations should carefully design and implement their compensation system to ensure that it promotes positive co-worker relationships and supports organizational goals.

H1: compensation management systems have a positive impact on co-worker relationships in organizations.

METHOD

This is quantitatively designed research. This research investigated the effect of compensation management systems on co-worker relationships in organizations. Surveyed data was collected via a structured questionnaire with three sections. The first section was the scale of compensation management systems, the second section was the scale of co-worker relationships, and the third section was on the demographic attributes of the subjects involved in the investigation.

Both measures, compensation management systems and co-worker relationships, were in the form of 5-point Likert-type scales ranging from “1 = strongly disagree " to "5 = strongly agree”. The measure for the compensation management systems was borrowed from the research of Ergüney (2006) who adapted this measure from Heneman and Schwab (1985). This measure consisted of 32 items. The measure for the co-worker relationships was adapted from the research of Yücel (2009). This measure consisted of 11 items.

Reliability analysis was performed for both measures. The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability value for the compensation management systems measure was $\alpha = 0.96$ (32 items), and for the co-worker relationships measure was $\alpha = 0.90$ (11 items). Results of the reliability tests revealed that the internal consistency of the items of both measures was reliable at a very good level.

The population of the research was the food production enterprises operating in Konya, Turkey, where the exact size is not known. Konya is one of the top seven developed big cities in Turkey. The sampling framework of this research was formed with randomly selected employees working in food production enterprises. A total of 319 questionnaires were collected from randomly selected employees and 291 of them were determined valid for the data analysis. This sample size is considered to be adequate to generalize by taken into consideration the limitation of having at least 5 observations for each variable (Hox & Bechger, 2006).

Expert feedback were taken from four experts actively working in the target industry and two academicians from the field to increase the surface validity of the scales and the questionnaire. A pilot study was performed to test the preliminary construct validity of the measures. By analyzing 36 valid pilot data, some items of the measures were rephrased to clarify the meaning of the items.

FINDINGS

Data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, explanatory factor analysis, and linear regression analysis. The statistics for the demographic characteristics of the respondents indicated that a significant proportion of the sample was male (61.50%), married (53.95%), 25 to 34 years old (43.30%), worked 1 to 6 years in their current organization (54.30%), at production department (98.28%) as an employee (75.26) in food production enterprises. The demographic characteristics disclosed that the participants were juvenile adults in their early career paths in their professional pursuits, having enough experience to assess the scales.

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted for the measure of compensation management systems. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for this measure suggested that the sample was factorable (KMO = 0.950). The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity test had a significant result ($\chi 2$ = 5404.190, df = 406, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the factor analysis can be applied to this measure. Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed by using “Direct Oblimin” rotation with the Principal Component Analysis method. Three items of the measure were eliminated from the analysis because of dual or low-loading reasons. Exploratory factor analysis generated four components explaining 67.06% of the total variance. One component was loaded with just two items. Thus, this component was removed from the analysis. Further analysis was conducted with four compound variables named adequate compensation, transparency, fairness, and formal procedure.

Construct validation for the scale of co-worker relationships was carried out through exploratory factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy results indicated that the sample size was sufficient for the analysis (KMO = 0.909). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded a significant outcome ($\chi 2$ = 1279.335, df = 45, $p <$ 001), showing that the data set was appropriate for applying factor analysis to the given measurement. The method of Principal Component Analysis with the "Direct Oblimin" rotation technique was executed for the analysis. The data rotated in one component with 52.415% of the total variance explained. Further analysis was performed with the compound variable named co-worker relation.

Pearson correlation analysis was performed to determine the status of the linear relationship between compound variables of the measures. Table 1 displays the Pearson correlation analysis results. According to the results, the correlation between compound variables ranged from 0.175 to 0.742, indicating low to moderate correlation.

Table 1
Pearson Correlation Analysis

Compound Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5
1. Co-worker Relations	3.76	0.735	283	1				
2. Adequate Compensation	2.85	0.905	291	0.251**	1			
3. Transparency	3.16	0.932	291	0.240**	0.722**	1		
4. Fairness	2.81	0.969	291	0.175**	0.754**	0.660**	1	
5. Formal Procedure	2.96	0.876	291	0.220**	0.673**	0.742**	0.668**	1

**: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The proposed hypothesis was tested by performing a linear regression analysis. Table 2 displays linear regression values. The results of the regression analysis revealed that the proposed hypothesis was not supported by the available data.

Table 2
Linear Regression Analysis

	Dependent Variable: **Co-worker Relations**					
	R	***R²***	***Adjusted R²***	***Std. Error***	***F***	***p***
Model	0.272	0.074	0.061	0.713	5.552	0.001
Bağımsız Değişken	***B***	***Std. Error***	***Std. Beta***	***t***	***p***	***Tolerance***	***VIF***
Constant	3.052	0.163		18.676	0.000		
Adequate Compensation	0.156	0.081	0.191	1.937	0.054	0.343	2.913
Transparency	0.087	0.076	0.110	1.138	0.256	0.360	2.781
Fairness	-0.064	0.071	-0.084	-0.905	0.366	0.384	2.603
Formal Procedure	0.056	0.080	0.066	0.696	0.487	0.374	2.675

DISCUSSION

The relationship between compensation management and co-worker relationship has been studied in various aspects by researchers in the literature. Compensation management refers to the process of designing and administering a compensation package for employees, while co-worker relationship refers to the interactions and relationships between co-workers in the workplace. Adeoye and Fields (2014) examined the relationship between compensation management and job satisfaction. The study found that compensation management practices, such as fair pay and benefits, were positively related to job satisfaction, which in turn was positively related to co-worker relationships. The study concluded that effective compensation management can improve both job satisfaction and co-worker relationships. Adeoye and Fields' (2014) research findings supported this current research at the significance level $\alpha = 0.10$. In other words, adequate compensation positively affects co-worker relations.

Daniel (2019) examined the impact of compensation management on organizational commitment in the workplace. The study found that employees who received fair compensation and benefits were more likely to experience positive emotions, which in turn were positively related to co-worker relationships. The study concluded that effective compensation management can foster positive emotions and co-worker relationships in the workplace. In another study, Akpan et al. (2022) investigated the impact of compensation management on employee turnover. The study found that employees who perceived unfair compensation and benefits were more likely to quit their jobs, which in turn negatively affected co-worker relationships. The study concluded that effective compensation management can help reduce employee turnover and improve co-worker relationships. Contrary to the findings of these research results, this current research did not evidence a significant relationship between compensation management and co-worker relationship.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This research explored the relationship between compensation management and co-worker relationship in food production enterprises. The findings of this study suggest that effective compensation management can play a crucial role in promoting positive co-worker relationships and reducing employee turnover. Organizations should therefore pay close attention to their compensation management practices, both monetary and non-monetary, to improve co-worker relationships and create a positive work environment. When the needs of employees are met in the workplace, they become satisfied with the work they do, and when they are satisfied with their work, they not only want to achieve more to earn better but, they also want to remain loyal and commit to the organization that looks out for them.

This current study was conducted based on survey data from food production enterprises operating in Konya, Turkey. Thus, the generalizability of the findings may be limited. Therefore, future research should validate the current framework in other industrial and cultural samples. This research was designed quantitatively. Future research can be designed qualitatively to get in-depth knowledge of the concept.

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FROM THE INSIDE OUT: RE-BRANDING TOURISM IN THE BAHAMAS THROUGH CREATIVE PLACE-MAKING

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ABSTRACT

Many island states like the Bahamas, are rebranding place and seeking other forms of tourism grounded in cultural resources. The creative industries provide an authentic place-based tourist experience that can diversify tourism away from traditional mass tourism focused on sun, sand and sea. But art and culture have been historically underrepresented and a more nuanced approach is needed to rebrand place. An exploratory case study approach examines the ways in which The Bahamas have contributed to place-making creatively through co-creation processes, building networks, and storytelling and in so doing rebrands tourism and place away from typical neocolonial images of mass tourism.

Key Words: creative tourism, rebranding, place-making, The Bahamas, cultural tourism

INTRODUCTION

The Bahamas has been a key mass tourism Caribbean destination since the mid-20th century, with lush greenery, pristine beaches, friendly locals and rum-infused drinks along with popular imagery of sun, sand, and sea. Stopover visitors (excluding cruise ship excursionists) to The Bahamas in 2019 reached over 1.5 million with the islands only receiving 427 000 in 2020 (www.tourismanalytics.com). The pandemic has had a drastic impact on the tourism generating economy in the islands which is problematic given tourism contributes 40-60% to the nation's GDP (UNWTO, 2018). There is hope, however, as 2021 stopover visitor numbers reached 715 000, a percent change down from 2019 of 54%. While tourism may be on the rise, there is still much concern for how tourism-dependent island nations remain resilient. While tourist arrivals may not be the most accurate representation of economic health or tourism's beneficial contribution especially to an island economy (Prievo, 2022), it affords those involved in the sector a moment to reassess the current and future direction of tourism in this region.

Caribbean tourism imagery is frequently associated with mass tourism and the 3 S's (sun, sea, and sand) coinciding with an 'earthly paradise' (Sheller, 2003). Postcolonial theory assists us in critically analyzing Caribbean tourism (Chambers & Buzinde, 2015) seeking ways to re-brand and redevelop tourism in places associated with centuries of imperialist and colonial legacies (Nixon, 2015). Many island states like the Bahamas, are rebranding place and seeking other forms of tourism grounded in cultural resources (Bangwayo-Skeete & Skeete, 2021); the creative industries providing an authentic place-based tourist experience (Duxbury & Richards, 2019) that can diversify tourism away from traditional mass tourism products. But art and culture have been historically underrepresented in tourism in the Bahamas and a more nuanced approach is needed to rebranding place through creativity (Minnis, 2021). Tangible and intangible characteristics of place are at the core of creative tourism (Scherf, 2021) allowing these approaches to be associated with community-led place-making. But gaps exist in understanding how creative arts through tourism contributes to place-making (Richards, 2021).

Despite extensive research on creative tourism (Al-Ababneh, 2020; Duxbury, 2021; Duxbury et al., 2021; Richards, 2021), more attention is needed on its application to small communities and how its alignment with locals' sense of place and belonging contributes to place-making (Mackay et al., 2021; Tuan, 1977). Place-making is how community groups imprint their values, perceptions, memories and traditions on a landscape (Lew, 2017; Zhao, 2019). By being citizen-focused, organic and emphasizing co-creation (Omholt, 2018) it can more accurately represent tourism as an agent of change (Dupre, 2019) working to re-brand places influenced by colonial and imperial legacies. Richards (2020) proposed a creative placemaking model in which the basic elements of resources, meanings and creativity are combined with other components such as grass-roots participation, tangible and intangible culture, programming, creative resources, curation, and local storytelling to create design principles that allow for holistic community development more firmly rooted in place.

Community-led movements to rebranding destination image and regenerate tourism away from the 3 S's, have been active for some time (Nixon, 2015). A wider variety of accommodations including design and boutique hotels are emerging and getting a re-birth; an alternative to the large-scale massive generic all-inclusive resorts. These, along with recent ventures into creative tourism are providing a varied tourism resource base catering to a more diversified tourist market. In March 2014, Creative Nassau made application to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network to be designated as a Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art and was successful in obtaining this membership. The purpose of this paper is to explore how creative place-making through diverse bottom-up community-based approaches contribute to re-branding place through creative tourism in so doing it offers ideas on how to diversify tourism away from traditional forms of mass tourism dependent on sun, sand and sea.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Creative Tourism

Adding creativity to tourism has become a common diversification strategy and includes new events and festivals, the regeneration of old buildings, 'design hotels', iconic museums, art galleries and wineries (Lee, 2015; Richards & Raymond, 2000; Richards, 2011, 2020; Ta & Yang, 2019; Tan et al., 2013). It is considered a potential means to improve the reality of those that live in these communities, provide a sense of place identity and belonging, especially smaller cities (Richards, 2020; Scherf, 2021). Many aspects of creativity and contemporary culture now fall under the UNWTO (2018) definition of cultural tourism which includes art and architecture, historic and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions. Furthermore, the everyday creativity, with its tangible and intangible components, that is embedded in local lifestyles, found in crafts, pastimes, the arts, music and literature and keeps places distinctive in a globalizing world (Al-Ababneh, 2020; Richards, 2021). Creative tourism can be a means of conserving those things that the local community might otherwise be in danger of losing. Just as cultural tourism has been important in stimulating the conservation of tangible heritage in recent decades (UNWTO 2018), now creative tourism is providing more possibilities for conserving intangible heritage. By introducing tourists to the creative products and processes of a community, these can be valorized, and successive generations can find new ways of interacting with which was one of the original inspirations for the creative tourism concept; effective gateway to developing shared experiences between "tourists" and "locals" and ensuring that the creativity of places is maintained (Richards, 2021).

Development of cultural and creative tourism is part of a general shift towards developing attractive places for people to live in, work in and visit (OECD, 2014). The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) was formed in 2004 to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. Sensitivity to place can illuminate how regional communities innovatively leverage creative capacities, address local challenges and create localized impact. The value of arts and culture might be best understood at a local level, and that community-led and community-generated creative experiences are those which communities find most impactful (Mackay et al., 2021). By ensuring that creative tourism aligns with bottom-up design approaches and coincides with community place-making can alleviate these potential stressors.

Creative Place-making

Animating place, also referred to as place making, describes a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces for improving urban environments and residents' quality of life (Kruger, 2006; Sofield et al., 2017). According to Project for Public Spaces (2022), place making inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent spaces as the heart of every community, strengthening the connection between people and the places they share. *Place-making* refers to how community or cultural groups imprint their values, perceptions, memories and traditions on a landscape and give meaning to geographical space (Lew, 2017). It emerges from a cultural geography tradition often in association with emotional attachments to place and sense of place (Basaraba, 2021; Relph, 1976), these forms of cultural place-making are bottom-up approaches, more grassroots, organic and incremental (UNWTO, 2018). In contrast, *Placemaking* (government initiated, well planned and funded place making more attune with place branding) and *place making* (a generic term that refers to either in a discussion) (Lew, 2017).

Disciplines with an interest in *placemaking* have traditionally been urban planners, designers and architects (Dupre, 2019). Recently, tourism researchers and practitioners have been examining its role in tourism planning and urban

development (Dupre, 2019). Acknowledging its role in improving quality of life for residents and attracting visitors, many centres are adopting a mix of place making projects that involve standard (incremental, small-scale), strategic (well planned, large-scale investment), creative (arts-based initiatives) and tactile (small-scale, temporary exhibits) place making (Lew, 2017). Unfortunately, citizens and communities often lack control over place making due to current trends in neoliberal urban development and investment in the creation of competitive city brands often supported by multi-million-dollar budgets (Mansilla & Milano, 2018; Omholt, 2018; Sofield et al., 2017). Aravot (2002) argued that place making has lost its central position and that we need to satisfy the request for open-endedness and constant interpretation of places providing insights for new creation and perhaps co-creation. Community-oriented, bottom-up place-making processes are more organic and focus on holistic community cultural initiatives emphasizing on long-term and more sustainable development (Omholt, 2018).

In the context of tourism, this move is needed in order to more accurately represent tourism as an agent of change thus scrutinizing its role through a critical social lens (Dupre, 2019). In addition, the shift away from mass tourism to more sustainable, community approaches have contributed to a renewal of strategies and goals in urban development (Dupre, 2019). Even though an emergent literature on place making and tourism has started to analyze this phenomenon, there is still more to understand on the role of place making in tourism and how this contributes to community development (Vuignier, 2017; Zhao, 2019). Speake and Kennedy (2019) suggested that cities can incorporate both structural, top-down aspects of placemaking and human agency (place-making) as co-performers in place making impact and influence tourism destinations.

While the role of locals in the tourism system is important (Braun et al., 2013; Easterling, 2004; Omholt, 2018) little empirical evidence has been published on the role of community members as actors and agents in the creative place-making process. Creative place-making through arts-based initiatives is a specific arena with which bottom-up and top-down governance approaches may work together for local community development. The creativity of places lies not just in the formal types of creative industries that are now so popular with governments seeking to stimulate economic development but in the everyday life of places, in the daily rhythms of work and play, in the ingenious ways in which people have adapted to the world around them (Richards, 2021).

Richards' (2020) proposed a creative placemaking model in which the basic elements of resources, meaning and creativity are combined to improve programming and design. Each case examined in the study showed specific traits of locally embedded creativity. Meanings were provided through grass-roots participation, intangible and tangible interventions in physical spaces (Marques & Borba, 2017) allowing for increasing engagement through spaces for people to participate, interact and create (Richards, 2020). Resources, both tangible and intangible, along with programming, link stakeholders in both top down and bottom up strategies that contrast with a more formal governance approach (Courage & McKeon, 2019). These resources are collective, improve quality of life through vision, governance practices, workshops, prototyping, and co-creation (Montouri, 2011). Curation is another design process becoming more evident in development programmes (Richards, 2020). The role of the curator not only develops a creative story of place but highlight elements of culture important for local and global actors. The creative placemaking process produces different results in each case because the design tools and governance context varies (Richards, 2020). Place making alongside creative tourism offers the possibility of transformations that are more firmly rooted in place (Ateljevic, 2020). Acknowledging and documenting this in a variety of place-specific contexts is needed.

METHODS

An exploratory case study approach examines the ways in which The Bahamas have contributed to place-making creatively through co-creation processes, building networks, and storytelling and in so doing contribute to a more resilient place in the context of tourism (Beeton, 2005; Richards, 2020). Nassau and The Bahamas were selected for this study because of the existence of bottom-up approaches especially a strong commitment by locals and the non-profit sector to counter the narrative of traditional Caribbean mass tourism (Strachan, 2002). The National Art Gallery of the Bahamas, Doongalik Art Gallery, Creative Nassau, Bahamar Resort, and The Island House are some of the creative tourism entities researched in this study. Thematic analysis, applied here, is an interpretivist approach that analyzes fluid and subjective meanings in texts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It interprets texts including words, phrases, and syntax considering their wider scale and socio-political formations. Secondary data sources such as reports, websites, and official documents were inspected through a thematic analysis alongside photographic documentation, informal conversations, and field work (Hardy et al., 2004; Martinez-Carazo et al., 2021). There are

several components that emerged in this study that connected with the themes as expressed in Richards (2020) creative place-making model: local talent; valorization of culture; curation; co-creation; and sense of belonging/place.

RESULTS

The explanation of the themes (valorization of culture, curation, co-creation, sense of belonging/place, and networks/flows) that emerged will be expressed under the headings of the organizations and businesses that are responsible for upholding creative tourism and place-making in The Bahamas (Figure 1). This gives those involved in creative place-making and creative tourism additional acknowledgement to provide a voice for them beyond the research paper and in an attempt to prevent disparities between the research context and everyday space (Ackerly & True, 2008; Jakoby, 2006; Millar, 2017; Schulz, 2021).

Doongalik Studios and Creative Nassau

Doongalik Studios formed in the 1970s by the late Jackson Burnside III, architect, artist and cultural advocate, and his wife, Pam promoting the country's artistic talent. The Burnsides believe they can establish The Bahamas as an international center of creativity. The dedication by Burnside as a curator, provided a narrative and a creative space with which artists can tell their own stories. Doongalik Studios Art Gallery has one location in Nassau - #20 Village Road which is home to a large Exhibition Gallery in an historically traditional building nestled amongst a lush garden. Doongalik's mission is to ensure that by the year 2020, most visitors to The Bahamas will come to experience Bahamian Art, Culture and Heritage rather than merely Sun, Sand and Sea.

Doongalik is home to the registered non-profit organization, Creative Nassau founded by the Burnsides in 2008, along with a group of passionate Bahamians who believed in its mission to *celebrate and promote Bahamian Art, Culture, and Heritage from the inside out* and showcase their unique Bahamian culture to the world. A Creative Tourism model was developed with the goal that *by the year 2020 more persons will travel to The Bahamas to experience its art, culture and heritage rather than just its sun, sand and sea. In 2014, Creative Nassau* secured the designation for the City of Nassau to become a Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art in the prestigious UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN). This designation provided a built-in network of flows from the global to the local. The 246 cities which currently make up this network work together towards a common objective; placing creativity and cultural industries at the heart of their development plans at the local level and cooperating actively at the international level. It's aims centre upon partnerships involving the public and private sectors and civil society; strengthening the creation, production, distribution and dissemination of cultural activities; and developing hubs of innovation to broaden opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector, notably for marginalized or vulnerable groups and individuals; fully integrate culture and creativity into local development strategies and plans. On May 2021, on the tenth anniversary of Burnside's death, Doongalik rebranded the art gallery in his memory and now showcases his extensive range of artwork and creativity on display, whilst continuing the sale of Bahamian books and DVDs, along with exclusive woodwork and ceramic art. The gallery and its role in curation tell a story about The Bahamas as a place. The gallery, a local space, provides a node in a global space of flows that connects to the global.

Transforming Spaces

Doongalik is also home to Transforming Spaces, another registered non-profit organization www.tsbahamas.com that was formed in 2008 by a group of Bahamian gallerists (Doongalik being a founding member) whose mission it was to expose the public to the wide offerings of Bahamian Fine Art in Nassau by hosting an annual art tour at these galleries. Transforming Spaces continues to offer a platform that allows participating galleries and community spaces to 'transform' for a weekend each spring. This platform organized by locals and for the community demonstrates how co-creation, curation and storytelling contribute to creative place-making. *We desire to bring Bahamian art to the forefront of the creative economy by challenging artists, innovators and artisans to explore and create* (www.tsbahamas.com). Transforming Spaces prides itself on fostering connections and collaborations with artists, curators and artist enthusiasts whilst highlighting regional and diasporic contemporary art practices (www.tsbahamas.com/about) which in turn contributes to the local/global space of flows.

National Art Gallery of The Bahamas

The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas (NAGB) is partially funded by a governmental subvention but engages a public-private network to operate and is also supported by the community that it serves, in the form of ticket sales,

memberships, and donations. It is a world-class museum with a passion for knowledge and a drive to push cultural boundaries. The NAGB collects, preserves, exhibits and interprets historic and contemporary Bahamian art it exists to educate, uplift and inspire. https://nagb.org.bs/mission-vision-values/ As the leading art institution for The Bahamas, it actively nurtures and provokes a healthy cultural ecosystem, empowering multiple generations of Bahamians and they are constructing another gallery on the island of Grand Bahama. The National Art Gallery fosters robust partnerships locally, regionally and internationally and builds institutional capacity thus formulating networks and flows crucial to becoming a changemaker in The Bahamian communities. The gallery hopes to provide more opportunities for access thus giving the public a sense of pride becomomg active participants in writing their own stories. The NAGB co-creates and curates Bahamian artists work allowing their stories to be shared both with the public and global visitors. Pride is established not only in locals re-affirming their sense of place and belonging but in the valorization of their culture knowing their narratives are being shared with a wider audience.

The Current, Bahamar Resort

The Bahamar Resort at first glance may seem to have a mass tourist appeal but its objective is different than traditional all-inclusive hotels. There is a commitment to maintaining the creative industries of The Bahamas through The Current Gallery and Art Center. Much more than a vast collection of contemporary art, The Current Gallery and Art Center is a hub for compelling Bahamian artistic experiences. As a gallery, studio, and retail shop, The Current is focused on recognizing and supporting a strong creative community in Nassau, The Bahamas, through captivating exhibitions, workshops and lectures, artist residences, partnerships with local collectors and curatorial services. There are more than 140 Bahamian artists showcasing their work at The Current. The Current positions itself within each of the realms of creative place-making providing intimate storytelling through the curation of local artists in addition to providing an artist studio space employing artists. Networks flow throughout these spaces, artwork on display throughout the resort, within the gallery and for sale within the retail shop. Art tours are provided as well. Many of the showcased works are a profound assortment of both historical and contemporary works, majority of which are no longer found anywhere in the world. The Fairwind Exhibition is a compilation of painting, sculpture and photography that shine light on important narratives, both in the past and present, allowing for a better place-based understanding of The Bahamas. https://bahamar.com/art/fairwind-exhibition/. Employment is created through work at the gallery, studio, retail shop and custom framing shop.

Design & Boutique Hotels

To move away from all-inclusive, generic mega-resorts that leave little to offer visitors in terms of a deep connection to the local culture and heritage, The Bahamas has refurbished existing smaller scale historic hotels as well as redeveloped smaller-scale, more intimate boutique and design accommodations. There are a number throughout The Bahamas, those situated in and around Nassau and especially on the other family of islands. For example, The Island House stands out among Bahamian resorts, having been designed with both visitors and the local community in mind, and as a symbiotic extension of the surrounding environment. The property features 30 rooms and suites, beach access, six rental apartments, two restaurants, a cafe, wine market, art house cinema, lap pool, movement studio, squash courts, TERN art gallery and a spa. The TERN is a contemporary art gallery and art consultancy business with a focus on emerging and mid-career artists from The Bahamas and the wider Caribbean (https://www.terngallery.com/about), *TERN celebrates and supports regional contributions to the visual arts while contributing to the international contemporary art market. The core mandates are to operate and maintain a public gallery to exhibit artworks from a global network of artists, to collaborate with the best minds and tastemakers in the industry, and to encourage the development of the local art market. As our name suggests, TERN encompasses a sense of local belonging with global access*.

DISCUSSION

There are several components that emerged in this study that connected with the themes as expressed in Richards (2020) creative place-making model: local talent; networks/flows; valorization of culture; curation; co-creation; and sense of belonging/place (Figure 1). The Bahamas is contributing to creative place-making through tourism from the inside out. Bottom-up place-making approaches involve co-creation and storytelling through the deep and passionate commitment of curators at non-profit organizations such as Doongalik Studios and the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas. Creative place-making as personal engagements (flows, co-creation) and humanistic activities (storytelling) help restore relations at an individual scale while also producing forms that circulate at collective scales (Puleo, 2014). Developing tourism through storytelling, curation and co-creation re-affirms a strong,

dedicated response for bottom-up place-making processes. Places gather tangible and intangible cultural resources over time that have given them deep, intrinsic meanings within the local population. Harnessing these resources for tourism enables them to be linked through a global space of flows from locals to international visitors (Richards, 2020). These creative place-making processes contribute to place rebranding by valuing local creative arts, providing creative spaces and connecting to The Bahamian sense of identity and place. This diversifies tourism away from traditional mass tourism images of sun, sand and sea with tourism resources dedicated to local creative talent, job creation, and community development. Diversification of tourism through the incorporation of creative tourism enables the economy to be less dependent on typical mass tourist markets.

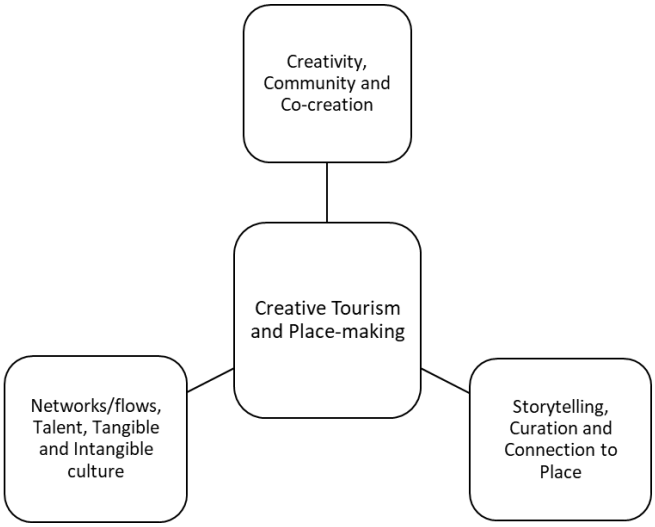

Figure 1: Adapted from Richards (2020): Dimensions of Creative Tourism and Place-making

Top-down placemaking also assists with these rebranding processes and centres upon newly imagined resort complexes that have focused on Bahamian culture. Mass scale resorts like Bahamar negotiate Bahamian culture through the concept of paradise (Nixon, 2015) but these moves to incorporate true Bahamian character through the creative arts may be a nod in the right direction for place making. Other top-down initiatives involve the designation by the UCCN, an opportunity for Nassau to maintain partnerships at the global scale as well as benefit from knowledge mobilization with other cities in the network. Bottom-up place-making approaches involve co-creation and storytelling through the deep and passionate commitment of curators at non-profit organizations such as Doongalik Studios and the partially government funded National Art Gallery of The Bahamas. Creative Nassau, a non-profit organization responsible for securing this global space of flows works closely with stakeholders in sustaining creative networks within The Bahamas. The non-profit organization Transforming Spaces provides special events that display local artists work promoting local stories. Top-down and bottom up place making strategies are connected by a series of networks and flows kept alive by locals involved in the creative planning and management process, the tourism industry and a steady flow of residents and visitors.

People are central to creative tourism initiatives in The Bahamas and the islands are being viewed as a place where locals' creative talent and intimate stories are situated alongside heritage landscapes and succulent natural seascapes. Lesser known to most than the traditional imagery, creative industries in The Bahamas are gaining steady ground as contributing to a healthy creative tourism sector. An alternative to the mass consumption of tangible cultural heritage of a given destination, creative tourism is tied to intangible knowledge and skills, which, when shared by locals with visitors, provides an authentic place-based experience (Duxbury & Richards, 2019; Richards & Raymond, 2000). The tangible and intangible characteristics of place, and the experiential integration of the tourist with them, is the core of creative tourism. For the residents of these places, there is an opportunity to engage with visitors to offer local place-based experiences (Scherf, 2021).

CONCLUSION

An exploratory case study approach examined the ways in which The Bahamas have contributed to place-making an tourism creatively through co-creation processes, building networks, and storytelling and in so doing rebrands tourism away from typical images of mass tourism. Cultural and creative tourism alongside other forms of tourism – even what appears to be traditional mass tourism – deepens the significance of an allied industry (Cunningham et al, 2020). Sustainable place-making can only be achieved if local community-led initiatives and local government-led strategies are no longer fragmented (Franklin & Marsden, 2015). Mutual benefits can be had from co-production and co-creation where local government needs to play a more nuanced, integrated and facilitatory role in place-making strategies but separate from its more traditional regulatory role. New ways of being, knowing and doing in the world are emerging as conscious citizens, consumers, producers, travellers, entrepreneurs, and community leaders are calling and acting upon the necessary transformation towards a regenerative paradigm (Ateljevic, 2020). Creative place-making as personal engagements (flows, co-creation) and humanistic activities (storytelling) help restore relations at an individual scale while also producing forms that circulate at collective scales (Puleo, 2014). Developing tourism through storytelling, curation and co-creation re-affirms a strong, dedicated response for bottom-up place-making processes. Creative tourism becomes the avenue with which creativity can be harnessed vis a vis place-making thereby contributing to a more resilient and robust community. Art can diversify economic activity given the consequences of severe economic crises and environmental catastrophes and new creative landscapes can be conceived as important for the resilience of cultural tourism destinations (Martinez-Carazo et al., 2021).

Creative tourism approaches in island states do tend to focus on community-led place-making but gaps exist in understanding these contributions in various contexts. There is less understanding of how creative tourism works on the ground (Richards, 2021) and still more attention needs to be paid to specific cases that demonstrate its successes and challenges in practice. In so doing, this paper expanded on Richards (2020) creative placemaking model by demonstrating how bottom-up approaches to creative place-making in The Bahamas contribute to the overall tourism mix vis a vis creative industries thus contributing to a more diverse tourism resource base. Diversification of mass tourism through the incorporation of creative tourism enables the economy to be less dependent on typical mass tourist markets that demand only sun, sand and sea. Instead, creative place-making ensures tourism is maintained from the inside out focusing not on tourism products nor paradise but people and place. After all, the central component of the Bahamian flag are the people that connect with the sun and the sea.

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HOSPITALITY AND ANALYSIS OF FEELINGS IN HYBRID EVENTS AND ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

This article presents an analysis of people's feelings during the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to do so, the period from March 11, 2020 to March 11, 2021 was selected, in which only aspects related to hybrid events and events occurring on digital platforms were considered. Therefore, in the first phase, bibliographical research was conducted, from which the keywords of this study were collected. In the second phase, it continued with documentary research in two distinct communication vehicles, considering relevant aspects in each activity. The question here is, what are the feelings identified during the COVID-19 pandemic when we consider the news associated with hybrid events and those occurring on digital platforms? The propositions are, (P1) given the scenario of the spread of COVID-19 and the development of information and communication technologies - ICTs, it becomes possible to identify people's feelings, and (P2) through the analysis of people's feelings expressed in events developed in a hybrid way and on digital platforms during the pandemic, a set of issues related to hospitality is demonstrated. The goal is to verify people's feelings expressed through information and communication technologies - ICTs in events developed in a hybrid way and on digital platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific goals are (O1) to reflect on the relationship between hospitality and events developed in a hybrid way and on digital platforms; (O2) to analyze feelings through the lens of hospitality; (O3) to present the feelings showed in the use of information and communication technology tools. In view of these considerations, the debate on the analysis of people's feelings in adverse times, such as the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, and also in environments sometimes stereotyped or not imagined, such as the metaverse, is enriched. Or even activities that increase and are highlighted due to the rise of technological resources. Consequently, the analysis of the data obtained indicates possibilities for action and for the sector.

Key Words: Hospitality. Analysis of feelings. Hybrid Events. Events held on digital platforms. Information and Communication Technology - ICTs.

INTRODUCTION

This article is about emerging aspects in the field of hospitality, such as the analysis of people's feelings. To this end, a specific study was conducted on hybrid events and also those developed on digital platforms, which got evidence due to the advancement of technology during the COVID-19 pandemic. The originality and importance of this investigation is presented by bringing together these questions, so this literature contributes to the development of knowledge in areas of applied social sciences, especially in the field of hospitality and events. For reasons of public safety, the COVID-19 pandemic anticipated the insertion of technological factors in the hospitality sector (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). Therefore, even in the face of the challenges established by the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects of this virus on the tourism and hospitality industry were observed, in the face of lockdown and social mobility restriction measures taken to reduce the spread of the virus.

The insertion of technological resources has been boosted in recent years in different fields of activity. In the hospitality area, human resources are being replaced by robots that perform concierge and delivery tasks, information assistants through mobile devices and self-check in/check out machines (Kim *et al*., 2022). This reality influences people's feelings, either due to existing differences in physical interaction or the way the service is presented. It appears that from the 1990s onwards, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have affected organizations operating in the hospitality sector, which have evolved into websites, social media and mobile technologies (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Leung *et al*., 2013; Wang *et al*. 2022).

In the field of business, mobile Internet and inventions that support the sustainable shift towards social robotics have grown (KIM *et al*., 2022) In addition, Business Intelligence and Analytics are being considered as management strategy to assess customer satisfaction and the positioning of the organization (Ramos, 2022) in relation to other players in the market. For the purpose of this study, the core concepts of the research are shown below, in Table 1.

Table 1 – Core research concepts

CONCEPTS	SPECIFICATION	AUTHORS
HOSPITALITY	Leads to different places where business, public institutions and ICT developments meet.	Breukel & Go, 2009 Normann, 1984
ANALYSIS OF FEELINGS	The ability to detect positive and negative opinions in the text, making it a component in tourism and hospitality investigations using big data.	Carvache-Franco *et al*., 2022 Thelwall, 2019
HYBRID EVENTS AND EVENTS HELD ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS	Promising activity that uses virtual reality and can be applied to the sector of meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions - MICE, in which these innovative methods prove to be viable to achieve organizational objectives in an effective and efficient way	Pearlman & Gates, 2010
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY – ICTs	Channels that allow professionals in the tourism and hospitality industry to reach their customers by combining mobility and ICTs. Mobile technologies such as smartphones, tablets and mobile applications (apps) have become the main devices for users to access the Internet and have become indispensable in consumers' daily lives.	Law *et al*., 2018

Source: Created by the authors, based on Breukel & Go (2009), Carvache-Franco *et al*., (2022), Law *et al*., (2018), Normann (1984), Pearlman & Gates (2010), Thelwall (2019).

Before the considerations made by Breukel & Go (2009), Carvache-Franco *et al*., (2022), Law *et al*., (2018), Normann (1984), Pearlman & Gates (2010), Thelwall (2019) in the Table 1, the problem and the general and specific goals of this investigation were elaborated. In this way, the research problem is: what are people's feelings identified during the COVID-19 pandemic when considering the news associated with hybrid events and those held on digital platforms?

The propositions are, (P1) through the scenario of the spread of COVID-19 and the development of information and communication technologies - ICTs, it becomes possible to identify people's feelings, and (P2) through the analysis of people's feelings expressed in events developed in hybrid way and on digital platforms during the pandemic, a set of issues related to hospitality is demonstrated.

The purpose of this study is to verify people's feelings expressed through information and communication technologies - ICTs in events held in a hybrid way and on digital platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific objectives are (O1) to reflect on the relationship between hospitality and events developed in a hybrid way and on digital platforms; (O2) analyze feelings through the lens of hospitality; (O3) present the feelings manifested in information and communication technology tools.

Thus, new technologies (e.g., web and mobile apps) like Facebook, Twitter and TripAdvisor, as well as big data, artificial intelligence and augmented reality, have emerged and got attention from researchers., An explanation for this could be that the tourism and hospitality sector is an application and market-oriented activity (Wang *et al*., 2022). This has had an impact on other issues such as the perspective of innovation in the hospitality sector, where users' senses are being provoked to try sensations, experiences and emotions never seen before, especially when considering the interaction of people and machines.

HOSPITALITY AND FEELINGS ANALYSIS

Hospitality focuses on offering a place where the 'stranger', in his capacity as a worker, traveler or individual, is welcome (Breukel, & Go, 2009). But it also involves other activities such as consumer satisfaction, people's feelings, the way organizations act and society behaves in times of crisis. In this context, hospitality studies deal with receptivity and its opposite, hostility, and, at the same time, with situations that involve risk to the lives of human and non-human animals, or acts of empathy and indifference.

Therefore, a universe of possibilities exists when it comes to hospitality. Going further, when analyzing human beings and the paradigms that are part of their daily lives, it becomes possible to verify intangible aspects like values, feelings and emotions. However, this activity is difficult to measure. Even so, there are studies that carried out the analysis of the feelings of consumers in the tourism and hospitality industry through the evaluation of their comments regarding the services provided in organizations operating in this sector (Carvache-Franco *et al*., 2022), as demonstrated in Table 2:

Table 2 - Studies on the analysis of consumer's feelings in the tourism and hospitality sector.

CONCEPTS	AUTHORS
TRAVEL AGENCIES	Tu *et al*., (2021)
ONLINE TRAVEL AGENCIES	Su *et al*., (2022)
AIRLINES COMPANIES	Misopoulos *et al*., (2014)
TOURIST DESTINATIONS	Liu *et al*., (2019)
HOTELS	Xiang *et al*., (2015)
RESTAURANTS	Nakayama & Wan (2019).
TOURIST SERVICES IN GENERAL	Gomez *et al*. (2018) Ramanathan e Meyyappan (2019)

Source: Created by the authors, based on Gomez *et al*., (2018); Liu *et al,*. (2019), Misopoulos *et al*., (2014), Nakayama & Wan (2019), Ramanathan e Meyyappan (2019); Su *et al*. (2022), Xiang *et al*., (2015)

Table 2 presents different studies conducted in the area of tourism and hospitality that deal with the analysis of feelings. Activities are presented such as travel agencies in the most traditional ways and those websites or mobile applications that rely almost exclusively on online operations, airline companies, tourist destinations, hotels, restaurants and also tourist services in general. These activities provide positive and negative feelings, aspects of hospitality and hostility regarding their consumers/users. This will depend on a number of factors.

Therefore, advances in technology have changed the way information is produced and consumed (Alaei *et al*., 2019) by stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sector. Since 2017, this methodology has been growing and provides discoveries (Mehraliyev *et al*., 2022; Wang *et al*., 2022), possibilities of research and applicability for those who work in the tourism market. Thus, this activity is emerging as a way to examine semantic relationships and their

meanings (Alaei *et al*., 2019), in which it becomes possible to combine feelings analysis techniques from text and other data, which previously could not be understood (Alaei *et al*., 2019; Carvache-Franco *et al*., 2022).

In a study carried out by the editorial team of the Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management, published in 2020, when vaccination against the COVID-19 virus was carried out in several parts of the world, such as in North America, it is shown that, after this period, part of the population wanted to travel again, go to hotels and restaurants, but customers' feelings showed variables associated with time of travel (Gursoy & Chi, 2020; Gursoy *et al.*, 2020). This analysis also demonstrated that further research needed to be carried out to identify the elements that would bring customers back to these organizations and, eventually, boost business in the hospitality sector.

When questioning hotel users, some respondents considered hygiene of the premises as an essential aspect, such as hand disinfectant stations, frequent cleaning of areas and surfaces, staff training to comply with sanitary protocols. Regarding the insertion of technology in order to avoid human contact, the need for services performed through robots, contactless payments and digital menus was increased (Gursoy *et al*., 2020). Thus, it has been observed that practices such as attention to the proper cleaning of all areas in organizations, combined with technological factors, becomes relevant to circumventing the crisis of lack of demand generated in the period of the pandemic.

HYBRID EVENTS AND EVENTS HELD ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Feelings analysis may present a bias either by the academic degree or financial factors of the researcher or of those surveyed, by the gender of the members of a given organization, or by the region in which the research was conducted. These discussions become more complex when it comes to applying the analysis of feelings to activities carried out in the metaverse - in this case, to events developed in a hybrid way or on digital platforms. Therefore, the metaverse has attracted the interest of consumers and professionals because it is growing, and because organizations are developing strategies to participate in this new world (Gursoy *et al*, 2022).

Organizations, with the help of technological resources, seek strategies to create experiences and customize settings that involve hybrid (mixed reality) and virtual (digital) environments by allowing the participation of customers, where users interact in a social way, create immersive experiences, use virtual identities (avatars) (Buhalis *et al*., 2022). This activity is complex and involves practical and operational approaches such as administration support, literacy and technological capacity, competence and technological infrastructure, proper structure and internal resources, and, finally, distribution of financial resources (Yavuz *et al*., 2023).

Virtual experiences change people's perspective on traditional concepts, many of them already consolidated and, at the same time, instigate researchers in common areas of study such as administration, economics, health, tourism and hospitality, especially when it is understood that the metaverse creates a sense of presence (Gursoy *et al*., 2022). Hence, Table 3 is presented.

Table 3 – Companies /Organizations that develop activities in the metaverse

COMPANY / ORGANIZATION	SECTOR	COUNTRY / HISTORY	FIELD
FIRST AIRLINES	AIRLINE COMPANY	Started their operations in 2016, in Japan. Started their customer service in 2017. Started flights to Finland in 2018. Started flights to New Zealand in 2019. Go To Travel and Fan Lounge services were started in 2020. Crew recruitment in 2021.	Virtual flights from Tokyo to Hawaii, New York, Rome, Paris and Singapore. Occupation might reach 100%, so it is important that consumers mind occupancy levels.
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC VR	TV CHANNEL ENTERTAINMENT STUDIO GLASSES	Part of National Geographic group, a joint venture operating in several parts of the world.	Introduces the mission to capture photographs for National Geographic.

		The group's first channels were launched initially in 1997 in Australia, Europe and the United Kingdom In the United States it was first broadcasted in 2001.	Allows interactive experiences to its users in locations such as Antarctica, Machu Picchu (Peru), in languages such as German, Korean, Spanish, French, English and Japanese.

Source: Created by the authors, based on First Airlines (2022), Gursoy *et al.*, (2022), Meta Quest (2022).

Table 3 shows applications developed for the hospitality sector with the purpose of providing different experiences to application users. Therefore, the metaverse is revolutionizing the hospitality sector (Gursoy *et al*, 2022). It is noteworthy that, despite having their headquarters in a given country, these organizations operate in several parts of the world, sometimes in locations their users would have difficulties to be physically present, due to factors such as access, geographic distance, cost and travel time.

It must be said that these companies already existed before the pandemic. In the case of First Airlines, the company provides comprehensive hospitality to customers related to the five senses, with the help of virtual reality technology and exclusive meals from the chef on board (First Airlines, 2022). There is an effort by scholars to understand this phenomenon, its impact on the consumer market and also on the academic environment (Gursoy *et al*, 2022).

Organizations operating in the hospitality sector offer services such as accommodation, food and beverages, entertainment and events (Buhalis *et al*., 2022), such as the MICE segment (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions), but this field of activity and others activities in society have been changing due to a mixture of experiences, which blend real and virtual environments, allowing different perspectives to stakeholders. In this context are events that now take place in a hybrid environment and on digital platforms with increased prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic, when people's mobility became restricted.

In the case of events held virtually, their participants can interact with other people and enjoy the atmosphere, where technology plays a key role in inducing emotions (Lei *et al*., 2022). Therefore, practical aspects aimed at preparing the event and analyzing its organizers in its different phases is essential. The digitalization of events, including those located in the MICE segment, through digital platforms and immersive technologies, has been transforming ideas and businesses, thus drawing the attention of the business community by diversifying businesses and promoting the new technologically immersive economy (IFEMA MADRID, 2022).

In research carried out with participants of events, conditions such as the ease of being in the home environment (sometimes with the family), costs, interaction and engagement of the participants are considered, demonstrating the construction of positive feelings in order to support the development of entertainment activities (Lei *et al*., 2022), which also involves the field of activity of the tourism and hospitality sector. Therefore, organizations in the area seek to enrich their expertise in the traditional business model and expand into new channels (IFEMA MADRID, 2022). Thus, the technological and organizational vision of companies enables economic and social impacts on the development of corporate activities (Yavuz *et al*., 2023) within and around the organization.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

In the first part of this study, bibliographical research was adopted on topics related to hospitality, feelings analysis, hybrid events, events on digital platforms and information and communication technology. In addition, websites of organizations that carry out actions in the metaverse environment (First Airlines, 2022; IFEMA MADRID, 2022) were analyzed according to their sector (activity), country of origin, history and area of activity, demonstrating the evolution of these organizations.

This research can be considered a documentary as it analyzes the materials linked to the hybrid events and events held on digital platforms displayed in two communication vehicles, G1 and UOL, from March 11, 2020 to March 11, 2021. On this date the director general of the World Health Organization – WHO, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, announced the first pandemic caused by a coronavirus (WHO, 2022). Such announcement mobilized the population of different countries and made government officials adopt measures considered unpopular to curb the spread of this virus.

The impact caused by the contamination of this virus, the news released and the measures adopted by governments has had a major impact on the population in the fields of health, social (human) relations and the economy (United Nations - UN, 2022), especially when considering data such as the number of cases of COVID-19 outside China increasing 13 times and the tripled number of affected countries (WHO, 2022). People's feelings analysis has been growing mainly due to the development of information and communication technologies – ICTs (Mehraliyev *et al*., 2022; Wang *et al*. 2022).

As for the communication vehicles with analyzed news, these have visibility in Latin America and South America. UOL is a company in the area of technology, services and payments which also started operations in the cybersecurity, service management and information technology infrastructure businesses in 2021(UOL, 2022), providing different experiences to its customers, readers and users. G1 is a news portal that produces content in areas such as motoring, science, culture, economy, education, employment, environment, politics, health and technology (G1, 2022). This is the scope of the areas of activity of these companies.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

The analysis carried out in the two communication vehicles demonstrates the dynamics of disseminated information. When intertwining with the research objectives, news associated with hybrid and digital events is considered, where the evolution of this activity during the pandemic period is highlighted. This is demonstrated in Table 4.

Table 4 - Evolution of news about hybrid and digital events

	COMMUNICATION VEHICLE	
PERIOD	G1	UOL
MARCH 2020	92	86
APRIL 2020	355	174
MAY 2020	541	34
JUNE 2020	541	34
JULY 2020	501	35
AUGUST 2020	462	20
SEPTEMBER 2020	283	23
OCTOBER 2020	237	18
NOVEMBER 2020	222	5
DECEMBER 2020	198	13
JANUARY 2021	116	10

FEBRUARY 2021	171	12
MARCH 2021	30	6

Source: Created by the authors, based on G1 (2021) and UOL (2021).

Table 4 shows the exposition of news on the subject. On the G1 website, the months of May and July 2020 had the highest number of occurrences showing 541 each. The month with the lowest incidence of cases was March 2021. This communication vehicle also presents the highest number of occurrences both in general and when the specific topic addressed is considered. Thus, the relevance of this communication group in Latin America and South America is verified. The propagated news is more linked to locations within Brazil.

At UOL, the peak of news occurred in April 2020 with 174 subjects addressed. November 2020 was the period of lowest incidence. On this website, it can be seen that the news inform about issues that occurred in different parts of the planet such as the USA, Spain and Italy. Or entities/organizations like Huawei, which launched products, the United Nations and the WHO. The number of news spread in the first months of the pandemic caused panic and stress in the population, in addition to problems such as depression.

This can be caused by lack of regular activity, exercise and change in lifestyle, in which affliction and anguish become common among the population, as well as variations in food consumption and sadness. In the analysis of the data, it appears that there were positive responses, such as the development of online activities that include socialization events among the elderly, which fit in the characteristics of hospitality and hope.

In March 2020, the period in which the pandemic was declared, some sporting events, such as the NBA season in the USA, were suspended. After that, other events followed the procedure, like the Argentine MotoGP Grand Prix. In football, Conmebol postponed next week's Libertadores games, Fifa postponed South American Qualifiers for the 2022 World Cup, Uefa changed Champions games, Flamengo tested for Coronavirus in the squad, and the Copa do Rei final match was also postponed. This had an impact on the finances of clubs due to the money destined for box office and TV. In Formula 1 there was the cancellation of the Australian Grand Prix and there was also suspension of tennis tournaments. In that month, there was an increase in virtual job offers, medical appointments, masses and services, birthday parties, artist presentations, language courses and yoga classes.

In April 2020, the number of cases of the disease intensified, which became a subject considered in the researched media and more festivals were held in the virtual sphere, with cinemas and museums providing online presentations. In Chile, there was a limitation on the number of participants in public events. In Colombia, public events were suspended. Places like Broadway were closed. The name Coronavirus proved to attract an audience and draw the attention of the population, such was the care and lack of effective measures to deal with it. In Brazil, the Backstreet Boys asked fans to wash their hands listening to songs. Singers were infected. There was also an increase in the number of virtual tours.

In May 2020, artists reinvented themselves by performing live shows for donations, showing solidarity with each other, the quest to maintain philanthropic institutions and empathy. Due to the moment of crisis, some organizations had reduced funds to maintain their routine activities. Personalities such as Anitta, Barack Obama, BTS, Lady Gaga, Mick Jagger and Will Smith were the target of both positive and negative news. Virtual weddings also emerged.
In June 2020, there was an online business fair with live broadcast, concerts with regional artists, a gastronomic contest, job and internship offers, and sales made over the Internet, a sign that its organizers sought to create means to maintain the interest of participants in this activity. Lives were created with the theme of fighting child labor and provision of free courses. Presentation of doctoral papers in virtual space were also held, indicating that the spread of COVID-19 reached even events located in the academic environment.

In July 2020, adaptations were made to gastronomic festivals in celebration of the anniversary of cities having the option of food delivery, as well as presentations at online events such as Paul McCartney’s and Metallica’s, lives organized by companies to get closer to customers, lives to collect hygiene materials for donation and music festivals held in drive-in spaces. People were hired to work at online business fairs, some of which had been infected by the coronavirus. There was also an increase in the schedule of presentations (agenda) in events developed online.

As a result, a systematization in the development of these activities was observed. An also the lack of belief about the real causes of transmission of COVID-19. In those months, rules were established for the work from home, debates on the interaction between participants in online events, symposiums held with The University of Queensland in Australia on contamination by the coronavirus, presentations of online cultural attractions, and tournaments of surf and karate were broadcast in the virtual environment.

In August 2020, virtual Jazz shows were held, as well as international film shows with tickets sold at reduced prices. In the online environment, there were events to discuss technology and entrepreneurship, cattle auctions, artistic workshops, competitions for lyrical singers, semi-digital gastronomic festivals, presentations of symphony orchestras, remote classes at universities, holding party conventions, solidarity events with acrobat pilots, cycles of lectures to help the recovery of the tourism sector, transmission of music festivals over the Internet for 5 days and online religious congresses.

In addition, educational institutions started actions to develop digital inclusion, philanthropic institutions pursued to leverage donations through motorcades and online lectures, audiences were held by videoconferences, digitized companies became indebted, TV programs had an increase in virtual audience and there were bans on lives in condos, demonstrating that these facts have become central issues in society and involving different places and institutions.

In September 2020, there were events in online format, business fairs with job offers, bands performing concerts in drive in convention center, LGBTQIA+ Pride celebrations in 'live' format, debates on freedom in the pandemic, ballet presentations, G20 meetings, fashion shows, increased risk of virtual scams and virtual assistance provided by government agencies. Thus, different players in society already understand the importance of hybrid and digital activities.

In October 2020, there were online activities related to literature, poetry, theater, dance and art festivals, and business fairs for entrepreneurs in the fashion area. The popularization of virtual meetings in companies and weddings broadcast over the Internet also drew attention. Among the various themes, there was a live with a mechanics course for women, marathons of technological solutions and BTS concerts.

In November 2020, in the online and hybrid spheres, there were student games, real estate fairs, sales actions such as Black Friday, task force of conciliations for labor processes, virtual task force for debt renegotiation and increased demand for parties in these formats. In addition, there was the development of brewing lives, virtual events for supermarkets, charity street races transmitted over the Internet, trials and online short courses.

In December 2020, in the hybrid and digital environment, there were exhibitions, activities such as babysitters, secret friends, virtual end-of-year get-togethers, events to foster adoption of dogs and cats and meetings with representatives of Mercosur member countries. New Year's Eve also had virtual shows, release of balloons, presentations of local artists, representatives of Catholic, Evangelical and African religions.

In January 2021, among the most relevant events, there was an online survey by Fiocruz to assess the perception of vaccines against Covid-19, events that connected architects through digital platforms and clients, free pre-university courses, shows with views on YouTube and virtual elections in government spheres.
In February 2021, there were courses with online meditation practice, dance and children's theater shows, online profession fairs, social themed shows, agribusiness fairs with virtual visits and vaccination projects. In Brazil, there were also online carnivals with folk music - forró, bossa nova, MPB and rock, and. carnival lives with axé stars, like Olodum and Margareth Menezes. In addition to the Women's Fashion Week in Milan and the virtual bilateral summit between the United States and Mexico.

In March 2021, a year after the COVID-19 pandemic was announced, the amount of news on the subject no longer attracted the attention of the population. Even so, some issues were the subject of exposure in the media, such as sessions in governmental institutions, still carried out in a virtual way, shifts with psychologists online, and disabled people taking online classes to circumvent loneliness.

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

The literature on the subject shows that, given the range of themes that involve hospitality, issues such as receptivity or hostility, people's satisfaction and society behavior are included. There are also issues such as feelings and positive/negative emotions in the developing relationships between people and organizations, where it becomes possible to find studies that deal with these issues by involving players in the tourism / hospitality sector, such as travel agencies, traditional and online travel, airlines, stakeholders of tourist destinations, hotels, restaurants and, finally, tourist services in general.

Feelings analysis presents variables that need to be considered such as academic degree, financial factors, gender and region. These issues in the virtual environment force researchers to review traditional concepts, as this activity creates the sensation of presence and other approaches. This provided a wide range of possibilities for the development activities of organizations that offer food and beverages, accommodation, entertainment and events in the MICE segment. The integration of these stakeholders with technological factors becomes a decisive element. It also highlights the means to circumvent moments of crisis, such as compliance with health protocols and the insertion of robots to ease the services provided and reduce human contact, for example. Investigations into hybrid and digital activities provide advances that discuss the atmosphere of this area and the creation of experiences, digitization and diversification of businesses, and technological immersion, customer engagement, social interactions, virtual identities and adequate technological resources in the development of these activities.

Confronted with the problem, what are the feelings identified during the COVID-19 pandemic when considering the news associated with hybrid events and events held on digital platforms? Issues pertaining to the risk to lives of human and non-human animals became the stage for debates in the media. As of March 11, 2020, due to the increased demand for medical services, it was identified in the two communication vehicles analyzed, that in addition to the statement by the director general of the World Health Organization - WHO, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, there was the statement of authorities in countries such as Spain in declaring a state of emergency due to the coronavirus and restriction of movement throughout the country. In addition to the approval of the calamity decree in other locations.

Eventually, these communication vehicles released similar information, and the first news broadcast in many channels about virtual events occurred from the virtual audience held by the Pope on March 11, 2020. But this also occurred in other areas of activity. This impacted society with the perception of deserted streets, which generated feelings of fear and mistrust. Apprehension and fear of contamination took hold of the population during this period, in which staying at home, avoiding contact with other people and reducing travel seemed to be the most effective measures, thus changing the dynamics of people's lives. And there was also the rescheduling or cancellation of events. These measures were taken in an attempt to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

In relation to the goal, it was to verify people's feelings expressed through information and communication technologies - ICTs in events developed in a hybrid way and on digital platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlights that part of these feelings were hostile, due to the fear of the population regarding the increase in the spread of COVID-19, which also includes the cancellation of regular services previously provided, the possibility of lack of supplies and the general increase in prices. These facts would cause social isolation and hinder the development of relationships among people, that is, people had to avoid exchanging handshakes, hugs and on-site conversations. The combination of this scenario allowed the emergence of a feeling of loneliness, because of the absence of relationships with other people, in which it was necessary to develop activities, sometimes not imagined or rarely performed in the virtual environment, either as a way to fill the free time that existed in the period of restriction of people's mobility or as a way of expressing relationships.

There was also the use of public spaces, such as stadiums, which were previously intended to host sporting events and were then used to treat infected people. In this context, aspects of security and empathy with others emerged, even if silently. This occurred because, at first, the news about the intensification of actions corresponding to the hybrid and digital events had a positive/negative impact on the population, mainly when considering issues such as the imposed difficulties and foreseen readiness.

In this perspective, technological issues began to help people and organizations in the development of their activities, where the pandemic accelerated many changes that were to come in society. These issues led to the reproduction of activities in hybrid and digital environments in sectors such as gym, agriculture, commerce, communication, culture and entertainment, education, economics and finance, sports, gastronomy, law, medicine and

health, politics, religion, security public, supplies, commuting, technology and health. These are examples that events in this sphere are present in different areas of activity.

This scenario has impacted the different stakeholders of the tourism/hospitality sector and also of society, since it took a global dimension. So, companies/organizations and people had to deal with this adverse scenario in a different way, with the resources and means available. But this also presented the eventual momentary hope of keeping activities previously considered common in people's daily lives, through subjects that involve hybrid and digital events, in which the evidence of lives is observed, with the participation and protagonism of personalities from the television area and music, sometimes dressed in pajamas, which would be impossible if it were in person, mainly because shows were cancelled, theaters were closed and audiences were suspended for events.

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HOSPITALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY: ANALYSIS OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE TRADE FAIR SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

This study involves issues related to hospitality and sustainability in the MICE sector – Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions. It uses bibliographic research on the keywords of this investigation and presents interviews with managers of businesses and companies that work in the MICE sector, especially in the trade fair sector. The problem is: what are the actions developed in the MICE sector that are in line with hospitality and sustainability? The propositions are: (P1) considering the activity of trade fairs, it becomes possible to identify actions related to hospitality and sustainability, and (P2) analyzing the holding of events in the MICE Sector, it is possible to identify activities that are in accordance with the Sustainable development goals – SDG. The goal is to verify the activities carried out within the MICE sector, especially in trade fairs that comply with matters related to hospitality and sustainability. The specific goals are (O1) to analyze the actions developed in the sphere of business fairs from the perspective of hospitality; (O2) understand the activities carried out at business fairs that are in the scope of sustainability; (O3) present aspects of hospitality and sustainability developed in the MICE sector. Among the conclusions of this study, it shows how the fields of hospitality and sustainability are related, in addition to enriching the debate on the incorporation of issues considered in the Sustainable development goals - SDG in the realm of business fairs. Hence, the analysis of the data obtained indicates possibilities of application for the MICE sector in the midst of existing paradigms in society.

Key Words: Hospitality. Sustainability. Business Fairs. MICE sector. Sustainable development goals - SDG.

INTRODUCTION

This study deals with hospitality and sustainability in the MICE Sector, Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions. This area of study, in addition to being a way to cultivate brands and design appropriate products for each type of event, is also a way to support communities and instigate different experiences for travelers (Chi *et al*., 2022) through their relationships in the course of their daily experiences and journeys.

The originality and value of this research is due to the fact that it brings together aspects of emerging areas in the field of science, which are the result of competitive advantage for organizations and other activities located in the sector of consumer market. In this sense, the incorporation of activities in the environment of organizations is observed. It also occurs in the field of hospitality and sustainability.

Thus, it is possible to see that there are emerging areas of research related to the development of tourism, whether according to the structure of theory and context, characteristic or methodology (Fakfare *et al*., 2022). For the purpose of this study, below are the central concepts of the research in Table 1.

Table 1 – Core research concepts

CONCEPTS	SPECIFICATION
HOSPITALITY & SUSTAINABILITY	These are areas that, when related, present the development of different approaches and methodologies such as preservation of biodiversity, sustainable attitudes, climate change, protected areas, satisfaction and environmental management (Molina-Collado *et al*., 2022).
BUSINESS FAIRS	Occur through the selection of factors such as the quality of employees and service providers; extra opportunities that are presented during these exhibitions; accessibility, environment, image and facilities of the convention center; venue cost and provision of accommodation (Lee and Lee, 2017) in the city that hosts the event.
MICE SECTOR	A relevant activity for the tourist destinations that host this public, responsible for generating foreign exchange income, and for attracting tourists with high spending potential (Campiranon and Arcodia, 2008; Lim and Zhu, 2018).
Sustainable development goals – SDG	The Sustainable development goals are a call to action for countries in a global partnership to end poverty and other deprivations, in which key strategies are set out to improve health and education, reduce inequality and spur economic growth – while combating climate change and working to preserve natural resources (United Nations, 2023). These embrace issues in the environmental, cultural, economic and social spheres.

Source: Created by the authors, based on Campiranon and Arcodia (2008); Lee and Lee (2017); Lim and Zhu (2018); Molina-Collado *et al*., (2022), United Nations (2023).

Given the considerations from Campiranon and Arcodia (2008); Lee and Lee (2017); Lim and Zhu (2018); Molina-Collado *et al*., (2022), United Nations (2023) in Table 1, the problem, the general and specific goals of this investigation were elaborated. The research problem is: what are the actions developed in the MICE sector that are in line with hospitality and sustainability? The propositions are:(P1) given the activity of trade fairs, it becomes possible to locate actions in the context of hospitality and sustainability, and (P2) considering the holding of events in the MICE Sector, activities that comply with Sustainable development goals – SDG.

The goal is to verify the activities carried out within the MICE sector, especially in trade fairs that agree with matters related to hospitality and sustainability. The specific goals are (O1) to analyze the actions developed in the sphere of business fairs from the perspective of hospitality; (O2) to understand the activities carried out at business fairs that are in the perspective of sustainability; (O3) to present aspects of hospitality and sustainability developed in the MICE sector.

This article is also expected to contribute to the literature in the area, especially in this period after the COVID-19 pandemic, which involves the transition period from the "old normal" to the "new normal" era (Fakfare *et al*., 2022). Thus, COVID-19 has spurred changes in the field of hospitality that concern social distancing, people's health and sustainability.

HOSPITALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY TRADE FAIRS

During the COVID-19 pandemic, despite all the difficult times faced by organizations in the tourism/hospitality sector due to low demand, the risk to employees' lives and the scarcity of resources in the market, the stakeholders of this activity survived the adverse scenario. This was possible mainly because their organizations incorporated emerging paradigms in their work routine or in the business environment.

Therefore, the competitive advantage of organizations involves different dimensions such as economic and socio-environmental factors, where the well-being of stakeholders (surrounding community, customers, employees and owners) of the activity, costs and cash flow, investment and profit, materials used and the quality of the products, in

addition to the resources (water and energy) (Yavuz *et al*., 2023), used during the production process or service provision.

In this context, the tourism/hospitality sector presents indicators similar to those of the pre-pandemic period. This activity constitutes a growing area all over the world, with its own qualities, where the tourist phenomenon is integrated into a systemic model composed of different players and several areas of activity such as: the design of new planning applications, marketing and the formation of a set of knowledge (Jafari, 1987) and sustainability.

Thus, companies operating in the field of tourism/hospitality develop environmental, social and governance (ESG) strategies that are associated with socio-environmental responsibility (Su & Chen, 2020), which benefits the stakeholders of the activity and provide return on investments in the short and long term. Combining hospitality and sustainability, this environment comprehends business travel activity, the MICE sector, business fairs, sustainable development goals and ESG practices. These issues emerge as a reality or even as a field that increases its visibility over the coming decades.

Sustainability issues are the challenge of the century, and are integrated with the hospitality area when considering food waste in food services (Munir, 2022), for example. Or when it is understood that corporate culture is visible and sensitive to measurable performance aspects (Chen *et al*., 2022; Su & Chen, 2020), becoming a constant agenda of meetings among clients, employees and investors (Chen *et al*., 2022), in addition to other existing stakeholders.

Accordingly, sustainable practical and theoretical implications are considered the development of sustainable operations, which involve aspects such as the demands of stakeholders and technology, support for administration and regulation of the activity, financial expectations and competitive advantage (Yavuz *et al*., 2023), which indicate future directions for the development of human activities in organizations.

In the field of business travel, this segment is a driver of the tourism and transport sectors in the global sphere, mainly for the aviation area (Müller and Wittmer, 2023). These travelers have been getting attention because they consider new demands and work resources, related to a different behavior, which considers the perspective of mobile work, the well-being of travelers and employee satisfaction (Ye and Xu, 2020).

In addition, the purpose and location of the meeting, the character of the message to be conveyed, contracts to be secured are decision attributes (Müller and Wittmer, 2023). People who travel on business have a previously stipulated amount paid by the company to cover the expenses of the trip, whether in the area of food, accommodation or transportation. For this reason, different dynamic patterns are shown in this professional activity (Ye and Xu, 2020).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, MICE SECTOR AND BUSINESS FAIRS

A relevant area in the field of business is the MICE sector, which presents a holistic decision model that theoretically understands business traveler's decision making and provides professionals with insights for the development of travel policies and travel market executives of business with guidance for management decisions (Müller and Wittmer, 2023). In this context, business fairs are included, which require planning and organization of the convention center, so that their operational management positively interferes in the perception (Lee and Lee, 2017) and in the relationship of the stakeholders of these events. That being said, it becomes vital to have a prior feasibility study for the development of this activity.

When it comes to the development of the MICE sector, we also address a situation that involves tourist destinations and their local communities, as shown in Table 2

Table 2 - Activities directly or indirectly impacted by the MICESector

Crafts and culture;	Politics and volunteering;	Hospitality and social relations;
Crises, security and resilience;	Technique and technology;	Commensality and gastronomy of a region;
Expatriation;	The social and tourism system;	Creation of value and competitiveness;
Events and trade fairs;	Transportation and people's mobility;	The environment, environmental preservation and sustainability;
Human capital and its motivations;	Organizations and business practices;	Education and teaching;
The dynamics of cities;	Means of accommodation;	Stakeholders;

Source: created by the authors

Table 2 indicates activities related to the MICE sector, in addition to highlighting research opportunities, which intertwine the field of hospitality and sustainability. Therefore, the cultural perspective involves long-term values and orientations, collectivism and aversion to uncertainty (Lu and Gursoy, 2023), positive and negative behaviors of people. In addition to environmental issues linked to sustainable development, it has become a strategic tool and a competitive advantage for organizations in the face of increasingly demanding customers (Lee *et al*., 2010).

This affects the organization's image positively through cognitive aspects of its consumers, constituting a value attribute. It is understood that, in the face of numerous existing challenges, organizations seek to add value to their products and services. In this sense, society calls for factors that respect the natural environment. Thus, the UN created the Global Development Goals.

ESG has been adopted in the corporate environment. It constitutes a set of sustainable and socio-environmental governance practices adopted by companies. This perspective includes respect for the environment, translated into actions that involve family and sustainable agriculture, reduction of carbon emissions, recycling of materials in the environment of organizations and reduction of food waste. Therefore, strategies have been outlined to achieve sustainability by 2030, especially when considering consumption (Munir, 2022) at different levels.

As a result, the tourism/hospitality sector can contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal, in which different companies adopt available implementation practices (Dolnicar, 2022). Sometimes, these approaches are easy and cheap. The change in society's behavior leads to a change in consumption patterns, ensuring greater responsibility in the use of natural resources. Among the real implications are sustainable behavior and environmental sustainability; consumption and economic demand; tourism development and strategies; rural tourism, poverty, ethics and education (Molina-Collado *et al*., 2022).

Sustainable development goals include bold goals that contribute to the development of a more humane world. These guidelines involve dimensions of sustainability that contemplate the triple bottom line, that is, environmental, economic and social spheres. But it also becomes possible to deal with cultural sustainability. These questions are distributed in dimensions of sustainability, as shown in Table 3:

Table 3 - United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Dimension of Sustainability

	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES	SUSTAINABILITY DIMENSION
	Poverty eradication	Environmental

	Zero hunger and sustainable agriculture	Cultural Economic Social
	Health and wellness	
	Quality education	
	Gender equality	
	Clean water and sanitation	
	Clean and affordable energy	
	Decent work and economic growth	
	Industry, innovation and infrastructure	
	Reduction of inequalities	
	Sustainable cities and communities	
	Responsible consumption and production	
	Action against global climate change	
	Water life	
	Land life	
	Peace. Justice and effective institutions	
	Partnerships and means of implementation	

Source: created by the authors, from the United Nations (2023)

Table 3 shows the Sustainable Development Goals and their respective dimensions of sustainability. In this case, the authors demonstrate that each of these objectives affects/implies more than one dimension of sustainability. This is possible, as it is understood that activities cannot be seen in isolation, but are associated with other existing systems in society. Sometimes, this activity goes beyond the environmental, economic and social spheres of sustainability.

Thus, being integrated with other dimensions, cultural sustainability involves new approaches, different activities and areas of knowledge. UNESCO promotes the processes of sustainable development and of the 17 sustainable development goals, in which culture provides integration of processes to promote (UNESCO, 2023) sustainability in different environments, organizations and daily practices.

In these aspects, there is a relationship among museums, cultural policies and the development of actions that encompass this perspective, such as the promotion of cultural tourism, appreciation of national identity and economic revitalization (Stylianou-Lambert *et al*., 2014) of degraded areas. Therefore, culture involves different stakeholders and integrates the environmental, economic and social issues of sustainability.

In sum, culture is considered a policy domain that renews people-centered paradigm shifts and promotes inclusive policy making (UNESCO, 2023) and building resilient local communities.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

Tourism/hospitality sectors provide researchers with the possibility of studies in different directions, from activities that apply research to activities that are sometimes associated with economic development and residents' quality of life, or the organizations' financial performance and corporate social responsibility (Babajee *et al*., 2022; Hu *et al*., 2022). This points out to paths/opportunities adopted by players in this sector to improve their performance indicators (Babajee *et al*., 2022).

It also involves the use of innovative research methods or those that mix concepts from traditional areas (Hu *et al*., 2022). In the first part of this study, bibliographical research was adopted referring to the keywords, hospitality, sustainability, trade fairs, MICE sector and sustainable development goals,. Considering that these are emerging paradigms, which increase prominence before the need for social relationships that respect the other, the maintenance of life and the preservation of natural resources.

In the second part, semi-structured interviews were carried out with directors/managers of projects that work in the MICE sector, mainly in the field of trade fairs, with the help of Zoom application. Therefore, a prior appointment was scheduled with these interviewees, the themes to be addressed were selected (interview script), and they were asked to fill in the term of consent for the research to be carried out.

Zoom constitutes a platform or new a public and work space, which allows its users to hold meetings (Zoom One, 2023) between companies and clients, professors and students, collaborating in the development of research in different parts of the planet. This application contributes to the elaboration and development of investigations, mainly because issues related to hospitality and sustainability are integrated into a situation that incorporates different stakeholders in society. The description of the interviewees can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4 –Interviewees' description

	NAME	SPECIFICATION
INTERVIEWEE 1	CINTIA MARI HAYASHI	Director at Visit São Paulo, Brazil ICCA Latin America Deputy Chair Certified in Exhibition Management – CEM
INTERVIEWEE 2	EDUARDO BUCKUP	Founding Partner of EBTravel Incentives e Turismo
INTERVIEWEE 3	JULIANA ARANEGA	Community Builder Meeting Designer Content Curator Branding Strategist
INTERVIEWEE 4	LAWRENCE REINISCH	Director at Reinisch Projects
INTERVIEWEE 5	IGOR TOBIAS	Managing Director de MCI – Brazil
INTERVIEWEE 6	SERGIO JUNQUEIRA	Academia Brasileira de Eventos e Turismo President

Source: created by the authors

Table 4 presents the name and field of activity of each researched person. The sample was chosen by convenience, the researchers also consider the history/experience of the interviewees in the area of events, sometimes representing public and private companies. These people represent or have represented organizations that operate in different

parts of the planet such as Latin America and Japan. For example, developing managerial or coordination roles in multinational companies based in Switzerland.

Often, in the use of their attributions, the interviewees traveled to destinations such as New York/United States and Tokyo/Japan. Throughout the development of the research, business fairs held in Buenos Aires/Argentina and in Colombia were mentioned. There are also other locations not mentioned in this research.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

The investigation was divided into two parts to better present the results and obtain depth in the debate of the questions for this research. In this context, hospitality and sustainability will be presented separately.

Hospitality

Hospitality is connected with the hotel sector (Interviewee 6). In this way, this person understands the hospitable dynamics, but soon after recalls this activity in other areas of activity, such as the transportation sector and in banks, that is, the financial area.

When considering the aspects associated with professional experience, Interviewee 2 reveals that, in the past, he worked as a guide/coordinator in trips organized for the MICE segment, and when he opened his own agency, he intended to strengthen the relationship with customers and other stakeholders in order to understand the benefits that this activity could provide. In this context, an opportunity stands out in the events market.

When dealing with the development of actions that contemplate the good relationship with the stakeholders of the area, it is highlighted that in the trade fair environment there are relevant players, for example, “there is always the organizer, and two important clients, which are the visitor/the public at the fair and the exhibitor” (Interviewee 3). Therefore, it is essential to develop instruments that work as previously established policies that establish the basis of these actions.

In addition, Interviewee 5 informs that there are several types of fairs, at times focused on the business to obtain sales, especially the B2C fair, that is aimed at the consumer. But there are also those whose result is measured through the construction of relationships, in which you have some customers who have goals and, at the right time, that sale is converted.

Thus, the interviewees point out aspects that are a competitive differential for their organizations, such as customer service, as this can make all the difference (Interviewee 2), or "the precepts of hospitality are always present in everyday life" (Interviewee 3) of events involving the MICE public and business fairs. This reinforces the need to create and develop interactions amongst people, as “a close relationship with the customer has everything to do with hospitality” (Interviewee 2).

In addition, hospitality is intertwined with any type of events, including the MICE sector and trade fairs, in which the precepts of hospitality are found in everyday life, because “when you are to set up a stand you have to think about activation, how you are going to entertain people, what you are going to do to make them really feel good inside your stand and do interesting things” (Interviewee 3). This concern for the well-being of the other is associated with hospitality issues. That can also include marketing issues.

In order to generate a synergistic effect among those involved in the activity, intangible factors are sometimes essential, as pointed out by Interviewee 5. Generating experience is a powerful tool to build trust, relationships and results. In addition, issues such as logistics and services provided during the event are presented, such as transportation, how the person will come, how they will be served, how they will queue, eat well, and be as comfortable as possible (Interviewee 3).

Therefore, aspects of hospitality are presented in the daily life of the MICE sector and trade fairs. For Interviewee 1, “the human factor makes a total difference in the experience of the visitor, the participant, the exhibitor who goes to the destination”. It is important, in this situation, to understand the objectives of each client, in which Interviewee 5 points the need to invest in the development of experiences to foster clients' objectives.

Thus, Interviewee 3 adds that, “the exhibitor will only go if they are guaranteed that there will be a flow of people, that there will be visitors, so this is a big charge, and it is not just about quantity, it is about quality. After holding consecutive editions of the WTM Latin America event, Interviewee 4 observes some aspects of visitation at this trade fair.

Sustainability

Throughout the research, we sought to question the adoption of sustainability practices in the MICE sector and trade fairs, which are aligned with the SDG, in addition to ESG practices, by listing environmental, cultural, economic and social aspects. It is also verified that the interviewees made little reference to aspects of the preservation of the environment. Interviewee 3 reinforces questions related to the work of planners and organizers of this activity, “how can we do something that is more environmentally sustainable and have a positive impact on local society?”

The economic perspective is seen from the positive impacts that the holding of these events bring to the economy, “where there is generation of taxes for all levels, that is, for the city, for the state and for the federation” (Interviewee 5). Thus, fairs are important generators of business, in terms of the exhibitor and of the market that is holding the fair (Interviewee 3).

For Interviewee 2, “the commercial relationship is what draws most attention” from stakeholders at a trade fair, in which the exhibitor wants to bring the final consumer to know his product, to attract partners to increase the volume of business, new customers, and so on. When we consider the frequency in a city like São Paulo, that holds trade fairs (MICE sector events) every day, “in 20 pavilions, it makes the business sustainable, so, this volume, this frequency is important” (Interviewee 3).

Another aspect of competitiveness and economic sustainability is found in the pavilion of the convention center itself. So, according to Interviewee 4: “having few pillars makes it easier to create streets, islands and everything else”. The goal of these events is to show novelties. In a shoe business fair one can see “trends for the next season” (Interviewee 6), whether for summer or winter. In addition, different domains are mixed so in this environment, so the amenities that pavilions have to offer are to be considered (Interviewee 4), because “this adds additional comfort” (Interviewee 6) to users.

In this regard, Interviewee 4 considers relevant issues in this scenario, the space for food in the exhibition pavilion, the distance for exhibitors and visitors to travel to the pavilion, the physical aspects of this environment, the products and aesthetic aspects displayed in the stands will depend on the type (segment) of the tradeshow. In which “they add up several physical things in the pavilion that make a difference” (Interviewee 4).

From the perspective of social sustainability, there is a generation of jobs and income for people in different social classes. For example: at an event for 3000 people, 400 people worked in the mounting, not to mention the people who worked during the event (Interviewee 5). For interviewee 6, all these events located in the field of the MICE sector “generate social actions”.

The effects of this activity are considered by Interviewee 5. They make the “city prepare itself in terms of infrastructure” when considering players in the accommodation sector, provision of services and transportation, making cities hospitable and also sustainable, mainly because of the extensions that remain from this activity.

The “city of São Paulo is a destination that survives, fosters many events, but also survives because of this movement” (Interviewee 1). Therefore, the activity of welcoming people in a way is important to maintain the survival of the destination stakeholders. Thus, strategies are thought and rethought “to support and to somehow promote business fairs” (Interviewee 5) held in the environment of cities.

Interviewee 2 points out that the region develops around the exhibition centers, either because of the people who work in them or because of the crowded pavilions. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, “there was a drop in revenue for companies and for everyone”. This shows the importance of these events for tourism development, boosting local economy and improving the business environment for companies. In this perspective, Interviewee 3 points out that “it is not sustainable to have something that is very non-standard”. Therefore, there must be a somewhat standardized frequency, the same size and things that are more regionalized.

It is verified through research that sustainability in the cultural context has become more evident. According to Interviewee 1, it is possible to involve cultural aspects in trade fairs, in which the promoter wins, the exhibitor wins, and the visitor wins. This highlights the linking of cultural and economic aspects in this activity.

As the research was carried out in the city of São Paulo, it was identified that this place is also a city that is "a blend of the rest of Brazil, welcoming people from all over the world, because it has people from all over the place" (Interviewee 5). Thus, it is understood as a differentiated place, or a multicultural city. In addition, Interviewee 1 highlights experiences that are intertwined with cultural aspects of the tourist destination. By holding fairs in the city of São Paulo, stakeholders "will not only have a commercial experience of the sector in which it operates, but also an experience of the destination" (Interviewee 1), which strengthens the work of promoters and organizers of this activity.

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

The theoretical framework of the research demonstrates that, in view of the scenario of the spread of COVID-19, different stakeholders of society sought to adapt to the life-threatening environment. Thus, in order to guarantee survival and considering the routine development of organizations, the scarcity of resources and lack of demand, it was necessary to incorporate emerging paradigms into their portfolio.

Regarding the research problem, what are the actions developed in the MICE sector that are consistent with hospitality and sustainability? In the hospitable perspective, a set of practices is observed that, at first, are focused on the activity of accommodation facilities, but soon after, other areas of activity are indicated, such as events, financial and transportation sectors, as explained by Interviewees 2 and 6.

In this context, good relationship actions are identified and these, at times, include marketing aspects, compliance with previously established norms among the stakeholders involved, the competitive advantage of organizations, the flow of customers (visitation), customer service and synergy in the development of activities, as presented by Interviewees 2, 3, 4 and 5. In addition, Interviewees 1 and 3 consider the concern for the well-being of others, the human factor, the generation of positive experiences and the intangible aspects.

In the context of sustainability, the adoption of practices aligned with the principles of the SDG and ESG is observed, in which there was little evidence in the environmental context, with the exception of Interviewee 3, who inquired about the subject. Regarding economic sustainability, Interviewees 2, 3 and 5 highlight the attraction of new customers, generation of taxes and businesses, and the maintenance of activities in this sector, in which the need for adequate location and amenities for the exhibition center is highlighted, according to Interviewees 4, 5 and 6, in addition to adequate infrastructure and services provided by the city hosting the event.

In this environment, when considering cultural sustainability, qualities of São Paulo are identified, which make it a multicultural and differentiated city, bringing together people from different parts of the world, and has the possibility of providing different experiences to its visitors, as mentioned by Interviewees 1 and 5.

Considering the goal, it was verified that the activities carried out in the sphere of the MICE sector, especially in trade fairs that are in accordance with matters related to hospitality and sustainability. It is noteworthy that economic and socio-environmental aspects were presented. Hospitality and sustainability issues are in this context, as companies seek to meet the new demands (segments) of customers, innovations in the work routine, reduction in the use of natural resources in the production of products and services. This has occurred in the global sphere in order to maintain competitive advantage of organizations in relation to their competitors. Thus, it became possible to develop new applications and form knowledge on the subject.

Organizations worldwide, such as the United Nation and UNESCO, played a fundamental role in reinforcing the need to adopt sustainable practices associated with SDG and ESG, by mobilizing different layers of society for relevant aspects that contribute to the creation of a more sustainable and equal world. This has also influenced the performance of managers and players of tourist destinations and business trips, in which participants of this activity also sought to introduce aspects that respect the environment.

In addition, in the field of events, the MICE sector and business fairs, due to demand and need, an incorporation of sustainable procedures was observed, which assists with strategies to present guidelines aligned with the principles of sustainable development goals created and propagated by United Nations. These actions involve sustainable, cheap and easy practices to be adopted by organizations, contemplated mainly in the socio-environmental sphere. In addition, they add value to the stakeholders of the sector.

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DECIPHERING 'DESIRABILITY' IN LUXURY TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

Luxury tourism is striving after the pandemic, with more and more people aiming at bespoke experiences and wow moments. While research has been conducted on what is creating luxury moments or triggering the wow effect, and what could be the motivators for consuming such experiences, little has been done on trying to understand how the notion of desire itself could be defined in the industry and how desirable experiences could be crafted and ultimately told to prospects. Our piece of research aims at providing insights on this, through the articulation of two separate studies. More specifically, we aim at (1) identifying in luxury tourism the key success factors to make a place/trip desirable and at (2) understand how professionals tell a story about a desirable place/trip etc. In our first study, we rely upon data collected in 2020 among members of the Serandipians* community during a contest of brand storytelling. 32 stories designed by travel designers, hoteliers or DMCs were analysed using semiotics (Greimas canonic narrative scheme and actatial scheme) to understand how these people share their brand story to make it desirable among their audience. In our second study, we used a Delphi study to define the notion of 'desirability' in luxury tourism. To make it short creating desire in luxury tourism is an art of seduction building upon brand awareness, exclusivity, fit (leveraging interests and habits) and emotions.

Key Words: desirability; luxury; tourism; delphi study.

INTRODUCTION

Luxury tourism is striving after the pandemic, with more and more people aiming at bespoke experiences and wow moments. While research has been conducted on what is creating luxury moments or triggering the wow effect, and what could be the motivators for consuming such experiences, little has been done on trying to understand how the notion of desire itself could be defined in the industry and how desirable experiences could be crafted and ultimately told to prospects.

Our piece of research aims at providing insights on this, through the articulation of two separate studies. More specifically, we aim at (1) identifying in luxury tourism the key success factors to make a place/trip desirable and at (2) understand how professionals tell a story about a desirable place/trip etc.

LITTERATURE REVIEW & METHODOLOGY

The research objective is to provide some insights / definition about the notion of desire in the luxury tourism industry. To reach this objective we designed two separate studies aiming at reconciling emic, etic and expert views about the topic. More specifically we wanted to get some insights from the ground (i.e., observing how the actors of the industry try to trigger desire in their clients' minds) and compare it with what the theoretical definition of desirability in the luxury travel industry could be.

The first study, conducted deliberately before the other one to avoid any analytical bias, relies upon data collected in 2020 among members of the Serandipians* community during a contest of brand storytelling. 32 stories designed by travel designers, hoteliers or DMCs were analysed using semiotics (Greimas canonic narrative scheme and actatial scheme) to understand how these people share their brand story to make it desirable among their audience. The structure of the stories was analysed using Greimas' CNS (Canonic Narrative Scheme) and Actantial Scheme (Greimas, 1966), two structural semiotics tools that are useful to compare the underlying structure of discourses (here stories) at the speech function level. The Actantial Model is used to break an action or a story down into six facets, called actants. The hero/subject desires the object of his or her quest. The helper supports the subject in obtaining the object whereas the opponent works against the helper and tries to prevent the subject from gaining the

object. The sender initiates the action and the receiver profits from the action and/or the object. The Canonical Narrative Model is used to describe a story as a structure consisting of five components. The action component can be broken down into skill (includes the conditions that are necessary to accomplish the action - wanting-to-do, having-to-do, knowing-how-to-do, and being-able-to-do) and performance (the actual accomplishment of the action). Manipulation is the component that deals specifically with wanting-to-do and having-to-do. The sanction evaluates whether the action was in fact accomplished, and the corresponding retribution (reward or punishment) that the performing subject has incurred.

The objective for us was to identify how Serandipians's members build a story, the object of which is the desire to travel. All formats were accepted, from videos to comics including social media campaigns. All participants used videos except one who chose an Instagram feed with a dozen posts. Participants had 2 months to produce their content after their training on storytelling for the jury evaluation in March 2020. 32 stories out of 48 were doubled-coded by two researchers using semiotic models; the other contents did not match the predefined storytelling requirements.

In our second study, we used a Delphi study to define the notion of 'desirability' in luxury tourism. A Delphi study relies on a series of experts (20 in our case) who never meet and who are invited to rate their agreement with statements supposed to define the concept under scrutiny, in an iterative format (rounds). To generate the statements, we firstly conducted an extensive literature review which ended in a questionnaire with the possible items for the definition. These items where enriched with a focus group conducted with the Luxury Travel Lab, a think-tank composed of luxury experts not-expert in travel but in luxury in general. Lastly a questionnaire with all items was designed and submitted to the members and partners of the Serandipians community, with the possibility for respondents (286 total) to add comments and potential items. That took us to a list of 55 statements presented to our panel of experts in luxury tourism for the Delphi study.
Delphi Studies are traditionally used to obtain a reliable response to a problem / definition from a group of experts who have no interaction with one another, and who can be geographically dispersed (Kezar and Maxey, 2016). It consists of a series of questionnaires that are sent by e-mail, and the replies being kept anonymous (HSU and Sandford 2007, Ekionea, Bernard et al. 2011). The aim is to reach some consensus by the group of experts on the key dimensions and concepts that would define desirability in the luxury tourism industry. Our group of experts consists of 20 people, all working in luxury tourism as hoteliers, DMCs, TDs or private places. They have been identified thanks to the help of the owner and founder of Serandipians, a community gathering "the Travel Designers, the Luxury Hoteliers, the humble Craftsmen and Masters of the unseen, with the refined and adventurous Travellers, [who] love the art of joy, surprise, and happenstance. Collectively, [they] strive to achieve a common ambitious quest, a shared purpose defined by [their] curated knowledge, [their] altruistic hearts, [their] deepest passions, and by [their] visionary pursuit of an ideal." They all acknowledge being luxury clients themselves, with ages from 35 to 68, and different nationalities. Average experience in the industry is above 20 years. Table 1 summarizes the sample of experts.

After filling-up a questionnaire that collected the key population characteristics such as age, sex, gender, socioeconomic status and level of education, the experts have been provided with the list of 55 claims that would define Desirability in Luxury Tourism. The list was based on the combination of a thorough literature review of past research on the notion of desire, insights with a focus group conducted with a Think-Tank composed of experts about luxury (not belonging to the tourism industry), and results from the survey presented to the overall Serandipians Community.

Brand	Category	Title	Name	Surname	Position	Located
Accor	Hotel Group	Mr	Stephen	Alden	CEO Raffles & Orient Express, Accor	Paris
Vistajet	Private Skies	Mr	Matteo	Atti	Executive Vice President Marketing	London
Mai 10	DMC	Mrs	Maita	Barrenechea	Owner & CEO	Buenos Aires
Strategic Vision	Consulting	Mr	Peter	Bates	Owner & CEO	New York City
Belmond	Hotel Group	Mr	Arnaud	Champenois	SVP Brand & Marketing	London
Workd of Travel	Member Agencies	Mr	Patrick	de Vos	Owner & CEO	Belgium
Hyatt	Hotel Group	Mr	Tristan	Dowell	Global Vice President HSF - Luxury, lifestyle & leisure	Chicago
Viajes Prestigio	Member Agencies	Mr	Alpis	Flores	Owner & CEO	Mexico
Elefant	Member Agencies	Mr	Gonzalo	Gimeno	Owner & CEO	Madrid
Il Viaggio	Member Agencies	Mr	Ico	Inanc	Owner & CEO	Milan
Como	Hotel Group	Mr	Olivier	Jolivet	CEO Como Holdings	Singapore
Cheval Blanc	Hotel Group	Mr	Olivier	Lefebvre	CEO	Paris
Sicily lifestyle	DMC	Mr	Salvatore	Lo Giudice	Owner & CEO	Sicily
SuiteDNA	Member Agencies	Ms	Kathy	Mc Cann	Owner & CEO	London
Oetker	Hotel Group	Mr	Simon	Neggers	SVP Marketing, Sales, Communication	Germany
Sikeleli Travel	Member Agencies	Mrs	Daniela	Ponter	Co-founder & DOSM	Vancouver
Peninsula	Hotel Group	Mr	Gareth	Roberts	Group Director, Brand and Operations Support	Hong Kong
Blue fish	Member Agencies	Mr	Steve	Sims	Owner & CEO	Los Angeles
One fine moment	Member Agencies	Ms	Susanne	Singer	Owner & CEO	Germany
Neo Yachting	Private Seas	Mr	Nicolas	Valin	Owner & CEO	Cannes

Table 1
List of experts for the Delphi Study

LITERATURE REVIEW ON 'DESIRE'

To anchor our reasoning in past research we conducted a thorough literature review about the concept of desirability. For Pham et al. (2017), desirability is defined as the degree to which a brand has good qualities that are worth

getting or having. It would have a catalytic (positive) effect on the influence of brand equity on commitment. Besides, consumer knowledge would positively influence trust and brand desirability (Kuo, 2020). In service design a desirability framework (Stickdorn et al. 2010) has been identified, consisting of four different elements: utility, usability, pleasurability and desirability who is a mix of the three others.

However, we were not able to find any literature directly related to the topic in the tourism industry. Thus, we reviewed literature from the luxury industry (goods and services) but also went through philosophical thinking and literatures studies. Authors from Aristotle to Proust (1913) have indeed studied how desire interacts with human beings, not to mention Levinas or even artists such as Frida Khalo or Baudelaire in *Les fleurs du Mal*. For Proust the origin of desire is "others", while for Aristotle and Platon desire is driving human beings to discovery of new places and sensations. We see that from a philosophical standpoint the concept of DESIRE and TRAVEL are intertwined.

However nothing has been written on the concept of desirability itself. Thus our grounded approach seems appropriate.

THE FOCUS GROUP

8 people attended the focus group. They are all members of the Luxury Travel Lab, a think-tank gathering luxury experts outside from the travel industry. The focus group was moderated by the researcher, with a duration of 3 hours. The objective was to generate as diverse insights and spontaneous reactions / discussions around the topic of 'desirability' in the luxury industry. Table 2 summarizes the list of participants.

Name	**Company**	**Job Title**
Edouard Boccon-Gibod	EuropaCorp	Secrétaire Général
Hervé de Gouvion Saint Cyr	Talentricity	Founder
Jean-Noël Kapferer	HEC	Professor
Olivier Damas	Pinel & Pinel	Director of Business Development
Simon Nyeck	ESSEC	Professor
Stéphane Gallieni	BalistikArt	Co-founder
Valérie Jourdan	Promise Consulting	CEO
Quentin Desurmont	Serandipians	CEO

Table 2
List of participants to the Focus Group

THE SURVEY

As part of the Essence of Luxury 2022 Show a global survey was sent to travel agencies from seven regions of the world. 286 agencies shared their views on travel desirability either explaining what they need to do to elicit client's desire or what criteria make a trip desirable for their clientele.

With this study we intend to:
Understand which factors trigger the desirability of a trip,
Identify convergences in desirability all around the world.

The survey was built considering five main themes – brand, expertise, prestige, client relationship and surprise – each theme divided in several criteria for a total of 25 questions. Agencies were asked to grade each criterion on a Likert scale from 1 to 7.

Criteria	**Category**
Agency brand name / fame / reputation	Brand
Insist on our brand qualities	Brand
Use our partners' (ex: hotel) fame	Brand

Fitting Interest	Client Relationship
Follow-up Complement to a previous trip	Client Relationship
Give our clients as much information as possible	Client Relationship
Our clients will gain lots of positive emotions	Client Relationship
Remind our clients about our relationship	Client Relationship
Showcase a new trip compared to previous ones	Client Relationship
Show how committed we are to our clients	Client Relationship
Provide information“craftsmanship” done behind the Travel	Expertise
Seamless experience	Expertise
Secure/Safe	Expertise
Simple to Understand	Expertise
Alluring	Prestige
Expensive	Prestige
Fashionable	Prestige
Not available	Prestige
Rare	Prestige
Shared	Prestige
Fun	Surprise
New	Surprise
Unexpected	Surprise
Unexpected travel proposal	Surprise

Table 3
List of criteria to trigger desirability (for assessment in the survey)

Back To the Delphi Study Protocol
The initial list of 55 statements can be found in Appendix. Each expert was invited to rate on a 10-point Likert scale on how much he/she agrees with the statement, with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest statement. Qualitative comments could be shared for each statement in some dedicated areas. Then results were compiled, using traditional statistical measures for quantitative data (measures of central tendency and level of dispersion), and content analysis for the qualitative data (Fischer 1978). A second set of questions was sent, with an enriched list of statements based on the qualitative comments provided in Round 1. Each expert was presented with his/her score and the average score of the group. He/She could choose to keep his initial score or update it. He/She also had to rate the new assessments. We proceeded in this way until consensus on the ratings was achieved. For this study, only perfect and very good consensus were kept, following the definition of consensus presented in Table 4 below, from Bauman (2001):

Perfect consensus	All respondents agree on an answer
Very good consensus	Median and 50% of respondents at one integer or 80% of respondents within one integer of the median
Good consensus	50% of respondents within one integer of the median or 80% of respondents within two integers of the median
Some consensus	50% of respondents within two integers of the median or 80% of respondents within three integers of the median
No consensus	All other cases

Table 4
Definition of the levels of consensus

RESULTS / FINDINGS

Results from Study 1
In 59% of the stories the hero is alone, which presents the quest of desire as a self-experience linked to introspection, passion, discovery, and knowledge acquisition. Overall, the hero is going on an adventure to discover something new or hidden. The object of desire can be abstract such as self-discovery for 17% of the scenario (i.e., learning one's passion, limits, and aspirations during the trip). But in 26% of the stories the object of desire remains very concrete and prosaic: place, country, hotel. THE HERO is the first to learn from the story (59% of cases). This reminds that travelling is a personal and experiential activity and passion. Each traveller can take back home souvenirs, personal knowledge, and new inspiration. THE AUDIENCE may also learn from the hero's adventure (32% of cases). The audience (i.e., the prospects and clients) feels empowered by the brand storytelling and is invited to act on this rising desire to discover and travel.

To win the quest for discovery, the hero needs a certain set of skills:
The WILL TO DO THE TASK (vouloir-faire) is the most important one with *39%.*
Then comes the KNOW-HOW (savoir-faire) with *30%.*
The performance of the hero is often (50%) BOTH PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL.

64% of helpers are concrete elements:
A PLACE: the hotel, the country or the region that inspires the hero and provides with anything he needs.
ONE OR SEVERAL PERSONS: a guide, the hotel employees that are dedicated to help the hero enjoy his trip.
AN OBJECT: related to the hero's souvenirs or to travelling.
A MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION: helicopters, cars, airplanes, scooters that are used by the hero to reach his destination.
The main abstract helpers are:
CURIOSITY: a key element for a fantastic and personal discovery.
PASSION/LOVE: for others and for travelling.
HARMONY/PERFECTION: created by the place where the hero stays.

44% of opponents are concrete:
DAY-TO-DAY LIFE: travelling forces people to discover new places and leave their comfort zone.
ONE OR SEVERAL PERSONS: relatives can be a brake to travels.
WORK: people with high responsibility tend to be unable to take a real vacation break and thus be focus on their travelling experience.
48% of opponents are abstract:
IGNORANCE: prejudices and stereotypes are a real brake to travels.
TIME: most people lack time to enjoy travelling experiences.
HERO'S PERSONALITY: people can be afraid or reluctant to try new places.

Main insights from Study 1:
Luxury tourism players focus on a male client and hardly project a female clientele into the experience.
A very rational storytelling leaving little room for emotions.
Luxury tourism players showcase their brand using concrete practical elements and forget the emotional part of it, thus helping the client to build his/her memorable experience without any emotions.
The hero of the story remains alone, as if a luxury memorable experience was not to be shared with family or friends.
The hero's quest is leading to very prosaic rewards: few stories help the hero transcend him/herself.

Results from Study 2 – Part 2 (Survey)
From the survey, we gain the below insights:
Client relationship is overall the most important element to focus on when trying to trigger desirability. It includes knowing your clients, sharing information with them, and developing loyalty. Client relationship is thus at the heart of any desirable trip.
Showing great commitment to clients is essential and is the most important element to focus on when building a strong relationship with clients.

Clients appreciate receiving substantial information on their trip. They are longing for a seamless experience, fitting their interests, and keeping them safe and secure.
Clients' feelings and positive emotions are a key target for travel agencies.
The agency's expertise places second overall. It refers to the ability of the agency to create the perfect trip for its clients regarding operational matters such as security and fluidity of the trip.
Elements of surprise and prestige trigger desirability to a lesser extent. Novelty, fun and unexpected features are appreciated but not the first factor to consider. Price, accessibility, and status are not priorities either. A trip being expensive is often the last desirability trigger in the regions' ranking.
The brand is often underestimated when evaluating its power over desirability. The brand name of the agency or its partners does not seem to be enough to trigger clients' desire.

Results from Study 2 – Part 2 (Delphi)
Four rounds of questions were necessary to reach consensus. Round 1 included the list of the 55 statements generated as explained before. Table 5 is an example of a typical statistical treatment of the data (from Round 1).

Panelist		Results Round 1						
E-mail Contact								
	Consensus Result	Mean Round 1	Mode Round 1	**edian Round**	Range Round 1	quartile range Rou	Deviation Rou	CV
A company with a strong brand name / reputation is	GR1	9,0	10,0	**9,5**	3,0	2,0	1,2	13%
To elicit client desire we can insist on one's brand qualities	VGR1	8,0	8,0	**8,0**	4,0	1,8	1,1	14%
Reminding clients about how much they can trust the	GR2	7,6	7,0	**7,5**	5,0	2,8	1,4	19%
Reminding one's clients about the relationship the	VGR1	8,2	8,0	**8,0**	4,0	2,0	1,1	14%
As a travel designer we can rely on the partners' (ex: hotel)	GR1	7,8	8,0	**8,0**	5,0	1,8	1,5	20%
Providing complete information about the "craftsmanship"	GR1	8,2	7,0	**8,0**	5,0	2,8	1,5	18%
Showcasing a new trip/journey/stay and comparing it to a	GR1	7,8	8,0	**8,0**	8,0	2,0	2,0	25%
To make a trip/journey/stay desirable we can provide as	GR1	7,0	7,0	**7,0**	8,0	2,0	1,9	28%
To make a trip/journey/stay desirable we can show how	GR1	7,5	8,0	**8,0**	6,0	1,8	1,5	20%
To make a trip/journey/stay desirable we can make clients	GR1	8,1	8,0	**8,0**	5,0	2,0	1,3	16%
To make ourselves desirable we try to surprise our clients	GR1	8,3	8,0	**8,0**	4,0	2,5	1,2	15%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	GR2	6,7	6,0	**6,5**	8,0	2,8	1,9	29%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	GR1	7,3	7,0	**7,0**	5,0	2,5	1,6	22%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is fun	GR1	7,2	7,0	**7,0**	7,0	1,0	1,6	22%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is a	GR1	8,2	8,0	**8,0**	4,0	2,0	1,2	15%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	VGR1	8,8	10,0	**9,0**	3,0	2,0	1,1	13%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	VGR2	7,2	8,0	**8,0**	6,0	2,0	1,5	21%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	GR1	6,5	8,0	**7,0**	7,0	3,0	1,8	27%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is not	GR1	7,0	8,0	**7,0**	7,0	2,8	1,8	26%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	GR1	6,3	6,0	**6,5**	8,0	2,5	1,9	31%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	GR1	7,4	9,0	**8,0**	8,0	3,0	1,9	26%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	GR2	7,5	6,0	**7,5**	5,0	3,0	1,4	19%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	VGR1	7,6	7,0	**8,0**	7,0	2,0	1,6	21%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is	GR1	7,1	7,0	**7,0**	8,0	1,8	1,7	24%
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is the	GR1	6,5	7,0	**7,0**	10,0	1,0	2,2	33%
To create desire we must make people dream about	VGR2	8,6	8,0	**8,0**	3,0	2,0	1,1	12%
There is a sexual hidden dimension in clients' desire you can play on to make them desire your trip/journey/travel	SR1	4,2	6,0	**4,5**	8,0	4,8	2,6	63%
You can create desire leveraging clients' passions	GR1	7,9	8,0	**8,0**	5,0	2,0	1,5	19%
Desire comes from the re-enchantment of daily habits	GR1	6,1	5,0	**6,0**	7,0	3,5	2,1	35%
The human factor is key to create desire	GR1	7,9	8,0	**8,0**	5,0	1,8	1,3	17%
People start desiring things/services when they feel they	VGR1	8,1	8,0	**8,0**	4,0	1,8	1,1	14%
Frustration & shortage can create desire	GR1	6,6	8,0	**7,0**	8,0	3,0	2,0	31%
What is desired is usually very intimate to clients (linked to	GR1	6,9	6,0	**7,0**	7,0	2,8	1,8	26%
Desire comes from the unstoppable wish to do/get like	GR1	5,7	6,0	**6,0**	9,0	2,0	2,1	37%
Creating clients' desire is some "art of seduction"	SR1	7,7	9,0	**7,5**	5,0	2,0	1,6	21%
What is repulsive/ugly can become desirable	GR1	3,8	5,0	**4,0**	9,0	3,0	2,3	62%
When a client fulfils his/her desire he/she becomes	SR1	5,9	5,0	**6,0**	10,0	3,8	2,5	43%
Desire is a component of art	GR1	6,5	8,0	**7,0**	10,0	3,0	2,3	35%
Desire can emerge from ostentation-seeking	GR1	6,6	7,0	**7,0**	8,0	3,0	1,9	30%

Table 5
Statistical Treatment of the Round 1 Data

32 statements out of the 39 were kept for Round 2, excluding those combining consensus and poor median score. Round 2 included a list of 43 statements, with 11 new statements emerging from the qualitative comments of the panellists. Consensus with high median score was reached during Round 2 on 10 statements.

During Round 3 the 32 other statements were once again submitted (+ an additional set of 7 statements as coming from the qualitative comments) and additional consensus was reached on a set of 6 items (with median score above 8/10). And during Round 4 the remaining 21 statements matching the same criteria were submitted to the panellists. Table 6 summarizes the consensus reached.

	Nb of VG Consensus	Nb of G Consensus	Some or No Consensus	*Total*
Round 1	7 (5 VR1+ 2 VR2)	29 (26 GR1 + 3 GR2)	3 SR1	*39*
Round 2	11 (7 VR1 + 4 VR2)	28 (25 GR1 + 3 GR2)	3 SR1	*42*
Round 3	10 (7 VR1 + 3 VR2)	27 (25 GR1 + 2 GR2)	0	*37*
Round 4	8 VR1	13 (12 GR1 + 1 GR2)	0	*21*

VG ~ Very Good consensus / G ~ Good consensus

Table 6

Consensus Reached during each round

In the end, the Delphi Study generated a list of 18 statements that would define desirability with highest median scores and Very Good Consensus:
A company with a strong brand name / reputation is desirable for clients
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is fitting with their interests / habits
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is expensive (not everyone can afford it)
You can create desire leveraging clients' passions
Creating clients' desire is some "art of seduction"
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is unexpected
Just focusing on the good bits of a trip/journey/stay when presenting it to the clients is enough to elicit their desire for it
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is a seamless experience (clients do not have to think about anything)
To elicit client desire we can insist on one's brand qualities (those which matter to clients)
Reminding clients about how much they can trust the company can create some desire of purchasing
Reminding one's clients about the relationship the company has with them can create some desire of re-purchasing from the company
Showcasing a new trip/journey/stay and comparing it to a previous experience clients have done before with us is a way to create desire for this new trip/journey/stay
To make a trip/journey/stay desirable we can provide as much information as possible
To make a trip/journey/stay desirable we can show how committed we are to our clients
Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is fashionable ("the place to go" / "the thing to do")
To create desire we must make people dream about something
Desire comes from the re-enchantment of daily habits
Making trips/journeys/stays unique and non-comparable to anything done before adds desirability

DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

We found that Creating clients' desire is some "art of seduction”:

A company with a strong brand name or a well-built reputation appears desirable for clients as it is usually the case in the luxury industry. Clients can more easily trust the company’s services and benefit from the brand name when enjoying the experience. A company should thus put forward its brand assets to create desire.

A desirable trip must fit with the clients’ interests and habits. A company should know what its clients are looking for and offer them tailor-made experiences.

When looking for a luxury experience, clients feel a trip is desirable if expensive. It is essential for them to know that such experience cannot easily be lived by everybody.

Therefore, a luxury tourism company should leverage on its clients' passions to create a desirable experience. Desire, passions, and feelings are always intertwined. However, we saw from Study 1 that the way luxury tourism actors try to tell stories about desire is quite far from this idealistic view. We believe there is still room for improvement or for rethinking communication strategies, having less of a push approach and more of a pull one. Emotions are everything and should be conveyed and customized according to the audience, to respect this notion of “fit”.

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APPENDIX – LIST of 55 STATEMENTS

- A company with a strong brand name / reputation is desirable for clients
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is fitting with their interests / habits
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is expensive (not everyone can afford it)
- You can create desire leveraging clients' passions
- Creating clients' desire is some "art of seduction"
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is unexpected
- Just focusing on the good bits of a trip/journey/stay when presenting it to the clients is enough to elicit their desire for it
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is a seamless experience (clients do not have to think about anything)
- To elicit client desire we can insist on one's brand qualities (those which matter to clients)
- Reminding clients about how much they can trust the company can create some desire of purchasing
- Reminding one's clients about the relationship the company has with them can create some desire of re-purchasing from the company
- Showcasing a new trip/journey/stay and comparing it to a previous experience clients have done before with us is a way to create desire for this new trip/journey/stay
- To make a trip/journey/stay desirable we can provide as much information as possible
- To make a trip/journey/stay desirable we can show how committed we are to our clients
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is fashionable ("the place to go" / "the thing to do")
- To create desire we must make people dream about something
- Desire comes from the re-enchantment of daily habits
- Making trips/journeys/stays unique and non-comparable to anything done before adds desirability
- To make a trip/journey/stay desirable we can make clients feel that they will gain lots of positive emotions (joy, pride, excitement)
- To make ourselves desirable we try to surprise our clients with an unexpected trip/journey/stay proposal
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is new
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is simple to understand
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is rare
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is the follow-up or complement to a trip they previously had the chance to do
- There is a sexual hidden dimension in clients' desire you can play on to make them desire your trip/journey/travel
- Desire is a component of art
- Our brand values may create desire
- Providing complete information about the "craftsmanship" behind a trip / journey / stay can create desire for another trip / journey / stay

- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is not available immediately to anyone (you must often wait to experience it, there is a waiting list)
- Desire can emerge from ostentation-seeking
- As a travel designer we can rely on the partners' (ex: hotel) fame /reputation to create client's desire
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is fun
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is something they can talk about with their friends or peers
- Frustration & shortage can create desire
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is secure / safe (no negative surprise)
- Desire comes from the unstoppable wish to do/get like others
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is alluring
- What is repulsive/ugly can become desirable
- The human factor is key to create desire
- People start desiring things/services when they feel they are unique/exclusive/bespoke to them
- Clients may desire a trip/journey/stay to outdo their peers
- What is desired is usually very intimate to clients (linked to their memories, their own imagination etc.)
- When a client fulfils his/her desire he/she becomes desirable to other clients
- A trip/journey/stay can be desired as part of a nostalgic moment that clients had done once before
- The purpose of causing envy might elicit clients' desire for a trip/journey/stay
- The relationship built with the client may elicit desire for a trip/journey/stay
- The time dedicated to the client may elicit desire for a trip/journey/stay
- A desirable trip/journey/stay always appear simple
- Too much information about a trip/journey/stay may decrease clients' desire for it
- Rarity can create desire
- A desirable trip/journey/stay is challenging for the client
- Scarcity can create desire
- When communicating about your trip/journey/stay, hinting but not showing everything increases desirability
- Clients feel a trip/journey/stay is desirable because it is unique or exclusive
- You can create desire leveraging your client’s areas of interest

URBAN TOURISM POLICY BY USING PROBLEM ANALYSIS METHOD (CASE STUDY: TEHRAN CITY)

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ABSTRACT

Today's, tourism is one of the important issues in economic, social, political and cultural dimensions and have most impact on the economic sector. Tourism causes business prosperity, fair distribution of wealth, cultural exchange and peace between communities. Tourism development requires systematic government policy. In order to the public policy of a country must plan to attain this goal. City of Tehran as political capital of IRAN have a lot of tourism attractions (natural, historical and …) and has always been of interest to domestic and foreign tourists however it has not developed as tourism industrial. In this study, the important issues of tourism industry policies have been studied by Problem Analysis method (case study: Tehran). In this approach the problem-solving to discovering solution process are based on interaction and group discussions and fish bone diagram allows policymaker to gain deeper understanding of the issues and find solution and practical actions for development. Also, in this research review the tourism conditional of Tehran, then identify the important and central issues related to tourism sector. These problems include marketing and advertising, tourism infrastructure, sustainable development, education and culture and development of tourism attraction which each one has sub-cause. Based on this identify and explain the solutions for tourism development.

Key Words: Urban tourism, Tourism policy, Problem Analysis, Fish bone (Ishikawa) diagram

INTRODUCTION

Today, tourism is one of the important issues in economic, social, political, and cultural dimensions and it is globalized. Currently (Paramati et al, 2017; Richard, 2018; Aquino, 2018; Farmaki, 2015), Therefore, the policy makers of the tourism sector believe that the general policy of tourism is the result of the accumulation of a range of forces and complex networks of actors, and they acknowledge the complex, fragmented and irrational nature of the policy process (Pforr, 2005). The role of public and private networks and partnerships in tourism policies has been the focus of researchers since the 1990s (Bramwell & Lane, 2000; Dredg & Jenkins, 2003; Dredge, 2006; Zapata and Hall, 2012). Although in some cases the political dimensions of tourism have not been the main focal point of the research (Benckendorff & Zehrer, 2013). Many authors have also described the importance of understanding tourism policy (including its implementation) in different contexts, histories and situations (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Bramwell & Meyer, 2007; Erkus-Ozturk & Eraydin, 2010; Zapata & Hall, 2012).

Todays, the conditions of societies are such that all national issues need to be planned and policy-made and none of dimensions develop and grow without planning. So, tourism industry is not exception to this principle and requires a change in the attitude of country major decision makers, meta-planning and development of laws.
Iran is country which have a lot of tourism industry, cultural and historical attraction potential. In this regard, Iran has been welcomed by many communities in the world who want to travel to it. Tehran is the same and as political

capital of Iran, over the years, has many tourist attractions that taken considered by domestic and international tourists. But in terms of tourism, it does not have develop that the root finding of this issue goes back to policies and planning and the legal basis isn't provided in high level documents related to tourism industry and this sector always have important challenges. In this research, the important issues and subjects of tourism industry regarding policy and public planning in Tehran have been studied and by using Problem Analysis model, check out the issues and problems of tourism and finally identify strategic policies for tourism development.

LITRETURE REVIEW

Policy

Policymaking is about understanding what governments should do and why (Dye, 2017). Therefore, policymaking is a specific term that refers to a series of actions to solve a society's problem, and concepts and definitions emphasize different aspects of processes, stakeholders, goals, and different levels of decision-making (Knill & Tosun, 2008; Anderson, 2014; Howlett, 2019). Policies are actions determined by government officials and their purpose is the public interest and to meet the needs of society. Public policy is political activity that is affected by economic, social and culture characteristics of society and government structures. These policies are related to what the government decides to do or not to do, so public policies are the results of government action as conscious choice (Baptista et al 2019). public policies are designed to achieve specific goals and product results, although these goals are not reached and the results are not desired. But policies are special actions that are set and implemented to achieve specific goals. In this regard, authorities give content and direction to policies based on the decision that are made, issue orders and rulings, and enact laws to implement these policies (Anderson, 2014). Public policies reflect the most important values of communities and show which of them have the highest priority in decisions. Therefore, policy makers activities can determine the rules definitely and determine the position and priority of each (kraft & furlong, 2019). The public policy helps to make decisions, assign resources and solve problems of society. Such policies are formalized through development and application. In terms of tourism, public policies are the cause of generating revenue, creating jobs, foreign currency increasing and help tourists flow and tourism spaces (Martínez et al, 2014). The purpose of determine public policy is creating the desired results that define the most appropriate methods to achieve the results. By using tourism development, governments can provide and influences policies to create greater economic growth, tax incentives for industry, and influence them. public policy aims to provide guidance by addressing the issues. These policies generally include the goals and strategies that governments have adopted in relation to tourism and other areas. Tourism is one of the biggest and diverse economic activities in the world and it attracts many economic benefits to tourism destinations. For many governments, tourism is a great opportunity for economic development and a tool for building a more prosperous society. Tourism indirectly affects other sectors and leads to development (Pocinho & Nechita; 2019). today, national and regional issues need policy and planning, and none of the economic, cultural, political, security and national dimensions can go through the process of growth and development without planning and policy. Accordingly, the efficiently and optimization of tourism capacities in countries also requires medium-term and long-term strategic and macro policy and planning, which means that the future of tourism to the thinking horizon of the country's major decision makers, development plans. And upstream laws are tied that determine the limits and dimensions of the tourism industry (Veicy, 2017). Policy-making in the tourism industry has wide variety according to the political, economic and cultural structures of each country, which determines the extent of government involvement in the process. Studies show the essential role of governments in policy-making on the tourism industry is very important especially in the first stages of development and the reason is usually the lack of risk in the private sector in the early stages of investment. The role of government at this stage is not include planning for development, but in some cases includes direct management of supply of tourism products (Heidari Chianeh et al., 2012). public power intervention is citing as the key to ensuring the coordinated development of tourism in exchange for autonomous development. This principle is based on the codification of specific public polices for tourism. Government have duty to provide the basic infrastructures to assist the local community in implementing projects. In some of tourism destination, government ensure that tourism prevail in the market. Policy-making in the tourism industry is a set of basic rules and guidelines that indicate ways to achieve the overall goals of tourism. Prioritization, standardization, and resource management are the responsibility of governments, which they provide guidance and facilities (Pocinho & Nechita, 2019; 81).

Capacity Building

Capacity building is a concept that has multiple definitions and has different dimensions of analysis, and like many theoretical concepts, it does not have a defined standard (Brix, 2018). According to the UN definition, capacity building is the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that

organizations and communities need to survive, adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing world. An essential element in capacity building is a transformation that is created and sustained from within over time. This type of transformation goes beyond performing tasks to change mentality and attitude. Sustainable Development Goal 17: Revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development the United Nations is committed to transformation from within. Goal 17 includes targets for capacity building, including increasing technology and innovation in least developed countries and improving data collection and monitoring to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nation/Academic Impact). From the point of view of Ku and Yuen-Tsang (2013), capacity building is activities that strengthen people's knowledge, abilities, skills and behavior and improve organizational structure and processes so that the organization can efficiently achieve its goals. achieve itself in a sustainable manner (Brix, 2018). Community capacities are classified under the title of community assets into two categories: individual and organizational assets. Individual assets include skills, talent, resident experiences, individual jobs, individual income, investment, and organizational assets include organizational relationships, citizen relationships, organizational culture, and organizational beliefs (Merino et al, 2012). Also, from the point of view of Jensen & Krogstrup (2017), capacity building is a continuous process to improve the capabilities of individuals, organizations and institutions to achieve their goals, and it is also an internal process that is achieved based on existing strengths. As an approach to change, capacity building is based on the principle that the sustainable development of society, organizations and individuals requires the participation of local communities, existing human and cultural resources (Jensen & Krogstrup, 2017). According to Kuhlicke et al (2011), there are different types of community capacity building, which include: knowledge capacity; 2- motivational capacity; 3- network capacity; 4- economic capacity; 5- Institutional capacity; 6- Procedural capacity. Therefore, this community capacity building is a long-term, iterative process based on the mutual cooperation of different actors at different scales (Kuhlicke, 2011).
Building capacity based on goals. Process and expression at both organizational and civil society levels is following as table (1):

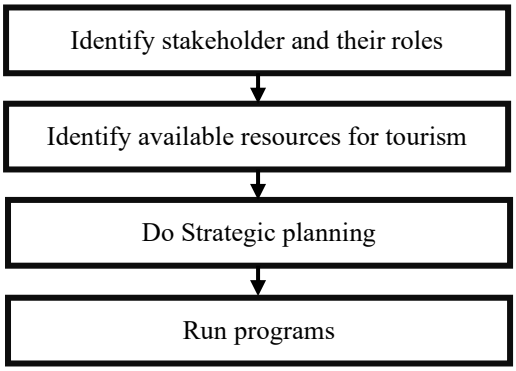
Table 1: based on goals. Process and expression at both organizational and civil society levels

Capacity Building	**As tool**	**As process**	**As goal**
organizational	Strengthens the organization to perform tasks such as capacity building in local communities.	The process of reflecting, guiding, and paying attention to greater coherence between goals / values and activities	Strengthen the organization to achieve goals and objectives
Civil society	Strengthen community members to do the things defined by them.	dialogue-communication, establishing relationships, accepting diversity, resolving conflicts	Strengthen community members to participate in achieving specific goals

(Source: Rafieian et al., 2014)

Capacity building of the community to develop tourism
In general, increasing community capacity precedes the tourism planning process and identifies key elements in community capacity building and development programs (Hataminejad, 2012). The following figure shows a model for achieving this:

Figure 1: Community base tourism planning approach



Source: Hatami Nejad et al., 2012

The main step in this approach is identify the stakeholders and their roles in the program. Strategic plan is consulting with stakeholders to identify resources for tourism development and then use the data in execution. These plans include infrastructure, educational needs and community awareness. Activities in parallel of special programs for tourism must be designed to increase the capabilities of the destination community to implement tourism plan and also control these activities (Hatami Nejad et al., 2012).

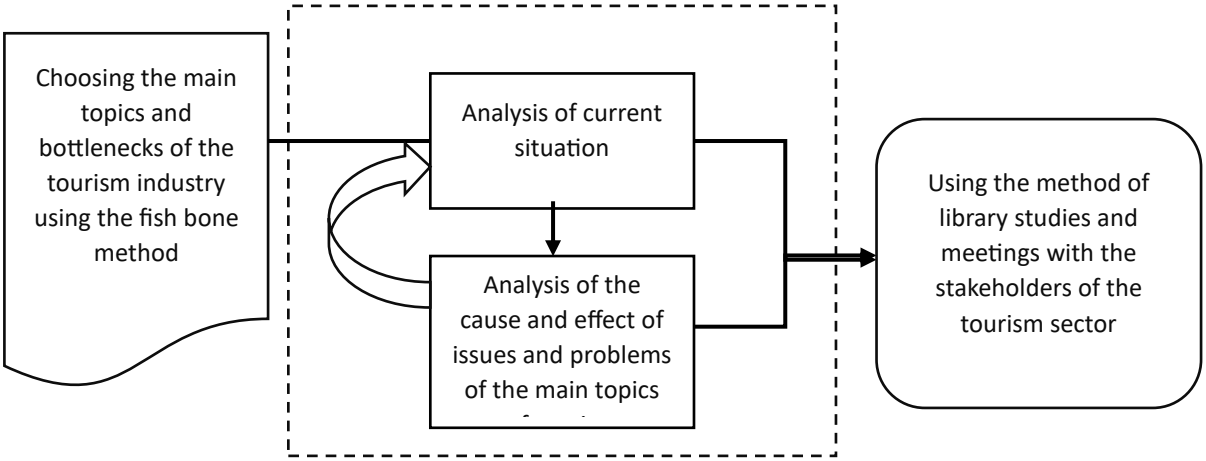
METHODOLOGY

Review of policy making by Problem Analysis approach

One of the methods that policy makers use in order to improve governance and deal with complex challenges is the problem analysis approach, which follows a process model and is not a linear process, but a return method that can be used to analyze issues and problems for decision-making and subsequent policies (Center for International Development at Harvard University, 2018؛ Andrews & et al, 2015).

In this study methodology is following as:

Figure2: Research process and methodology



According to the process policy approach and the presented research method, in order to carry out the above steps, the measures taken are shown in the table below. In order to analyze the current situation and meet the challenges of the tourism field, the upstream documents that exist in this sector (Tehran Tourism Development Plans) have been reviewed and studied. Therefore, all the challenges mentioned in the field of tourism in these documents were extracted. In order to complete this list with the public sector (administrators and government experts in the tourism office) and the private sector (Travel agencies society, tourist accommodation and hotels society, tourism academics, tour guides society, restaurateurs and waiter's society, Tourism NGO's) interviews were conducted and also other university studies were studied and reviewed and a draft of obstacles and problems in the field of tourism was prepared. In the next step, in order to discover the cause of each of the extracted issues and problems, the fishbone diagram method was used. A fishbone diagram is a tool for graphically drawing a variety of small and large causes that give rise to any problem or issue. In fact, this technique is to express, identify and recognize the dimensions of the problem, which can draw a general picture of the problem in the mind.

RESULT

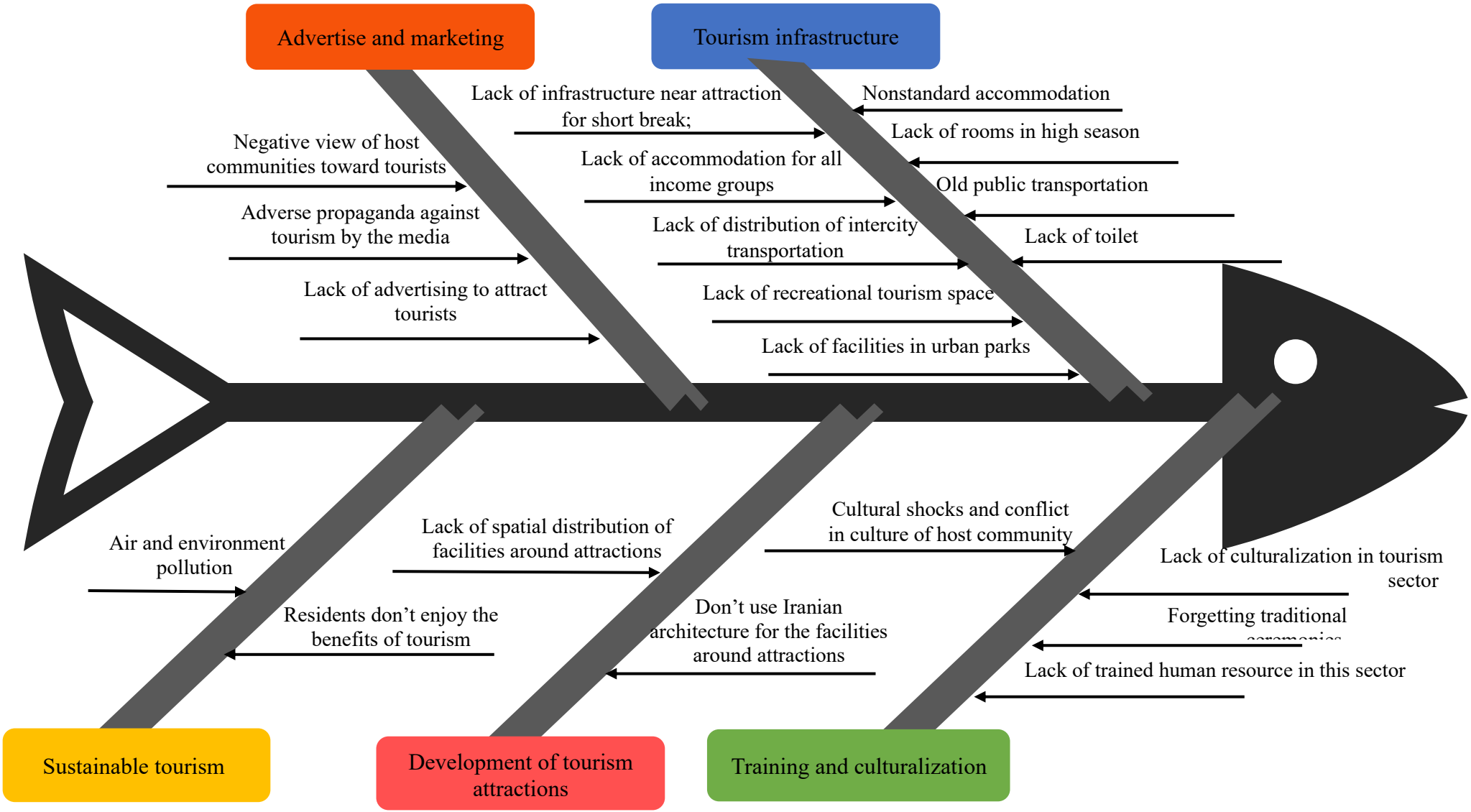
Step 1: Analysis of current situation

At this stage, through interviews with stakeholders and library studies and people involved in the field of tourism and related experts, the issues and problems of different fields of tourism were counted. Then, each of the issues and problems was considered as a general indicator, and in this way, the central issues were extracted.

Table2: Main Issues of Tourism

Row	Main Issues	explanation
1	Marketing and advertising	The advantage attitudes of host against tourists causes the communities to towards the growth and development of tourism and slowdown this process. Also, negative advertising and the insecurity of Iran as tourist destination has caused many tourists to stop traveling to Iran. At the same time, there are no remarkable advertising about Iran's potential to attract tourists.
2	Tourism infrastructures	Lack of tourism infrastructure for rest of tourists near the attractions and sites, lack of health facilities, lack of recreational-tourism space, lack of diversity in accommodation, lack of urban and interurban transport fleet and old vehicles in use, lack of facilities and amenities in urbans parks and natural areas, the distance of accommodation centers from international standards and also thee lack of accommodation for tourists in high season are the important tourism problems in Tehran city.
3	Sustainable development	One of the most important issues in tourism of Tehran is most of residents, marketers and people don't benefit from the income of tourism, which leads to lack of cooperation about it. Also, lack of attention of many people causes environment, air and water pollution, which is a big hit to the cycle of nature.
4	Education and Culturalization of tourism	One of the biggest issues in tourism development is the lack of training and culturalization of communities which creates conflict in culture and it maybe cause the important traditions be forgotten. Lack of expert and trained people in the tourism sector has always create big problems and cause abnormal behaviors with entering tourists.
5	Tourism attraction development	Spatial distribution of tourism attractions is inappropriate in the city and most of them don't have recreational and welfare facilities nearby to serve tourists so that tourists have to travel long distance to be able to use these facilities. Accommodation are far from the tourism attractions. in some areas where these places have been built, don't conform to the historical context of attractions and have different architect, which has causes heterogeneity near these attractions.

Step2: Investigating the causes of issues and problems of tourism's central issues


Advertise and marketing
Tourism infrastructure
Lack of infrastructure near attraction for short break;
Nonstandard accommodation
Lack of rooms in high season
Negative view of host communities toward tourists
Lack of accommodation for all income groups
Old public transportation
Adverse propaganda against tourism by the media
Lack of distribution of intercity transportation
Lack of toilet
Lack of advertising to attract tourists
Lack of recreational tourism space
Lack of facilities in urban parks
Air and environment pollution
Lack of spatial distribution of facilities around attractions
Cultural shocks and conflict in culture of host community
Lack of culturalization in tourism sector
Residents don't enjoy the benefits of tourism
Don't use Iranian architecture for the facilities around attractions
Forgetting traditional
Lack of trained human resource in this sector
Sustainable tourism
Development of tourism attractions
Training and culturalization

CONCLUSION

In the Problem Analysis approach, the problem-solving process to discover solutions is based on interaction and group discussions, which allows the fishbone diagram to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and embed solutions and practical measures for development. When there are problems and issues, at the first, problem should be analyzed properly then a suitable solution and strategy can be planned and a step by step taken in the way of planning. This approach caused empowers governments and creates a different theme for interaction between stakeholders and decision makers, and attracts more people to participate in problem solving to reach deep-rooted issues through interactions, and large issues into small issues with the ability to make changes. Based on this, the current situation of tourism in the city of Tehran was examined and the central issues that are in fact the problems of this city regarding the development of tourism were identified. Problems of Tehran are including advertisement and marketing, urban tourism infrastructure, sustainable development, training and culturalization and tourism attraction development. In fact, each of the central issues mentioned has minor causes within them, which should be expressed some solution based on these problems. In general, training and culture of local community must be given special attention to the host community accept the domestic and international tourists and provide opportunities for a fair distribution of tourism revenues, which can be achieved by involving the general public in direct and indirect jobs. Mass media have very important roles in tourism industry because they are able to eliminate the negative view of tourism and tourists by using training and culturalization, and prepare local community about dealing with guests in society. Even medias can advertise to attract more and more tourists and promote tourism in different destinations. Tehran city always have some problems in the field of tourism infrastructure as most of tourism staff believe there are not enough accommodation in high season of tourism and many of these places are far from global standards. Accordingly, there are many issues and problems in the development of tourism in Tehran and it need more interaction and studies to implement appropriate solution to solve it.

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"BARKING UP THE RIGHT TREE" - SEGMENTING POST-MODERN LGBT NIGHTCLUB VISITORS IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

The current trend among post-modern LGBT consumers suggests a decline in their preference for exclusive LGBT nightclubs compared to the recent past. This is due to the increasing acceptance and tolerance of 'straight' leisure and entertainment venues, resulting in intense rivalry among certain nightclubs vying for LGBT visitors. This paper adds value to the broader hospitality and leisure literature by examining the needs and preferences of post-modern LGBT nightclub visitors in South Africa. Using cluster analysis, it presents a typology of LGBT nightclub visitors, which can assist LGBT nightclubs in attracting a new generation of LGBT consumers in South Africa, consequently enhancing their competitiveness.

Key Words: cluster analysis, leisure behavior, LGBT nightclub, market segmentation, South Africa, visitor motivation

INTRODUCTION

More than 20 years ago, Pritchard, Morgan, Sedgely, and Jenkins (1998) claimed that the boundaries between the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) and heterosexual ('straight') societies have been so completely blurred that many young LGBT people now have far more in common with young heterosexual people than they do with older LGBT people. In his assertion that LGBT and 'straight' cultures are becoming increasingly mixed and fragmented, Sullivan (2005) expresses similar feelings when he claims that the world is observing an irreversible transformation that will eventually put an end to LGBT culture. Post-modern LGBT consumers do not appear to favor exclusive LGBT leisure and entertainment venues as they did in the recent past because 'straight' venues are increasingly becoming more accepting and tolerant (Hattingh & Bruwer, 2020; Nash, 2013). Villarreal (2017) asserts that post-modern LGBTs are more likely to socialize with other groups elsewhere rather than with only LGBT friends at a gay bar. Social groupings today are thought to be formed around particular interests like professions, music genres, lifestyles, and recreational drugs, with sexual orientation playing a less important role (Visser, 2003). According to Nash (2013), the current LGBT generation grew up in a different cultural, political, and social environment where homosexuality is becoming more and more prominent and accepted by mainstream society. This has led to popular nightclubs, bars, restaurants, and other 'straight' leisure and entertainment venues increasingly drawing mixed ('straight' and LGBT) visitors (Rink, 2013). Furthermore, the temporary 'gaying' of 'straight' venues is a common phenomenon and increasingly popular among this new generation of LGBT consumers (Hattingh & Bruwer, 2020). These gatherings, which are also referred to as "pop-up parties" (Villarreal, 2017), pose a danger to the viability of the permanent LGBT leisure and entertainment facilities located in many global cities including Cape Town (Hattingh & Bruwer, 2020).

Therefore, in order to draw in a new generation of LGBT consumers, LGBT leisure and entertainment venues are increasingly competing with traditional 'straight' or mixed-oriented venues, which has led to intense rivalry (Voss, 2015). This is because the boundaries between nightclubs and other types of leisure and entertainment activities are blurring (Skinner, Moss, and Parfitt, 2005). Leisure and entertainment venues require ongoing innovation (Moss, Parfitt, & Skinner, 2008) and renovations to stay current and maintain a consistent stream of patrons (Hollands & Chatterton, 2003). According to Kubacki, Skinner, Parfitt, and Moss (2007), most nightclub owners continue to operate their establishments impromptu and under the assumption that "the spiral of fortune moves itself," which results in numerous misunderstandings and unsuccessful establishments. According to Moss et al. (2008), alternative strategies for competing in these competitive environments are required. They advise segmenting the target market to better understand the specific needs of the main groups (visitor segments) that visit LGBT leisure and entertainment venues. There is no prior study on the needs and preferences of LGBT nightclub visitors in South Africa from the social sciences perspective. This lack of research leads to an urgent need to better understand the forces driving LGBT leisure and entertainment venues in South Africa– the post-modern LGBT consumer. The lack of understanding about these consumers' leisure behaviors is what drove the current study, which could help LGBT

nightclubs become more competitive. This paper provides the first quantitative approach to propose a typology of post-modern LGBT nightclub visitors in South Africa.

BARS AND NIGHTCLUBS AS A FORM OF LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT

The night-time economy (NTE) pertains to evening leisure and entertainment activities in urban areas (Shaw, 2010), typically occurring between 18:00 and 06:00, as defined by the Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID, 2022). According to Zmyslony and Pawlusiński (2020), the NTE encompasses a broad range of activities, including music clubs, theatres, cabarets, nightclubs, sex clubs, massage parlors, museums, galleries, shopping, festivals, events, restaurants, cafes, sports arenas, leisure areas, night markets, and more. In the literature, related terms such as night-time entertainment (Roberts, 2006), night-time alcohol and leisure industry (Shaw, 2014), city nightlife (Nofre & Eldridge, 2018), and the 24-hour city (Charman & Govender, 2020; Roberts & Eldridge, 2012) are also commonly found. Thus, the NTE serves as an overarching term encompassing a wide range of venues, consumer service providers, and leisure and entertainment activities, as per Zmyslony and Pawlusiński (2020). This study, however, is specifically focused on bars and nightclubs, which is one of the leisure and entertainment activities within the NTE.

The body of research on nightclubs is still relatively limited, and the current literature tends to view nightclubs as part of a larger context, with other phenomena being studied alongside them (Serra-Cantallops & Ramon- Cardona, 2017). Much of the existing academic research focuses on the negative aspects associated with the night-time alcohol and leisure industry, such as alcohol and drug abuse, accidents and disasters, health problems (Ramón-Cardona, Álvarez-Bassi, & Sánchez-Fernández, 2021), noise levels (Giritlioğlu & Türkmen, 2014), violence, crime, anti-social behaviors, prostitution, human trafficking, gentrification, and pollution (Zmyslony & Pawlusiński, 2020). According to Mintel (2002), nightclubs are defined as permanent venues that primarily offer dancing and charge admission fees. This definition has been expanded to include other types of establishments such as youth-dominated town center super pubs, pub-restaurants, late-night bars with some nightclub characteristics, and chameleon bars that change their character during opening hours to appeal to different customers (Mintel, 2003). Hollands (2002) distinguishes nightclubs from pubs or taverns by the presence of a dance floor and a DJ booth for playing recorded music. Miyakubo (2009) classifies nightlife venues into three distinct categories: mainstream nightlife, residual spaces, and alternative spaces. Mainstream nightlife refers to well-established venues that are typically found in most large urban areas and represent the dominant mode of urban nightlife culture. Residual spaces include more traditional establishments such as pubs and taverns that have been around for a long time. Alternative spaces, on the other hand, are a diverse range of smaller, more specialized venues that cater to specific cultural tastes or identities such as music genres, ethnicities, or sexualities (Miyakubo, 2009). Additionally, nightclubs can differ in terms of the musical genres they feature, which can range from hard rock, pop, hip hop, jazz, RnB, techno, trance, and more (Voss, 2015).

Nightclubs offer a temporary space for socializing, creating intense and short-lived moments of belonging and enjoyment, also known as ‘ecstasy’ (Hollands, 2002). Young adults are more likely to visit nightclubs than the general population, and they view the weekend as a special time for letting loose and indulging themselves. For many young people, the nightlife scene fulfills their needs for entertainment, fun, pleasure-seeking (Hollands & Chatterton, 2003), dancing, relaxation, and overall well-being (Voss, 2015). Going out at night can also reduce stress levels by providing opportunities to relax and socialize with friends (Giritlioğlu & Türkmen, 2014).

Cape Town is known as a 24-hour city (Charman & Govender, 2020) and its bars and nightclubs are a significant part of its nightlife scene, making it stand out from other South African cities. The city has a metropolitan feel and is often compared to some of the world's most popular cities (CCID, 2022). According to the State of Cape Town Central City Report, the Cape Town central business district (CBD) had a total of 2,981 businesses operating in 2021, with 1,163 of them being in the leisure and entertainment sector (CCID, 2021). In recent years, several of Cape Town's bars and nightclubs have been recognized as among the top 100 in the world (Peyper, 2022). The mainstream nightlife options in Cape Town are concentrated in densely populated areas such as Camps Bay's Beach Road, Gardens' Kloof Street, the CBD's Long Street and Bree Street, and Observatory's Lower Main Road (Charman & Govender, 2020). Meanwhile, there are also several alternative leisure and entertainment venues tailored to the LGBT community in suburban areas such as Zonnebloem, De Waterkant, Sea Point, and Green Point, as noted by Hattingh and Bruwer (2020) and Hattingh and Spencer (2017). According to Travel Gay (2022), Crew Bar in De Waterkant is a leading leisure and entertainment spot for the LGBT community, boasting attractive bartenders and go-go dancers and earning a reputation as a popular destination for late-night debauchery. In addition to its hedonistic atmosphere, the venue features numerous side rooms and cozy nooks that allow for both intimate

gatherings and lively parties (Crew Bar, 2022). Crew Bar also regularly showcases performances by top drag artists from South Africa and welcomes local and international DJs for their themed events and special occasions (Cape Town Magazine, 2017).

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING LEISURE AUDIENCES' BEHAVIOR

Motivation is an important topic that is discussed in a variety of contexts in the field of leisure studies. It can be viewed as psychological influences influencing people's decisions, in line with Middleton's (1994) analysis. According to Slater (2006), motivation can be thought of as a catalyst that prompts people to act on a certain unmet need. For example, those who are passionate about entertainment could have some unmet needs that can be satisfied by engaging in various leisure activities (Kruger & Saayman, 2012), such as going to a nightclub. Although other factors can affect people's behavior, motivation is the most important one taken into account when making decisions (Dikmen & Bozdalar, 2013). Identifying consumer needs, which can influence a person's motivated behavior, is the first stage in the decision-making process (Boekstein, 2012). Accordingly, leisure and entertainment venues need to understand the factors that motivate consumer choices, including the underlying needs that prompt visitors to seek out their services (Slater, 2006). Additionally, dividing visitors into segments based on motives allows for the matching of production features and resources with different visitor needs (Bansal & Eiselt, 2004). This ultimately aids in the design and tailoring of the offering to the needs of specific visitors (Kruger & Saayman, 2012).

Table 1 identifies some of the most common motivational factors that influence leisure visitors' decisions to attend or participate in leisure activities and reveals market segments from a selection of studies that segmented leisure visitors or audiences. It further shows the limited research that has been conducted on LGBT nightclub visitors, particularly in South Africa. According to Table 1, some of the main factors influencing people to engage in leisure activities are related to escape, entertainment, social interaction, and relaxation. The significance and priority of these factors, however, seem to differ between studies. According to several research studies, the type of leisure activity (Dikmen & Bozdalar, 2013), and visitor demographics (Kruger & Saayman, 2012) all have an impact on why individuals choose to participate in certain leisure activities. Hattingh (2018) cautioned against making generalizations about why visitors engage in a particular leisure activity, as these motivations can differ significantly among individuals who participate in other leisure activities.

METHODS

The study conducted was empirical and exploratory in nature, where a quantitative methodology was employed to identify different visitor groups who visited an LGBT nightclub in Cape Town. The utilization of quantitative procedures to categorize data sets into homogeneous behavioral categories (Weaver & Lawton, 2005) has been suggested as a means of facilitating segmentation through the application of multivariate analytic methods (Eftichiadou, 2001). Therefore, a survey was selected as the optimal approach for collecting primary data in this study.

Online Self-Administered Survey

The self-administered online survey was conducted using SurveyPlanet and comprised two sections. The first section solicited sociodemographic data from participants, while the second section employed a 5-point Likert scale to examine the motives of individuals visiting LGBT nightclubs. To enhance the reliability and validity of the survey, variables were borrowed and modified from prior validated leisure studies, specifically from Hattingh (2018, 2021), and Hattingh and Niekerk (2020, 2022). The survey was administered in English.

Sampling Method and Data Collection

Kruger and Saayman (2016) cautioned against conducting on-site data collection in leisure settings where attendees are actively engaged in dancing or experiencing a festive atmosphere, rendering traditional sampling methods impractical. Therefore, an alternative approach to data collection was deemed necessary. The researcher utilized non-probability sampling techniques, including convenience and snowball sampling, to recruit participants for the survey. Convenience sampling was implemented by distributing the survey hyperlink through Crew Bar's social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to target LGBT nightclub visitors. In addition, the researcher employed snowball sampling to collect supplementary data. Participants were requested to disseminate the survey link to other individuals who had also visited Crew Bar prior to submitting the survey. The data collection spanned over three months, from June to August 2022, and a total of 341 respondents who had visited Crew Bar at least once were included in the study.

Table 1. Selection of Previous Research Using Motives to Segment Leisure Audiences

Researchers	Type of leisure activity	Motivational factors	Market segments
Ross, Mattison, and Franklin (2003)	Gay male circuit party	Celebration and having fun, dancing and enjoying music, socialization, escape, looking and feeling good, gay experience, being wild and uninhibited, partying and recreational drug use, and sex	Social (celebratory) segment and sensation-seeking (to have sex, a wild time, drugs) segment
Crocco, Gutmann, Strehlau, and de Lourdes Bacha (2006)	Gay male nightclub	Finding a partner, flirting, music, and atmosphere	Gays, barbies, and bears
Reingle et al. (2009)	Mainstream student nightclub	Intoxication, socialization, romance/sex-seeking, and problem relief	High-frequency, non-monogamous, and monogamous nightclubbers
Kruger and Saayman (2012)	Live music performance	Artist affiliation and unique experience, socialization and event novelty, fun and group affiliation, enjoyment and entertainment, and nostalgia	Avid fans and recreational attendees
Saayman and Saayman (2014)	Live orchestral performance	Escape, socialization, and event attractiveness	The vintage males, the vintage females, and modern enthusiasts
Kruger and Saayman (2015a)	Live music performance	Group affiliation, artist affiliation and entertainment, social interaction, and unique experience	Music lovers and Beatle maniacs
Kruger and Saayman (2015b)	Circus performance	Entertainment and fun, social status and socialization, aesthetics and enchantment, act affiliation and uniqueness	Enthusiasts, novices, and observers
Kruger and Saayman (2017)	Opera performance	Group affiliation and fun, unique experience, entertainment, appraisal, and socialization	Phantom lite and phantom deluxe
Hattingh and Niekerk (2020)	Live stand-up comedy production	Entertainment, unique atmosphere, socialization, relaxation, and fun	The highbrow socialite, the hero worshipper, the bored and curious, and the culture vulture
Hattingh and Niekerk (2022)	Drag show (production)	Relaxation and fun, socialization, unique atmosphere, entertainment, supporting drag artists and performances, enjoying the costumes, make-up, sounds, and sights associated with drag shows	The avid drag fan, the comedy enthusiast, the brotherhood tribe, the sisterhood tribe

Source: Researcher constructed from secondary data

Ethical Considerations
Throughout the data collection phase, appropriate ethical considerations were carefully observed. The study adhered to informed consent protocols, where all participants agreed to participate voluntarily. Participants had the option to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences, and their anonymity was guaranteed. Additionally, measures were put in place to protect participants from physical harm, and their data were treated with the highest levels of confidentiality.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Identification of the Segmented Clusters
The research utilized version 28 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to encode, capture, and analyze data obtained from 341 completed and usable surveys. To elucidate the heterogeneity of visitors to LGBT nightclubs in Cape Town and to establish distinct market segments, a post hoc segmentation method was applied, which involved applying hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's procedure with Euclidean distances to the scores of the motives for visiting an LGBT nightclub. Hierarchical clustering is a method in which the number of clusters is not predetermined but instead is suggested by the inherent patterns in the data (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). In this study, visitors were segmented based on their natural similarities, without any predefined clusters. The visitors' motives served as the primary basis for market segmentation, without any pre-processing of the raw data, which is recommended against by Dolnicar (2002) and Hattingh and Spencer (2020). The number of clusters was determined through a heuristic approach by visually examining the dendrogram, as suggested by Dolnicar (2002). Various solutions were considered, including two, three, four, and five clusters. Ultimately, a three-cluster solution was chosen as it provided the most distinctive and acceptable outcome, with common motives within each cluster but differing motives across clusters (as shown in Table 2).

Table 2: The Three Clusters (n = 341)

Number	Name	Size	% of sample
Cluster 1	Adrenaline Junkie	180	53
Cluster 2	Social Butterfly	123	36
Cluster 3	LGBT Nightlife Aficionado	37	11

Interpretation and Profiling of the Segmented Clusters
o ensure the robustness and reliability of the cluster analysis results, various statistical analyses were conducted. Specifically, the three clusters were cross-tabulated with the 23 motives to identify the most salient motives for each cluster. The resulting chi-squared tests indicated significant differences in the importance scores of all motives (p<0.05), as presented in Table 3. These findings provide evidence that the clusters were statistically dissimilar, and that internal validity was established.

To guarantee the marketing applicability of the three identified clusters and establish external validity through external criterion analysis, the sociodemographic and leisure behavior characteristics of the clusters were cross-tabulated. Table 4 presents the results of this analysis. The results of the chi-squared tests indicated that there were no statistically significant differences across the three clusters in terms of group size (p = 0.434); the number of times visiting Crew Bar (return vs first-time visitor) (p = 0.625); regularity of visiting Crew Bar (p = 0.625); gender (p = 0.819); age (p = 0.561); relationship status (p = 0.141); sexual orientation (p = 0.499), and place of origin (p = 0.767). In contrast, the clusters were found to be significantly different at the 5% level with respect to occupation (p = 0.011); race (p = 0.069), and education level (p = 0.011). These descriptive statistics were utilized to interpret and create profiles of the clusters by assigning a label to each cluster based on the *most important distinguishing motive, sociodemographic, or leisure behavioral characteristics*. This labeling process is crucial in developing marketing strategies as it offers practical, actionable, and easily comprehensible information for each cluster (Sarigollu & Huang, 2005).

Cluster 1: Adrenaline Junkie
This cluster had the largest number of respondents and accounted for 53% of the sample. Despite some motives being shared with other clusters, membership in this cluster was strengthened by unique group characteristics This visitor group displayed distinct characteristics when compared to the *Social Butterflies* and *LGBT Nightlife Aficionados,* as respondents exhibited a strong motivation to visit LGBT nightclubs to attain a euphoric and energized state of being (95%) and for alcohol consumption/drinks promotions (70%). Lea, Reynolds, and De Wit (2013) discovered that LGBT nightclubs were more strongly correlated with hazardous alcohol use and club drug use than 'straight' or mixed-oriented nightclubs. Their findings suggested that LGBT nightclubs were a

more common setting for recreational drug and alcohol abuse. The current finding seems to support that of Lea et al. (2013). However, it must be noted that this need is of significance for this cluster only and cannot be generalized to all LGBT nightclub visitors. When compared to the two other clusters, this cluster placed higher importance on visiting LGBT nightclubs to dance to the best electronic music and DJs (92%), form new friendships/romances (92%), and more than two-thirds (68%) hoped to meet a partner for a sexual adventure. These findings support the argument by Reingle et al. (2009) that bars and nightclubs in general serve as a catalyst for finding partners for romance and sex. Hattingh and Spencer (2020) found that traveling for sex is only important to a sub-segment of LGBT travelers. Therefore, a similar conclusion can be made about visitors attending LGBT nightclubs – it is only important to one segment, the *Adrenaline Junkie,* but not all LGBT visitors visit nightclubs for a romantic/sexual adventure.

Table 3: Comparison of Motives Among Clusters Using Cross-Tabulation and Chi-Squared Test Results

Motive (importance scores)	Adrenaline Junkies % (N = 180)	Social Butterflies % (N = 123)	LGBT Nightlife Aficionado % (N = 37)	Chi-square probability
To explore/learn new things (e.g. broadening my mind)	49	11	92	0.000*
To experience LGBT culture	72	32	95	0.000*
For exploration and evaluation of self (gain insight about self)	42	5	92	0.000*
To enjoy the unique atmosphere	72	37	95	0.000*
For alcohol consumption and drinks promotions	70	30	49	0.000*
To experience a euphoric and energized state of being	95	24	49	0.000*
To support my favorite barman/go-go dancer	25	2	78	0.000*
To listen to/support my favorite DJ	43	5	76	0.000*
To enjoy a safe and secure environment related to my personal safety	87	57	100	0.000*
To relax and have fun	92	74	100	0.000*
To escape from my daily routine and responsibilities	44	32	89	0.000*
Curiosity got the better of me	18	9	68	0.000*
To escape from a disapproving society	61	21	89	0.000*
To support LGBT nightlife	67	37	97	0.000*
To enhance relationships with family/friends	60	24	97	0.000*
To dance to the best electronic music and DJs	92	38	65	0.000*
For a chance to be with people who enjoy clubbing	74	42	95	0.000*
For social interaction with LGBT people	83	51	100	0.000*
An opportunity to meet a partner for a sexual adventure	68	19	27	0.000*
An opportunity to form new friendships/romances with people who have similar interests	92	26	57	0.000*
Because of social status regarding being seen by others	14	2	57	0.000*
To socialize with friends, family, or colleagues	82	55	97	0.000*
To share the experience with someone special	57	24	89	0.000*

***Significance at the 5% level**

Regarding the sociodemographic and leisure behavior characteristics outlined in Table 4, the majority of respondents in this group were white (61%), students (21%), with a certificate/diploma (43%) as their primary qualification. These findings suggest that the *Adrenaline Junkie* cluster is primarily composed of white students seeking exciting and energizing experiences, as well as opportunities to meet people for sexual or romantic encounters. This finding is consistent with Ross et al.'s (2003) 'sensation-seeking' category for gay male circuit parties, as both share similarities in their desires, such as seeking sexual encounters, engaging in dance, pursuing a wild experience, and experimenting with recreational drugs.

Cluster 2: Social Butterflies

The second-largest cluster, comprising 36% of the sample, displayed relatively low importance scores across most motives. Nevertheless, when compared to the other visitor clusters, this cluster stood out due to only four motive importance scores being higher than 50% (Table 3). The LGBT nightclub appears to attract this particular visitor group primarily for the purpose of relaxation and fun (73%). This finding supports Hattingh and Niekerk's (2022) claim that relaxation and enjoyment is one of the most important motives for visiting

LGBT leisure and entertainment establishments. This particular visitor group also displayed a high motivation to socialize with friends, family, and colleagues (55%) and to seek social interaction with LGBT individuals (51%). Socialization seems to be one of the most important reasons for visiting LGBT leisure and entertainment establishments, as evidenced by its significance in all of the reviewed literature studies (Table 1). A final but significant factor driving this group to patronize LGBT nightclubs is the desire for a safe and secure environment that safeguards their personal well-being, as indicated by 57% of the respondents. The importance of safety as a fundamental motivator of human behavior has been extensively discussed in the literature (Crouch, 2007). Nonetheless, LGBT individuals face heightened vulnerability in unfamiliar public settings due to the risk of harassment, discrimination, verbal, or physical assault, and even criminalization in countries that do not accept homosexuality (Hughes, 2005). Hence, this discovery provides substantial evidence that the perceived safety of the environment, where individuals can express themselves freely, is one of the primary drivers for *Social Butterflies* to visit LGBT nightclubs.

Table 4: Comparison of Socio-demographic and Leisure Behavior Characteristics Among Clusters Using Cross-Tabulation and Chi-Squared Test Results

	Adrenaline Junkies % (N = 180)	Social Butterflies % (N = 123)	LGBT Nightlife Aficionado % (N = 37)	Chi-square probability
Occupation				0.011*
Student	21	11	13	
Education	7	7	3	
Admin/Sales	12	7	8	
Manager/Executive	9	18	3	
Business professional	11	13	19	
Medical professional	3	1	11	
Technical	3	1	0	
Government employee	4	1	3	
Self-employed	12	28	19	
Unemployed/Other	18	13	21	
Race				0.069*
African	7	1	0	
White	61	74	65	
Mixed Race	23	20	35	
Indian	3	2	0	
Asian	1	0	0	
Confidential/Other	5	3	0	
Education level				0.011*
No formal education	0	1	0	
Primary completed (7 years of schooling)	0	0	3	
Secondary completed (more than 7 years of schooling)	8	12	16	
Certificate/diploma	43	24	24	
Bachelor’s degree	27	33	35	
Honors degree	8	16	16	
Master’s degree	11	10	3	
Doctorate	1	0	0	
Other	2	4	3	

*Significance at the 5% level

Based on sociodemographics and leisure behavior characteristics (Table 4), the respondents in this cluster share similar characteristics to *Adrenaline Junkies* in terms of their predominant whiteness (74%). However, they differ from the latter as they are mostly self-employed (28%) individuals who hold a bachelor's degree (33%). These findings suggest that the *Social Butterflies'* main interest lies in fulfilling their social needs by gathering with friends, family, colleagues, and other members of the LGBT community in a secure and welcoming environment. The finding corroborates Ross et al.'s (2003) ‘social (celebratory)’ group for gay male circuit

parties, as this particular cluster engages in LGBT leisure activities primarily to fulfill social needs such as connecting with friends and engaging with other members of the LGBT community.

Cluster 3: LGBT Nightlife Aficionado
Comprising 11% of the sample, the *LGBT Nightlife Aficionado* visitor group was the smallest of the clusters. Notably, respondents attributed importance to all motives within this group, a characteristic that distinguished it from the other clusters. Furthermore, it is the only cluster for which the importance scores for all 23 motives were above 50%, as evidenced by Table 3. In contrast to the *Social Butterflies* and *Adrenaline Junkies*, this particular cluster placed greater emphasis on specific motives. For example, they assigned higher significance to experience LGBT culture (95%), being with people who enjoy clubbing (95%), exploring/learning new things (92%), and engaging in introspection and self-evaluation (92%). According to the findings, *LGBT Nightlife Aficionados* exhibit a willingness to embrace diversity and are eager to broaden their experiences. These findings align with previous research conducted by Hattingh and Niekerk (2022), who identified learning and exploring new things as significant motives for engaging in leisure activities within the LGBT community. Given the social stigmatization, prejudice, and potential lack of acceptance that LGBT individuals often encounter in their regular social contexts (Monterrubio, 2008), the establishment and validation of an 'LGBT identity' frequently necessitates living and socializing in LGBT-affirming environments (Hughes, 2002). Thus, concerning attending LGBT nightclubs, visitors in this cluster may be motivated by a need for belonging, wherein their sense of identity is derived from feeling a sense of affiliation with a specific community (Hughes, 2006), as is often the case in LGBT leisure and entertainment venues.

The desire to seek respite from their daily routine and responsibilities (89%) emerged as an additional motivator for the *LGBT Nightlife Aficionado*, a finding that is in alignment with prior research by Hattingh and Niekerk (2022). Their study highlighted the role of recuperation, relaxation, diversion, and escapism as crucial factors motivating participation in LGBT leisure and entertainment activities. As Herrera (2003) suggests, some individuals who identify as LGBT may participate in certain leisure experiences as a means of escaping a world that tends to prioritize heteronormativity and frequently subjects them to discrimination and social disapproval, particularly in their home environments. The majority (89%) of respondents in this cluster visited LGBT nightclubs to escape from a disapproving society. However, it is important to note that the need for escaping the everyday environment as noted above is distinct from the need to escape a disapproving society. In the present context, this need specifically pertains to the desire to escape the challenges and difficulties associated with being LGBT in a predominantly heterosexual society. Furthermore, respondents in this cluster seemed to be highly motivated to visit LGBT nightclubs to support LGBT nightlife (97%), to enhance relationships with family/friends (97%), to support their favorite barman/go-go dancer (78%), and to listen to/support their favorite DJ (76%). This visitor group tends to frequent LGBT nightclubs to demonstrate their support and admiration for their idols and can be classified as analogous to Hattingh and Niekerk's (2020) audience segment characterized by the phenomenon of 'hero worship' within the context of comedy performances. This group demonstrates a specific proclivity towards supporting LGBT nightclubs and engaging with their preferred bartenders, go-go dancers, or DJs.

Regarding the sociodemographic and leisure behavior characteristics, this particular group exhibited a notable preponderance of white participants, who constituted almost two-thirds (65%) of the overall sample, as evidenced by the data presented in Table 4. Interestingly, unlike other clusters, over a third of the visitors in this group identified as mixed-race (35%). The majority of individuals were either business professionals (19%) or self-employed (19%). Furthermore, a significant percentage of them held a bachelor's degree (35%). These results suggest the presence of a tolerant and diverse visitor group, comprising individuals of white and mixed-race backgrounds, who are motivated by a desire to broaden their understanding of LGBT culture, offer their patronage to their preferred LGBT nightlife establishment, as well as to engage with and show admiration for their preferred bartenders, go-go dancers, and DJs. Furthermore, these individuals aim to cultivate their social networks and interact with others who share their fondness for clubbing. Nonetheless, it is apparent that *LGBT Nightlife Aficionados* are strongly guided by their sexuality, and their leisure activities revolve predominantly around the LGBT-related aspects of nightclubbing. Unique to this cluster when compared to other clusters was that they appear to visit LGBT nightclubs to express their own identity or feel a sense of community and belonging, escape from disapproving society, and support various aspects of LGBT nightlife. Therefore, they are labeled *LGBT Nightlife Aficionados.*

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From a social sciences perspective, this study's exploration of the needs and preferences of post-modern LGBT nightclub visitors in South Africa makes a valuable contribution to the broader hospitality and leisure literature. It provides substantial support for the existing literature, particularly in relation to the work of Ross et al. (2003), who distinguished between two visitor groups at gay male circuit parties. The current study not only confirms the findings of Ross et al.'s (2003) research but also adds to the body of knowledge regarding LGBT leisure and entertainment activities by suggesting an additional third visitor group.

This paper is the first to present a quantitative methodology for constructing a typology of post-modern LGBT nightclub visitors in South Africa. While it is important to note that no segment was entirely homogeneous, with certain motives, sociodemographics, and leisure behaviors being shared across clusters, there were identifiable group characteristics that strengthened their classification. Although the findings presented in this study are not universally representative of all LGBT nightclub visitors, as only one LGBT leisure and entertainment venue participated in the research and all respondents were internet users, the empirical evidence obtained indicates that these visitors do not frequent LGBT nightclubs for the same reasons and are not homogeneous as a group. It is, therefore, recommended that LGBT nightclub owners refrain from assuming that "the spiral of fortune moves itself", and instead recognize that there are diverse groups of LGBT patrons with differing leisure behaviors and needs. As a result, LGBT nightclub owners should "bark up the right tree" by adjusting their operations accordingly to better serve their various visitor segments and enhance their competitiveness.

Furthermore, this paper represents the first application of this analytical approach to an LGBT nightclub in South Africa, demonstrating that the clustering technique can be a valuable tool for segmenting leisure visitors. The clusters of LGBT nightclub visitors identified in this study may be utilized to assist Crew Bar and comparable LGBT leisure and entertainment venues in South Africa in refining their target marketing approaches and improving their understanding of the unique opportunities presented by each segment. The results of this study indicate that it is not feasible to target LGBT nightclub visitors with a single marketing campaign since various visitor segments seek to satisfy different needs through their visitation. Accordingly, it is suggested that implementing separate marketing campaigns that highlight the specific motivational factors influencing the decision-making processes of each cluster could enhance the competitiveness of LGBT nightclubs. This targeted approach could also encourage these distinct visitor groups to return in the future, thereby fostering customer loyalty.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

The data used for the analysis were sourced from a single LGBT leisure and entertainment venue in South Africa. In order to conduct a more robust analysis, it is recommended that multiple venues be compared using visitor segmentation techniques. Additionally, it is important to conduct multiple studies using different clustering methods before making definitive conclusions. For instance, further research could explore the presence of the identified visitor segments in other LGBT leisure and entertainment venues in South Africa and other countries with an LGBT nightlife supply. In conclusion, there is a substantial amount of research required to understand LGBT nightlife from the viewpoints of management, economics, and marketing. A significant limitation of the current study is the reliance on a convenience sample, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to the wider population. Although visitor segmentation assists in understanding the diverse requirements of the LGBT community, it does not account for all the intricacies and complexities within this diverse group. Therefore, additional research is necessary to explore these matters in greater depth.

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CREATING A COLLECTIVE AWARENESS OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY EDUCATION FOR SOUTH AFRICAN CITIZENS

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ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at highlighting the necessity of a holistic upbringing and uplifting of Tourism and Hospitality as an extension of an African culture rather than an experience designed only for foreign tourists. In essence, Tourism and Hospitality in a country that is naturally positioned to have an advantage over many other parts of the world should be viewed as a way of life. Unfortunately, traditional tourism education continues to represent outdated systematic structures where knowledge is still defined by the tallest buildings and a syllabus found in higher education. Tourism and Hospitality knowledge should be made easily accessible and conducive to all members of society, especially those who do not or may never have formal education regarding this subject. Thus, it is not sufficient to educate students at a university level about tourism and hospitality and omit the very society that shapes these students' realities. South Africa still needs to induce (parallel to education) a culture that can go beyond perceiving tourism potential jobs as an alternative to unemployment. Today, tourism and hospitality efforts in South Africa, are geared towards the outside world with the aim of bringing investment opportunities for economic advantage. However, no country has been able to reach economic liberation without first, attending to the social needs and welfare of its own people.

Key Words: awareness, education, culture, tourism and hospitality, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

One of Africa's grand identities can be found in the bountiful natural resources that have captured the globe's interest since the beginning of time (Signé, 2018). These natural resources are embedded not only underneath the African soil but can also be assessed through physical contact for an external/tangible immediate experience (Osei & Gbadamosi, 2011). The focus on African natural beauty has opened vast opportunities for sectors such as Tourism as a dominant sphere. However, Tourism alone can only mimic the potential of what an African story represents if it does not accompany itself another innate human aspect of how African people generally view life. This accompaniment can be found in what is referred to as Hospitality. Hospitality entails the relationship between a guest and host; it is the work or practice of being hospitable (Kapur, 2018). On the other hand, Tourism simply refers to the activity or practice of touring, especially for pleasure (Netto, 2009). Tourism can be the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work, as well as their activities during their stay at these destinations (UNWTO, 2008). Tourism and Hospitability have come to represent themselves as financial pillars of the South African economy. From an African cultural perspective, these concepts are what the continent has founded its basis, its anchor, its principles, and its essence on (Mkono, 2019). For instance, the philosophy of Ubuntu (regarded as an African basic identity) embodies tourism and hospitability as an extended way of life (Nicolaides, 2020). The philosophy of Africa echoes the importance of being mindful-ness of nature as well as expanding such grace towards all of life (McDonald, D.A., 2010). Nonetheless, South Africans are further today from being mindful of nature and all that it has to offer than ever before – that is, from a personal and collective viewpoint-consciousness (Musavengane, 2019).

There needs to be an intentional decision to conscientise and remind South African natives about the beauty of their own country first (Nicolaides, 2020). The power of being able to recognize one's advantage or distinctive characteristic that sets them apart from others is a primitive realization necessary to steer forward a positive outlook towards self and others (Branden, 2021; Pan et al., 2021). South Africans are generally drawn to explore nature outside of their country (Glaesser, 2017) and although that may be a natural response of perceiving "unfamiliarity" as attractive, there must be, a sense of self-acceptance and self-embracing attitude and position (Masling, Johnson & Saturansky, 1974), particularly about exploring one's local or national tourism and hospitality experiences. This awareness when identified and practiced can attempt to resolve some of Tourism and Hospitability concerns that have rather been aggravated by the global pandemic – with a limitation of

foreign nationalities opportunities to explore South Africa (Dlomo & Ezeuduji, 2020). The negative perceptions residents may have about traveling South Africa, overlap to that of general international perceptions. According to Collins (2018) despite Africa's wealth of natural attractions, it still only attracts 4.2% of the world's tourists that can be connected to the negative stereotypes the outside world holds about the continent. If unattended, these perceptions might negatively influence the participation of the local tourism consumption and exploration, particular by South Africans (Garcês, 2018). Numerous authors and institutions have alluded to the importance of supporting local (Butler, 2017; Donaldson, 2018). However, this sentiment seems to be limited to the consumptions of convenient and shopping products only and not towards the adventure and experiential prospect South African Tourism and Hospitality have to offer. The question remains: What role is education playing in advancing the livelihood of Tourism and Hospitality outside of its four-walled-syllabus-based, system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism and Hospitality Education

One would argue that the education system in South Africa has often, been unsuccessful in addressing the gap between what it taught and what it should be teaching (Hoadley, 2017). This inherent trait of disconnection has left many learners, and undergraduates (who are members of a society) with a complex that fails to reflect their everyday reality (Woodside, de Villiers & Marshall, 2016). Without adequate guidance and practical reality of how tourism is necessary for personal, social, and economic benefit to an ordinary South African citizen, the decision to study this field of specialization for many students in higher education institutions is based on the availability of courses still open for registration (Moodley & Singh, 2015). Other reasons why students may want to engage in studies pertaining to Tourism are based on the harsh reality of an ultimatum of being jobless or/and school-less. The objective seems rather for learners from high school to want to instantly enrol into higher education institutions without proper guidance and motivation of doing so (Walker & Mkwananzi, 2015). Unfortunately, courses such as Tourism remain many of those students choose to study out of the frustration of not being enrolled at a university. The dropout rate of university students also supports the above statement of choices made from desperation (Moodley & Singh, 2015). The desperation should also not be as surprising as what students (predominantly black children) experience at home is invariably different from what the course of Tourism and Hospitability suggests for one's future contribution into society. A significant number of black people generally don't travel, at least not for entertainment purposes. Therefore, students are enrolled to study courses where the disconnection persists throughout their learning experience (Sustainability leaders' project report, 2017). This disconnection remains evident post student graduation as they become confronted with the reality of high levels of unemployment – and therefore, placing traveling and exploring the country rather a luxurious experience than it is an essential (Pou & Sard, 2017). The unemployment crisis is a double sword from an undergraduate standpoint. Not only is it impossible to encourage participation of local citizens towards Tourism and Hospitality within challenging financial conditions, graduates themselves fall short of finding jobs to further actualize what had been theorized in universities for years (Wang, 2014).

With the pandemic crisis, many tourism and hospitality businesses (large and small) discontinued their business operation entirely (Kitsos, 2020). Leaving less and less opportunities for job placements. It is worth noting that, with the country constantly going back and forward with the reopening/closing of business operations under the regulations of various levels of Covid19 and their implications, the education system became severely compromised. The education system faced challenges in providing alternative means of granting an essential part of studying Tourism and Hospitality known as "Work Integrated Learning". (Bilsland, Nagy & Smith, 2020). The reasons were valid, however an unquestionable compromise on the overall quality of the course and its intended objectives became equally and clear (Omodan & Ige, 2021. With the need to respond to the pandemic, alternative routes were only alternative rather than reliable or valid. As such, the quality of assessments relating to hospitality and tourism could not be guaranteed. For example, the practical courses of hospitality and tourism required professional equipment/machinery that are offered in industrial venues and yet could not be accessed (Gupta, Roy & Sahu, 2021). Therefore, major and compromising efforts had to be done from the original blueprint of Tourism and Hospitability practical experience for the learners.

Without a doubt, Covid19 further illuminated the discrepancy that has been hidden in South African curriculum development and practice (Le Grange, 2020). One such limitation is observed through the limited use of (or rather lack of) technological applications to help the student carry out his work during a global predicament.

The impact of Covid19 on Tourism education: An overview

Given the nature of Tourism education whose predominant objective is to train/equip students to exude a balance between hard and soft skills as fundamental traits to successfully grow this industry – the traditional educational system was not ready to fully jump on a digital wagon of e-tourism (Omodan & Ige, 2021). As mentioned previously on the limping nature of South African education, Covid19 required robust adaptation and practicality of a full-on digital integration of a learning experience (Bilotta, 2020). A significant part of the education system (students, lecturers, and management) had to go for various online/digital workshops training, which demanded (apart from monetary resources) an immense level of time and effort to acclimatize and execute the new way of learning (Tamrat & Teferra, 2020). For tourism students, this transition became rather a despondent experience as all physical outcomes of learning became theorized. As the world shut down to curb the spread of the virus, these students' quality of education was compromised by physical contact, traveling limitations, and ongoing changes in national levels regulations (Onyema, et al., 2020). Although online learning embodies some benefits that speak mainly to protecting lives or allowing a sense of flexibility to student time, academic activities, and participation, these benefits continue to be regarded as desperate measures taken due to the flexibility of immediate usage of platforms for convenience purposes (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021).

Moreover, it is unclarified online educational tools that may lead to misperceived course expectations due to miscommunication between tourism students and tourism educators (Hidayat & Wibawa, 2020). To simplify the complexity of Covid19 effects on student learning, convenience became a central keyword to accommodate the two key role players (the student and the lecturer) (Zhong, 2021). This notion is supported by universities whose mantra became "leaving no student behind" – noble and yet impractical. Such a mantra has also allowed the education system to respond slowly and with caution to other "creative" ways put forward to be tested on students (Darling-Hammond, L., 2018). For instance, numerous surveys indicated that students did not or do not respond similarly to this Covid19 hazardous chaos. According to (Davis et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2016) the flexibility that comes with online learning may leave students with self-control/self-management exposed to more academic performance deterioration due to lack a of self-discipline. It is evident that the educational downward spiral in Tourism influences other facets of students' life, one which becomes the social context of the very student reality outside of a school system (Mayaka, Croy & Cox, 2018).

Social impact on Tourism and Hospitality

Tourism in South Africa is a much-needed sector for reasons beyond monetary/economic gain. This sector is part of an essential aspect that forms an identity of a national. From a relatable point of view, the observation it appears the disconnection Tourism and South Africans (particularly previously disadvantaged ethnicity (black people) there needs to be visible and dominant messages (this could take a form of a social campaign) communicated across the country, more so to the outskirts and rural areas of our country (Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020). It is from these outskirts that the very same students who travel from one province to another, to study Tourism hail. Communication must be used to emphasize the importance and the ease of executing these experiences within localities (Sixaba & Rogerson, 2019). The goal must never be to spend much to experience nature. The advantage of people in the rural area is that they are already in nature but must be conscientised on the beauty that surrounds them (Ezeuduji, 2015). Furthermore, local community members must be reminded on the beauty of African rich culture and the importance of such a culture being celebrated and passed on the next generation – with digital platforms to ensure culture is archived and evolve from a factual basis for a revolution bigger than the past (Gao & Wu, 2017). As such, Tourism and hospitality must find their presence in the everyday life occurrences of common members of the society than the current notion of being perceived as a luxurious experience whose appeal is focused/concentrated towards international tourists (Sixaba & Rogerson, 2019). Community engagements are highly important than it is emphasized.

This approach may assist with the preservation of local culture. It can promote an on-going storytelling, writing and cultural practices that have previously been regarded unnecessary (Bartis & Madlwabinga, 2020). In fact, storytelling is the primal practice of culture preservation if not restoration as in it, the significance of hospitality, of Ubuntu, the spirit of "I am because we are" is awakened. From a social context, tourism and hospitality need to strive for a representation that is not limited to "an extravagant - nice to do" experience for the elite. The social impact of Tourism education can extend into aspects of creating a culture and a behaviour that revitalizes the local art and culture identity, where the department of art and culture can focus its efforts on reviving cultural tourism, village tourism and other direct and relatable forms of tourism towards community members (Shabalala & Simatele, 2020). That in turn, can also foster the initiation of small tourism business programs/projects (local community collection or selling of artefacts) as a way of commercialization culture and art by South Africans, for South Africans (Booyens & Rogerson, 2015). According to Almeida-García et al., 2016) there is a lack of studies on educational tourism and the local communities' attitude toward this issue.

Below, are some of the common benefits of Tourism and Hospitality when they are practiced in line with creating a holistic impact towards ordinary members of a society:

- Local management: Involve local communities, empower local people for planning and decision making. The community partner with tourism management team to develop both the community and tourism and hospitality (Benjamin & Kline, 2019)
- Community Welfare: Maintain and boost the local community's lifestyle. Local community members are part of social structures and make use of such platforms to identify and recommend other tourism and hospitality initiatives that can be capitalized around their localities (be it an opening of a social art market, preservation, and commercialisation of natural art sites within the locality) (Kirillova & Au, 2020).
- Local enrichment: Tourist destination and hospitality prosperity is an enormous part of tourism. The tourism business continuously maximized the economic growth of the host destination. Therefore, this success can easily be transferred into local communities who can consciously make a collective effort to promote rural tourism and other branches of tourism related to them (Ivona, 2021).
- Natural Integration: Maintain and improve the quality of both urban and rural landscapes. It avoids natural and visual degradation of the environment. To do this, community members must be educated/informed about the value of their environment/surrounding and how such natural resources can be used to generate more resources for the community whilst better their overall living conditions (Fang, 2020).
- Employment Standards: Tourism supported the level of wages, terms of service, and availability for all. It creates local jobs with no discrimination based on gender, race, disability, or other means. With a high rate of unemployment, particularly in the rural areas and townships of South Africa, an emphasis of the ability to identity self-employment opportunities granted by tourism and hospitality is highly important (Butler, 2017).
- Economic Sustainability: It ensures the effectiveness and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises. It helps continue improvement, which is beneficial for short and long term.

The effects of Covid19 on Tourism and Hospitality industry performance: An overview

The following highlight general global pandemic impact on livelihoods on Tourism. As the third largest export sector of the global economy: (Zhang et al., 2021; Salehnia, Zabihi & Khashayar, 2020):
Due to the pandemic, all parts of tourism and hospitality vast value-chain have been negatively affected.
Tourism supports one in 10 jobs and provides livelihoods for many millions more in both developing and developed economies, however due to the pandemic approximately 100 million direct tourism jobs are at risk.
Small businesses which carry about 80% of global tourism have become vulnerable and are now disposed to shutting down or facing liquidation.
The "most at risk" tourism category are women in tourism particularly from an informal economy
The least developed as well as developing counties tourism sectors will be hit the hardest.
With this predicament, South Africa as one of the developing countries in Africa needs to find strategic and alternative methods to combat the distress brought by the pandemic. One approach can be found in rebuilding the identity and role of tourism and hospitality towards its own people first.

Consciousness Re-building

Although the education system is trying to revive and connect the dots on how its influence can increase awareness and participation in Tourism and Hospitality, the root of the problem can be found in the mind of South African natives, from an individualistic to the collective thinking (Ezeuduji & Ntshangase, 2017). The idea of exploring South Africa is rather a natural occurrence in response to a basic way of keeping in touch with family and friends, for many South Africans. Therefore, in its essence, it does not bear monetary responsibility as the visitations and the hospitality that comes with it is family oriented. *And that is as naturally far as black South African may want to explore traveling from a tourism and hospitality context.* The crux of creating a collective awareness is to rebuild or rather extend the scope of traveling into one that highlights the treasures and knowledge that are still waiting to be discovered and reclaimed from the archive of nature (Koens & Thomas, 2016). To do so, more emphasis should be on the usage of destination marketing organizations (DMS) to bring this transformation (Pike, 2015).

Apart from re-energizing a "collective self concept" and turning the focus on celebrating what the country has to offer best, the re-building of the mind process also brings forth an element of closing the gap that seems evidently present between everyday realities of an average South African vs high and unrealistic expectations of Tourism and Hospitality towards local citizens and their participation (Hikido, 2018). The objective may also

encompass psychological campaigns aimed at fostering solution-oriented thinking and positive-image-oriented thinking toward Tourism and Hospitality. This idea should be to break down Tourism into relatable, practical, and functional opportunities. Instead of focusing on selling the beauty of Cape Point, the message should be to celebrate one's immediate and neighboring surrounding (Kodir, 2018). Extensive usage of Marketing and Consumer Psychology needs to be brought together to help re-educate South Africans on the importance of exploring Mzansi attraction sites/places (Yasa, 2020).

According to Ling (2012) travel and tourism marketing is the systematic and coordinated execution of business policies by both private or public and public sector tourism organizations operating at the local, regional, national, or international level to achieve the optimal satisfaction of the needs of identifiable tourist groups, and in doing so to achieve an appropriate return. (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2017); Du Plessis, Saayman & Van der Merwe, 2015). Tourism and hospitality should be marketed in a manner that is realistic toward its intended audience to help break the stereotype and miscommunication regarding the role of these disciplines (Chen et al., 2012). To do so, marketing tourism suggests a few approaches that can be used to achieve the aabove-highlightedargument.

The use of location marketing
In this type of marketing, the focus of tourism marketing is in bringing the attention of the people to a specific location. (Palos Sánchez et al., 2018). With an overlapping selling of some well-known tourism attraction sites in South Africa (Durban), more emphasis should be used in identifying and marketing local, undiscovered tourism sites. This will allow local participation in terms of commercialization of such sites, whilst creating employment towards localities (Viljoen & Tlabela, 2007).

The use of activity marketing
With this type of an approach, tourism and hospitality are carried out keeping in mind both the location and the activities that are performed in such places (Garrod & Fyall, 2017). This type of marketing usually keeps in mind the travellers who are adventure lovers or activity freaks. There are many locations all over the world which are famous for some specific activities (McCool & Bosak, 2016). In South Africa, places such as Tshatshingo Potholes can be marketed based on their different experiential component that cannot be acquired from Cape Town or Stellenbosch.

The use of tourism psychology
The psychological concept of motivation is a mixture of needs, wants, and goals that create an unbearable desire in the minds of individuals. According to Garcês et al., 2018; Uysal, Sirgy & Kruger, 2018) there are five reasons why people would be eager to travel: Knowledge (cultural or educational motives), Punishment Minimization (the need to escape), Reward Maximization (pleasure or sensation-seeking). Self Esteem (Social Prestige) and Ego Enhancement (Social Prestige).

These variables need to be marketed based on the target audience and the type of experiential tourism adventure objective intended to be done. The psychology of the mind in tourism goes further. The must be a repetition of the same message for local members to begin processing, accepting, and practicing the intended mind-shift perceptive towards tourism and hospitality (Lim, 2016). As such, the message communicated to local South African members is of paramount.

Re-defining the message
To capture the attention and willingness of people to want to participate in Tourism and Hospitality it is important to ensure the message relays the context of their reality (Beirman, 2020). As such, marketing has a huge role to play in ensuring South Africans are eager and willing to be part of the Tourism evolution, not only in terms of embracing it but also understanding its role in their immediate live first (del Barrio-García & Prados-Peña, 2019). As mentioned, Tourism and Hospitality is rather an extension of African people rather than an independent, foreign mysticism awaiting to be broken down into smaller pieces. The element of Ubuntu encompasses a great sense of kindness and openness in the totality of the word, hospitality (Bank & Paterson, 2019). Therefore, it is important to make an intended decision to re-brand and re-identify how South Africans relate with the experience travel and tourism stands for (Ollor, 2015). Marketing efforts must address the practicality of exploring neighbouring tourism attraction sites for exploration as well as knowledge-gaining benefits. EG: Sub-segments of Tourism hidden in cultural tourism, dark tourism, village tourism, wellness tourism are many that citizens can engage into with a limited utilization of financial resources (Miller, D.S., Gonzalez & Hutter, 2017). The Masorini village mesuem in Phalaborwa, Limpopo or the Pedi Potters cultural

sites, The Adam calendar at Ehlazeni, Mpumalanga and OR instead of Suncity Resort in Northwest, or Southern Sun in Durban.

To redefine the message, Africa needs to be re-branded not only towards external tourists but more important than that, towards its own citizens (Mogaji, 2021). It is important to acknowledge this concept before starting to talk about the brand because branding is not only about giving a name and colour to a product or place, but also the sum of multiple elements all converging into one narrative which we call the brand (Tovmasyan, 2020). A well –established brand gains reputation effortlessly. It is this reputation that can be used in South Africa to spread across the rural areas, the townships, the semi-suburbs and to the already well marketed high end tourism adventures (Fang, 2020). The reputation of tourism and hospitality in South Africa needs to be built, protected and maintained (Fullerton & Kendrick,2017). A strong reputation formulates its own identity. It becomes easy to set a brand apart from others when its reputation is unquestionable. When a solid reputation and identity is created, consumers' perceptions automatically change. (Fullerton & Kendrick, 2017).

Contribution to the body of knowledge
This study can contribute to shedding light towards South African education systems (higher and basic education) as well as towards department of tourism structures in applying potential, innovative and transformative insight and approaches that can assist to demystify the essence of this internationally favoured sector. Moreover, the study can assist in bringing about continuous multi-disciplinary studies between tourism, hospitality, marketing, and consumer psychology to better understand methods that can be used to influence tourism and hospitality towards various social and economic classes of South African citizens. To do so, this paper proposes, starting by re-designing tourism and hospitality *message* into one that can (educate) spread an awareness from a *relatable context*, so that common South Africans can begin to understand and appreciate this phenomenon and its intended effects from the grassroots.

METHODOLOGY

This study will use synthesis research. Synthesis research is carried out by combining the results of multiple primary studies aimed at testing the same conceptual hypothesis. This paper will therefore consult recent, relevant, and credible data sets/sources such as: Journal of hospitality and tourism research, Current issues in tourism journal and Journal of travel and tourism marketing (to name a few). These various scientific records will be analysed (theoretically and statistically) to assist reach an informed conclusion regarding this research problem.

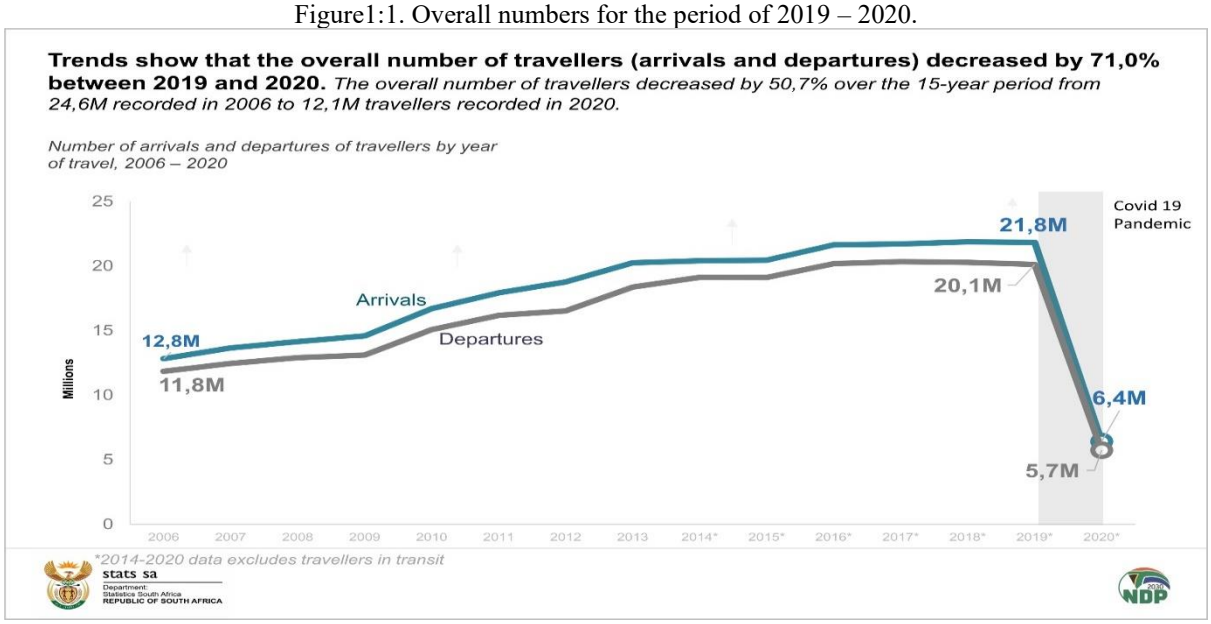
FINDINGS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Rogerson (2015) there is a need to build South Africa and Africa's growing interconnectivity. The challenges with travelling within South Africa to get to some of these tourism sites can be a challenge. Therefore, more emphasis needs to be put towards the basic travel infrastructure in and around Africa reconstruction of roads and transport sectors to make accessibility easy (Adeola & Evans, 2020). In South Africa tourism and hospitality has proven to boost competitiveness particularly when the focus is put on the promotion of domestic and regional tourism as well as through the support in the facilitation of business environment for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) (Wiese, 2014).

There are more opportunities for advanced innovation and digital transformation of tourism, including promotion of innovation and investment in digital skills, particularly for workers temporarily without jobs and for job seekers (Matsiliza & Block, 2017). Coordination and partnerships to restart and transform sector towards achieving SDGs, ensuring tourism's restart and recovery puts people first and work together to ease and lift travel restrictions in a responsible and coordinated manner (Sifolo, 2020). According to Litheko and Potgieter (2019) it is only through a collective action and cooperation with other various sectors can South African tourism transform (Dube & Nhamo, 2021) in line with the 2030 National Development Plan which has centralized its essence to represent communities and local values of this country to be actualized.

Statistics South Africa Report (2020) indicates foreign arrivals dropped by 71% - Thus from over 15, 8 million (in 2019) to less than 5 million (in 2020). The overall number of travellers decreased by 50,7% over a 15-year period from nearly 24,6 million recorded in 2006 to 12,1 million travellers recorded in 2020.

Figure1:1. Overall numbers for the period of 2019 – 2020.



Source: SA Stats: 2020 Report

Table 1: Total Tourism Spend: Leading 20 Municipalities 2016

Municipality	Total Spend (R million) Current Prices	National Share (%)
City of Cape Town	40 053	15.1
City of Johannesburg	38 545	14.5
City of Tshwane	17 856	6.7
eThekwini	16 313	6.1
Ekurhuleni	9 883	3.7
Mbombela	7 249	2.7
Polokwane	5 061	1.9
Mangaung	4 977	1.9
Bushbuckridge	4 122	1.6
Nelson Mandela Bay	3 682	1.4
Moses Kotane	3 320	1.2
Nkomazi	3 026	1.1
Madibeng	2 945	1.1
Ray Nkonyeni	2 905	1.1
Rustenburg	2 864	1.1
Mogale City	2 758	1.0
Overstrand	2 480	0.9
Stellenbosch	2 324	0.9
Buffalo City	2 300	0.9
Knysna	2 299	0.9

Source: Adapted from: Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020. Authors based on IHS Global Insight data.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Tourism research should be driven by societal needs than personal agendas. There is a need for more substantial evidence and social impact towards changing the mind-set of Tourism and hospitality are as well as having measurable evidence of the change there of. There needs to be more compulsory collaborations between education system and tourism practitioners on what it is that is needed to close the gap of what is taught and what is practiced. This also suggests a re-evaluation on assessment types and scoring measures towards Tourism and hospitality education. Moreover, more emphasis should be driven towards domestic tourism and hospitality

experiences to bring about realistic expectation and relation towards the essence of tourism/hospitality sector. More marketing efforts using destination marketing organizations should be done to market and familiarize South African natives with many local travel experiences that can be explored within reach. An emphasis on the commercialization of art and cultural commodities, especially within disadvantaged localities should be sought after. However, so is governmental intervention through the facilitation, support and transference of information and financial provision to back up tourism practices from the grassroots.

Nature heals. So, we need to start using our innate land gifts to revive our awareness and reposition our thinking of what it is to be an active and present member of South Africa. A call is then made that South African explorers must first consider local hidden treasures before embarking outside the borders to seek what was never lost.

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EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AI APPLICATION WITH PBL IN MODEL-BASED TEACHING LEISURE, TOURISM, HOSPITALITY, AND RECREATION DEVELOPMENT TREND

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ABSTRACT

This research proposes a conceptual model for examining the development trend of the leisure, tourism, hospitality, and recreation field using artificial intelligence (AI) and project-based learning (PBL) along with system thinking and industrial analysis tools to teach trend recognition skills. A quasi-experimental design was adopted to compare two teaching methods (exploratory vs. confirmatory) on AI literacy and learning effectiveness. The exploratory group improved significantly in AI knowledge, while the confirmatory group showed improvement in trend recognition ability. The study used innovative teaching methods to enhance students' trend recognition skills and suggests that inductive reasoning might be difficult for developing a trend recognition model.

Key Words: AI, system thinking, PBL, trend, text mining, leisure

INTRODUCTION

This research project proposes a conceptual model that examines the development trend of the leisure, tourism, hospitality, and recreation field, as a reference framework and guide for teaching how to recognize trends. The construction or use of this model mainly relies on the advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) information technology, the application of intelligent text analysis, and text mining technology, and combines project-based learning (PBL) to integrate systems thinking and industrial analysis skills.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method adopted a quasi-experimental design. Two classes of the college's core course "Artificial Intelligence and Management" were randomly assigned. One class was the experimental group (1) using the "exploratory guidance" teaching method while the other class was the experimental group (2) using the "confirmatory" teaching method. The number of participants was 39 and 38 students respectively in each class. The course contents included: introduction of artificial intelligence and industrial applications, Python, PBL activities, and final presentation. Artificial intelligence (AI) literacy (knowledge and attitude) is used as a formative assessment; summative assessment is measured by learning effectiveness, including: trend recognition ability, analysis and problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills. A test with 10 questions and a comprehensive exam were used to measure AI knowledge, while AI attitudes and learning effectiveness scales were measured by seven-Likert points. In the end of the semester, the post survey recruited 36 and 19 students respectively in each class. The confirmatory group lost more students because some students moved to another EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) course. 28 students in the exploratory group answered prior and post survey while 16 students in the confirmatory group did so.

RESULTS

The results showed that AI knowledge is improved overall. However, further analysis indicated that only the exploratory group improved ($t = 4.927$, $p < 0.001$) whereas the confirmatory group did not significantly improve. A final comprehensive exam has derived the similar result, showing that the exploratory group (the mean score = 82.51) performed better than the confirmatory group (the mean score = 70.33) significantly ($t = 2.639$, $p = 0.011$). Two possible reasons were: First, good students in the confirmatory group moved to EMI.

Second, there were more asynchronous classes in the confirmatory group than the exploratory group. Additionally, the confirmatory group improved significantly in trend recognition ability ($t = 2.359$, $p = 0.032$) in the comparison analysis between the prior and post surveys. Comparison between these two groups in trend recognition ability showed that the exploratory group had a higher score than the confirmatory group in the prior survey but both groups did not differ significantly in the post survey. As for AI attitudes, analysis and problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills, neither the comparisons between prior and post replies nor between these two groups had significant difference. In conclusion, the exploratory group improved in AI knowledge whereas the confirmatory group improved in trend recognition ability. Using an inductive reasoning method in the exploratory group might not be effective to improve trend recognition ability.

INTRODUCTION

發展趨勢是指某個領域或產業可能會朝向某個方向發展的方向性，趨勢的形成可能係基於政府政策、市場需求、社會制度等多種層面。在休閒遊憩領域中，授課人員傾向透過說明當前的發展趨勢及討論其成因與影響。但，就教學現場的老師而言，所碰到的挑戰是洞察趨勢的能力，有辦法培養或傳授嗎？因此，為解決實務困難。本研究提出一個檢視休憩領域發展趨勢的概念模型，做為洞察趨勢教學上的參考工具和指引。本研究基於文字探勘的技術建構模型，結合專案導向學習 (project-based learning, PBL)，融入系統思維和產業分析的技巧，並採用「探索式引導」、「驗證式確認」兩種教學方法，檢視模型建構的有效性。

The development trend refers to the direction in which a certain field or industry may evolve, based on various factors such as government policies, market demand, and social systems. In the field of leisure and recreation, instructors tend to explain the current development trends and discuss their causes and impacts. However, for teachers in the classroom, the challenge lies in their ability to identify trends. Is there a way to cultivate or teach this skill? To address this practical difficulty, this study proposes a conceptual model for examining the development trends in the leisure field, serving as a reference tool and guide for trend analysis in teaching. The model is constructed based on text mining techniques, incorporating project-based learning (PBL), integrating systems thinking and industry analysis skills. Two teaching methods, "exploratory guidance" and "confirmatory validation," are adopted to evaluate the effectiveness of the model.

LITERATURE REVIEW

洞察發展趨勢模型 Insight into Development Trend Model

洞察發展趨勢模型主要以經濟學供給與需求之間的互動，對產業整體趨勢做系統性的審視。供給面觀點以產業分析的概念為基礎，包括外部環境(PEST)分析、產業脈動和產銷模式的變化 (TTR 台灣趨勢研究，2016)、五力分析(Lewis, 2017; Porter, 1979)。需求面觀點以人工智慧文字探勘輿情為主，從次級資料推論需求流向的型態反應(陳建錦，2018)。綜上，擁有洞察發展趨勢的能力將有助於對休憩產業發展趨勢，做整體系統性的審視。因此，本研究將洞察發展趨勢做為 PBL 教學的重點。

The Insight into Development Trends model (Figure 1) primarily examines the systematic interaction between the supply and demand in economics to provide a comprehensive analysis of overall industry trends. From the supply side perspective, it is based on the concepts of industry analysis, including external environmental (PEST) analysis, industry dynamics, and changes in production and distribution patterns (TTR Taiwan Trend Research, 2016), as well as the five forces analysis (Lewis, 2017; Porter, 1979). On the demand side, it focuses on artificial intelligence online text mining to infer the patterns of demand trends from secondary data (Chen, Jian-Jin, 2018). In conclusion, possessing the ability to gain insights into development trends will contribute to a holistic and systematic examination of trends in the leisure industry. Therefore, this study emphasizes the integration of insight into development trends as a major aspect of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) instruction.

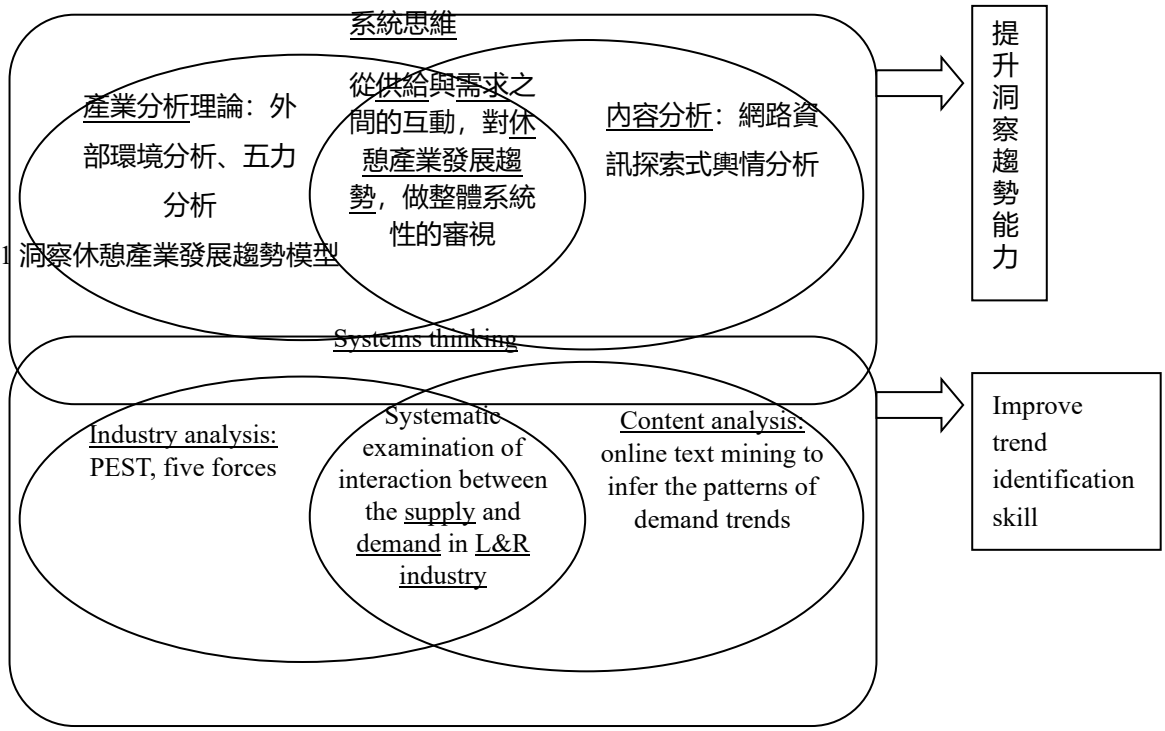

圖 1 洞察休憩產業發展趨勢模型

Figure 1 Insight into Development Trend Model

Two Teaching Approaches: "Exploratory Guidance" and "Confirmatory Validation"

本研究計畫提出「探索式(exploratory)引導」和「驗證式(confirmatory)確認」是來自於多變量統計學上「探索性因素分析」和「驗證性因素分析」，前者在於探索構成模型的因素，後者則是確認模型的因素組成。應用在教學方法上，前者採用開放引導探索的方式，後者採用模型確認的方式。「洞察休憩產業發展趨勢模型」扮演的角色，在「探索式引導」教學方法上為參考工具，在「驗證式確認」教學方法上為教學指引。兩種教學方法比較，「探索式引導」教學方法一開始針對某個趨勢的探討為題目(例如：「glamping 豪華露營 (Brooker & Joppe, 2013)」)，探討該趨勢內涵和成因，以「後設認知」的思維發展出概念圖說明可以看出趨勢的技巧。「驗證式確認」教學方法一開始直接介紹洞察發展趨勢的模型，接著以 PBL 單元活動讓學生學習該模型的分析技術，並練習能否找出某個趨勢，驗證模型有效性。

The research project proposes "exploratory guidance" and "confirmatory verification," which originate from multivariate statistics: "exploratory factor analysis" and "confirmatory factor analysis." The former aims to explore the factors that constitute a model, while the latter confirms the composition of the model's factors. In terms of instructional approaches, the former adopts an open-guidance exploratory approach, while the latter uses model confirmation. The role played by the "Insights into the Leisure Industry Development Trends Model" serves as a reference tool in the "exploratory guidance" teaching approach and as instructional tool in the "confirmatory verification" teaching approach. When comparing these two teaching approaches, the "exploratory guidance" approach initially focuses on the exploration of a specific trend as the topic (e.g., "glamping luxury camping (Brooker & Joppe, 2013)"). It explores the meaning and causes of the trend, and through "metacognition," develops a conceptual map to extract the skills for identifying trends. On the other hand, the "confirmatory verification" approach directly introduces the model of development trends. It then

utilizes problem-based learning (PBL) unit activities to enable students to learn the analytical techniques of the model and practice verifying the effectiveness of the model by identifying a specific trend.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

本研究採用準實驗設計，隨機分派兩個組別，組(一)採用探索式引導教學方法；組(二)採用驗證式確認教學方法。前測和後測均包括形成性評量(人工智慧素養、人工智慧態度)和總結性評量(洞察趨勢能力、分析與問題解決能力、批判思考能力)。在教學介入上，教學方法在 PBL 的單元設計有所不同。

The research method adopted a quasi-experimental design (Figure 2). Two classes of the college's core course "Artificial Intelligence and Management" were randomly assigned. One class was the experimental group (1) using the "exploratory guidance" teaching approach while the other class was the experimental group (2) using the "confirmatory" teaching approach. The number of participants was 39 and 38 students respectively in each class. The course contents included: introduction of artificial intelligence and industrial applications, Python, PBL activities, and final presentation. Artificial intelligence (AI) literacy (knowledge and attitude) is used as a formative assessment; summative assessment is measured by learning effectiveness, including: trend recognition ability, analysis and problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills. In terms of instructional intervention, the instructional approaches differ in the design of PBL units and activities.

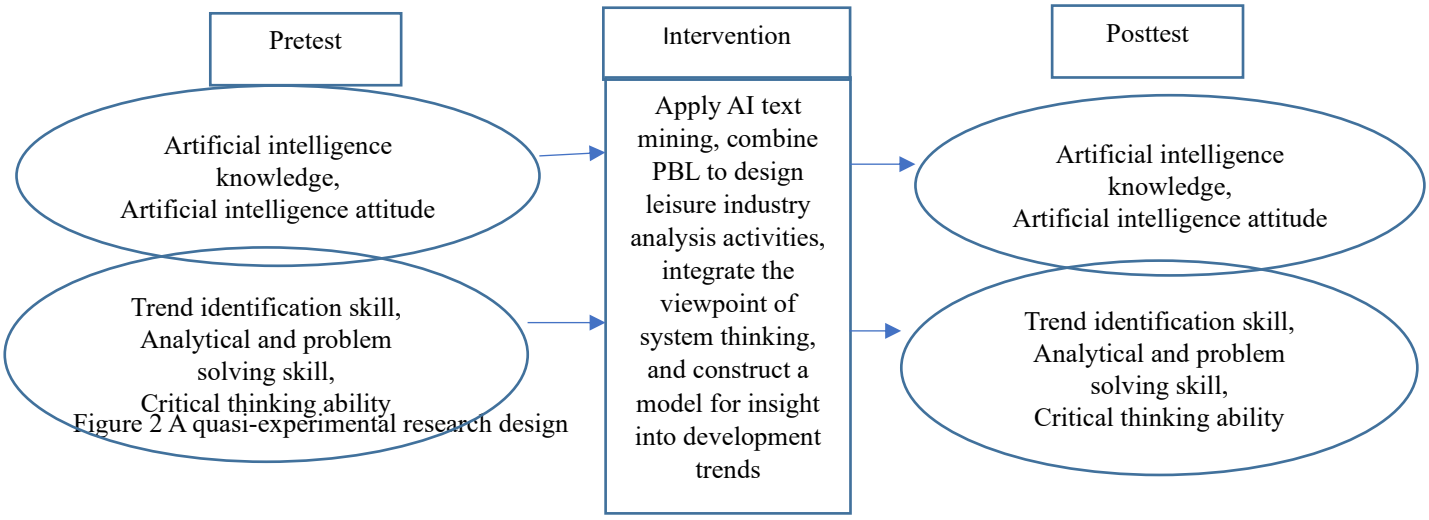

Figure 2 A quasi-experimental research design

In the end of the semester, the post survey recruited 36 and 19 students respectively in each class. The confirmatory group lost more students because some students moved to another EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) course. 28 students in the exploratory group answered prior and post survey while 16 students in the confirmatory group did so.

Measurement

A test with 10 questions and a comprehensive exam were used to measure AI knowledge, while AI attitudes and learning effectiveness scales were measured by seven-Likert points (Table 1). Learning effectiveness scales include trend recognition ability, analysis and problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills.

Table 1 Measurement

AI attitudes:
I think AI is very important. 我認為人工智慧很重要。
I feel AI is interesting. 我覺得人工智慧是有趣的。
I am glad to accept new AI technology. 我樂意接受新的 AI 技術。
I hope I can get more information about AI. 我希望獲得更多與 AI 有關的資訊。
I love to learn AI-related products and services. 我喜歡去關注與 AI 有關的產品或服務。
Trend recognition ability:

I am sensitive to leisure and recreation development trend. **我對休憩**產業發展趨勢有不錯的敏銳度
I have great insight into leisure and recreation development trend. **我對休憩**產業發展趨勢有不錯的洞察力
I am able to be aware of leisure and recreation development trend. **我有能力覺察休憩**產業發展趨勢
I am able to analyze leisure and recreation development trend. **我有能力分析休憩**產業發展趨勢
I am able to tell leisure and recreation development trend. **我有能力判讀休憩**產業發展趨勢
I am able to predict leisure and recreation development trend. **我有能力預測休憩**產業發展趨勢
Analysis and problem-solving skills: Be able to identify and state the problem clearly **能**夠清楚地確認與表述問題 Be able to use professional knowledge to analyze rudimentary problems **能**夠使用專業知識來分析基本問題 Be able to use information to develop a comprehensive analysis **能**夠使用資訊來發展全面性分析 Be able to evaluate potential solutions and choose the optimized solution **能**夠評估潛在解決方案，並選擇最適方案 Be able to express opinions about the problem **針對問題，能**夠表達意見 Be able to solve problems through team works **能**夠透過團隊合作來解決問題
Critical thinking skills: I would like to try different angles to consider an issue. **我會嘗試採取不同的角度去思考一個問題** Before adopting an information, I would try to know whether the information is reliable. **在使用一項訊息之前，我會先思考此一訊息是否可靠** When hearing a statement, I would try to consider any premise behind this statement. **當他人提出一個論點時，我會試著去找出這個論點中所隱含的主要假設** When solving a problem, I would try to have the most updated and complete information related to this problem. **在解決問題時，我會試法使自己保有最新與最完整的資訊** For a new controversial issue, I would like to know reasons behind pros and cons. **對於新近發生的爭議性問題，我會嘗試去了解其來龍去脈** I love to explore new things and ideas. **我會嘗試去進一步探索新奇的事物或觀點** When solving a problem, I would like to consider different possible solutions. **在解決問題時，我會試著去考慮各種不同的可能解決方案**

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings revealed an overall improvement in AI knowledge. However, upon further analysis, it was found that only the exploratory group demonstrated significant improvement ($t = 4.927$, $p < 0.001$), while the confirmatory group did not show a significant improvement in AI knowledge between the pretest and posttest. A final comprehensive exam yielded similar results, indicating that the exploratory group (mean score = 82.51) outperformed the confirmatory group (mean score = 70.33) with statistical significance ($t = 2.639$, $p = 0.011$). Two possible reasons for this discrepancy were identified. First, high-achieving students in the confirmatory group may have transitioned to the EMI course. Second, the confirmatory group had a greater number of asynchronous classes compared to the exploratory group. To achieve comparable performance to classroom-based classes, students in asynchronous classes must exhibit greater self-regulation.

Furthermore, the confirmatory group exhibited significant improvement in trend recognition ability ($t = 2.359$, $p = 0.032$) when comparing the pre and post surveys (Table 2). When comparing the trend recognition ability of the two groups, the exploratory group had a higher score than the confirmatory group in the pre-survey, but there was no significant difference between the groups in the post-survey (Table 3). Regarding AI attitudes, analysis and problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills, there were no significant differences observed in either the comparisons between pre and post responses or between the two groups.

In conclusion, the exploratory group showed improvement in AI knowledge, while the confirmatory group demonstrated improvement in trend recognition ability. It appears that using an inductive reasoning approach in the exploratory group may not be effective in enhancing trend recognition ability.

Table 2 The confirmatory group exhibited significant improvement in trend recognition ability

	pretest	posttest	t	p
I am sensitive to leisure and recreation development trend.	5.467	5.733	-1.740	.104
I have great insight into leisure and recreation development trend.	5.533	5.800	-1.468	.164
I am able to be aware of leisure and recreation development trend.	5.467	5.800	-1.435	.173
I am able to analyze leisure and recreation development trend.	5.467	5.800	-1.784	.096
I am able to tell leisure and recreation development trend.	5.467	5.800	-1.435	.173
I am able to predict leisure and recreation development trend.	5.533	5.933	-2.449	.028
Trend recognition ability	5.14583	5.51042	-2.359	.032

Table 3 The exploratory group had a higher score than the confirmatory group in the pre-survey about Trend recognition ability

	The exploratory group	the confirmatory group	t	p
I am sensitive to leisure and recreation development trend.	5.667	5.324	1.394	.168
I have great insight into leisure and recreation development trend.	5.641	5.265	1.554	.125
I am able to be aware of leisure and recreation development trend.	5.658	5.206	1.941	.056
I am able to analyze leisure and recreation development trend.	5.667	5.176	2.110	.038
I am able to tell leisure and recreation development trend.	5.718	5.235	1.848	.069
I am able to predict leisure and recreation development trend.	5.615	5.265	1.409	.163
Trend recognition ability	5.637	5.095	2.016	.048

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TOURISM DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS IN THE LUXURY TRAVEL SEGMENT: OUTBOUND TOUR OPERATOR PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines distribution channels in the luxury travel segment from the perspective of outbound tour operators. Employing a qualitative approach, we conducted 23 semi-structured in-depth interviews. All respondents reported that they try to shorten their channel length and approach both travelers and service providers directly to fulfill and satisfy luxury travelers' needs for unique and personalized services. Furthermore, our findings indicate that these special needs in the luxury travel segment have been instrumental in driving TDC disintermediation. This study shed light on the concrete TDC strategies and concrete guidance for outbound tour operators, DMCs, and luxury hotels.

Key Words: tourism distribution channels, luxury travel segment, outbound tour operators, disintermediation

INTRODUCTION

With increased competition in the tourism industry the issue of distribution has become more prominent (Bitner & Booms, 1982; Pearce, 2010) and has generated a considerable volume of studies on tourism distribution channels (henceforth, TDCs). However, most of these studies have concentrated on the high-volume, low-price travel market (Buhalis, 2000; Pearce & Tan, 2004) and have neglected the structural characteristics of TDCs in the low-volume, high-price luxury travel market.

Luxury travel has long been the fastest-growing segment of the tourism industry (Park, et al., 2010). The concept of luxury travel has changed from traditional luxury products such as five-star hotels and restaurants to various types of exclusive and unique experiences (Bakker, 2005; Park, et al., 2010). Previous studies on luxury travel have tended to concentrate on consumer behaviors such as symbolic and/or utilitarian consumption motivation (Correia & Kozak, 2012; Correia, et al., 2016), luxury shopping (Park, et al., 2010), and cross-cultural differences (Kozak, 2002). Consumer perception of what makes products, services, and experiences 'luxurious' is based on several inherent product/service characteristics, such as excellence, exclusiveness, uniqueness (Kapferer, 1998; Park, et al., 2010), ability to enhance social status (Correia & Kozak, 2012; Correia, et al., 2016), and customization and privacy (Zhang & Tse, 2018). Because no consensus exists on a definition of 'luxury' products, services, and experiences, in this study, we adopt as our working definition that 'luxury' travel exhibits at least one of these inherent characteristics, in addition to being priced towards the high end of the market.
While previous studies have fundamentally examined luxury travel and tourism from the perspective of traveler behaviors, this study seeks to fill this research gap in the literature by focusing on the distribution channels of the luxury travel market and specifically on the outbound tour operator-type of channel intermediary. The rationale for studying outbound tour operators is that they are well-positioned to provide valuable insights into the nature of luxury travel distribution because they play a pivotal role in the luxury segment channel. The primary aim of this study is to explore the structure of TDC in the luxury travel segment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most mass travel market suppliers use multi-channel distribution systems for a broader market coverage. TDC structure diagrams in the literature include both direct and indirect channels. Pearce and Tan (2004) identified a variety of distribution channels used to approach group-travel and independent-travel segments and reported that the breadth of product appeal, capacity issues, and the level of commissionable products are three factors that influence differences in TDC structure. Furthermore, Pearce, et al. (2007), identified that the TDC structures vary due to market-centric factors such as the characteristics of travelers, travel styles, and the specialization of

intermediaries. In addition, Andrade and Smith (2020) report that for suppliers in small islands destinations local intermediaries, such as destination-based ground operators and DMCs, are important in building an effective business network to connect the destination to geographically distant markets and intermediaries.

Considering the influence of information and communication technologies, Kracht and Wang (2010) examined the historical evolution and progression of TDC structure and reported that the advance of ICT did not reduce the length of TDC nor simplified the TDC structure, but instead resulted in much longer channel length with a variety of new online intermediaries and more complex array of intermediaries. Furthermore, Fountoulaki, et al. (2015) and Tom Dieck, et al. (2018) empirically updated Kracht and Wang's (2010) TDC structure in the Europe destination context by adding additional new online communication and distribution channels such as social media, online review sites, and mobile channels. As a result, these researchers have clarified that traditional tourism intermediaries are losing their competitive advantage to online platforms (Fountoulaki, et al., 2015; Kracht & Wang, 2010; Law et al., 2015). The loss of competitive advantage of traditional travel agencies has led to their *disintermediation* from the TDC. Moreover, studies on disintermediation have typically focused on traditional intermediaries in the high-volume, low-price segment (Kaewkitipong, 2010; Kracht & Wang, 2010; Law & Lau, 2004; Law, et al., 2015).

Despite the uniqueness of luxury travel and tourism, few studies have focused on the TDC in the luxury segment. While cost-conscious tourists are increasingly booking their tour products online, about 70% of the high-end travelers arrange their travels through travel agencies and other intermediaries (Aeberhard, et al., 2020). Meanwhile, online distribution channels based on digitalization play an increasingly important role for marketing communication instead of sales because luxury tourism is based on providing and delivering personalized, in-person services and maintaining personal relationships of trust (Aeberhard, et al., 2020). Indeed, as part of a study on the decision-making process of specialist travel agents in luxury wildlife tourism, Buckley and Mossaz (2016) concluded that it is paramount for high-end travel agents to establish long-term relationships of mutual trust with individual clients and tour operators. They contrasted this with travel agents in the high-volume lower-price segment who tend to be driven by commission and incentives. Furthermore, Le, et al. (2018) examined distribution channels from the perspective of high-end hotels in Vietnam and found that all hotels used multiple distribution channels, among which international tour wholesalers and operators were the most important.

Finally, Andrade and Smith (2020) investigated the distribution channel structures in a Brazilian small island destination and reported that luxury accommodation providers not only employ direct channels –such as corporate websites, word of mouth, specialized magazines, brochures, and books– for product distribution and marketing communication, but also use indirect channels, in the form of intermediaries such as tour operators, travel agencies, and OTAs that specialize in luxury travel. Based on the above review, we can conclude that there is a dearth of a) specific research on TDCs in the luxury travel segment and b) research on TDCs from the perspective of luxury outbound tour operators. Thus, this study focuses on the nature of TDC in the luxury travel segment and uses outbound tour operators as informants.

METHODOLOGY

Due to the lack of extant research on TDCs in the luxury travel segment, we opted for a qualitative approach through in-depth semi-structured interviews. Interview questions are developed based on a review of extant literature and the lead author's previous working experience in the tourism industry. Questions include topics such as channel mix, channel length, and channel width to clarify the characteristics of the TDC structure. In addition, we also included questions on how tour operators communicate with travelers and service providers.

Because of the exclusive and closed nature of the luxury travel industry, we needed to resort to a combination of a two-stage convenience and snowball sampling. First, we conducted 17 interviews with tradeshow buyers of the ILTM Cannes (International Luxury Travel Market) during December 3–6, 2018. ILTM Cannes is the largest global B2B tradeshow specializing in luxury travel. Only buyers who meet the tradeshow's strict criteria can attend ILTM. These attendance criteria ensure that the members of the sampling pool −tradeshow buyers of ILTM Cannes− are appropriate for the current study. Interviews were conducted in the lounge area of the tradeshow hall, where participants spent time when they were not negotiating business deals. Second, we used the snowball sampling method by asking our ILTM respondents to introduce their compeers and partners in the same high-end tourism market to us. Based on this referral, we individually interviewed three France-based respondents at their respective offices from December 7-10, 2018, and three more respondents in Japan from

July to August 2019. We thus interviewed a total of 23 outbound tour operator representatives from a variety of locations. Table 1 specifies the profiles of respondents and their companies.

Table 1: Profiles of respondents and their companies

Code	job title	Company location	Main destinations	Main targets	Budget level
R 1	CMO	Canada; US	Europe; Asia	FIT leisure	Medium; high-end
R 2	Product Manager	Guatemala	Europe	FIT leisure	Medium; high-end
R 3	CEO	Latvia	Asia; America	FIT leisure	High-end
R 4	Owner	Denmark	America; Asia	FIT leisure	High-end
R 5	Commercial Director	Russia	Europe; Asia	FIT leisure	High-end
R 6	Founder	US	Europe; Asia	FIT leisure	High-end
R 7	Marketing Director	Canada	America; Europe	FIT wedding & honeymoon	Medium; high-end
R 8	Managing Director	Italy	Europe; America	FIT leisure; small packaged group	Medium; high-end
R 9	Group Manager	Switzerland	America; Asia	FIT leisure; small packaged group	Medium; high-end
R 10	CMO	China	Europe; America; Asia	FIT leisure; MICE	Medium; high-end
R 11	Co-founder	China; UK	Europe; America; Asia	FIT leisure; small packaged group	Medium; high-end
R 12	Executive Director	Russia	Europe; America	FIT leisure; small packaged group	Medium; high-end
R 13	Managing Director	US	Japan	FIT leisure; small packaged group	High-end
R 14	Travel Specialist	France	Japan; Taiwan; South Korea	FIT leisure; small packaged group	Medium; high-end
R 15	Project Chief	France	Europe; America	MICE	Medium; high-end
R 16	Managing Director	Germany	Asia; Europe	small packaged group; health & well-being tour	Medium; high-end
R 17	CEO	China	Europe; America; Asia	FIT leisure; small packaged group	Medium; high-end
R 18	Senior Product Manager	Belgium	Europe; America	FIT leisure; small packaged group	Medium; high-end
R 19	CEO	France	Japan	FIT leisure; small packaged group	Medium; high-end
R 20	Head of Premium Services	UAE	Europe, America, Asia	Luxury UHNW Travelers FIT	High-end
R 21	CEO	Australia	Asia	small packaged group; golf tour	Medium; high-end
R 22	Sales Manager	China	Europe; America; Asia	small packaged group; golf tour	Medium; high-end
R 23	Manager	US	Europe; America; Asia	MICE; FIT; packaged leisure tourists	Medium; high-end

At the beginning of the interviews, we confirmed the qualification of our interviewees for this research by asking questions pertaining to their career experience, position, company size, and the geographical coverage of their business. Then we explained the purpose of the research and described general TDC structures identified in prior research (Kracht & Wang, 2010; Pearce, et al., 2007). We worked from a semi-structured question list, but also flexibly adapted to any additional but pertinent topics raised by our interviewees. While most of the interviews were in English, three interviews were conducted in Chinese and one in Japanese. We assured that personal information and company names would be kept strictly confidential within the research team. Interviews were audio-recorded with respondents' approval and spanned from 20 to 80 minutes, depending on their schedules. After naturalized transcription and translation evaluation, we coded the data and conducted content analysis via Nvivo 12 (Saldaña, 2016).

FINDINGS

All respondents reported that they try to shorten their channel length and approach both travelers and service providers directly. The most important reason for this is a direct consequence of the inherent characteristics of the luxury travel market in which travelers have differentiated, personalized, and high-level requests. Tour operators consequently need to communicate with these travelers in the most efficient and effective way and respond to these requests with tailor-made service and seamless experience. Since outbound tour operators are

intermediaries between travelers in the outbound market and service providers in the inbound destination, we divide the TDC structure into the market and destination sides. Due to the fast development of internet communication technology, it is impossible to ignore marketing communication channels (promotion) when discussing distribution channels (place). In accordance with research on omni-channel marketing (e.g., Payne, et al., 2017; Kotler, et al., 2017) that various types of channels function interactively and synthetically, we initially incorporate communication channels stated by our respondents into this luxury TDC structure. Figure 1 paints the overall picture of the TDC structure from the perspective of outbound tour operators in the luxury travel market. In the following sections, we will explicate sales and communication channels on the market side and procurement and communication channels on the destination side.

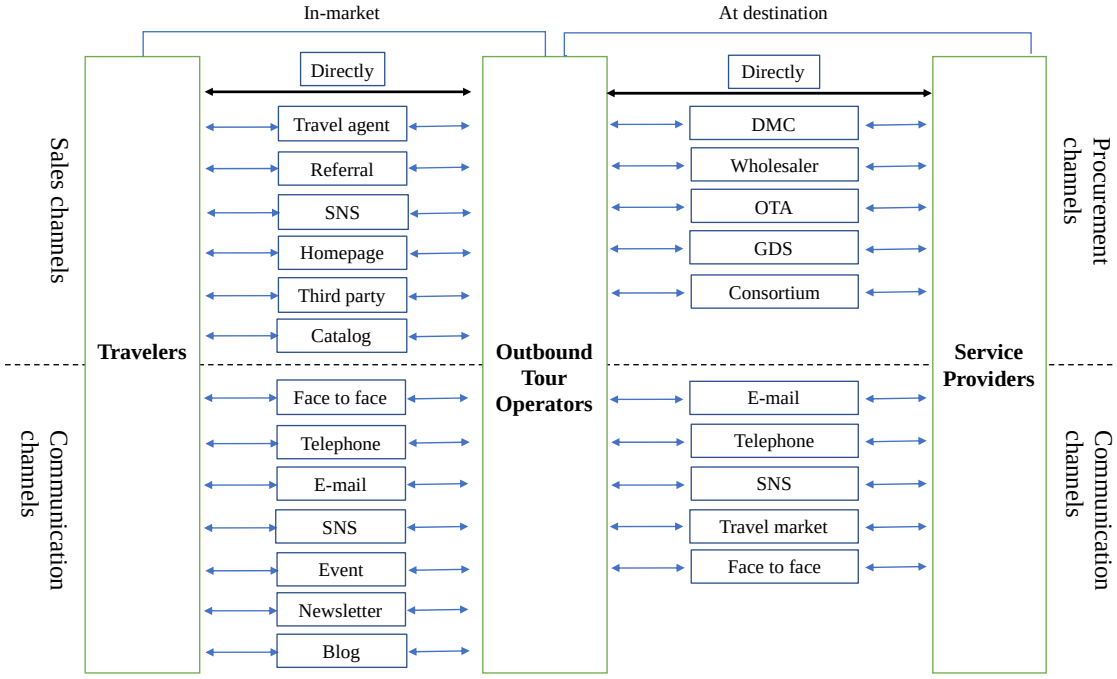

Figure 1. Structure of tourism distribution channels: the perspective from outbound tour operators

Sales channels on the market side

All respondents indicated that they primarily focus on B2C sales channels, while only 7 respondents said that they complement their main B2C business with the B2B channel of approaching clients via travel agents, but that this only represents a small share of their business (R1, R11, R13, R14, R16, R18, R19). Furthermore, they mentioned that they principally design customized products based on individual requests from travel agents rather than selling pre-prepared standardized tour packages through travel agents. This is one key characteristic that differentiates the B2B business model in the luxury travel market from that of the low-end high-volume travel market.

Other B2C channels used by tour operators include referrals, corporate homepages, SNS (Social Network Service), third parties, and catalogs. Regarding catalogs, only one respondent (R16) addressed the use of catalogs as a distribution channel. Results show that this is not a popular channel for luxury tour operators. About half of the respondents emphasized the importance of referral and word of mouth by their existing clients, for example, "*The most important is that clients coming back from their trip say they had the best time in their lives. And then they will give us more business*" (R13). One respondent even said that referrals are the most important driver of business growth (R6) while another mentioned that they expect "*each current client [to] introduce 2-3 new clients every year*" (R17). This may be attributed to the fact that most of the travelers in the high-end market are frequent travelers and they live in similar social bubbles, which helps tour operators win travelers' loyalty and generate more sales (R9). Only one respondent from China (R22) mentioned giving rewards or gifts to clients who refer others.

Regarding the tour operators' online sales channels, i.e., corporate websites and SNS, several respondents reported that they make use of their corporate websites (R13, R14, R16) and SNS accounts (R7, R13, R14, R16) as sales channels. As reported by R14, "*Clients see our website and find some places in which they are*

interested, and then they fill out the inquiry form online and send it to us." R13, based in the US, told us that he has even served clients from Asia through the online sales channel. An analysis of the website contents of our respondents' companies revealed that these websites primarily contain the following information: concept of travel, knowledge of destinations, and personal travel experiences of the companies' travel designers, with an emphasis on commitment to service quality and unique experience. This markedly differs from the usual website contents of tour operators in the low-end high-volume market.

Around one-third of the respondents reported that they actively collaborate with and promote their services through third parties (i.e., investment banks, wealth management companies, real estate management companies, industry organizations, alumni associations, golf clubs, and upscale private schools) because those organizations are closely connected to the wealthy (R2, R6, R8, R10, R17, R21, R22). Collaborations include co-hosting events, sponsorship, and travel consulting services. For example, R17 collaborates with a local bank and offers a travel concierge and butler service to the bank's VIP clients free of charge, which has allowed R17 to build a long-term relationship with these potential clients and to accumulate a database of their travel style, -preferences, and -habits.

Communication channels on the market side

Communication in this study is comprised of operating communication and marketing communication. However, it is always challenging to distinctly separate one from the other in communication channels. In regard to daily operating communication, more than half of the respondents report that the most frequently used channels are telephone, email, and face-to-face. In contrast to that in the mass-market, call centers are scarcely used by our respondents. Face-to-face communication is emphasized for building personal relationships (R8). In addition, more than one-third of the respondents stress the importance of SNS (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, and WeChat) as both marketing communication and operating communication channels. WeChat, emphasized mostly by Chinese respondents, is used in branding, public relations, promotions, payment collections, and operating interaction (R10, R17, R22). While acknowledging the absolute convenience and immediacy of WeChat, respondents (R17, R22) also claim its adverse effects such as causing overwork and feelings of constantly being under stress for the tour operators' employees. Therefore, R1 and R13 now explicitly refuse to use any SNS for daily operating communication either with clients or within their companies.
Other marketing communication channels mentioned by a minority of respondents are event activities like travel shows, salons, and workshops (R7, R9, R10, R14), newsletters (R9, R14, R15, R21), and blogs (R6, R10, R11).

Procurement channels on the destination side

All respondents clarify that they keep good relationships with DMCs (Destination Management Companies) at destinations, one of the most important procurement channels. Respondents also acknowledge that only DMCs can offer them high-quality organic products and services for their high-end clients rather than other intermediaries or even themselves. On the other hand, wherever destinations respondents are familiar with or have resources directly, they primarily try to operate by themselves through direct procurement from hotels, restaurants, and transport companies, in which way they can more effectively reduce the possibility of miscommunication, manage product quality, and save cost (e.g., R3, R4, R15, R22).

Furthermore, respondents show different attitudes toward the ethnic origin of DMCs. For example, R17 argues that DMCs run by local people at the destination can offer a more organic and differentiated experience even though they may have some difficulties in understanding clients' needs. On the other hand, some respondents (R15, R22) clarify their preference for DMCs run by people who share the same culture and language, respectively, for the convenience of communication and work efficiency.

Regarding the direct procurement from hotels, a typical pattern clarified by Chinese respondents (R10, R11, R17) is selecting hotels deliberately out of major hotel groups like LHW (The Leading Hotels of the World) and then handling through the VIP agent of the hotel group instead of each individual hotel, whereas some respondents who are small scale or do not have a large number of transactions at minor destinations prefer to procure hotel rooms from wholesalers to save cost (R1, R11, R12, R16).

Other channels addressed by respondents include OTA, GDS, and the tourism consortium. Most respondents state that operations by OTAs lack flexibility and cannot meet their needs for personalized service, which leads to an explicit refusal of using OTAs in the luxury travel market (R10, R13). However, some respondents admit that they reluctantly handle simple cases through OTAs. In contrast, some respondents argue that some OTAs offer B2B services with relative flexibility for personalization (R11, R22).

GDS is used as a channel by some respondents limited to flight reservations, which is not the current research domain. Finally, the tourism consortium is a unique channel used by outbound tour operators in the luxury travel market. Virtuoso, a membership organization specializing in luxury travel, is the most well-known one. Because of its fame and strict member acknowledgment, respondents address that it is reliable to procure from Virtuoso members (R2, R6, R7).

Communication channels in the destination side
Communication channels at destinations are relatively simple compared with those in the market. Most of the communication at the destination is for operating procurements. All respondents simplified that the most frequently used communication channel is email. Some respondents also elucidate that they use telephone and/or SNS (i.e., WhatsApp, Skype, WeChat) for emergent communication (R7, R11, R15, R17). In addition, some respondents (R6, R9, R13) clarify that they join travel markets and/or meet their suppliers face-to-face for relationship management, which functions as a marketing communication channel.

DISCUSSION

The fundamental difference between the luxury and mass travel market is based on the difference in customer needs. Customer needs for personalization, flexibility, and uniqueness in the luxury travel market lead to disintermediation both in the market and at the destination. Outbound tour operators in the luxury travel market can seldom offer preliminarily developed products due to the inherent market characteristics and personalized traveler needs. In general, they develop tailor-made products according to travelers' individual requests. Consequently, communication plays an essential role in the luxury travel market compared with the mass travel market. Once customers are satisfied with the engagement and personalized travel experience, they tend to be loyal in the long term and tend to share their experiences within their communities. Furthermore, to deliver the personalized requests of luxury travelers precisely and efficiently to service suppliers at destinations, outbound tour operators tend to reduce the possibilities of misunderstanding and information loss during communication and thus endeavor to get rid of intermediaries by working with final service suppliers directly. Consequently, the differentiated traveler needs and wants, and the pursuit of communication effectiveness and efficiency drive outbound tour operators in the luxury travel market toward disintermediation.

Unlike extant studies on TDC structure, we incorporated communication channels (i.e., marketing communication and operational communication channels) into our TDC model. The rationale for doing so is based on the concept of customer touchpoints and customer experience in omni-channel strategies and integrated marketing communications. More and more consumers combine multiple channels during their decision-making process (Flavián, et al., 2020). Consequently, marketers should respond to these consumer preferences by integrating touchpoints for a seamless customer experience. Although academic research and practical implementation of channel integration or omni-channel strategy in the general retailing industry have been gaining prominence, few studies have focused on channel integration in the tourism industry. The dominant model of the TDC structure reflects that outbound tour operators have limited themselves to the use of multi-channel strategies for approaching clients in the market and suppliers at destinations due to the difficulty of tracking travelers' cross-channel activities and behaviors. This is why respondents rarely mentioned integrating multiple channels to enhance the customer experience. However, our study indicates that one basic rule for outbound tour operators in the luxury travel segment is to delight customers with a seamless experience through shortened distribution channels.

This study also provides guidance for TDC strategies and tactics for outbound tour operators newly entering the luxury travel market segment. Practitioners need to be aware that the business model in the luxury travel segment dramatically differs from that in the mass travel segment. Although it is difficult for outbound tour operators to develop tour packages beforehand, they can always research luxury travelers' needs, wants, and trends regarding destinations, accommodation characteristics, activities, and travel styles. Based on the market information, they can develop networks and relationships in advance with service providers and partners at the destinations. Unlike low-end high-volume businesses in the mass segment, the volume in the luxury segment is relatively low. As a result, outbound tour operators often do not receive any requests for a particular destination for prolonged periods. Nevertheless, they should constantly renew their knowledge of the destination through comprehensive communication with a variety of partners. Furthermore, even though online channels are not critical to sales contribution in the luxury travel segment, various types of online touchpoints with travelers have always been essential for creating a seamless travel experience. Outbound tour operators, for instance, may initially publicize the referrals and word of mouth of satisfied customers in the online communities in which wealthy people participate. Our study also finds that tour operators can also make use of third parties such as

investment banks, credit card corporations, golf clubs, and international schools as channels of communicating with their potential customers.

Although this study sheds light on the TDC from the perspective of outbound tour operators, our findings also indirectly have managerial implications for DMCs and luxury hotels. As a type of intermediary, DMCs are also at risk of disintermediation and should develop unique selling propositions and exclusive resources that outbound tour operators have difficulty accessing or handling independently. Furthermore, DMCs should continuously deepen and broaden their knowledge of the destination while strengthening their networks in a broader geographic scope. In addition, DMCs should also build close relationships with key luxury hotels at the destination and ensure that luxury hotels understand DMCs' significance to their operation and handling, and they can lower the risk of being disintermediated proactively by hotels at the destination. On the other hand, from the perspective of luxury hotels, they should maintain multi-channel strategies, including online and offline channels. Luxury hotels need to strengthen their online distribution channels with OTAs and their direct channel of homepages, which is most profitable without commission cost. Furthermore, luxury hotels should offer a high level of concierge service expected by outbound tour operators and travelers. Finally, for luxury hotels and DMCs, flexibility and responsiveness are critical because tour operators ask for the personalized services requested by luxury travelers.

The relatively small sample size limits the generalizability of the study's findings. Future research should investigate the characteristics and dynamics of the TDC structure by focusing on other channel members in the luxury travel market. In addition, our findings may be used as the basis for more quantitative research.

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A STRATEGIC PLANNING MANAGEMENT AND A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF BANGKOK ADOLESCENTS' ATTITUDES, CONSUMPTION INTENTIONS AND BEHAVIORS ABOUT FAST FOOD PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explains the Bangkok adolescents 'attitudes, consumption intentions and behaviors about fast food products. As the number of the overweight and obesity among Bangkok adolescents is rising more than 2.5 times over 23 years. The researcher uses in-depth interview with the semi-structure questions to elicit the data from the 15 young Thai in Bangkok who age between 15 to 19-year-old, together with focus group, and self-observation journal from the sample. Moreover, the researcher uses the theory of reasoned action to be the theoretical framework with this research; as it shows the relationship of attitudes, intentions, and behaviors of individual. Lastly, the researcher suggests the strategic planning that could encourage adolescent to be interested in healthy food product rather than eating fast food product.

Key Words: Adolescents, Obesity, Eating behavior.

INTRODUCTION

This research article gives the significance to the rising of fast food consumption in Thailand (Chavasit, Kriengsinyos, Tangsuphoom& Photi, 2014; National Statistics Organization, 2013). According to the statistics from Asian Development Bank Institute(ADBI), the prevalence of overweight and obese among Thai adolescent is increasingly rising more than 2.5 times over 23 years (Teerawattananon& Luz, 2017). The number is synchronous with the statistics from the World Health Organization (2012), adolescents at age 15-19 in the capital city of Thailand- Bangkok, has found 19.1% obese adolescents which this group is at great risk of being developed to be an obese adult. A high frequency of fast food consumption leads to the obesity, and it has contributed to the health risk factors, such as, cardiovascular disease (CVD), diabetes, also chronic diseases, including osteoarthritis, liver and kidney disease, sleep apnea, and depression (Aekplakorn, et al., 2014; Xavier, 2010).

The important causes that contribute to the overweight and obese situation among adolescents are various yet relative to the eating and physical activity behavior (Panichchart, 2014), an unhealthy lifestyle among Thai adolescents is observed to be prevalence in urban area, especially in the capital city of Thailand- Bangkok (Lynette et al., 2009). According to the study of Lynette et al. (2009), who collected 200,000 samples among Thai adolescents, found that an unhealthy lifestyle, among Thai adolescents which leads to the body weight problem are the high frequency of eating junk food, inadequate physical activity, and spending time on screen more than going to practice an exercise, which mostly found in the urban area (Panichchart, 2014).

The definition of fast food product is defined as cooked food sold in snack bars and restaurants as a quick meal or to be taken away (The Oxford English Dictionary, 2007). In addition, fast food product always serves in large portion and contain high levels of fats, sugar, energy and sodium (Feeley, Pettifor& Norris, 2009).

Other interesting motive that makes this research interesting is that, Thai food is listed as one of the healthiest cuisine in the world (W&S Research, 2015). Yet, the number of the overweight and obesity is high especially among the young. Leading the researcher to the question of this study that why does this scenario could ever happen in the society which is listed as one of the healthiest cuisine in the world? There is a revolutionary urban lifestyle exposed in the big city, which moves food purchasing habits among people from fresh market to modern supermarket and convenience store (Kelly, Banwell, Dixon, Seubsman, Yiengprugsawan& Sleigh, 2010), which leads people to expose themselves to the imported calories-dense food products (Kelly, Banwell, Dixon, Seubsman, Yiengprugsawan& Sleigh, 2010). And this is the significant nutrition transition which Thai people need to be aware of, as child malnutrition could lead to overweight and obese problem in adult (Stender, Dyerberg & Astrup, 2007).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

As the causes that affect overweight and obese among adolescent is relative to eating fast food products, this research aims to study about the attitude and consumption behavior about fast food products among adolescents in Thailand, specifically in Bangkok. Moreover, the researcher aims to suggest the strategic planning for the policy maker to plan the policy that make the adolescent to have interest in eating healthy food product rather than fast food product.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The situation of overweight and obesity among adolescents

According to World Health Organization (2019a) and Ministry of Public Health, Thailand (2019a), adolescent is used to described individual who ages between 10-19 years old. The number of adolescents in the South East Asian Region is counted as 22% of the population in the entire region (World Health Organization, 2019). However, in this research, the term adolescent is defined as individual who age between 15-19 years old. As there is a report from WorldHealth Organization (2019b), that the number of obese adolescent is increasing tenfold from 11 million in 1975 to 124 million in 2016. And in Thailand, the situation of obesity and overweight among adolescent in this age group is significantly concerned, as the prevalence of overweight and obese among Thai adolescent is increasingly rising more than 2.5 times over 23 years (Teerawattananon& Luz, 2017). Especially in group of age among 15-19 years old in capital city- Bangkok. It has been found 19.1% of the population in this age group are obese (World Health Organization, 2012; No-in, 2017).

Overweight and obesity is defined by the World Health Organization (2019c) and Thai Health Promotion Foundation (2019) as individual who has excessive fat accumulation that is at risk in health. A crude measurement in obesity and overweight is body mass index (BMI), which can be calculated by the individual's weight in kilogram divided by the square of his/her height in centimeters. If the individual BMI is 30 or higher, he/she is considered as obese; while individual whose BMI is 25 or higher, he/she is considered as overweight (World Health Organization, 2019c).

World Health Organization (2019d) says that overweight and obesity contribute to the various major health risks in noncommunicable diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases (mostly stroke and heart diseases), diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders,metabolic syndrome (No-in, 2017), obstructive sleep apnea (Reilly & Kelly, 2011; Reilly, Methven, McDowell, Hacking, Alexander, Stewart, et al., 2003), Moreover, overweight and obesity in childhood and adolescents could lead to the opportunity to be obese adult (Reilly & Kelly, 2011). Not only the physical threats, overweight and obesity also contributes to negative psychology comorbidities, such as, lack of self-esteem, and lack of confidence (World Health Organization, 2019d), and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder or ADHD (Agranat-Meged, Deitcher, Goldzweig, Leibenson, Stein, Galili-Weisstub, 2005).

However, overweight and obesity are preventable and can be reduced (World Health Organization, 2019d). In order to prevent and reduce, one has to look back at the reasons that cause overweight and obesity. According to the report from World Health Organization (2019d), main reasons that cause overweight and obesity especially among the adolescents in undeveloped and developing countries are that they are exposed to high-fat, high-sugar, high-sodium, unbalanced nutrients food, together with the low level of physical activities. This information is consistent with Ministry of Public Health (2019b) of Thailand, which mentions in its annual report about the situation of overweight and obesity among Thai adolescents that the significant reasons that cause overweight and obesity among the young Thai are unbalanced diet and inadequate amount of time spending in outdoor activities.

Attitude on Food and Food choice

As adolescents are people at the age that can make a decision by themselves on food choice intake (Sanasuttipun & Jungsomjatepaisal, 2015). Amidst the influence of social media, globalization, and advanced communication technology, information and knowledge travel across border over a click of mouse, including food choice, food culture, and food information (Bosamia, 2013). Nowadays the term global culture has come to the existence (Cato Policy Report, 2003). The migration of people, culture, identity, and community exist around the world (Jeffery, 2002). Therefore, the widespread of Western and Eastern food culture through globalization creates opportunity for the young to be exposed with the food choice they are interested in (Pieterse, 2009). While globalization allows people to taste food around the world, the appeal of fast food has also been spread to the young generation globally (DiPietro, 2017; Hong, Lee, Nam, Ahn, & Lee, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012).

Attitude is the variable that gains widely interest in research area, as it is related to the purchasing prediction (Kim, Lee & Ryu, 2017), purchase intention and brand loyalty (Hall & Sharples, 2003; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Kim, Kang, & Shin, 2005). Attitude is constructed by the consumer experience and subjective knowledge or belief of individual (Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010). Moreover, individual uses attitude to judge the situation or substance as good or bad (Anable, 2005). According to the study from Greene, Murphy & Rossheim (2018) shows that adolescent's attitude on food and beverage could be formed by social, cultural and environmental influences.

Social influence on food attitude and food choice among adolescents is formed by the interaction and relationship between adolescents and family, peers, and community members (Greene, Murphy & Rossheim, 2018). Cultural influence on food attitude and food choice among adolescents is formed by shared value, subjective norms and attitude in the area that adolescents live (Greene, Murphy & Rossheim, 2018). Environmental influence on food attitude and food choice among adolescents is formed by the aspects of the physical environment and connections with larger institutions (Greene, Murphy & Rossheim, 2018). For example, the availability or the scarcity of the food in the living area.

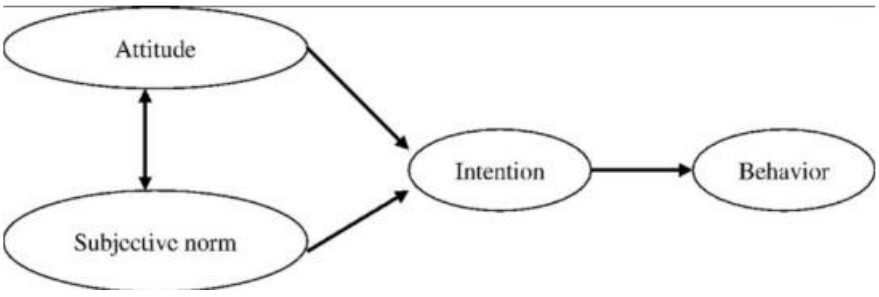
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory of reasoned action

It appears to be a general agreement among social scientist and psychologist that human behavior is mostly goal-directed (Heider, 1944; Lewin, Dembo, Festinger &Sear 1944). Most of the human activities have been planned in advanced (Ajzen, 1985). For example, before going to the cinema, a person may extend an invitation to a date, buy tickets, dress up nicely, drive to pick up a date, proceed to the movie (Ajzen, 1985). Moreover, some actions if practice frequent enough, it may develop to be a routine or habits, which a person can perform automatically (Ajzen, 1985).

The goal of the theory of reasoned action is to explain the relationship between attitude and behavior (Ajzen &Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975); and it is usually used to predict behavioral intention and behavior. The theory of reasoned action proposes the idea that behavior is the outcome of the behavioral intention, which produces the information or belief for a person to perform a particular action (Fishbein &Ajzen, 1975). Fishbein &Ajzen (1975) categorizes belief which leads to the behavioral intentions into two sets: behavioral and normative. The behavioral belief is considered as the factor that influence a person's attitude which leads to perform a behavior; while normative belief is considered as the factor that influence a person's subjective norms which leads to perform a behavior. Moreover, Fishbein &Ajzen (1975) says that external variables to the model (Figure I) may affect or influence intention only if they affect attitudes or subjective norms.

Figure I: Theory of Reasoned Action Model

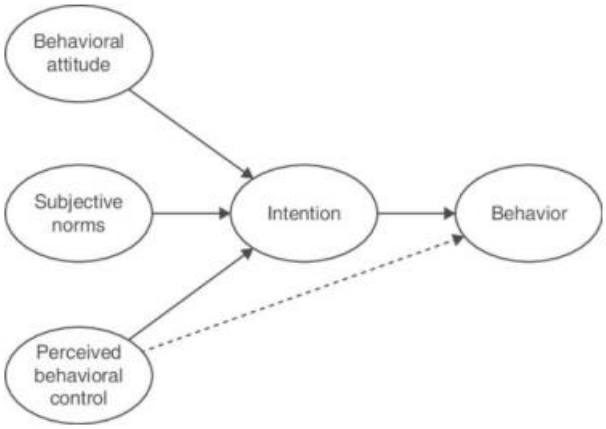


Source : Fishbein & Ajzen (1975).

Moreover, Fishbein &Ajzen (1975) posits that there are three potential conditions that can affect the relationship between intentions and behaviors, which are the degree of specificity when one measures the intention and the behavior, the stability of intention when measured and the performance of behavior, and the degree of completion of intention is under control of the individual. Therefore, Ajzen (1985) has extended the theory of

action model which has been proposed by Fishbein &Ajzen (1975) by including the perceived control over behavioral completion as in figure II.

Figure II: Theory of reasoned action which incorporated the notion of perceived control.



Source: Ajzen (1985).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This section explains the recruitment of the participants and the development of the script and the method this study is conducted. A hypothesis is not contained in this study as it is empirical research and its nature of the qualitative study.

The recruitment of the participants
As the population of this research is the adolescents who age between 15 to 19 years old and reside in Bangkok, which is accounted for 321,755 people (Official Statistics Registration Systems, 2018). The researcher organizes the population into six group referring to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration(BMA) which also organizes Bangkok into six groups for administration and planning process (Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Data Center, 2015), which are Burapha group, Ratanakosin group, Chaophraya group, Srinakarin group, Krungthon Neua group, and Krungthon Tai group. The researcher starts to recruit the participants by approaching the schools in these six groups. The researcher sends out the letter and proposal of this research to the schools and gets 6 schools feedback which agree to participate with this research project.

The researcher then asks the school to send the letter of consent and assent form together with the research proposal to the 15 students who voluntarily sign up to be a participant. Moreover, the researcher has asked the school that the desired participants which the researcher wishes to interview are in age 15 to 19 years old range. After, the consent and assent letters that are signed by themselves and their guardians; the researcher organizes the time with each of the participants when the participants and their guardians are available.

Script development
As the participants of this project are adolescents which are considered as a sensitive group to collect the data. The researcher then considers the UN Convention on the rights of the child (Children's Rights Alliance, 2010) and the Forum for Ethical Review Committees in Thailand (2013) seriously which concerns about the rights of the children and adolescents which could leave at any time during the interview process and the rights to express any speech with freedom. However, the researcher also repeats their rights again before the interview process, to be certain that they are aware of their rights. In addition, the script and the language that is used during the interview session is also very carefully developed by the researcher.

The script is developed by the researcher after the researcher has reviewed the literature. The script is designed to elicit the participants in order to get the data from them. The script is written in order to ask them these topics: definition of fast food, their attitude toward fast food, intentions to consume fast food, and their behavior of consuming fast food.

METHODS

The researcher chooses to conduct the qualitative research as the researcher wishes to collect the deep aspect and intensive data from the adolescents. Interview is the way to collect the experience, viewpoint, beliefs and motivations from the participants (Morgan, 1997). The semi-structured interview is conducted in this research, as its characteristics is flexibility allows the researcher to elicit the data from the participants whenever the participants bring up the unplanned issue during the interview session. Moreover, the researcher also conducts the focus group and asks samples to write down their self-observation journal on their daily eating for 30 days. Therefore, the researcher could have a triangulation data to help verify the validity of the content.

RESEARCH RESULTS

A number of themes about attitudes, intentions, and consumption behaviors emerged during the interview, which the researcher could summarize the thematic into four broad groups: 1) definition of fast food; 2) image of fast food; 3) social influence on intentions and consumption behavior of fast food; 4) limitation on fast food consumption.

Definition of Fast Food

When the researcher asks the participants to define fast food; from 15 participants, all of them define fast food as a food that is associated with Western-derived brand, such as McDonald, KFC, and Burger King. They describe that, in their opinion, fast food means the food that is served in a speedy service in a Western-derived brand, which is mostly located in a department store. Nowadays Thailand has an Asian fast-food brand available in a big city, such as Bangkok; however, none of them mentions or talk about Asian fast-food chains.
The researcher then asked the participants to come up with the word they could possibly think of, when mentioning fast food; the result is that most of them come up with the Western fast-food menu, such as, hamburger, doughnut, French fries. The researcher then asked them why do they came up with these words; their answers are quite similar to each other that, since they were born until now, when they heard about the term fast food, all they can picture is a hamburger with fries. It came from their experience since they were young, and their parents always ordered these menus whenever they have chances to go to the fast-food restaurant.

Image of Fast Food

From the in-depth interview session, the researcher gains the participants viewpoints that, they do not perceive fast food product as a significant threat to their health, as one of the participants said that, “I think many of the food I eat nowadays in school canteen or the street food in the market contain high fats, high carbohydrate which may be more than the well-known fast-food product, like hamburger.” The participants give a very interesting opinion about fast food that, they think fast food product is not an important factor that harm their health as they do not have that much chance to consume fast food product in their daily lives. On the other hand, the street food and the ready-to-eat food sold in fresh market seems to be more dangerous to their health than the fast-food product, as they think that there is no standard or organization that control the process of making the ready-to-eat food product sold in the market; unlike fast food product of the well-known Western brand, which has the fixed protocol and worldwide standard that manages the food production procedure.

Even the participants do not think that the fast-food product is the significant harm to their health comparing with the usual food sold and consumed in their daily lives; however, many of the female participants still give the opinion that they think that the fast-food product they will avoid whenever they are on diet is fries. As the researcher asked them to give a reason, they all said that they think fries contains high fats and carbohydrates with high level of sodium, which they have been taught since they were a child from their parents that fries provide high energy and high in fats, which they need to avoid when they want to control their weight.

Beside the effect of their health and physical appearance, the researcher also asked them about their attitude on fast food image. For example, the question is, “what do you think about fast food?” Turn out, the participants’ answers seem to be positive about fast food. As they accept that they think of fast food as a food they will consume in a special occasion, as the price is higher than the street food sold on the food stall on the street. So

they cannot afford to have the fast food product every day. They will preserve it as in the day that they think it is a special occasion or special event, such as, the birthday party, the last day of the semester.

Moreover, the participants accept that they tend to post the pictures of the fast-food product or check in in the fast-food restaurant in their social media account more than the usual restaurant, like Thai restaurant. As they think that the fast-food consumption gives them a positive image on the society as its price is high than the usual food sold in the fresh market. So when they announce to the social media world that they are capable to afford the fast food product, they think their friend will perceive them as a wealthy person.

Social Influence on Intentions and Consumption Behavior of Fast Food

As mentions in the image of fast-food section that participants perceive fast food product in a positive way, as the participants take the fast food as a tool to help them build the positive image among their friends. Therefore, social influence has role on the participant's food selection process. The participants accept that they intend to choose fast food product to dine in in a special occasion not because of the taste of the fast-food product itself, but because of the image, and social influence from their friends. One of the participants accept that there is like a norm among Thai society that, "*If you have a special occasion, like when you finish your final exam at school, you have to go to McDonald or KFC or The Pizza for a celebration. It is a symbol of a party*." One of the participants accepts that he opens to any choice for any kind of food when it comes to the celebration, but their friends always agree to have a fast food whenever it comes to the celebration occasion, therefore, their friend has a direct influence on their intention and consumption behavior of fast food.

From the interview, all of the participants mention their friends as a main influence on fast food intention and consumption behavior, and none of them mentions other social members else. Therefore, the researcher asked them about other social member that could influence on their intention and consumption behavior of fast-food product. And most of them mention their family. Participants give the information to the researcher that, as their financial still depend on their parents, therefore, their parents also have a major influence on their intention and consumption behavior on fast food. If their parents limit their allowance, they have to save up to have a fast-food product. Therefore, their family, parents, or guardian who support their financially, has an influence on their intention and consumption behavior to have fast food product.

Limitation on Fast Food Consumption

As the participants of this research are adolescents who are 15 to 19 years old, and every participant in this research do not work yet. Therefore, their income is depending on the allowance they receive from their guardians. The first limitation that prevent the participants to consume fast food product is that they have limited income which is not enough for them to spend it on the fast-food product in daily lives. As the price of the fast-food product is higher than the average street food sold in food stall.

Another limitation that the researcher found that make the fast-food consumption difficult for the participants is, the availability of the fast-food product. Fast food product, in the participant's opinions are only available when they go to the department stores or sometimes in the stand-alone fast food restaurant location; which both are not in their resident area.

DISCUSSION

From the data gained in interview session, the researcher divides the result into four themes as showed in the result session. The researcher then relates the results with the theory of reasoned action. As the result shows that the attitude among the adolescents tend to be positive toward the fast-food product. They do not consider the fast food as a major threat to their health. They take the food they usually eat in their daily lives basis as the standard to judge the fast-food product as not a threat. Moreover, the data the adolescents provide to the researcher implies that they perceive fast food as a positive image creator. They tend to post their picture of consuming fast-food product on the social media platform to let the society knows that they are capable of affording fast food product.

The adolescents' attitudes on fast food are positive with the fast-food product, which leads to the positive result in the consumption intentions and behaviors. They intend to consume fast food product whenever possible, especially in the celebration occasion. However, the adolescents have a limited income, and their income are depending on their guardian. Therefore, even their attitudes lead them to the intentions to consume fast food product; however, the behavioral control over their financial aspect from their guardians decrease the intentions to consume the fast-food product.

The fast-food consumption behavior of Bangkok adolescents based on the result is that they consume fast food product when there is a special occasion with the limit of the behavioral control from guardians.

CONCLUSION

The result shows that the adolescents in Bangkok tend to have a positive attitude toward the fast-food product, as the image that the fast-food product provide to the person who eats it. The price of the fast-food product is higher than the street food sold in street vendor in Thailand, which turns out to give positive feedback to the image of the product, as the adolescents perceive it as a status indicator to the society. The intention and consumption behavior of the adolescents are depending on their social influence, and also based on the income from their guardian and the availability of the fast-food products.
The researcher suggests that the potential future research could be in the area of the role of the food image on the adolescents' consumption behaviors, as the result on this research suggests that the adolescents tend to give the significance on how the others perceive themselves, even on the product they consume.

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'NEW NORMAL' TOURISM EDUCATION: EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION BASED ON TOURISM SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

As it is known, Covid-19 is a pandemic that affects the whole world, causing great damage to countries both economically and stopping life. Many countries have limited tourism activities during Covid-19 pandemic and this situation caused a decrease in demand. The academics must always aim to train future tourism professionals, develop projects for educational purposes and must work to bring a sustainable tourism model that should be created in tourism-reliant destinations worldwide under the termof 'the new normal'. The qualitative method used as the research method and interviews with twelve academics in tourism education field were conducted online and in person. While choosing academics, it was taken into consideration that they have industry experience and give practical lessons because the future of tourism is practice, adaptation to technology and digitalization. The second research method in the research is the examination of scientific articles on the subject on the internet and by various researchers using the literature review method. As a result, educational institutions and touristic enterprises should constantly renew themselves technologically. The common view of academics who want to provide a better education is that the organizations must be constantly prepared for this type of pandemic.

Key Words: LMS, Tourism Education, Hybrid.

INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector suffered the biggest wound during the Covid-19 pandemic process. In order to prevent the spread of the disease, many countries have limited travel, tourism and hospitality during Covid-19 pandemic and this situation caused a decrease in demand in the sector. In these uncertain times, the rules and regulations that must be adhered to by educational and tourism institutions have increased the costs and responsibilities of operating in the tourism industry, which has seriously harmed the viability of the businesses.

A drop in service capabilities and an increase in expenses have resulted from the sector's businesses being required to adhere to social distance and hygiene regulations as well as upgrade their technical infrastructure. Every negative development in the tourism sector affected education in the same way. The reason for this was the decrease in students' confidence in tourism and the shaking of their expectations for the future. However, both sectors acted jointly in the process and created a new normal for education with certain arrangements connected to each other. A few training strategies applied by housekeeping, front office, marketing and gastronomy educators were used as supporting examples for the study. During Covid-19 period, a number of initiatives have been identified, along with suggestions for unique promotions that will be crucial to the tourist and hospitality sectors' sustainable growth. Both the domestic tourism market and the attraction of foreign tourists must be taken into account in this calculation. Authorities and governments are under pressure to assign and enforce laws that must adhere to the World Health Organization's guidelines.

The academics must always aim to train future tourism professionals and develop projects for educational purposes. Tourism academics in this case must work to bring a sustainable tourism model that should be created in tourism-reliant destinations worldwide under the term of 'the new normal' (Guden et al, 2021). Attracting local tourists, focusing on sustainable tourism models such as ecotourism and heritage tourism should be considered. It is crucial at this time to provide graduates with the skills necessary to manage crises in this manner, including empathy for a sector that is sensitive to changes and knowledge of global cultural norms, attitudes, and viewpoints that contribute to the modern world.

COVID-19 AND ITS EFFECT ON TOURISM AND EDUCATION SECTOR

The coronavirus is a virus with symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath that first appeared in the animal market in Wuhan, China, then spread to other cities and countries of the world, and was defined by the

World Health Organization on January 13, 2020 and named 2019-nCoV (He et al., 2020). During Covid-19, the education and tourism sectors were passing through an unprecedented time, which wearing a mask with a logo of different enterprises, having Covid-19 Safety certificates, monitoring kitchens from a different perspective, social distancing even in fast food restaurants (Guden et al., 2021). Tourism was one of the sectors most affected by the coronavirus pandemic (Cetin and Goktepe, 2020). Although coronavirus cases have decreased worldwide with vaccines found, tourism still continues to be affected by the pandemic (Sharma and Nicolau, 2020; Skare et al., 2021). Tourism, as an industry with intense human interaction, will undoubtedly witness some long-term transformations after Covid-19 (Haleem et al., 2020). Preparing the industry effectively for this transformation will make it more resistant to future epidemics even if Covid-19 loses its impact, but it will change the preferences of visitors for sure (Guden et al., 2021).

Tourism is critical in creating goodwill within people and, which results in, socioeconomic growth in the country. Tourism as an industry contributes significantly to the country's foreign exchange reserves and provides direct and indirect job possibilities to a broad segment of the population both for locals and foreigners (Thommandru et al., 2021). In addition, it directly and indirectly affects many sectors such as tourism and education; contributes to the balance of payments by creating foreign currency inflows and it also triggers many leading industries such as transportation, trade, construction, health, finance. Apart from its economic effects, tourism also has many social, cultural and political effects that are out of the scope of this study. Although tourism is an important global economic sector, it is very vulnerable to crises in any country or region of the world (Pforr and Hosie, 2008). Since tourism demand has a deferrable structure, it draws a very sensitive image against security problems, economic crisis and health problems (Blake and Sinclair, 2003). Tourism is also a non-storable product, so it cannot be stored for future sale like physical goods. Rooms, seats, tables that are not reserved today cannot be transferred for later sale (Reisinger et al., 2001). Except for a few examples in the past (eg, the 2008 economic crisis), the crises had regional effects and reached a level that would affect the global tourism movements in a limited way (Pforr and Hosie, 2008). Considering its impact and speed, it is difficult to say that the global tourism industry has faced a crisis like Covid-19 before. The impact of Covid-19 was expected to be more devastating than the 2008 financial crisis (CRS, 2021).

2019 was a record breaking year in many countries in terms of tourism statistics. International tourist arrivals worldwide grew 4% in 2019 to reach 1.5 billion, based on data reported by destinations around the world. 2019 was another year of strong growth, although slower compared to the exceptional rates of 2017 with 7 percent increase and 2018 with 6 percent increse (UNWTOa, 2020). No one in the world expected such a crisis because a few years before Covid-19, incredible numbers were reached in tourism and could not detect that such a strong sector would be negatively affected and the material damage that would occur.

According to industry scenarios, there may be a 58–78% fall in the number of foreign visitors in 2020, which would result in a drop in visitor expenditure from $1.5 trillion in 2019 to between $310 and $570 billion in 2020. This threatens more than 100 million direct tourism jobs (UNWTOb, 2020). One in ten employment are supported by tourism, and millions more people both in developing and established nations rely on it for their living. Over 100 million direct tourism jobs were at stake as a result of Covid-19, particularly in micro, small, and medium-sized businesses. After fuels and chemicals, tourism is the third largest export industry in the world economy, accounting for almost 20% of the GDP of some nations. (UN, 2020). In the OECD report, it was predicted that tourism will decline by 80% or more in 2020. Governments have implemented amazing emergency steps to restore and reactivate the industry while safeguarding jobs and businesses, which is helping to lessen the impact of the crisis. Additionally, several nations are developing policies to build a tourism industry that will be more resilient after COVID-19. Creating plans to aid in the tourism industry's sustainable recovery, advocating the shift to digital technology and a greener tourism infrastructure, and rethinking tourism for the future are a few of these. Using the initial lessons learned from the crisis to create a more sustainable and resilient tourism industry for the future, this paper offers policy recommendations to lessen the effects of COVID-19 on tourism and aid in recovery (OECD, 2020). According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), nations that adhere to cleanliness regulations may begin a normalization process in the tourism industry as early as 2021. One of the most significant contributors to the economies of many nations is the tourist industry and it would take a few years for tourism to return to its old days as a sector (WTOa, 2020; IMF, 2020).
Increased inspections, more incentives provided by the government to tourism businesses, promotion of economic support programs, and making these monies available to small and medium-sized businesses were all necessary for the tourism businesses. The ‘Covid-19 Safe Enterprise’ Hygiene and Sanitation Training required for schools, businesses, and comprehensive plans and planning implemented to ensure prompt openings in the education and tourism and hospitality industries globally. With the curfews imposed by the states after the

contagious disease and increasing cases, there have been many innovations in online education during the home education period (Radha et al., 2020).

VIRTUAL REALITY

During the Covid-19 period, many students made a forced return to their countries and could not return to their schools for a long time. In this period, educators had to produce creative solutions for the development of their students. In the tour guiding lesson, the lesson teacher gave a creative task to the students from their home country. According to the rules (by observing the mask and distance requirements), the historical places in the region were videotaped, the video was recorded by adhering to certain points, it was not necessary to make a narrated presentation and share it on the school's social media channel. Applications such as Virtual Reality tools were supplied by the school in courses such as e-tourism, marketing, etc. This gave students different experiences. If Virtual Reality tools continue to disperse rapidly in this way, they will take their place in schools and trainings and will be used frequently in tour guiding and applied lessons (such as housekeeping). In addition, applied silver service video shoots about waitresses, training modules about bartending and bartender should also be planned by schools to focus on practice.

Enterprises have the chance to learn from and collaborate with a variety of project partners, including universities or research departments, as part of the ‘Digital Innovation Hubs," a strategies to support SMEs in the process of digitization and innovation (Rissola and Sorvik, 2018). As a result, information can be shared in many different industries, including e-tourism, industrial security, robotics and artificial intelligence, and others (Mich, 2020). VR has the potential to give visitors and consumers life-changing experiences and memories, regardless of the type of SME, hotel or tourist attraction, ski resort, museum, or theme park (Godovyk et al., 2022). Some people may view VR as a tool to visit lodgings, vacation spots, or attractions before physically visiting a certain region when relating it to tourism (For example: the American Museum of Natural History). Visitors with these virtual tours can learn about the time of the dinosaurs and one of their most renowned representatives, the tyrannosaurus rex. where visitors can also interact with interactive features, fossils, and other common museum exhibits (Egger, 2020). Google on the other hand, also encourages its users (both hoteliers and guests) to publish & connect 360 photos by ‘Street view option’. GoogleMaps 360 degree is a kind of virtual hotel tour that allows the hoteliers upload (support.google.com/maps) different attractive pictures of some hotel areas and it also allows guests to upload some pictures about their experiences.

Nowadays, users can access data on every hotel that Google is aware of using the Google Hotels service. Online travel agencies (OTAs), other hotel metasearch engines, business ties between the hotel and Google, paid ads, and other factors may have contributed to this awareness. Hotel descriptions, reviews, location information, and price details are a few examples of the kind of information that is provided. Users of Google Hotels can also make direct room reservations on the site, eliminating the need for potential guests to ever leave Google. The booking process is substantially streamlined as a result (Hotel Tech Report, 2022). Today, in this competitive environment, every tourism student must experience such activities in different deparments of the hotels where they have to train to fill the internship documents.

LMS (LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS) AND HYBRID LEARNING

During the Covid-19 epidemic, schools and colleges increasingly embraced both GSuite for education and Microsoft Teams to successfully move regular classes online. Edmodo, Blackboard, and MoodleCloud are more LMSs that have been implemented as a part of blended learning (Darius et al., 2021). The tools which are used by students and institutions depends on their need, cost, usability, and functionality. Today, students can take their classes online at several universities. These are chosen by students who choose to enroll in part-time classes. This gives them scheduling flexibility and removes the requirement for campus travel. Many, if not all, colleges have been compelled to move all of their courses online using LMS systems that are packaged as Software as a Service (SaaS) due to the pandemic problem with Covid-19 (Berking and Gallagher, 2013). Hybrid learning, commonly referred to as blended learning, is a teaching strategy that combines digital media and technology with traditional instructor-led classroom activities to provide students greater freedom to modify their educational experiences (Singh et al., 2021). Learning can be done face-to-face in a classroom with an instructor, online or both by hybrid learning. With hybrid learning, instruction takes place online in a way that gives the learner control over the direction and speed of their engagement with the material. Online and in-person learning are complementary, resulting in a completely integrated learning environment (Zhao, 2019).

It has been reported by many researchers that teachers are more familiar with distance education technologies in the post-Covid-19 period and many schools have their own educational and information portals (Saboowa and Manghirmalani Mishra, 2021). These portals are platforms that bring together the teachers who represent the school and the students who are the tourism professionals of the future. These portals are getting richer content (such as announcements open to use of visual and smart boards, projects, online recording exams and assingments, turnitin check and sharing the theoretical lessons with powerpoint or similar presentation files in the classroom with screenshare, recording the lesson and uploading it in system, open book exam in the classroom where the e-book is uploaded etc.) and easier to use day by day. Login to these systems with applications, editing, involving the student in the event, giving live lessons and attending meetings via collaborative digital platforms (eg Google Meets, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom) are now normalized online education applications (Jacques et al., 2021).

The power of blended learning methods lies in their ability to improve the student experience. Studies have shown 'blended learning' reduces failure rates, improves learning, and boosts engagement (Poon, 2012; Buraimoh et al., 2021). Learning management systems (LMS), in-class response systems (such as bigbluebutton, zoom meeting, microsoft teams etc.), adaptive learning platforms, tablets, smartphones, learning analytics etc. are the tools and technologies of blended learning (Talib, 2021). Video is one of the most common technology used in blended learning (Castro, 2019). For example, flipped classrooms require students to review lecture materials prior to class. Most often this involves teachers or trainers recording short video lectures that typically include a screen recording of slides, a webcam recording of the teacher, a video of a demonstration or a combination of the three. The video is typically then shared with students through a Video CMS (content management system) or LMS (Al-Ataby, 2021; Talib, 2021). On the other hand, it is now a scientific fact that programs such as MasterChef increase the interest in gastronomy education. It is frequently seen that students develop themselves every day depending on new trends in order to demonstrate their skills on sites such as instagram, twitter and facebook, prepare video CVs for sites such as LinkedIn and create youtube channels (Fouts, 2009; Şimşek and Güner, 2021).

Positivity is necessary for the new normal period of tourism education. The more optimistic the outlook, the more adaptive and ready instructors will be to employ the hybrid learning strategy for their professional development in the post-pandemic age, where in-person instruction and classroom contact will only be done when necessary (Kattiyapornpong et al., 2022). Kattiyapornporn et al. (2022) research suggest that in-service teachers who have a positive attitude towards online learning, work management, online interaction, and learning flexibility are more likely to adapt to hybrid learning. Online platforms offer a variety of gastronomic tourism options and contributions to regional places. Additionally, local internet platforms provide a wider range and more distinctive gastronomic tourist experiences, such as real food experiences, community involvement and benefits, individualized cultural learning with locals, and social aspects of food that help local communities (Kattiyapornpong et al., 2022).

Tourism academics, who are experts in their fields such as Front Office and Marketing teachers, are constantly renewing themselves on how different digital channels can be integrated into tourism education. The most common tourism and hospitality programs used for business-customer-oriented strategies such as information technology, total quality management (TQM), supply chain management (SPM) and customer relationship management (CRM) are Fidelio and Opera (Dagfous and Barkhi, 2009). However, due to reasons: the increasing demand for online platforms, the price balance, the options offered by the channels to educational institutions, etc. alternative channels have started to be preferred in the tourism sector. Elektra, one of these channels, not only makes a difference with its cloud based system, but also supports the training of future tourism professionals with the free education opportunities it offers to schools (ElektraWeb, 2020).

In marketing training, academics have to keep up with new trends every day. Managing the campaings on the business pages of sites such as booking.com (by extranet), Holidaycheck or on TripAdvisor (marketing and reviewexpress properties in the page management) channels are becoming more useful for businesses day by day (Diaz and Rodrigues, 2018). Because of the new normal in education demands it, students should also improve themselves in this regard and gain skills in taking care of guest reviews and feedbacks, measuring the service quality, communicating effectively with guests online, and increasing the profitability and productivity of the hotel or just the opposite result (Ruytenbeek et al., 2021). The ability to integrate many marketing channels on platforms such as HotelRunner with the application programming interface (API) method and to make some moves such as price, day and discount simultaneously with all channels will take students one step further in new normal tourism education (Yurtlu, 2021; Girgen et al., 2022). Elektraweb also offers educational videos on Udemy, one of the largest online education platforms. Participants who complete the training set,

which includes over 100 videos, are given the "Elektraweb Training Certificate" free of charge. Another advantage for international schools with students from different countries is that the trainings are given in 5 languages other than Turkish. For more than 4000 hotels using Elektra, employment of certified personnel with program information will be facilitated, and a brand new window will be opened in the career planning of tourism professionals (https://www.udemy.com/course/elektraweb).

The tourism sector has been greatly affected in the Covid-19 period in terms of both robotics and software and the use of information and technology by the personnel. In addition to systems such as POS system and mail order, the use of contactless cards and, for example, QR systems have become widespread in hotels and in the field of F&B (food and beverage). Besides these programs, it is no longer surprising to see a robot working as comi in restaurants, or as suitcases in airports and in the tourism sector.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND OTHER APPLICATIONS

The hotels always in search of attracting customers and making a difference. For example: Marriot Protea Hotel in 2017 had installed the Pokemon Go game in hotel and adopted it by google maps and allowed guests to catch pokemons with their phones in different areas of hotel to attract more families (https://protea.marriott.com/catch-all-the-customers-with-pokemon-go/). The tourism sector has been greatly affected in the Covid-19 period in terms of both robotics and software and the use of information and technology by the personnel. In addition to systems such as POS system and mail order, the use of cameras to measure temperature and items become very popular during Covid-19 as well as the sanitation and air pure machines, contactless credit cards and QR systems have become widespread in hotels and in the field of accommodation and food and beverage. (Sherma et al., 2017). Besides these programs, it is no longer surprising to see a robot working in the tourism sector. Even the blockchain technology and cryptocurrency become part of tourism sector and is an acceptable payment in many countries today (Treiblmaier et al., 2021). Artificial intelligence such as mobile and voice-activated assistants (like Microsoft Cortana, Google Home, Amazon Alexa and Apple Siri) that give visitors a simple and straightforward way to engage with hotels are currently the biggest opportunity (and the main emphasis area for the majority of hotels). The transfer is simple and enticing because people are already used to getting news and advice from digital platforms; familiarity always helps users get beyond the most frequent barriers to technology adoption (Kepuska and Bohouta, 2018). Guests have voice control over the TV, lights, music, and temperature in their rooms (with settings remembered for future visits). After Covid-19 many hotels including Marriot International Inc. developed their systems (for rooms music systems, room service orders, QR payments etc.) and adopted the applications to decrease contact, increase satisfaction and comfort and improve the quality (Sharma et al., 2021). They can use room service and make requests of the hotel staff. Wall displays with touchscreen interfaces and digital room assistants are two more in-room gadgets that are gaining popularity. Starfleet (2018) according to their research shares that over time, these robotic additions such as butlers and concierges to hospitality guest services teams, whether resembling Star Wars droids or lifelike humanoids, may come to play a valuable role in enhancing the guest experience.

RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this study is to produce a scientific resource on Cyprus's new normals of tourism education. This study was conducted with the aid of a qualitative research methodology. Interviews with twelve academics in tourism education field were conducted online and in person. While choosing academics, it was taken into consideration that they have industry experience and give practical lessons because the future of tourism is practice, adaptation to technology and digitalization. In scientific research, qualitative investigations are used to better understand the characteristics that provide meaning to people's perceptions and viewpoints of various phenomena. In another sense, it is a method for understanding social phenomena by deciphering the intentions and interpretations that people attach to their deeds (Karatas, 2017).

The second research method in the research is the examination of scientific articles on the subject on the internet and by various researchers using the literature review method (Snyder, 2019). There is no set sample size for qualitative investigations, therefore the researcher typically only has access to a limited sample size, saving both money and time (Baltaci, 2019). Suneeth et al. (2021) in their research, applied a similar research method technique on educational institutions in their country. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate to examine the perspective of tourism educators and industry professionals on the future of tourism education in the post-COVID-19 era (Mei, 2017; Tiwari et al., 2021). The main problem of the study is finding answer to 'What is the new normal of tourism education?' question. The researcher preferred the easy access method and

conducted interviews with the volunteer participants. Qualitative data were analyzed with descriptive content. Research reliability was ensured with the categories, sub-categories and codes created as a result of the interviews of the researchers. The codings were created with the open coding method, together with the processing of the data. The collected data were examined in detail with this method and subtitles were created as shared in table 1.

Table 1 Sub-problems, themes and codes

SUB-PROBLEMS	THEMES	CODES
What are the applications of tourism facilities during and post Covid-19?	**1. Tourism sector applications**	VR - Virtual Reality API based software systems HotelRunner TripAdvisor (reviewexpress) Booking (extranet) Artificial intelligence
What are the applications of universities during and post Covid-19?	**2. Tourism education applications**	Hybrid / BL – Blended Learning LMS & In-class response systems (Zoom meeting, Microsoft teams, Google meet) Creative teaching
How will tourism and education sectors integrate themselves into new normal changes?	**3. Tourism and education sectors integration**	Use of VR in sector EurhoChrie and Eurhodip Competitions API based software systems Google 360 degree hotel service

FINDINGS

People around the world have been dealing with unusual conditions in tourism and education sector since the year 2020 began. In addition to limiting physical contact, the COVID-19 pandemic epidemic has had a particularly negative impact on the leisure and tourism sector as a whole. Travel restrictions have had a significant impact on both tourism service providers and individual tourists, who are no longer physically able to travel or can only do so under very severe guidelines. The education sector has also been affected by these negativities. Many alternative education models (such as distance education, blended learning etc.) have emerged, and educational institutions have strengthened their LMS systems.

Research participants were selected from tourism industry professionals who has role in education sector and has been selected among people who use Artificial intelligence and VR - Virtual Reality, API based software systems such as HotelRunner, Online feedback and marketing sites such as TripAdvisor and Booking, Hybrid and Blended Learning with LMS & in-class response systems such as Zoom meeting, Microsoft teams, Google meet etc. The demographic data of research participants shown in Table 2 follows as:

Table 2 Demographic data of research participants

No	M/F	Age (n)	Education	Field	District	Years of experiences by sector
R1	M	33	MSc	Marketing, Front Office	Kyrenia	3 years in education : 9 years in tourism sector
R2	M	32	PhD	HK, F & B Front Office	Kyrenia	3 years in education : 10 years in tourism
R3	F	46	MSc	F & B	Kyrenia	15 years in education : 10 years in tourism
R4	F	47	PhD	HRM	Kyrenia	20 years in education : 7 years in tourism
R5	M	31	MSc	Gastronomy	Kyrenia	1 years in education: 13 years in tourism
R6	F	29	MSc	Gastronomy, F & B	Kyrenia	1 years in education: 5 years in tourism

R7	M	52	PhD	GM, F & B, Front Office	Nicosia	17 years in education: 30 years in tourism
R8	M	30	MSc	Gastronomy	Nicosia	2 years in education: 6 years in tourism
R9	M	43	PhD	Front Office, HRM	Famagusta	10 years in education : 10 years in tourism
R10	F	42	PhD	HK, Front Office	Famagusta	10 years in education: 5 years in tourism
R11	F	31	MSc	Online Marketing	Famagusta	2 years in education : 10 years in tourism
R12	F	37	MSc	Marketing	Famagusta	10 years in education : 7 years in tourism

Researchers were selected from various parts of Cyprus, including 6 Kyrenia, 2 Nicosia and 4 Famagusta, and the educational status of the researchers is 7 masters degrees (MSc) and 5 doctora degrees (PhD). Although there are new entrants to the education sector, the researchers are of 7 millennials and 5 Gen. X generations who have at least 5 years experience in the tourism industry in several positions including Marketing, Front Office, HK (Housekeeping), F & B (Food and Beverage), HRM (Human Resources Management) and Gastronomy. One of the instructors who is participant (R2) of the reseach, in his blended learning courses record videos for use as supplemental course material, designed to help students with more creative challenging concepts (such as Housekeeping Challenge adopted by Girgen during Covid-19 period) or for those that wish to deepen their understanding of the subject (Eurhodip, 2021).

Alternatively, teachers can also record tutorials to introduce students to equipment that will be used in classes. Competitions organized by organizations that connect educational institutions such as Eurhodip have enabled many schools to improve on tourism education online during the Covid-19 period (https://www.eurhodip.com/competitions/). For Example: the video competitions such as #taste2connect competition is a good example of integrated tourism product, as one of the participant (R6) has participated (Ferit, 2021).

One of the Front office teacher (R1) participated in EuroChrie online hotel management simulation competition about the investment (buying materials), cost control, employee and guest satisfaction with setting the right job contiditions, budgeting, marketing hotel rooms, yield management, profitability and critical decision making with his students to improve his students qualification and skills during Covid-19 period. This competition actually is open for many other course educators such as management, marketing and sales, cost and yield courses etc. Anaya (2022) explained the competition as: teams of three to five students and an instructor will compete in two separate competitive sets of a simulation challenge (with one hotel operated by each school). The universities will focus on Market Performance, Financials, Guest Satisfaction, and Associate Engagement when making strategic decisions each week to strengthen the position of their hotels in their competitive set. The top hotels from each competing set will be evaluated side by side at the conclusion of the four-week tournament using a range of performance criteria, and the winning team will be announced. The students will also be earning their Certificate in Hospitality Business Acumen while competing, thanks to online learning modules, a knowledge test, and weekly web conferences (Anaya, 2022).

In HRM (Human Resources Management) department as well as its educators (as R4 & R9) in universities, the certification of personnel through online trainings and interviews in recruitment methods in which educators are included, was the another goal. In education and tourism sector, many businesses preferred social media meeting channels such as Google and Zoom to reduce contact.

Many researchers stated in their study that there will be serious changes in the tourism sector after the Covid-19 pandemic and drew attention to certain practices. Robots with artificial intelligence are predicted to eventually take the place of people in several departments when it comes to hiring. Additionally, it was mentioned to the attendees that the tourism industry might hire digital workers in the future. Experts in the subject instruct students through distance education, recognized training, and training offered by nearby colleges. The participants generally agreed that, in the present, distance learning was safer than in-person instruction (Guden et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021).

Other participants who have Front Office experiences (n=4) emphasized the importance of similar front office applications and emphasized that today's hotel management programs should turn to online-based software that can keep up with the speed of technology. These technologies should also be transferred to students through education. The participants who have Marketing experiences (n=3) drew attention to the importance of online sales and marketing programs and digitalization today and should be addressed in every school that provides tourism education. In support of this, participants gave theses following anecdotes;

'Hotel management programs should be systems that have an online cloud system and accelerate hotels.' (R7)
'It is essential that future sector employees, namely tourism students, learn these technologies.' (R9)
'Hospitality programs should be developed by students in such a way that they can receive education on online platforms.' (R10)
'Online sales are the most effective weapons of hotels today.' (R11)
'The importance of online marketing programs should be addressed in every school that provides tourism education.' (R12)
Research participants (n=2) emphasized that many similar applications, such as the gastronomy example (in which R6 participated), could also be done in the restaurant and bar areas in the F & B department. In support of this, participants gave theses following anecdotes;
'Thanks to the techniques and ingredients shared in the applied trainings, the online classes become more practical day by day.' (R3)
'Today, the importance of internet and online sharing is very important for gastronomy.' (R5)
All research participants (n=12) accepted that "the hybrid education system in tourism is the new normal. It is a must for all tourism education schools to have the capacity to teach online. It is the common view of the participants that the internet speed and technological competence should not be disrupted in online education".

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

As the researcher stated, this situation, which the whole world is facing and is still living in certain regions, is especially challenging for businesses because it is an unknown entity, although it is reduced by vaccines and PCR control (Mladenovic et al., 2022). Suggestions for adaptation to the new normal after the Covid-19 pandemic made by professionals related to Tourism Education are as follows:
The importance of establishing a stronger communication bond between managers and employees in both sectors, educators and students, realizing open and effective communication and transparent management, and thus creating employee loyalty was emphasized.
Provision of protective medical equipment is recommended for businesses to be ready for training in a manner that adheres to hygiene rules and maintains social distance in emergency situations, and that the capacity is adjusted accordingly, and for emergencies in the areas of transportation and socialization.
Introducing gradual working hours and establishing a working from home (remote working) environment according to the nature of the work, providing trainings for remote and virtual work and reconsidering the business strategies and activities and improving the use of performance in online platforms for both tourism and education (hybrid etc.) sector was also emphasized.

Sectors such as the tourism and education sector are among the sectors most affected by the epidemic, and every sector that takes the exam in the process has to constantly renew itself. It is not known how serious this epidemic will become in the future or whether it will explode rapidly. The unknown creates fear and panic, and businesses need to be as focused as possible to deal with this situation proactively. In this context, sector managers of enterprises should not wait until they reach a point of no return. All businesses should take long-term and health-focused measures, be safe and careful, and implement long-term strategies.

The applications about the unpredictale period during Covid-19 period by the education and tourism sector were all a part of the 'new normal'. Academics must always revise their curriculums to incorporate these ideas, train in real crisis situations and develop skills to manage under the existing pressures of the nature of our industry as well as the 'new normal' ones.It is very important to update the existing information and catch the trends daily especially in tourism education.

There are dizzying developments and advances in scientific and technical fields in the world. Now, knowledge and technology have become the most valuable capital in the changing world (Szymkowiak et al., 2021). Obtaining, processing and finally producing information from data is only possible with an effective, efficient and high quality education system that does not ignore the developing technology. Institutions of education and the tourism sector providing tourism education must show the necessary importance to tourism education. The

subject is to keep up with the change, and the solution is to adapt to the technology in the ever-changing world. However, only with the support of tourism and educational institutions and innovative academics (both in the education and managerial positions in tourism sector) the future tourism professionals can find a place for themselves in this competitive order.

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TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: REVIEW AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

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ABSTRACT

Currently, a significant number of countries are betting on tourism as an economic activity on which to base their economic development, given that most international organizations recognize that tourism can become a tool for economic development, especially in less developed countries. However, on the part of the scientific literature there is no defined current on the capacity of tourism to become an instrument with which to improve the living conditions of the population residing in receiving countries. In this sense, in the scientific literature there are numerous investigations that have dealt with analyzing the relationship between tourism and economic growth, a large part of these works coinciding that there is a causal relationship between both variables, but the same does not happen when the relationship between tourism and economic development. Among works that have analyzed this relationship, there is no uniform current on the relationships that exist between tourism and economic development; therefore, to deepen the knowledge about the relationship between tourism and economic development, the objective of this work is to analyze the relationships that may exist between these two variables and if there are factors that influence this relationship. In this context, this work highlights a comprehensive review of a large number of peer-reviewed articles that analyze the relationship between tourism and economic development. The analysis carried out shows that tourism can be configured as an instrument of economic development.

Key Words: tourism, economic development, theorical framework, comprehensive review.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the tourism sector has positioned itself as one of the most important sectors thanks to the positive influence it has on the economic growth of countries. In fact, there are numerous investigations in the scientific literature on the relationship between tourism and economic growth, with the conclusion that supports the hypothesis of tourism-driven economic growth predominating (Balaguer and Cantavella-Jordá, 2002; Lee and Brahmasrene, 2013; Tang and Tan, 2015).

Additionally, tourism can also be characterized as a tool that acts as a development of the quality of life and well-being of the population, that is, it can be conceived as a means to improve economic and human development (Athanasopoulou, 2013; Croes and Vanegas, 2008; Woo et al., 2015). Because of this, international organizations see tourism as a crucial element for economic development and poverty alleviation in developing countries. Specifically, it is the effects generated by tourism, such as the creation of foreign currency, the generation of jobs and obtaining thanks to the flow of visitors, which lead to improving the quality of life of the resident population, serving many countries developing countries as a means to alleviate poverty (Khan et al., 2020; Sharma et al., 2020).

At the same time, in the present century a new current has been generated that questions the usefulness of tourism as a development engine (Cárdenas-García et al., 2015), since they have found cases in which tourism has not functioned as a means to improve socioeconomic conditions. In this regard, it is important to highlight the importance of taking on the characteristics and factors (whose identification is therefore vital) that seem to be key in each of the territories so that the contribution of tourism to the country of destination results in an improvement in economic development.

In contrast to economic growth, the current literature lacks an appreciable number of empirical articles that analyze the relationship between the tourism sector and economic development that can compete with the economic one, although the number is growing little by little.

Therefore, the objective of the present work is to carry out a review of those empirical works and their results regarding the relationship between tourism and economic development to determine if there is a common current in this regard, or not, previously trained in a theoretical framework. to understand the relationship between variables.
Analyzing the influence of the tourism sector on economic development, as well as identifying the factors that occur in each territory for its success, is key for countries to be able to formulate social and economic policies focused on tourism, since they identify it as a favorable instrument. of economic development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the literature, certain articles have begun to be made known that support the idea that economic development is driven by the influence of tourist activity. Although this idea is not accepted by all, since there are authors who question the success of tourism as a tool for economic development.

On the one hand, there is a group of authors in the scientific literature that advocates the idea that tourism not only benefits economic growth, but that it is capable of contributing to something more general such as economic development, thus perceiving the sector tourism as a relevant instrument to achieve economic development (Cooper et al., 2008; Sharpley and Telfer, 2002, among others). Therefore, they identify that tourism has a series of features that help improve the living conditions of the population in the destination territories, achieving improvements in the culture of society or their own well-being (Rosentraub and Joo, 2009).

On the other hand, the previous idea is not shared by another group of authors, who have argued that tourism is not a way to achieve economic development, because in some countries it has entailed high costs to be attractive to visitors. , thus limiting the ability to attract to the detriment of other sectors, difficulty in controlling local resources and the impact on the natural environment, etc. (Kingsbury, 2005; Sahli, 2007; UNDP, 2011, among others). In fact, Andereck et al. (2007) find negative impacts caused by large crowds of people, with the corresponding noise pollution that this entails, as well as traffic congestion.

However, despite the existence of these opposing positions, it should be noted that most of these studies lack empirical methodology, thus being characterized by being rather theoretical, where they have explained the relationship that exists between the variables under investigation.

Regardless of these currents, everything seems to indicate that the characteristics of each country significantly influence the capacity of tourism to generate economic development. Thus, for example, according to Ranis et al. (2000), Ecuador has been establishing a series of measures aimed at improving national education, allocating a larger budget for this, as well as increasing investment in other sectors, which may lead to a greater attractiveness of the country for visitors.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The purpose pursued by this work is to analyze the different empirical works on economic development and tourism and identify the determining factors in each territory that promote tourism as a tool for economic and social development for the country of destination.

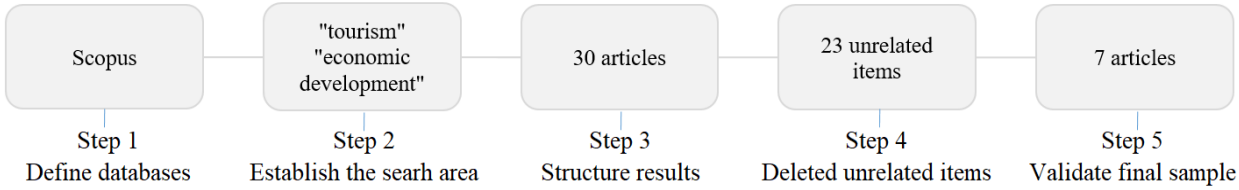
Search strategy
The search for relevant empirical papers was carried out in January 2023. For this, the database that includes the most prestigious scientific journals, Scopus, was searched. To carry out this search, a series of keywords such as

"tourism" and "economic development" were introduced, both for the titles, abstracts and keywords. In order to adequately screen and obtain representative results, those articles of purely theoretical content were excluded, therefore remaining those of empirical analysis but which also identified determining factors or characteristics that occur in each territory so that tourism favors economic development.

Data collection process

The articles selected in a first phase were filtered using the PRISMA method (figure 1), consisting of a set of items based on obtaining evidence for the development of a systematic review through a checklist and a flowchart. (Sousa et al., 2022). The review included about 30 valid articles, of which 7 were selected in the present work.

Figure 1
Collection and selection process



RESULTS

This section gives way to the review of the articles found that study the relationship between economic development and tourism empirically.

The capacity of tourism as a key instrument for economic development has been analyzed in some investigations, and although the number of works is rather small, more and more studies are emerging. In these studies, other non-economic indicators have been included on certain occasions, although it should be noted that they are closely related to tourism and economic development, since they are indicators of quality of life and well-being (table 1).

Table 1
Analysis of the relationship between tourism and economic development

Authors	Destinations analyzed	Determinant factors
Cárdenas-García et al. (2015)	144 countries	Level of development
Croes (2012)	Central America	Education and health
Gunter et al. (2018)	Latin America	Insularity
Meyer and Meyer (2014)	Vaal Triangle (South Africa)	Territorial location
Pedrana (2013)	Not applicable	Infrastructure and transport
Ridderstaat et al. (2016)	Aruban island	Conversion of the national economy
Van der Schyff et al. (2019)	South Africa	Event celebration

In view of the results obtained in the selected works, it can be seen how certain circumstances or characteristics of the territories make the relationship between tourism and economic development beneficial. Thus, it is seen how the good territorial location of the Vaal Triangle, south of Johannesburg along the Vaal River, plays a strategic role that translates into an opportunity to attract tourism and therefore economic development, in the study by Meyer and Meyer (2014). Continuing with factors that intervene in the success of the relationship between tourism and economic development, the case of South Africa stands out (Van der Schyff et al., 2019) where, thanks to the celebration of the Soccer World Cup in 2010, sees multiplied its tourism, which resulted in a substantial improvement in the economic and social environment. They also point out that if the years of schooling, life expectancy and per capita income were increased, the territory would more easily see an improvement in economic development.

For the study on 144 developed and developing countries, Cárdenas-García et al. (2015) determined that tourism activity contributed to improving the living conditions of residents, but only in those countries that already had high conditions of economic development, based on the quality of infrastructure, trade in goods and services,

age of the population, electricity production from oil, gas and coal, characteristics of the population, geographic location, etc.

Ridderstaat et al. (2016) investigate the case of the island of Aruba, a territory that since 1986 has become one of the main Caribbean destinations for tourists, finding a two-way relationship. Said island has some previous qualities that have allowed to improve the quality of life, for example, the conversion of the national economy into an oil industry within a tourism-oriented nucleus, having the highest standards of living. Likewise, Croes (2012) finds a feedback relationship in Nicaragua between tourism and human development, although he does not determine a positive relationship in the case of Costa Rica. The Nicaraguan government has carried out policies by which the population has free access to education and health, which has resulted in improving the quality of life of the inhabitants, thus having certain preconditions when it comes to understanding the relationship between tourism and human development, in this case, which will result in a positive impact on economic development.

Insularity is another characteristic that plays an important role, as Gunter et al. (2018) in their study on a group of South American countries. The islands are highly attractive due to their coastlines and rich landscapes, both of which are highly valued by visitors.

Finally, as Pedrana (2013) indicates, there are certain factors that help the tourism sector as an engine of economic development. The destination area must have easy access, so infrastructure and transportation is essential; the local level of education, as well as the culture and traditions are strong attractions; Lastly, internal investment plays an important role in developing the industrial fabric of the place of destination.

CONCLUSIONS

Research in the existing literature on tourism has focused mainly on studying its relationship with economic growth. In this regard, there are many works that empirically study the causal relationship between both variables.
On the other hand, with regard to economic development, the volume of work is much smaller, with more theoretical research predominating. In this sense, it cannot be affirmed that there is a common current that determines a concrete result of the relationship between the variables. However, this work has carried out a review of the literature of a large number of articles, identifying from among those selected, the conditions or circumstances that occur in the territories and that seem to be determining factors or factors that favor tourist activity as a motor of tourism. economic and social development in developed and developing countries.

Following this line, the geographical location, the policies to support tourism and economic activity (provision of a greater fund for education, infrastructure, transport, business fabric, etc.), the possession of a coastal area, the high standard of living of the population, among others, seem to be qualities that benefit countries in order to increase socioeconomic development.

Finally, a general conclusion can be drawn regarding economic development. Tourism is not a tool that has an immediate effect to generate economic development, but in certain places it can have a great impact depending on the characteristics of the destination territory.

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THE RELATIONHSIPS AMONG DESTINATION FASCINATION, TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE AND RE-PATRONIZING INTENTION IN NIGHT TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

The night-time activity is not only a crucial part of the urban economy but provides unique destination experiences for visitors. Night festivals with lighting has been valued by scholars which has the uniqueness to set up destination branding. Studies on fascination have thus far focused on natural attractions, the effects of destination fascination in night tourism remain unknown. This paper identifies hypothetical relationships among destination fascination, transformative experience, and re-patronizing intention concerning a night festival from a stimulus-organism-response theory perspective. A questionnaire survey was conducted at the Yanshui Beehive Fireworks Festival, Taiwan, and 371 completed questionnaires were collected. A positive relationship among tourists' destination fascination, transformative experience, and re-patronizing intention was discovered in night tourism. This is the first study to examine the effect of fascination in night tourism. This study offers guidance and insights into night tourism from the perspective of the SOR theory.

Key Words: Local residents and culture, Self-assurance, Disorienting dilemma, Joy, Festival, Stimulus-organism-response model

INTRODUCTION

Night tourism has been valued in recent years. Night pilgrimage, lighting and light festivals, the rights of hospitality employees, gentrification, urban commodification, and the relations between tourists and locals have been discussed by tourism scholars (Eldridge & Smith, 2019). Night provides sensuality, mystery, and intimacy elements for tourists to consume night tourism products (Chen et al., 2020). Night expresses something different about the ways destinations are experienced by tourists. The expansion of street lighting offers evening leisure and nightlife entertainment for tourists. Tourism industry also contributes to the process through organizes light night festivals or night entrance to cultural venues (Evans, 2012; Roberts and Eldridge, 2012; Shaw, 2018). However, discussion on how and why tourists become interested in night tourism needs to be further explored (Li et al., 2022a).

The concept of destination fascination is derived from attention restoration theory (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). Being in a restorative environment involves the following four characteristics: fascination, being away, extent, and compatibility. Scholars contended that tourism activities essentially involve being away, extent, and compatibility (Hsu et al. 2004; Jeng & Fesenmaier, 1998; Leask, 2010; Liu et al., 2017). Among the four elements, fascination is considered to most affect the destination restorative quality (Kirillova & Lehto, 2016; Lehto et al., 2017). Studies on fascination have thus far focused on natural attractions (Liu et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2020; Girish et al., 2021). Therefore, exploring how destination fascination can be applied in the night tourism field by employing quantitative methods is crucial.

Transformative travel experience has gradually valued by tourism scholars in recent years (Soulard et al., 2019; Cavender et al., 2020; Pung et al., 2020a; Pung et al., 2020b; Soulard et al., 2021). Scholars believe that transformative tourism allows individuals in a new environment, forces them to development new skills, faces challenging situations, and changes personal behaviors, lifestyle after travel (Phillips, 2019). Compared with other tourism activities, transformative tourism focuses on the changes in individual consumption patterns; and positive transformation in attitudes when interacting with others (Pung et al., 2020a; Pung et al., 2020b). Studies on transformative experience have thus analyzed through qualitative methods. Therefore, this study explores tourists' transformative experience in night tourism through quantitative survey.
The relationship between destination fascination and transformative experience has been valued in recent years. Kirillova et al. (2017a) pointed out that when tourists perceive the charm of natural landscapes and encounter wild animals during their journey, they can evoke peak experience and promote transformative experience. Zhang (2021) proposed that tourists from western have a high degree of novelty and fascination of the Pompeii ruins and Roman pillars which enhance transformative travel experiences. Bandyopadhyay and Nair (2019) also

found that India has spiritual and fascinated qualities for tourists from Western countries. By visiting Indian spiritual sightseeing spots, one can pursue self-identity, transformative experiences and enhance happiness.

Stimulus-organism-response (SOR) theory provides a functional framework for investigating festivals (Lee, 2022). It has been applied to explore the relationships among inputs, processes, and outputs involved in pleasure and arousal (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Future behavioural characteristics of consumers can be further analysed using SOR theory. Therefore, this study examined tourists' behaviour at a night festival from the perspective of SOR theory by exploring the associated stimuli (destination fascination), processes (transformative experience), and outputs (re-patronizing intention).

Favourable behavioural intention frequently represents customer conative loyalty. Customer loyalty is a crucial goal in the consumer marketing community because it is a key component for a company's long-term viability or sustainability (Chen & Chen, 2010). Studies have found the positive relationship between transformative experience and behavior intention in tourism, such as Lee and Jan (2018) believed that tourists can learn the value of the environment and construct positive attitudes towards the environment and behavior intentions in eco-tourism. Tsai (2021) found that tourists visit Jiuzhaigou can perceive well-being and personal meaning, which generate positive word-of-mouth and revisit intention. Furthermore, the positive relationship between destination fascination and behavior intention was found. Girish et al. (2021) pointed out that the destination fascination (friendliness, uniqueness) perceived by tourists visiting the Cayman Islands has a positive impact on future revisit intentions. Yang (2018) also found that the storytelling perceived by tourists, as well as the "attractiveness", "friendliness" and "uniqueness" of the attractions are all can positively influence future behavior intentions. Therefore, this study aims to explore the relationship among destination fascination, transformative experience, and re-patronizing intention in night tourism. Accordingly, the hypotheses were stated as follow.
H1: Destination fascination has a significant positive relationship with transformative experience in night tourism.
H2: Transformative experience has a significant positive relationship with re-patronizing intention in night tourism.
H3: Destination fascination has a significant positive relationship with transformative experience in night tourism.

METHODOLOGY

Instrumentation
Demographics and Travel Characteristics. The usual demographic variables, such as gender and marital status, were included in the survey to identify explanatory variable. The variables of travel characteristics were selected with reference to other relevant studies.

Destination fascination. The participants completed a self-reported 24-item questionnaire developed by Liu et al. (2017). Twenty-four items, including statements such as "This place could link with my life experiences" and "My curiosity toward the place is aroused while visiting the place", were listed, and visitors were asked to indicate their levels of agreement, from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)".

Transformative experience. Transformative travel experience was measured according to Soulard et al. (2021). Twenty-four items, including statements such as "As a result of this trip, I am more true to myself" and "This trip made me think about how I react when confronted with cultural differences", were listed and visitors were asked to indicate their levels of agreement, from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5).

Re-patronizing intention. Re-patronizing intention was measured according to Zhang et al. (2019). Four items, including statements such as "I will visit this festival again next time" and "I will recommend the festival to my friends and family", were listed and visitors were asked to indicate their levels of agreement, from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5).

Study Setting
Yanshui Beehive Fireworks Festival is the most prominent night event in southern Taiwan (Figure 1). According to local folklore, beehive fireworks originated in 1885 when an epidemic disease had caused a high daily death toll. The locals prayed to Guan Yu (the god of war) and asked for help. The procession lasted until dawn, by which time the epidemic was eradicated. Later generations continued this custom every year by running through the exploding fireworks on the night of the Lantern Festival and praying for good fortune. The festival consists

of a palanquin circuit around Yanshui town, with tens of thousands of visitors and local inhabitants clustered around the palanquins. When the palanquins reach the gate of a business, someone associated with that business sets up gun walls and lights the fuse. The gun wall consists of thousands of rockets that ignite all at the same time, creating a deafening, bee-like sound that fills the air as sparks fly in all directions (Tourism Bureau of Tainan City Government, 2020).



Figure 1 Yanshui Beehive Fireworks Festival (Housefun News, 2014)

The Sample

During the questionnaire survey, respondents were informed that the data were to be collected anonymously and only used for academic purposes. The on-site survey was conducted at Yanshui Beehive Fireworks Festival through purposive sampling. The population of this study was all visitors who participated in the Yanshui Beehive Fireworks Festival in 2023. This festival was held across various open public spaces in Yanshui; therefore, no database accurately describing the population size exists. A street-intercept survey was performed at the festival on 4-5 February 2023. Before conducting the actual survey, intercepted individuals were asked to confirm being aged 20 years or older and being visitors whose residence was outside of Yanshui town. A total of 400 formal questionnaires were distributed, and 371 valid questionnaires were obtained.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 24.0. The applied statistics included descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, and factor analysis. AMOS 24.0 was used to conduct a two-stage structural equation modeling procedure suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). First, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to examine psychometric properties of the measures. Subsequently, a general SEM technique was used to test the validity of the proposed model and the hypotheses.

RESULTS

The respondents

A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed and 371 valid responses were returned. Most of the respondents were married (52.5%), and 57.7 per cent of them were female. Most of the respondents were aged between 30 and 39 (36.1%). The results revealed that most of the attendees visited Yanshui Beehive Fireworks Festival by car (52%), and 38.8 per cent of respondents obtained information about Yanshui Beehive Fireworks Festival from their friends and relatives (Table 1).

Table 1 Demographic and travel characteristic of respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	%
Gender		
Female	214	57.7
Male	152	41.0
Other	5	1.3
Marital Status		
Single	169	37.8
Married	195	52.5
Other	36	9.7
Age group		
20-29	130	35

30-39	134	36.1
40-49	70	18.9
50-59	29	7.8
60-69	6	1.6
Over 70	2	0.5
Transportation used		
Car	193	52
Motorcycle	130	35
Bus	28	7.5
Walking	13	3.5
Taxi	7	1.9
Main information about the night festival		
Relatives & friends	144	38.8
Internet	90	24.3
Personal experience	80	21.6
Television	34	9.2
Magazine	22	5.9
Other	1	0.3

Destination fascination of visitors

The mean of items on the destination fascination scale are all greater than 3, with the highest scores of ″Sensory experiences offered by this place appeals me″ (mean = 4.09) and ″This place has hospitable and friendly local residents″ (mean = 4.02). The total reliability Cronbach's alpha of the scale is 0.90, and the reliability of the dimension is all higher than 0.77, indicating that the scale has acceptable reliability and meets the internal consistency requirements of the questionnaire (Table 3). In this study, the validity of the scale is further analyzed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). After 1 item was removed due to low factor loading, the scale indicates that the indicators are in line with the validation criteria (chi-square = 874.08, df = 224, GFI = 0.83, CFI = 0.87, AGFI = 0.79, and RMSEA = 0.08).

Transformative experience of visitors

The mean of the transformative experience scale items are all greater than 3, Among them, ″This trip made me think about the way I feel about cultures different from mine″ (mean = 3.93) and ″As a result of this trip, I gained new perspectives about the destination's local residents″(mean = 3.89) have the highest score. The total reliability Cronbach's alpha of the scale is 0.87, and the reliability of the dimension is all higher than 0.73, indicating that the scale has acceptable reliability and meets the internal consistency requirements of the questionnaire (Table 4). The scale validity through CFA is further analyzed in this study. After the disorienting dilemma dimension was removed due to low factor loading, the scales showed that the indicators were in line with the validation criteria (chi-square = 548.87, df = 132, GFI = 0.85 CFI = 0.90, AGFI = 0.81, and RMSEA = 0.08).

The relationship among destination fascination, transformative experience, and re-patronizing intention

The resulting data were analyzed by using AMOS software to conduct the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis (Figure 2). The multiple indices of model fit, including the *chi*-square statistic, the comparative fit index (CFI), Bollen's incremental fit index (IFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), were examined as recommended by a number of researchers (Bollen, 1989; Doll et al., 1994; Chin & Todd, 1995; Mueller, 1996). According to the analysis of results, all the indices of overall fits were acceptable (GFI = .77, AGFI = .74, CFI = .86, RMSEA = .06, and chi-square value = 2535.77, df = 977, $p > .001$).

The results revealed significant parameters for the path between destination fascination and transformative experience ($\beta = .82$, $p < .001$). The result was consistent with the statement of the Hypothesis 1. The results revealed significant parameters for the path between transformative experience and re-patronizing intention in night tourism ($\beta = .41$, $p < .05$). The result was consistent with the statement of the Hypothesis 2. However, there was a significant negative relationship between destination fascination and re-patronizing intention ($\beta = -.45$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 3 was therefore not supported.

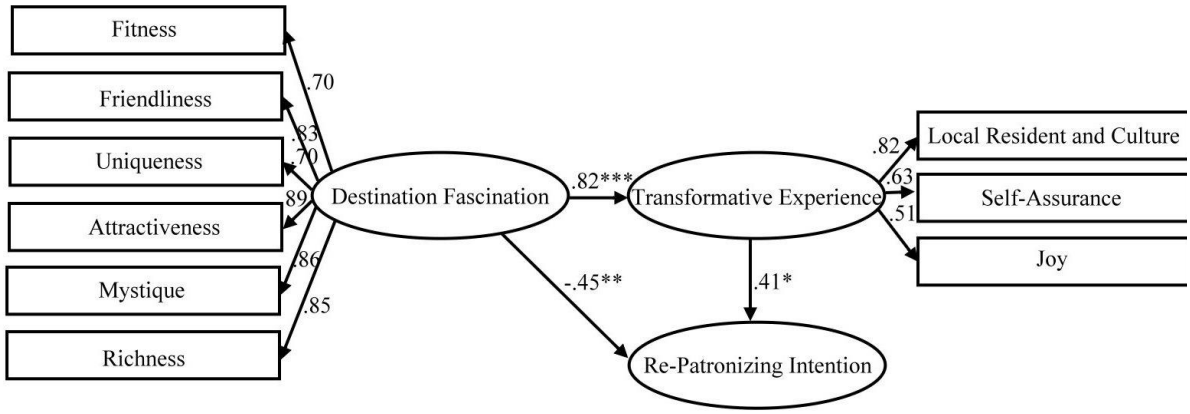

Figure 2 Estimates of structural model

CONCLUSION

In this study, a conceptual model comprising destination fascination, transformative experience, and re-patronizing intention from SOR perspective was established and applied it in night tourism. The majority of night tourism studies had not explored the fascination concept or established a tourist behavior model from a theoretical foundation. The present study considered the concept of destination fascination from the perspectives of transformative experience investigated the effects of these variables on re-patronizing intention by using SOR theory. To better understand the comprehensive meaning of destination fascination, this study operationalized destination fascination and transformative travel experience as second-order factors of fitness, friendliness, uniqueness, attractiveness, mystique, richness, local residents and culture, self-assurance, disorienting dilemma, and joy.

This study revealed that the stronger was a tourist's perception of the fascination of the night festival, the more positive was the tourist's transformative experience, indicating that the level of fascination was the key factor affecting whether the tourists' experienced local residents and culture, self-assurance, disorienting dilemma, and joy while visit the night festival. The results are similar to those of Kirillova et al. (2017a), Zhang (2021), Bandyopadhyay and Nair (2019). This study indicated that transformative travel experience contribute to re-patronizing intention, which was consistent with Lee and Jan (2018), Tsai (2021). Furthermore, destination fascination was discovered to be insignificant predictor of future behavior, which was inconsistent with previous studies. In these informal interviews with participants during the process of research, it was found that some visitors pointed out that the beehive firework activity has developed into a sizeable festival with many firework forts; the risk of dangerous explosions is ever-present. Most of the visitors considered Yanshui Beehive Fireworks Festival is the most fascinated and dangerous night festival in Taiwan, and they will not visit here again.

In this study, a model of tourists' experience, and behavioural response in the context of a night festival in Taiwan was conceived. The relationships among fascination, transformative experience, and future behaviour in other categories of night tourism, such as pilgrimage and night-time activities (drinking, eating, and other forms of entertainment), require further examination. Moreover, the study only measured attendees' perception during their visit. Future researchers should compare the difference between on-site and postevent attitudes and construct psychological models accordingly.

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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SERVICE QUALITY AND THE ROLE OF CUSTOMER CARE IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

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ABSTRACT

Ensuring customer loyalty, together with the ultimate effect on repurchasing by the customer, seems to be receiving a great amount of attention. This article begins with examining the concepts of customer loyalty, service quality as well as customer satisfaction. Customer loyalty with the ultimate effect of ensuring repurchasing by customers is a significant component that is important when it comes to in-service marketing. Loyal consumers that participate in recurring consumptions are the foundation of every successful industry. These concepts of service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty are connected to each other.

Key Words: Service quality, customer care, tourism, hospitality

INTRODUCTION

This study examines the effectiveness of service quality and customer care (SQCC) and their role in the tourism and hospitality industry. Literature review indicates that there is a dearth of research conducted in this area. The collection of knowledge produced by methodologically sound research is what gives an academic field its legitimacy and social acceptance (Fritz, 2020). This is also true for the field of tourism and hospitality. Research journals provide significant channels for information on the advancement of knowledge. Scholarly papers generate, distribute, and disseminate academic information (Wang, 2022). Reviewing preceding research papers might assist one to grasp what is known in a related industry (Hart, 2018). The literature review establishes a solid ground for new information as well as the growth of the ideology (Choong & Leung, 2022). One of the main areas of study in tourism and hospitality inquiries that has drawn a lot of interest from researchers as well as academics is service quality and customer care (SQCC). Since the first theories of service quality were developed during the mid-1980s (Oliver, 1981; Gronroos, 1984; Parasuraman et al., 1985), there has been a sizable amount of literature on service quality and customer care (SQCC), and it is still an active research area (Tra & Ha, 2021; Misischia et al., 2022; Zygiaris, Hameed, Alsubaie & Rehman, 2022). Following suit, this article examines the effectiveness of SQCC and their role in the tourism and hospitality industry. Customer care is fundamental to a business's success because it fosters long-term recurring business and customer loyalty (Tien, Diem, Vu, Dung, Dat & Duc, 2021). Thus, for the tourism and hospitality sectors, service excellence and customer care continue to be a strategic asset and a key factor of success (Park & Jeong, 2019; Shyju, Singh, Kokkranikal, Bharadwaj & Antony, 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer satisfaction as well as service quality form the basis for service loyalty which is essential for the performance of companies in the tourism and hospital industry.

Service quality

In the realm of tourism and hospitality, one of the key elements that determine whether a business succeeds or fails is the quality of the service provided. This is because providing a service and performing well affects the quality of service, which in turn affects how satisfied guests are (Wantara & Irawati, 2021). The definition of quality is the degree of grandeur at a reasonable cost and the operational evaluation of consistency at a worthwhile charge (Kainthola, 2021). Quality service in the mass-producing market, for example, has consistently been the major factor influencing customer loyalty (Lee, Sun, Wu & Xiao, 2018). Many researchers

have thus been inspired by this above-mentioned shift toward benefit and profit segmentation to go on and analyse the tourism and hospitality sector's service quality (Liat, Mansori & Huei, 2014; Shyju, Singh, Kokkranika, Bharadwaj, Rai & Antoni, 2021; Wantara & Irawati, 2021).

One sector within the hospitality and tourism industry that is regarded as one of the leading contributors to economic growth is the hotel sector (Suprayitno & Heng, 2021). This owes to the fact hotels are an essential part of the tourism and hospitality sector, and they encourage these sectors to further aid families by generating money and jobs. The significance of hotels also stems from the fact that they satisfy the most fundamental need of visitors, namely accommodation (Prabhu, Abdulla & Ahmed, 2020). Additionally, guests in hotels can benefit from other services such as dining establishments, spas, lounges, tennis courtyards and private pools, turning their stay into an experience rather than just a basic one. As a result, they should be treated accordingly and supplied with excellent service, as the hospitality offered by the hotel reflects and sets the tone for the kind of relationship that will form between the guest and the host, which is the hotel. Due to their role in receiving and assisting guests, hotel employees are essential to the operation of the hotel industry (Anwar & Shukur, 2015). The way they handle the guests who are paying customers reflects on the company's values and standards. For instance, unsatisfactory service quality from hotel staff will have a detrimental effect and decrease guests' likelihood of returning to the same hotel. However, if hotel employees are successful in providing their customers with high quality service in this instance, visitors will have a pleasant stay and may return (Sultan, Ahmed, Jafar, Murtaza & Gardi, 2020).

The hotel industry's capability of providing quality service holds a vital position in its competitiveness. Therefore, hotel administrations need to have a thorough understanding of customer wants to establish the components of quality of service accordingly. Rectification of customer wants is essential for identifying customer's preferences and strategizing for service quality features. For tourism and hospitality service businesses, including hotels, achieving customer satisfaction is essential for achieving customer loyalty, growth, and effectiveness (Chen, Wang, Lyu & Zhang, 2022; Nyagadza, Mazuruse, Muposhi, & Chogora, 2022) - the role of customer care is relevant in this right. one of the most important factors affecting service execution in the hospitality and tourism sectors is the improvement of administration as well as service quality, which results in the generation of financial returns and a long-term advantage (Allaberganov et al., 2021). Basically, the aim of quality service is to provide good customer care which results in the satisfaction of a customer.

Customer satisfaction

One of the essential factors in keeping consumers and fostering loyalty is customer satisfaction. Chen et al. (2022) describes customer satisfaction measures as how much a consumer believes using a particular service can stimulate positive emotions. Wantara and Irawati (2021) add that customer satisfaction is the result of comparing consumer expectations with the level of quality service provided. In essence, customer satisfaction leads to a customer assessing the costs that they paid to receive a certain service and the experience. Chang and Lin (2022) state that when the benefits received outweigh the costs expended, customer satisfaction will increase; if the opposite is true, customer contentment will decrease. In the hospitality industry, the customer's loyalty is enhanced by quality of service, customer consummation, value, reliance, and commitment to consumer (Nyagadza et al., 2022). These components when enhanced can improve service excellence and customer retention. Consumer activity in tourism and hospitality has evolved to be more experience based rather than procedural because of being a part of the service industry (Cetin, Akova & Kaya, 2014). After the year 2000, there has been a notable rise in research about pragmatic marketing, risk, quality of service and satisfaction of customers (Kim & Stepchenkova, 2018; Wu, Chen & Cheng, 2019). According to scholars in the tourism and hospitality sectors, among other relevant criteria, service quality influences customer loyalty and satisfaction (Ali, Gardi, Othman, Ahmed, Ishmael, Hamza, Aziz & Sabir, 2021; Nyagadza et al., 2022). The perceived value, enjoyment, and attitudinal loyalty are all related to the quality of the experiences in hospitality and tourism. An important determinant of attitudinal loyalty is service quality (Nyagadza et al., 2022).

Customer loyalty

Customer loyalty is important in supporting business performance and growth (Naz, Alshabani, Rudnak & Magda, 2021). Therefore, it plays a major role within the hospitality and tourism sector. Customer loyalty is defined as the willingness and ability to consistently purchase or support a chosen good or service in the future, leading to repetitive purchases of the same brand, even though situational influences from marketing efforts may induce a change in behaviour (Gontur, Gadi & Bagobiri, 2022). Customer loyalty is what makes customers to continuously go back to the same hotel or use a particular service. Customers that support a business with their loyalty will help it grow by often purchasing, paying higher prices, and introducing and attracting new customers through complimentary verbal compliments (Naz et al., 2021). Gontur et al. (2022) argues that it is

therefore essential for hotels to have a record of the loyalty levels of their customers to thwart their transference because it is less costly to keep a loyal customer than to secure a new one. More so, in the hospitality industry, customer loyalty results in a positive dissemination of the businesses reputation through satisfied customers relating about their positive experience to others (Hoang & Suleri, 2021). Therefore, quality service is vital for satisfaction which leads to customer loyalty.

Measuring service quality

To gauge service quality in the tourism and hospitality sectors, the SERVQUAL framework is the instrument often utilized. It is a comprehensive research tool designed to capture consumer opinions and service expectations along the five dimensions considered to be representative of service quality. As an illustration, Ali et al. (2021) carried out research on the influence of service quality on consumer satisfaction in the hotel business of the Erbil City in Kurdistan region and findings were presented with pointers that were connected to SERVQUAL. The far more critical factor indicating the widespread desires of service and administration quality valuation was undeniably organisation. Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003) also looked at the Australian hotel industry's organisational structure. From SERVQUAL, the components such as design and comfort, apartment quality, fascinating deals, atmosphere, quality service, efficient planning as well as pleasant food and beverages were delivered. In addition, an increasing number of studies (Naz et al., 2021; Gontur et al., 2022; Nyagadza et al., 2022) has emerged and demonstrated that, from the perspective of the customers, the attributes of management quality segments and organisation demands varied depending on the accommodation establishment design.

According to the expectancy-disconfirmation framework, whereupon SERVQUAL is founded, the extent to which consumers' pre-purchase prospects of quality are satisfied or refuted by their real impressions of the customer experience is the measure of service quality. To create this model, Parasuraman (1985) first enumerated several service-related characteristics that can be grouped, and essentially, they came down to be the five dimensions or variables in SERVQUAL: responsiveness, tangible, reliability, empathy, and assurance.

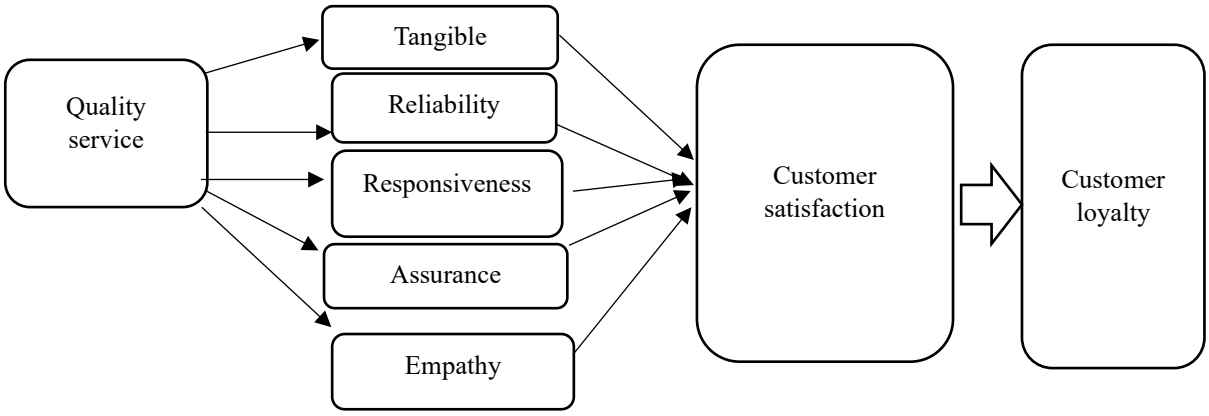

Fig. 1: Research SERVQUAL model

Figure 1 above shows how the five dimensions can be used to raise satisfaction among customers which leads to loyalty from customers. The literal facilities or amenities, personnel attire, technology, machinery, and information system of tourism and hospitality establishments are all represented by variable termed tangible. This variable concentrates on offering physical facilities as well as resources to customers. For example, does the hotel maintain a clean environment and do its staff members wear proper attire? The reliability element on the SERVQUAL model confirms the capability to offer amenities effectively, on time as well as authentically. Supplying customers of the tourism and hospitality sectors with services or experiences in mistake-free environments demands coherence. These establishments must respect their promise to deliver the service effectively and with ease that consumers have asked for. The willingness to treat customers with care and respect, as well as provide fast amenities to appease them is known as responsiveness. The responsiveness element focuses on two fundamental aspects, prompt service as well as eagerness. Consequently, after the COVID-19 epidemic which had an impact on the flow of customers within the hospitality and tourism sector,

service providers must ensure that customers receive their service swiftly and devoid of hesitation and express to the customers their sincere desire in offering help.

SERVQUAL guidelines suggest that the customer's waiting time for response or resolution can be utilised to measure responsiveness. In other words, being responsive involves solving problems faced by customers as rapidly as possible through the distribution of expected information or item alternatives. During the COVID-19 pandemic era, a lot of customers had to endure prolonged customer wait times due to the safety protocols that meant a lot of check-ups had to be conducted. In the post COVID-19 era, it is important that service providers ensure that there is an improvement in responsiveness to ensure customer satisfaction. The assurance variable encompasses gaining the customers' trust and admiration. Here, the employee's knowledge, real-world communication abilities, manners, integrity, competency as well as professionalism are all important. Resultantly, these capabilities will assist the tourism and hospitality establishments in obtaining confidence as well as loyalty from its customers. Four components are encompassed within the assurance variable: courtesy (politeness), security, competency, and reliability. Firstly, competency implies having the required capabilities as well as knowledge. The thoughtfulness, respect, professionalism, and politeness of employees are all illustrations of courtesies. Reliability is about the employees' dependability, genuineness, and credibility. Security consists of making sure that the customer is kept safe from danger or risks. The employee treating customers with kindness and consideration while providing service is an illustration of the assurance dimension. To ensure thoughtful and quality service, there is need for empathy which entails paying close consideration to the customers. After the COVID-19 pandemic which caused a lot of strain on humanity, people are now visiting tourist and hospitality spaces to distress from the strain that was caused by the pandemic. Therefore, empathy plays a significant role in such instances. Some service providers in some parts of the globe stress on the importance of handling every customer as a distinct guest. In addition, it is a remarkable approach to enhance customer loyalty, faith as well as retention at the same time ensuring psychological customer satisfaction. Due to the possibility of losing customers because of the deprivation of compassion among the workforce, tourism and hospitality service providers must always encourage compassion. Moreover, the following components come together to shape empathy: communication (for instance, being attentive to customers and ensuring that they are informed in a tongue they understand); social and physical accessibility (for instance, welcoming staff and easiness of connection between customers and staff); recognizing the client (for example, striving to understand customers and their specific needs).
There is a wealth of academic literature (Amegayibor & Korankye, 2021; Chen et al., 2022; Gontur et al., 2022) to support the usefulness of the SERVQUAL paradigm, particularly in stressing the significance and effectiveness of service quality as well as the function of customer care in the tourist and hospitality sector. For instance, Ali et al. (2021) discovered SERVQUAL to be a noteworthy tool that was also a suitable estimating tool for the hotel industry, one of the management companies focusing on customer loyalty. Additionally, Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009) developed a measure for evaluating the friendliness of administrative practices and the study also proved that the SERVQUAL gauge is a highly helpful instrument that can be customised for the various amenities sectors such as tourism and hospitality service providers.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study contributes towards the hospitality and tourism industries by analysing the value of high service standards and the function of customer care. The comprehension of SERVQUAL characteristics, the theory of customer satisfaction, as well as the interplay of SERVQUAL variables input towards customer satisfaction are all contributions made by this study to the aforementioned areas. The awareness of crucial quality service intervention towards customer happiness in South Africa will assist business executives, marketing academics and every other stakeholder in the hospitality and tourism sector. In this way, it can be claimed that this study added to both the academic and business fields. The main aim of the research was to investigate how customer satisfaction levels in the tourist and hospitality industries are impacted by service quality. Majority of the service quality aspects assessed in this research had a positive impact on customer satisfaction, according to the study's conclusions. The results of this study may therefore be helpful to tourism and hospitality service providers, including management of hotels, with regards to the manner they are supposed to provide quality service by interacting well with customers, maintaining, and improving the hotel's primary goal of income optimization and cost minimization. Therefore, results point to the importance of quality service to ensure customer satisfaction and loyalty in the period after COVID-19 which negatively affected the hospitality and tourism sector.

The research done to analyse service quality and customer care (SQCC) in a variety of tourism and hospitality contexts, including airline companies, airports, conference centres, resorts, restaurants, hotels, lodges,

guesthouses, tourist sites, festivals, events, etc. is demonstrated by the literatures evaluated in this work. This paper raises several crucial points with practical applications. The tourism and hospitality sectors have already been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and only with the good management procedures will a recovery continue to be possible. This is achievable through considering the significance of customer satisfaction, the effectiveness of service quality, and the function of customer care. According to the paper's guidance, preserving service quality should be the greatest central duty of establishments in the hospitality and tourism sectors, and them doing so will guarantee customer satisfaction leading to customer loyalty.

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THE ANALYSIS OF CRUISE SHIPS EMPLOYEES SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

The subject of employee motivation and satisfaction becomes one of the main questions in recent time due to the lack of quantity and qualified employees in tourism. The objective of this paper is to find what is job satisfaction level of cruise ships employees' and significance of chosen satisfaction factors in order to provide inputs that could help the companies in motivation efforts to achieve higher level of job satisfaction. The quantitative research was conducted by the questionary on 269 cruise ship employees from 19 different countries in 2022. The analysis was done for all participants in general and additionally to gender and dividing participants to service staff and managerial staff. Two main tests were used: Student's two sample t-test of independent samples and Two sample z-test of proportions. It was found, in general, that cruise ships employees show the highest degree of satisfaction with factors such are paid expenses, destination, safety of job, independence in working, and flexibility and creativity. The lowest degree of satisfaction was showed by working hours, variable salary such are bonuses, commissions and incentives, and possibility of getting good tips. The managers have shown the highest level of satisfaction degree with paid expenses, destination, basic salary, safety of job and independence in work. The service staff have shown the similar satisfaction. The satisfaction with tips was the only factor for which was found statistically significant difference between managerial and service employees. There is statistically significant difference in non-satisfaction of male and female employees, for example, in safety of job, receiving feedback on work performance, ability of supervisor

to recognize good job and appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement. The female employees have shown the higher level of dissatisfaction with those factors. Looking at high levels of satisfaction there was no statistically significant difference between male and female employees, except for appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement by supervisor. The male employees were more satisfied with this factor. The results of this paper are significant to the theory and practice, as there are a very few researches on cruise employees', even in general.

Key Words: cruise tourism, hospitality industry, human resources, satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

The cruise industry, as transportation and a destination (Johnston *et al.,* 2002), as well as an experience (Moorthi, 2002), is interesting research area, especially in an examination of cruise service employees. Cruise ships are in nature floating hotels. The larger cruise liners are also seen as mobile floating resorts because of their diverse offer onboard (Kovačić and Silveira, 2020). Although the cruise guests are participating in the excursions or sightseeing's of port destinations, those destinations are considered as secondary destinations. The cruise ships are considered as a primarily destinations themselves. Traveling from port to port, cruise staff get chance to experience many places what can be considered as motivation factor and contribute to their satisfaction as well.

Stronger development of cruise tourism offer began in 60s and 70s years of last century. For many years, cruises were available only to guests of greater purchasing power and lately are affordable to broad population. As demand for cruise ships grows globally, so does the visitors' consumption and the number of jobs this industry provides (Kovačić *et al.*, 2020). With increasing globalization and international competition, the importance of recruiting, retaining and managing the resources that can help increase organizations' competitiveness has become a crucial
factor in the success of the hotel industry (Nadiri and Tanova, 2010). Considering rapidly changing, competitive business environment; employees become the most significant and leading factor to achieve greater success, efficiency, and productivity (Güleç and Samancı, 2018; Nath and Agrawal, 2015).

Talent management, or how to recruit, retain, and develop an engaged workforce has played a critical role in tourism industry (Barron *et al*., 2014). The cruise experience is not about product only. It is also result of each employee, their interaction with other employees, and employees with guests, as well guests to other guests. Managing all these interactions through planning of human resources and planning of processes leads to smooth and successful business performance. Because of that, managing the employee satisfaction in the cruise industry, and in hospitality industry in general, compared to some other industries, becomes the most critical point in managing. Such human interaction and the intangible nature of services, highlights the relationship between job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, as the quality of service depends on the employee's performance (Nadiri and Tanova, 2010). Carlzon (1987) invented the 'inverted pyramid' for the service industry where on top is service staff, in difference to the classic pyramid where on the top is management. Heskett *et al.* (1994) proposed their service profit chain, which explains that profit and growth are stimulated primarily by customer loyalty as a result of customer satisfaction. If the service staff is satisfied, the guests will be satisfied and loyal, and consequently, the company will also perform successfully. The service employees often serve as ambassadors of their companies and they are even equalized with the service firm itself (Babić-Hodović and Arslanagić-Kalajdžić, 2019). The investment in the employees become key for delivering unique service and quality in order to increase their satisfaction and the satisfaction of guests. A marketing approach to human resources management proposes selecting employees with right personality, continuously training them to skills and service culture, encouraging teamwork, initiative, and responsibility, monitoring their work performance and awarding them for a good job. High job satisfaction leads to increased productivity and lower absenteeism and turnover rates (Yang, 2010; Yucel, 2012). Companies which desire to enhance competitiveness, need highly motivated, committed, satisfied and innovative human capital (Abou Elnaga and Imran, 2014). Qasim and Sayeed (2012) asserted that satisfaction perception makes employees more loyal, committed, productive and creative.

Human activity does not appear by itself, to be provoked activity requires internal motivation and certain external incentives, directing the activity and determines its intensity and duration, what is per Nakić and Lindov (2020) collectively called motivation. The question of motivation refers to the reasons for human behavior. Bahtijarević Šiber (1999) states that motivation is a common term for all internal factors that

consolidate intellectual and physical energy, initiate and organize individual activities, they guide behavior and determine its direction, intensity and duration. She believes that it is a very complex and dynamic conception based on diverse human needs, aspirations, values and to preferences that are not only different in different people but develop and direct with growth and by the development of a person, i.e. they are different for the same people in different situations and periods of their life and development. Theoretically, if we control motivation factors, assuming the employees have right personality and capabilities, we can control their behavior. Motivated employees can become not motivated if they are not satisfied on their job. Nakić and Londov (2020) think that is important that employees and human resources managers, firstly know what motivates them so they could manage the factors that could contribute to their motivation to work and make motivation level higher, therefor higher business performance and higher job satisfaction level.

According to Locke (1976) job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. It reflects pleasurable emotions stemming from judgment toward one's job experience based on how well his/her needs and expectations are met with what got from the job (Locke, 1969). We could say that the job satisfaction is a set of positive or negative perceptions and feelings that employees experience while work. Shortly, job satisfaction refers to the degree to which employees like their job.

Some theories of motivation and attitudes at work can be used as basis for the understanding of job satisfaction such as Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Herzberg's (1968) Theory of Two Factors. Motivation implies a desire for a result, while the satisfaction of the consequences of that result (Weihrich and Koontz, 1998). Though motivation and satisfaction are not the same categories and could have different result on employee behavior due to the time passage and circumstances changes, both could have similar variables. The job satisfaction is a positive or negative emotional state or feeling about past realized work and motivation is the result of expectations in the future work. Following this point, it could be expected that higher satisfaction with some factors leads to the conclusion that the company is good motivation in those fields. The low satisfaction could lead to rethinking and different approach in motivating in future. Tourism studies have shown that employee motivation is strongly connected with a feeling of satisfaction resulting from the quality of work performed (Wildes and Parks, 2005). In addition, some researches show a significant positive relationship between employee satisfaction and financial performance (Chi and Gursoy, 2009; Koys, 2003) so each company should strive to have satisfied employees.

Although there is significant amount of researches on employees' satisfaction with different variables over years, there is a lack of researches specifically on cruise employees. Based on many theories of motivation and researches on job satisfaction, this paper identifies satisfaction factors applicable to cruise industry. The **objective** of this paper is to find what is satisfaction level of cruise ships employees and significance of chosen satisfaction factors. In addition, determining of low satisfaction with some factors could lead to the gap that needs to be filled by adopting and improving motivation human resources politics.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON JOB SATISFACTION FACTORS

Tourism industry has been known for low wages, weekend and night work, seasonal work, emotional labor and other challenging conditions. The seafarers have been subject to plenty of researches (e.g. Ayap and Macalalad, 2016; Hult and Snöberg, 2014; Yorulmaz, 2018; Yuen *et al.*, 2018) due to challenging and isolated working conditions, but there is a lack of researches exploring behaviors of employees working on cruise ships. The necessity of providing fast and high-quality service in an intense competitive environment results in time pressure and job stress on agency employees (Yorulmaz *et al*.,2020) as well as on cruise ship employees. Many different factors are affecting their behavior and work performance. Many authors have proposed many different factors that influence the job satisfaction level of employees.

Building a strong brand identity also concerns internal marketing, i.e., to communicate and deploy the core values of the company in the service employees' minds as a means to impact their role taking behavior (Skaalsvik, 2017). Determining employees' perceptions about their organization is critical to understand and control mechanisms that influence employees' attitudes, and behaviors toward their jobs (Tüzün, 2009). Organizational identification which reflects oneness perception of members with organization, is known to increase job satisfaction (Feather and Rauter, 2004; Alegre *et al*., 2016) and organizational commitment (Meyer *et al*., 2004; Marique and Stinglhamber, 2011; DeConinck, 2011). A company with a good image creates feelings of trust and belonging of employees. The service companies, especially in the hospitality and cruise industry should hire the employees because of their personality and train them with skills. This way merging of

beliefs of employees and company beliefs is more possible to happen, and employees are more likely to reflect the company values. The more merged, it is expected that employees will be more dedicated to company, engaged in their work, absenteeism will be lower, and the satisfaction level will be higher. Dissatisfaction of employees causes lower commitment that may also result in withdraw from the organization (Sarwar and Abugre, 2013). The same as for the guests, the employees who have emotional attachment to the company they work for will be loyal and unwilling to leave the company easily.

Alegre *et al.* (2016) emphasized the higher level of identification with organizational values and goals and pleasant relations with workmates are indicated as driving force behind perception of satisfaction. On the other hand, having lower identification causes feeling of demotivation, alienation and dissatisfaction that increases job stress, grievances, turnover and absenteeism (Edwards, 2005; De Roeck *et al*., 2013). Through identification with the organization, multiple needs of employees such as belonging, self enhancement and safety can be satisfied (Ashforth *et al.*, 2008). A sense of identification helps employees to display greater levels of altruism, cooperation, supportive actions, and devote more effort in favor of the organization (Demir, 2015). Feeling of attachment and loyalty to the organization stimulates employees' motivation to support organizational processes, take more responsibility and improve job performance (Edwards, 2005; De Roeck *et al.*, 2014). Lee *et al.* (2015), found that identification of individuals with their organizations will more likely be followed by satisfaction and commitment.

Organizational factors of job satisfaction arise from the characteristics of the company itself and the individual workplace, such as nature of work, possibility for promotion, relationship with co-workers, relationship with superiors, salary, awards and recognition, working conditions and job security. Personal factors of job satisfaction are factors that the company cannot influence. These factors include personal dispositions, mood and emotions, compatibility of personal interests and work, age, length of service of the employee and status (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, 2006). Motivation strategies such as material stimulation, redesigning and enriching work, management style, employee participation, management by objectives, flexible working hours, organizational culture, recognition and awards, training and career development, aim to increase motivational potential (Nakić and Lindov, 2020). Novaes Southgate and Savi Mondo (2017) have found that infrastructure played an important role in the perceptions of satisfaction, especially with the regard to kitchen employees, as well as workload and stress management. Social gatherings, integration programs and non-monetary benefits were thought to be important in improving the satisfaction of the company's employees. Ineson and Berechet (2011) obtained results in which job satisfaction also focused on opportunities for the development of personal skills, use of the workers' strengths and goal achievement, stating that the dissatisfaction is manifest in lack of career development and opportunities for promotion what is associated with a high turnover of staff.

Satisfaction of socio-emotional needs (payment, recognition, support etc.) of the employees encourage employees' to be more committed (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Peterson *et al.* (2003) and Luthans (2010) for example mentioned management, relations of co-workers, pay levels, nature of the work, and promotion and carrier development. Likewise, Baran and Arabelen (2018) stated that job satisfaction is of relatively higher prominence in service sectors and that co-worker relations and job security are the most satisfying components for ship agents' employees, while compensation and advancements are the least ones. Furthermore, they stated that increase in age, seniority and work experience brings higher satisfaction. Laškarin Ažić (2017) stated that good relations in an organization (often displayed by organizational culture) are the main incentive for stimulating positive behavior among employees and showed a direct relationship between employee satisfaction with co-worker relationships and job satisfaction, as well as the employee satisfaction with management relations has a direct impact on job satisfaction.

Kukanja (2013) research results show that in times of economic crisis money is the most important motivational factor to work in foodservice, followed by flexible working hours and social security. Motivational factor money was far more important to women than men. Younger employees are mostly motivated by fun and flexible working hours, while elderly employees highly valuate social security. To more educated and experienced employees career development and training are more important than to less educated and less experienced employees. Young people are understandably more interested in fun and flexible working hours.

Furthermore, salary was considered one of the main determinants for satisfaction. Its importance lies in the fact that salary is related to the satisfaction of the individual needs, from the most basic needs (at the subsistence level), to the highest, such as social recognition (Novaes Southgate and Savi Mondo, 2017). However, Milman (2002) stated that the retention of employees in the workplace is primarily associated with personal fulfilment

and working conditions, rather than the financial compensation, although money is considered to be the oldest and the most usual way for motivating people.

Yang (2010) indicated that there are influencing factors on job satisfaction in the hospitality industry such as role conflict, burnout, socialization, and work autonomy stating that job satisfaction is a powerful contributor to the affective commitment of individuals to their current organizations. Slatten and Mehmetoglu (2011) have found a positive relationship between autonomy, strategic attention, role benefit, and employee engagement. Managers who show high levels of supervisory support behavior make employees feel understood, valued, and cared about (Kang., *et al*., 2014). Nakić and Lindov (2020) write that education and training affect the performance of the organization if they are aligned with the strategic organizational goals and integrated into the human resources management function and have a positive influence on the motivation of employees as well as on job satisfaction. The education and training are investment, and not a cost, if aligned with the organizational goals and needs of employees.

Although a significant number of studies have been published on job satisfaction with various variables over the years, to the best of our knowledge, there are few or no studies specifically addressing job satisfaction among cruise ship employees. The literature review given here identify many motivation and job satisfaction factors. However, some factors are not found in the literature and play an important role in job satisfaction of cruise ships employees, such are possibility of experiencing many destinations through work mobility, possibility of getting good tips, free and easy Internet access etc. Therefore, this paper will also identify and provide the job satisfaction factors of cruise ship employees. Service culture based on employees' behavior and satisfaction is still the hardest element to copy for the competition so companies should pay special attention to what motivates and satisfies their employees.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH RESULTS

Prior to the research an open interview was held with seven cruise employees and two employment agencies specialized for recruiting of cruise ships employees in order to confirm which of the motivation and satisfaction factors they consider relevant. Following the theoretical background and opinions collected through interviews the following factors were identified: **basic salary; variable salary** (including commissions, bonuses, and incentives such as company car, laptop, mobile phone, etc.); the possibility of getting **tips**; defined **working hours**; **flexible working hours**; **paid expenses** (accommodation, travel, health insurance, etc.); **safe** and stable **job**; an organizational structure with a **defined** job description and **responsibilities** and measuring of work performance; good **interpersonal relations** encouraging teamwork; receiving feedback on work performance (**performance feedback**); the ability of the superior to recognize good job of employee (**good job recognition**); respect for employee opinion and suggestion for business improvement (**employee opinion respect**); independence in work (**work independence**); flexibility and **work creativity**; possibility of further **education** through seminars and trainings organized by the employer; possibility of **professional development**, career planning and job promotion; public perception of the company (**company's public image**); possibility of identifying the values promoted by the company with employees own values and beliefs (**company values**); free and unlimited **internet access**; the employer location and possibility of experiencing other **destinations** through work mobility. All these factors were tested on current job positions of cruise ship employees participated in the research.

The data was collected from 269 employees from 19 different countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and North America working on cruise ships through the questionnaire using Google form between June and November 2022. The majority of the participants were male (N=178; 66.2%). There were the 91 female participants (33.8%). The most of participants, regardless the gender, belong to the age group 36-45 (42.4%), and 26-35 (39.4%). There were almost the same percentage of service employees (food and beverage employees, front desk, and housekeeping employees) and employees on managerial positions (department managers and manager assistants), 45.3% and 43.9%, respectively. The rest of the participants were administrative employees (accounting, human resources, etc.).

The measurement tools used in this study were developed with widely used 5-point Likert scale (1 = I totally disagree, 5 = I totally agree). The responses 1 and 2 were gathered together as "low satisfaction", and 4 and 5 were considered as "high satisfaction". The analysis was done for all participants in general and additionally by gender and dividing participants to service staff and managerial staff. Two main tests were used: Student's two sample t-test of independent samples and Two sample z-test of proportions.

According to arithmetic mean the highest satisfaction level is obtained on paid expenses, destination, work independence, job safety, and interpersonal relations. The lowest satisfaction level is achieved on tips, variable salary, and working hours.

Table 1
Arithmetic mean, low satisfaction level (proportion of responses 1 and 2), and high satisfaction level (proportion of responses 4 and 5) for chosen job satisfaction factors

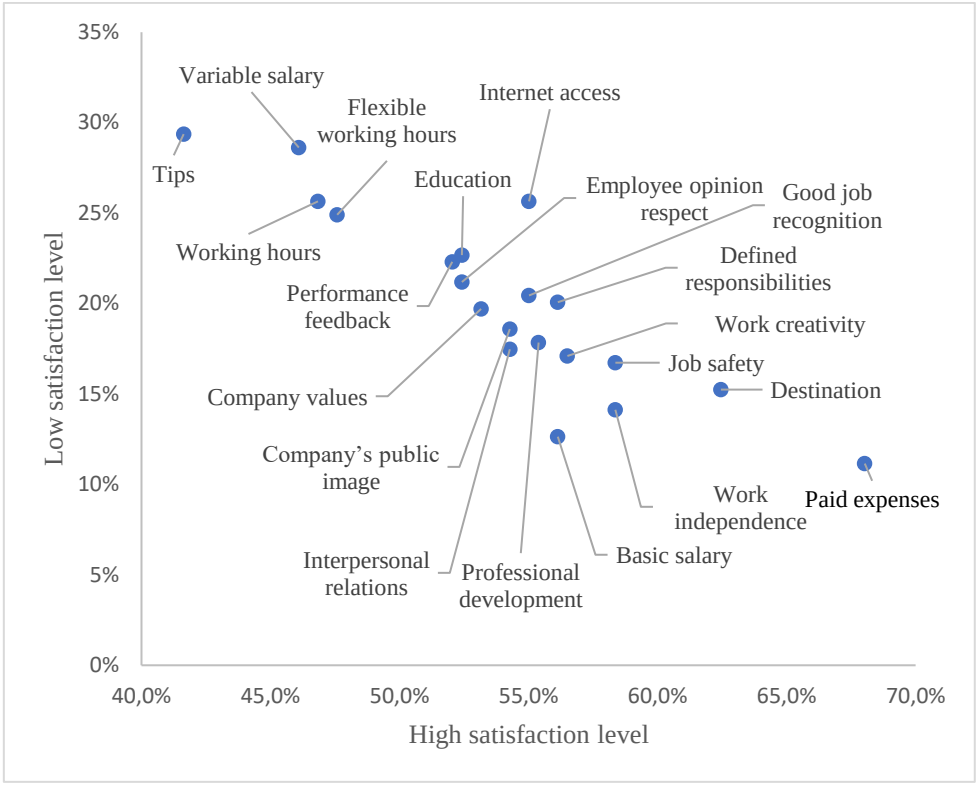
Job satisfaction factors	Arithmetic mean	Low satisfaction level	High satisfaction level
Paid expenses	3,99	11,2%	68,0%
Destination	3,80	15,2%	62,5%
Work independence	3,74	14,1%	58,4%
Job safety	3,73	16,7%	58,4%
Interpersonal relations	3,70	17,5%	54,3%
Basic salary	3,69	12,6%	56,1%
Work creativity	3,69	17,1%	56,5%
Professional development	3,66	17,8%	55,4%
Defined responsibilities	3,65	20,1%	56,1%
Good job recognition	3,61	20,4%	55,0%
Performance feedback	3,57	22,3%	52,0%
Company's public image	3,57	18,6%	54,3%
Company values	3,57	19,7%	53,2%
Employee opinion respect	3,56	21,2%	52,4%
Education	3,56	22,7%	52,4%
Internet access	3,52	25,7%	55,0%
Flexible working hours	3,36	24,9%	47,6%
Working hours	3,33	25,7%	46,8%
Variable salary	3,27	28,6%	46,1%
Tips	3,21	29,4%	41,6%

Source: Authors

We can see that cruise ships employees are not satisfied nor unsatisfied with basic salary and are not satisfied with variable salary and tips which leads to conclusion that there is space for rethinking of the salary as motivation factor. As salary still is one of the basic requirement in motivation factors package, nonsatisfaction with salary could lead to higher absent from the work and turnover of employees. Higher salaries could lead to higher satisfaction level and consequently better business performance. Another gap that requires rethinking and changing of human resources politics is in the field of working hours.

Figure 1 shows percentage of high satisfaction responses (on the abscissa) and low satisfaction responses (on the ordinate). According to it, the highest ratio of low satisfaction is with tips, variable salary and working hours, as already shown in Table 1. The lowest ratio of low satisfaction is with paid expenses and basic salary. The highest ratio of high satisfaction is with paid expenses, destination, job safety and work independence.

Figure 1
Percentage of satisfaction responses on current job of cruise ship's employees



Source: Authors

Table 2
Arithmetic mean of job satisfaction factors according to gender and p-value for Student's two sample t-test of two independent samples

Job satisfaction factors	Arithmetic mean (male only)	Arithmetic mean (female only)	p-value
Basic salary	3,74	3,60	0,340
Variable salary	3,38	3,04	0,045*
Tips	3,20	3,23	0,868
Working hours	3,44	3,10	0,035*
Flexible working hours	3,46	3,18	0,080
Paid expenses	4,03	3,89	0,329
Internet access	3,66	3,25	0,030*
Job safety	3,89	3,42	0,003**
Defined responsibilities	3,76	3,44	0,043*
Interpersonal relations	3,82	3,45	0,017*
Performance feedback	3,75	3,21	0,001**
Good job recognition	3,79	3,27	0,002**
Employee opinion respect	3,75	3,19	0,000**
Work independence	3,86	3,51	0,017*
Work creativity	3,85	3,37	0,002**
Education	3,66	3,35	0,067
Professional development	3,79	3,42	0,021*
Company's public image	3,66	3,38	0,073
Company values	3,69	3,34	0,028*

Destination	3,83	3,76	0,661

* difference significant on the level 0,05 ** difference significant on the level 0,01

Source: Authors

Student's two sample t-test of two independent samples (men and women) was applied on each satisfaction factor and main results were shown in Table 2. In general, arithmetic mean of male employees who responded to the questionary is higher than mean of female gender participants, except for possibility of getting good tips as a factor. Statistically significant difference on the significance level 1% (p-value less than 0.01) is found on job safety, performance feedback, good job recognition, respect of employee opinions, and creativity and flexibility at work.

Statistically significant difference on the significance level 5% (p-value between 0.01 and 0.05) is found on factors identification with company values, professional development, work independence, interpersonal relations and defined responsibilities, variable salary and fixed working hours.

Table 3

Ratio of low satisfaction on chosen factors according to gender and p-value for two sample z-test of differences proportions

Job satisfaction factors	Low satisfaction (Male only)	Low satisfaction (Female only)	p-value
Basic salary	11,2%	15,4%	0,333
Variable salary	26,4%	33,0%	0,260
Tips	30,9%	26,4%	0,441
Working hours	24,2%	28,6%	0,433
Flexible working hours	22,5%	29,7%	0,196
Paid expenses	10,1%	13,2%	0,449
Internet access	21,9%	33,0%	0,049*
Job safety	11,8%	26,4%	0,002**
Defined responsibilities	18,0%	24,2%	0,230
Interpersonal relations	14,0%	24,2%	0,038*
Performance feedback	16,3%	34,1%	0,001**
Good job recognition	14,6%	31,9%	0,001**
Employee opinion respect	16,3%	30,8%	0,006**
Work independence	11,2%	19,8%	0,057
Work creativity	13,5%	24,2%	0,028*
Education	19,1%	29,7%	0,050
Professional development	14,0%	25,3%	0,023*
Company's public image	15,2%	25,3%	0,044*
Company values	16,3%	26,4%	0,049*
Destination	14,0%	17,6%	0,445

* difference significant on the level 0,05 ** difference significant on the level 0,01

Source: Authors

Generally, the female employees show the higher level of un-satisfaction, measured by share of low satisfaction marks, than their male co-workers. Statistically significant difference is found on some same factors as in the case of arithmetic mean (Table 2). Statistically significant difference on the significance level 1% (p-value less than 0.01) is found on job safety, performance feedback, good job recognition, and respect of employee opinions. Statistically significant difference on the significance level 5% (p-value between 0.01 and 0.05) is found on factors Internet access, identification with company values, professional development, creativity and flexibility at work, and interpersonal relations.

Table 4

Ratio of high satisfaction on job satisfaction factors according to gender and p-value for two sample z-test of differences proportions

Job satisfaction factors	High satisfaction (Male only)	High satisfaction (Female only)	p-value
Basic salary	56,2%	56,0%	0,983
Variable salary	49,4%	39,6%	0,124
Tips	41,6%	41,8%	0,977
Working hours	50,6%	39,6%	0,087
Flexible working hours	50,6%	41,8%	0,171
Paid expenses	69,1%	65,9%	0,598
Internet access	57,3%	50,5%	0,292
Job safety	61,2%	52,7%	0,181
Defined responsibilities	57,9%	52,7%	0,424
Interpersonal relations	56,7%	49,5%	0,256
Performance feedback	55,6%	45,1%	0,101
Good job recognition	57,9%	49,5%	0,189
Employee opinion respect	56,7%	44,0%	0,047*
Work independence	62,4%	50,5%	0,063
Work creativity	60,7%	48,4%	0,054
Education	53,9%	49,5%	0,486
Professional development	57,3%	51,6%	0,377
Company's public image	57,3%	48,4%	0,163
Company values	55,6%	48,4%	0,258
Destination	62,9%	61,5%	0,825

* difference significant on the level 0,05
Source: Authors

On the other hand, the male employees show the higher level of satisfaction, measured by share of high satisfaction marks, than their female co-workers for all factors except for tips. The statistically significant difference is found only for appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement by supervisor as a satisfaction factor. The male employees were more satisfied with this factor.

As female employees are more satisfied with tips that could mean that their service excellence and going extra mile in serving guests is better recognized and awarded by the guests than of their male co-workers. Quality of service should be base for setting the human resources motivation politics in service industries. Therefore, we could conclude that there is gap in factors from guests' point of view such is getting good tips and employers' (supervisor) point of view such as appreciation of female worker's opinions and suggestions for business improvement by supervisor and recognition of their good job. Previously presented results may imply the need of different approach to female and male employees to achieve gender equality and need of better training of middle management to leader skills.

Table 5
Arithmetic mean of job satisfaction factors according to dividing employees to managerial and service employees and p-value for Student's two sample t-test of two independent samples

Job satisfaction factors	Arithmetic mean (management)	Arithmetic mean (service stuff)	P-Values
Basic salary	3.75	3.73	0.856
Variable salary	3.16	3.35	0.263

Tips	2.96	3.46	0.004**
Working hours	3.23	3.43	0.218
Flexible working hours	3.36	3.34	0.901
Paid expenses	4.07	3.95	0.433
Internet access	3.60	3.50	0.590
Job safety	3.69	3.76	0.640
Defined responsibilities	3.62	3.69	0.663
Interpersonal relations	3.62	3.75	0.419
Performance feedback	3.47	3.67	0.210
Good job recognition	3.58	3.66	0.595
Employee opinion respect	3.56	3.53	0.871
Work independence	3.67	3.80	0.402
Work creativity	3.64	3.72	0.585
Education	3.49	3.60	0.532
Professional development	3.60	3.71	0.488
Company's public image	3.46	3.67	0.172
Company values	3.49	3.67	0.261
Destination	3.84	3.84	0.985

** difference significant on the level 0.01
Source: Authors

The managers have shown the highest level of satisfaction degree with paid expenses, destination, basic salary, safety of job and independence in work. The service staff have shown the similar satisfaction. The data presented in Table 5 do not show significant difference in satisfaction between managerial and service staff measured by arithmetic mean. The only statistically significant difference is found for possibility of getting good tips which leads to conclusion that tips are more important to service staff than to managerial staff, as expected due to the nature of job.

The same results were shown when analyze was done using arithmetic mean, ratio of low and high satisfaction on job satisfaction factors according to dividing the staff to managerial and service staff using p-value for two sample z-test of differences proportions showed that there was statistically significant difference only for tips as a satisfaction factor with difference significant on the level 0.05.

CONCLUSION

Although there is significant amount of researches on employees' satisfaction with different variables over years, there is a lack of researches specifically on cruise employees. Starting from many theories of motivation and researches on job satisfaction, this paper identifies job satisfaction factors applicable to cruise industry employees. Some of proposed factors in this paper were not found in the literature and play an important role in job satisfaction of cruise ships employees, such are possibility of experiencing many destinations through work mobility, possibility of getting good tips, free and easy Internet access etc.

The objective of this paper was to find what is satisfaction level of cruise ships employees and significance of chosen satisfaction factors. In addition, determining of low satisfaction with some factors could indicate the gap that requires rethinking and improving human resources motivation politics of cruise companies.

The data was collected from 269 employees from 19 different countries during 2022. The measurement tools used in this study were developed with widely used 5-point Likert scale. Furthermore, responses 1 and 2 are gathered together as "low satisfaction", and 4 and 5 are considered as "high satisfaction". The analysis was done for all participants in general and additionally by gender and dividing participants to service staff and managerial staff. Two main tests were used: Student's two sample t-test of independent samples and Two sample z-test of proportions.

It was found, in general, that cruise ships employees' show the highest degree of satisfaction with factors such are paid expenses, destination, safety of job, independence in working, and flexibility and creativity. The lowest degree of satisfaction was showed by working hours, variable salary such are bonuses, commissions and incentives, and possibility of getting tips. The managers have shown the highest level of satisfaction degree with paid expenses, destination, basic wage, safety of job and independence in work. The service staff have shown the similar satisfaction. The satisfaction with tips was the only factor for which was found statistically significant difference between managerial and service employees. There is statistically significant difference in non-satisfaction of male and female employees, for example, in safety of job, receiving feedback on work performance, ability of supervisor to recognize good job and appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement. The female employees have shown the higher level of dissatisfaction with those elements. Looking at high satisfaction levels there was no statistically significant difference between male and female employees, except for appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement by supervisor where the male employees were more satisfied.

The results of this paper are significant to the theory and practice, as there are a very few researches on cruise employees, even in general. The results could serve as an advice to the human resources managers of cruise companies to rethink their motivation policies, primarily in field of salary and gender equality, better training of middle management to leader skills and awarding employees based on quality of service provided to the guests in order to achieve higher level of employees' job satisfaction. Further studies may include larger sample of employees of cruise ships and analysis according to the size of cruise ship, demographic and some other variables.

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PERSONAL VALUES IN TOURISM: EVALUATING THE UTILITY OF AN EXPLORATORY SEQUENTIAL MIXED METHODS DESIGN

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ABSTRACT

Personal values research is extensive, crosscutting a number of academic disciplines and contexts. Primarily, values studies have employed either a qualitative or a quantitative methodology. The former typically uses interviews or vignettes to explore values and the latter requires participants to rank, rate or compare a prescribed list of values. As part of a wider study concerning values underpinning ecotourism management in South Africa, the purpose of this paper is to reflect upon the application and utility of an exploratory sequential mixed methods design (ESD). Recommendations are presented from lessons learned. Overall, ESD is supported as a viable methodology in personal values research in a tourism context.

Key Words: exploratory sequential design, mixed methods, values, ecotourism, management

INTRODUCTION

Values are ideals or conceptions that determine modes of conduct or behaviour (Rokeach, 1968; Schwartz, 1992). Values can be classified according to the level at which they are held, namely, individual, organisational, institutional, societal and global (Agle & Caldwell, 1999). Furthermore, values can also be differentiated as 'terminal' or 'instrumental' (Rokeach, 1973), the former referring to 'end states' of existence that a person wishes to achieve such as freedom, wisdom and pleasure, and the latter referring to modes of behaviour deemed necessary for the attainment of desirable end states, such as ambitious, honest, loyal and responsible, for example. However, there appears to be no conclusive list of personal values. Indeed, different scholars have proposed different value sets or lists of values for measurement.

Values research is voluminous, crosscutting a number of academic disciplines. In the context of tourism, personal (individual) values research has essentially centred on consumer behaviour including studies by Carasuk, Becken and Hughey (2016), Watkins and Gnoth (2010) and Weeden (2011), environmental values (e.g. Esparon, Stoeckl, Farr & Larson, 2015; Perkins & Brown, 2012; Vermeersch, Sanders & Willson, 2016), and work values (e.g. Chen & Tesone, 2009; Koroglu & Gezen (2014). Typically, studies have generally employed either a qualitative or a quantitative methodology. With a few notable exceptions (e.g. Lee & Moon, 2020; Walker & Moscardo, 2014), there appears to be a paucity of values studies in a tourism context that have utilised a mixed methods design.

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the application and utility of an exploratory sequential mixed methods research design that was employed in a study concerning values underpinning ecotourism management in South Africa. The paper commences with a background to the qualitative and quantitative methodologies employed singularly within previous tourism values studies, and hence provides a context for the employment of a mixed methods design. The application of the ESD within the study is elucidated, justified and subsequently evaluated. Lessons learned are presented. The results have possible implications for the future employment of ESD in values research in a tourism context.

METHODOLOGIES IN VALUES RESEARCH

Personal values studies have typically employed a quantitative methodology. Studies have included both direct and indirect approaches, whereby the former requires respondents to endorse overt value statements and the latter to make selections indicative of their values (Mumford, Connelly, Helton, Van Doorn & Obburn, 2002). A number of instruments have been developed in this regard, including the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS), List of Values (LOV), Schwartz Value Survey (SVS), Short Schwartz Value Survey (SSVS), and the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ).

In the context of tourism, the LOV has commonly been employed (refer to Guiry & Vequist IV, 2015; Li & Cai, 2012; Wassenberg, Goldenberg & Soule, 2015; Watkins & Gnoth, 2010). However, these instruments have been subject to criticism including the time-consuming nature of ranking values, and lack of applicability to different

contexts (Weeden, 2011), the assumption that people are consciously aware of, and able to articulate, their values (Mumford et al., 2002), and the biased determination of the value items to be included in a measurement instrument (Braithwaite & Scott, 2013).

With regard to qualitative studies, these have typically employed interviews or vignettes to explore values. In a tourism context, values have commonly been explored through the application of the Means-End Chain Theory (MECT) (see Klenosky, 2002; Jiang, Scott, Tao & Ding, 2019; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2009; Pezeshki, Ardekani, Khodadadi, Almodarresi & Hosseini, 2019; Watkins & Gnoth, 2010; Weeden, 2011). As an alternative to the MECT, values have also been explored using grounded theory and the thematic analysis of interview transcripts; Campbell and Smith (2006) in their study of volunteer tourists is a case in point. However, the inherent parameters of qualitative studies mean that findings cannot be extrapolated to a wider population given the small sample size.

Hence, overall, the employment of a single methodology in values research is limited either with regard to a lack of validation by, or generalisation to, a wider population, or with respect to the use of a pre-determined list of value items, often prescribed at the discretion of the researcher irrespective of the study population.

MIXED METHODS IN TOURISM RESEARCH

The employment of mixed methods in tourism research has been gaining considerable momentum over the past decade. According to Johnson, Onweugbuzie and Turner (2007, p. 123), mixed methods essentially "combines the elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches...for the purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration". Numerous mixed methods designs have been presented (see Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann & Hanson, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, 2003). Put simply, the three core designs include explanatory sequential, exploratory sequential and convergent design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The combination of a qualitative and quantitative methodology has implications regarding paradigms or worldviews guiding inquiry. Operating at a broad, abstract level, worldviews can essentially be classified as post-positivism, constructivism, participatory and pragmatism, each with a distinctive ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology and rhetoric. Acknowledging the on-going debate and lack of consensus concerning paradigm options in mixed methods research (as summarised by Hall, 2013), Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) advocate that researchers must be explicit in terms of the stance being adopted.

In mapping the trajectory of mixed methods research in tourism, Khoo-Lattimore, Mura and Yung (2019) report that research has tended to privilege sequential mixes. More specifically, research by Choi and Ritchie (2014), Lenggogeni, Ritchie and Slaughter (2019), and Wu and Pearce (2014) are examples of studies that have employed an exploratory sequential design. However, the employment of a mixed methods design in the context of personal values in tourism appears to be somewhat limited.

THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

The purpose of the wider study was to identify the values underpinning ecotourism management in South Africa with a view to informing a values-based ecotourism management curriculum in higher education institutions. The study employed an exploratory sequential mixed methods design which, according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) is a three-phased mixed methods design involving an initial qualitative exploration of a topic with findings then being translated into a tool that is tested quantitatively. In the final phase, results are reported and interpreted integratively.

With regard to worldviews, a 'multiple paradigm stance', which contends that researchers can draw on more than one paradigm in their research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003) was adopted. The target population for the study was managers/owner-managers of ecotourism suppliers that facilitate the ecotourism experience, such as visitor attractions, tourist accommodation and tour operators.

Qualitative phase

The initial exploratory phase was informed by constructivism, which is primarily concerned with the elicitation of multiple realities, closeness, bias, induction and informal style. The theoretical lens employed in this phase was that of an interpretive phenomenology. Sloan and Bowe (2014, p. 1295) posit that an interpretive phenomenology is concerned with the interpretation of the meanings found in relation to phenomena, with the focus on "understanding the meaning of experience by searching for themes (and) engaging with the data

interpretively". Thus, this approach would allow for the summarisation of the experiences of ecotourism management personnel, through the identification of the essences of the phenomena arising from the 'lived experiences', and subsequent interpretation of those phenomena. The rationale for this approach stemmed from the acknowledgement of the anticipated challenges in eliciting values from participants through direct questioning, in that participants may not be able to articulate their values, or in contrast, overstate their values (Campbell & Smith, 2006), in addition to the potential for social desirability reporting (Doran & Hanss, 2019).

Experienced ecotourism management personnel were purposively selected (i.e. personnel with a minimum of 10 years' management experience). Heterogeneity in the sample was pursued with regard to business nature (tourist accommodation, tour operations, and attraction sites) ownership and management (public/private/community), and location (rural / urban). Given the geographical size of South Africa, participants were selected from the Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng provinces, i.e. in proximity to the researcher given the limitations of financial resources for travel.

Data were collected via on-site, individual semi-structured interviews. The rationale for the selection of this data collection method was three-fold. Firstly, the researcher wanted to promote convenience for the participants. Secondly, the wide geographical dispersal of the businesses would not have permitted the use of group interviews or focus groups. Thirdly, the purpose of the study was to elicit personal 'lived experiences', hence it was anticipated that one-to-one, in-person interviews would yield more insights as opposed to a group setting. The sample size was capped at 12 participants when it was felt that no new insights were being gained. Cognisant of the assertion that phenomenological studies are not concerned with opinion or speculation (Sloan & Bowe, 2014), questions on the interview guide were framed to ensure that the 'lived experiences' were being elicited from the participants (i.e. in the form of their reported behaviours). Questioning was centred on factors in both the micro and the macro environment. Importantly, probes were used to elicit the 'how' and the 'why'. For example, "From your experience, can you describe some of the operational challenges you have faced? How did you respond to those challenges? Why did you respond in that way?"

One researcher conducted all the interviews with a view to promoting consistency. Efforts were made to establish a rapport and standard ethical protocol was applied. Each interview was approximately one hour in duration. Interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim. Memos also documented the researcher's observations of the participants' behaviour, e.g. body language, humour, hesitations and tone of voice. Transcripts were analysed by one researcher using an adapted version of an inductive thematic analysis. Transcripts were repeatedly read in order for the researcher to become immersed in the data. Descriptive coding was then undertaken. This involved attaching codes to participant reported behaviours and researcher observations. This practice was applied to all transcripts. Efforts were also made to ensure that descriptive codes stayed 'close' to the data (King & Horrocks, 2010). For example, the descriptive code of 'takes the blame' was applied to the following reported behaviour:

> "Guests ….are demanding a service…we are charging a premium price…we just make sure that if we drop that ball, we are to blame for that. (P7)

Subsequently, similar descriptive codes were clustered, the meaning of each cluster being in relation to the research question, i.e. the identification of values, inductively. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that, with the inductive approach, themes are generated from the text without paying attention to the themes that previous research on the topic might have identified, such as the LOV or values comprising the RVS. Interpretive codes were then applied to the full data set. However, once the interpretive codes were assigned (i.e. values identified), the analysis was halted, and no overarching themes were identified. This was because it was the value items themselves (i.e. the interpretive codes) that were to be measured by the wider ecotourism industry in South Africa in the subsequent quantitative phase of the study. Hence, from the descriptive code of 'takes the blame' the underlying value of 'accountability' was interpreted. A total of 51 value items were identified; these values would inform the survey instrument.

Quantitative phase

The subsequent quantitative phase was informed by post-positivism, which advocates a 'single reality', distance and impartiality, minimal bias, deduction, and a formal style. Given the absence of a national database of ecotourism suppliers and hence, and absence of a valid sampling frame, the researcher developed one. This was achieved through consulting existing South African responsible tourism certification membership lists such Fair Trade Tourism, responsible tourism award programmes (e.g. African Responsible Tourism Awards) and consumer websites dedicated to responsible travel such as www.responsibletravel.com. Given the time

consuming nature of such database development, the list of businesses was capped at 450, but included representation across the ecotourism industry in South Africa.

Data collection involved the administration of an e-survey. In addition to eliciting the standard demographic information, the main section of the survey included a list of the 51 value constructs that were interpreted from the semi-structured interviews. Cognisant of the limitations of the ranking of values as suggested by Weeden (2011), a visual analogue scale (VAS) was rather employed. This required participants to rate the importance of each value construct using a 10-point continuum between the polar boundaries of 'extremely important' and 'extremely unimportant'. Prior to the administration of the e-survey, a pilot study was undertaken with 10 owner-managers/managers of tourism products in an endeavour to achieve face and content validity. Following the pilot study, some value definitions were clarified to promote internal consistency and 'reminders' regarding the research purpose were inserted at regular intervals within the survey. The e-survey elicited 126 responses, of which 101 were usable.

Using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), descriptive statistics were then drawn in the form of raw count frequencies and raw count percentages for the grouped data (i.e. the demographic variables). For the continuous data (i.e. the value item rating), the mean and standard deviation were drawn. Subsequently, a principal components exploratory factor analysis (PCA) with oblique rotation (direct oblimin) of the value items was performed. Factors were determined using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) criterion. Reliability (Cronbach's α) was computed to verify the internal consistency of variables within each factor. Alpha scores for the factors were higher than 0.8, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency. Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p<0.001$), and the KMO measure of sampling adequacy was 0.845.

Integrated data reporting

Mixed methods requires not only integration at the 'methods' level but also at the 'interpretation and reporting' level. Guetterman, Fetters and Creswell (2015) advocate the use of joint displays to integrate and represent mixed methods analysis. Joint displays typically involve the portrayal of organised, related data by means of a figure, table, matrix or graph (Fetters, Curry & Creswell, 2013) and typically take the form of either a themes-by-statistics or side-by-side comparison (Guetterman et al., 2015).

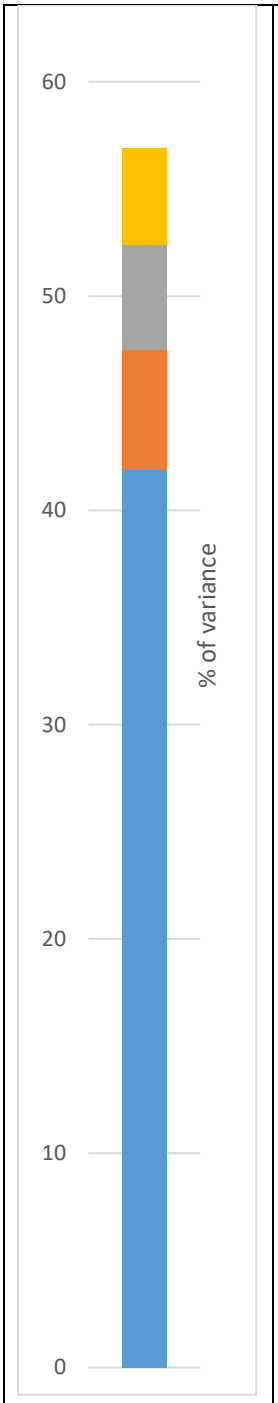
In this study, the joint display (see Figure 1) mirrored that employed in 'The Adaptive Designs Accelerating Promising Trials into Treatments (ADAPT-IT) Study' alluded to by Fetters et al. (2013). The right-hand side of the joint display shows the reduction of the values data into four factors ('self', 'outward', 'reciprocation', and 'betterment'), along with mean value. Below each factor is a list of the values subsumed, in addition to a selection of pertinent interview extracts that informed the values identification within the qualitative phase. The left-hand side shows the variance of each factor (identifiable by the colour coding). In total, the factors represented 57% of the variance, of which Factor 1 ('self') accounted for 41.9%, Factor 2 ('outward) represented 5.6%, Factor 3 ('reciprocation') represented 4.9%, and Factor 4 ('betterment') represented 4.5% of the variance. All four factors achieved a mean value of no less than 8.64 suggesting that all values subsumed with the factors are important underlying values of ecotourism management.

In the reporting of the integrated data, a narrative approach was employed which describes the quantitative and qualitative results thematically (Fetters et al., 2013). Hence, the findings were reported holistically by *weaving* between the qualitative and quantitative data. A short extract from the wider study on the value of 'environmental protection' comprising Factor 2 (Outward) demonstrates such weaving.

"The value of 'environmental protection' scored highly in the validation phase (mean= 9.80198), in addition to being highly prevalent both across and within the data sets in the qualitative phase of the study. Participants in the qualitative phase frequently alluded to waste and pollution minimisation practices such as the use of solar energy, cleaner fuel usage, recycling, etc. with repeated reference to terms such as 'conservation', 'sustainability', 'respect for wildlife', and 'ecological responsibility'. This is perhaps unsurprising given that 'environmental protection' is a key tenet of ecotourism, in addition to the acknowledgement of the numerous negative environmental impacts that have resulted from a growth in ecotourism demand, such as pollution, wildlife disturbance, depletion of natural resources, to name a few".

Figure 1
Joint Display: Values Identification and Measurement

	SELF (Factor 1) Mean value 9.08 Pride; responsiveness; assertiveness; intuition; safeguarding; customer-centric; self-respect; balance; achievement; revenue generation; optimism; appreciation; respect-earning; enjoyment; trust; relationship-building; determination; approachability. *If you don't appreciate your own product then don't expect people to appreciate it. (P4)* *You must have an open door policy. (P3)* *Actually, I am a person that likes to interact the most with the visitors. (P5)* *You have to be very, very positive. (P3)* *Because if you respect yourself, you can respect other people. (P3)* *We don't get any subsidies so we run this like a business…if we don't make a profit we're going to be dead in the water. (P7)* *I don't take any nonsense. (P2)*
	OUTWARD (Factor 2) Mean value 9.45 Innovation; flexibility; environmental protection; love of nature; curiosity; open-mindedness; fairness; reflection; creativity; accountability; honesty; vision; diligence; integrity; excitement; trustworthiness; wisdom. *I always wanted to do what I love most… to live and work in the world of wilderness, to work with animals, work with nature. (P1)* *For me, (a manager should have) all those attributes that make us the right people to be nice, to be honest, and to be open-minded. (P1)* *We are responsible for the ecology of the area. (P7)* *We created a tour called "Sam's Tour"…a true African experience. (P6)* *We know where we want to go…we have been trying to get where we wanted to get to. (P4)* *You need to be an ambassador…you need to have a huge amount of product knowledge. (P9)* *Because people need that relationship to build a trust in you as an operator that you can do what you are promising to do. (P6)* *Do your work diligently, do hard work. (P7)* *They need to know that if they are taking people in their hands, they need… they are responsible and accountable for them; they can't say, Oh well, sorry, I didn't know… (P6)* *So you cannot stop learning. (P4)* *You know there's a guest expectancy and you try & always to exceed that expectancy. (P3)* *A smart person will quickly reflect on the day. (P4)* *Guests ….are demanding a service, we are charging a premium price, we just make sure that if we drop that ball, we are to blame for that. (P7)*
	RECIPROCATION (Factor 3) Mean value 8.64 Tolerance; authenticity; humility; self-control; persuasiveness; sense of humour; pragmatism. *In the past…we have had a 'Hollywood' kind of tourism where everything is staged….but we are doing….authentic cultural tours your guests come to a village to… and they make a positive contribution. (P1)* *You must be able to handle a lot of pressure with a smile. (P3)* *The other challenge was that…the manager insisted that the meetings would be in Afrikaans (participant laughs)…ja, and I'm a very polite person…ja, so it was quite interesting the meetings at first, but I caught up quickly. (P8)* *There is a lot of red tape we have to go through…trying to convince them to understand that the creation of the lines… does not bode well for tourism. (P3)* *You know, from the tourism perspective, remember we are working as the bigger picture. (P5)*
	BETTERMENT (Factor 4) Mean value 8.97



Community upliftment; local community education; employee welfare; employee education; leadership; encouragement; respectful

We have to sustain the local communities. (P7)

Principally the community must see that it has value because if the community protects it then it will be protected. .(P2)

We can't just take someone and put them in a job…we have to take someone and train them…we are talking about uneducated people who haven't had access to education and it's our responsibility to do that. (P7)

I can't let people lose their jobs. (P11)

You have to lead by example. (P3)

Where you can, encourage people to develop and encourage people to study.(3)

If we can treat the community fair and with respect and work with them… (P10).

Thus, in conclusion, this study employed the interview-survey sequence common to many ESD tourism studies previously alluded to by Khoo-Lattimore et al. (2019). In this instance, the qualitative exploration of values informed the survey design to be employed with a larger sample, with a view to validation. Subsequently, data were illustrated and reported in an integrated manner by means of a joint display and a thematic narrative, respectively. Figure 2 visually displays the procedures and products of the mixed-methods research design employed.

Figure 2
Exploratory sequential mixed methods design

	Qualitative		Quantitative		Interpretation
	Data Collection	**Data Analysis**	**Data Collection**	**Data Analysis**	
Procedures	Purposive / convenience sampling *(N=12)* Ecotourism managers / owner-managers in South Africa Semi-structured interviews	Coding Adapted thematic analysis	Purposive sampling *(N = 101)* Ecotourism managers / owner-managers in South Africa E-survey (demographics + VAS importance rating for 51 value items	Principal Component Analysis (PCO) Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Spearman's rho Kruskal-Wallis H test Mann Whitney U test	Interpretation and discussion of joint display, factor loadings, correlations Discussion in relation to extant literature
Products	Transcripts Memos	Descriptive codes and pertinent supporting interview extracts 51 value items (themes / interpretive codes)	Demographic profiles Numerical item scores.	Mean /Standard deviation / variances Raw count frequencies, percentages Cronbach's Alpha Joint display Factor loadings Correlations	Framework for values-based higher education ecotourism management curriculum in South Africa

Source: Adapted from Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:124)

EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION AND UTITILY OF THE ESD

In this section, the application and utility of the ESD are evaluated and lessons learned within each study phase (qualitative, quantitative and integrated data reporting) are presented.

Qualitative phase

With regard to sampling, limited financial and human resources restricted the sample to being drawn from the three provinces in relative close proximity to the researcher, with efforts taken to promote heterogeneity within the sample. It was anticipated that the inclusion of participants in other provinces would not necessarily have yielded any new insights.

Although the semi-structured interviews were time consuming (in both travel time and execution), conducting the interviews in-person and on site gave the researcher an opportunity to develop a rapport with the participant and gain a further insight into the business management through observation. Indeed, many participants afforded the researcher a tour of the business and its facilities. Observing the way employees interacted with the manager was also another indication of management behaviour and hence, underlying values. Hence, an in-person

interview approach helped to elicit rich materials. Perhaps a less time-consuming alternative is the employment of virtual interviews. Certainly, with increasing use of, and familiarisation with, online communication technology, participants can be reached more easily, but it is acknowledged that the researcher may not be able to create the same level of rapport as with an in-person interview.

The transcription of interviews verbatim was extremely time consuming given that the researcher did not have access to software to assist with transcription. However, it did allow for immersion within the empirical materials and hence, familiarisation. The highly subjective nature of interpretation was acknowledged. One researcher interpreted the materials with a view to promoting consistency. However, although researcher reflexivity, i.e. the acknowledgement of researcher assumptions, beliefs and biases that may shape the inquiry (Creswell & Miller, 2000) was addressed through 'staying close' to the value definitions when interpreting behaviours, it is appreciated that the employment of additional researchers would have served as a method of triangulation in further promoting the credibility and dependability of the results.

Quantitative phase

The quantitative phase of the study elicited only 101 usable responses. Three key conclusions are drawn from this. Firstly, with additional resources, a larger database of ecotourism suppliers could have potentially been developed which may have yielded more responses. Secondly, the use of e-surveys in the social sciences arena is becoming prolific. This, coupled with a demanding work schedule for 'hands-on' management personnel in a service sector, increases the potential for the survey to be 'lost' or simply disregarded. Despite measures being taken to encourage 'engaged participation' (i.e. personalised emails, a polite follow up to unresponsive participants, and an explanation of the value of participation in the study), the appropriateness of an e-survey as a data collection method with this target population is questionable. This implies that alternative data collection methods should be investigated but, in the absence of a suitable alternative, the actual administration of the e-survey could be re-visited, perhaps being disseminated through established tourism membership organisations. Indeed, the request for participation by an established tourism membership organisation may therefore 'carry more weight' than a request for participation from an unknown researcher. Furthermore, although it was felt that offering tangible benefits to the participants would not necessarily induce participation, in hindsight, offering a tangible incentive that would have benefitted the business itself (or the wider tourism destination in which the business operates) may have encouraged a higher response rate. For example, a competition offering a business audit such as a service quality audit, environmental audit, etc. may have encouraged participation. Thirdly, the prescription of 51 value constructs for rating may have proved an onerous task for participants, given that there was a requirement for familiarisation with each given value definition before assigning an importance rating. Whilst the purpose was to validate or verify each value construct that was identified in the qualitative phase, a more viable approach could included a 'values reduction exercise' prior to the survey design and administration. This could have involved a further step in the thematic analysis involving the 'clustering' of value items into broader value principles. For example, the value items of 'self-respect', 'respect-earning' and 'respectful' could have been clustered into a value principle of 'respect'. Such clustering, resulting in a reduced number of value principles for measurement, would have reduced the time and effort required by participants and may have encouraged a higher response rate. In this regard, this suggestion mirrors previous research whereby the 57 value items constituting the SVS were subsequently reduced to 10 value principles constituting the SSVS. A smaller value item list could have also permitted additional measurement options beyond rating, e.g. ranking, comparisons, or combinations thereof. In conclusion, although there was consistency in the importance rating of each value item (indicated through low standard deviations), the engagement of 101 participants is perhaps not sufficient to claim validation of the values. Hence, the quantitative phase in this study should perhaps rather be considered as a *process towards validation.*

Integrated data reporting

The employment of a joint display neatly illustrates the key findings of the combined methodologies thereby promoting ease of reference. However, it can be argued that 'richness of data' elicited in the exploratory phase of the study is lost given that only a small sample of interview extracts can be shown in order not to 'clutter' the joint display. Furthermore, the joint display did not permit the mean and standard deviation scores for the individual value items. In this instance, perhaps the joint display could have been presented as a 'series of figures' which would allow for the incorporation of additional data, yet still maintaining integration.

CONCLUSION

Exploratory sequential design is an under-utilised methodology in values research. Acknowledging the limitations of employing a single qualitative or quantitative methodology in identifying values characteristic of a

specific population, the purpose of the study was to evaluate the application and utility of an exploratory sequential mixed methods design for identifying values underpinning ecotourism management in South Africa. Researcher reflections of this novice approach elicited a number of lessons learned. In the qualitative phase, these essentially pertained to the need for heterogeneity within the sample and investigator triangulation. This would serve to further promote credibility and dependability given that this phase would inform a subsequent quantitative study phase. Furthermore, was the acknowledgement of the need to 'reduce' the number of value items that would inform the subsequent survey instrument. In other words, the further 'clustering' of the 51 value items into broader 'value principles'. This would permit a less onerous rating exercise. In the successive quantitative phase, the utility of e-surveys as a data collection method is questionable. E-mail and web-based surveys have proliferated in social sciences research, which can ultimately result in a low response rate or 'unengaged' responses. Alternative data collection methods or alternative means of survey dissemination warrants consideration. With regard to data reporting, whilst the employment of a joint display neatly illustrates the combined data, there is a danger that the 'richness' of the qualitative empirical materials is lost. This perhaps calls for a 'series' of figures, as opposed to just one figure, jointly displaying the integrated data, and a comprehensive thematic narrative. Overall, the employment of ESD in values research is advocated. Certainly, future values studies, within and beyond the tourism context, could build upon the lessons learned from this novice research study. Table 2 provides a summary of recommendations.

Table 2
Recommendations for the employment of ESD in values research

	Recommendation	**Rationale**
Qualitative	Provide an explicit definition of each value item	Guides the interpretation of the empirical materials (researcher 'stays close' to the value definitions when interpreting behaviours). Promotes consistency concerning the participant understanding of the value item before assigning an importance rating.
	Ensure diversity in sampling criteria.	Promotes heterogeneity in the sample Promotes credibility and dependability in that the results from the qualitative phase will inform the survey instrument for the subsequent quantitative phase
	Prioritise on-site, in-person semi-structured interviews	Promotes convenience for the participants Promotes researcher-participant rapport and researcher familiarisation with the business, allowing for additional insights as a result of observation
	Consider virtual interviews where resources are limited (but making efforts to promote a rapport)	Promotes accessibility to the participants Travel time is eliminated for the researcher
	Employ a multi-disciplinary team of investigators (drawing on qualitative and quantitative expertise)	Promotes investigator triangulation Provides heightened confidence in findings, hence, increased credibility and dependability
	Cluster the value constructs into broader 'value principles'	Makes for a less onerous values importance rating exercise May encourage greater participation Permits a range of measurement approaches, e.g. rating, ranking, comparing, etc.
Quantitative	Consider a viable alternative to e-surveys yet still maintaining anonymity	May serve to increase the response rate
	Where an e-survey is the only viable method of data collection, utilise existing channels of communication for its dissemination	May promote more 'engaged' participation in the study
	Offer an incentive to participate (i.e. a business benefit)	May yield a higher participation rate.
Integration	Use an 'extended' joint display to illustrate integrated findings (e.g. a series of figures)	Promotes ease of reference Allows more data to be included whilst maintaining integration

	Employ a comprehensive thematic narrative	Avoids the loss of 'rich' qualitative materials

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CHANCES AND LIMITS OF CORPORATE FEEL-GOOD CULTURE – CASE STUDIES OF GERMAN HOSPITALITY HAPPINESS MANAGERS AND TEAMS

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ABSTRACT

Feel-good management is a contemporary approach in companies to react on the developments of evolving requirements of employees towards employers. In addition, the shortage of skilled workers and, also the change in values lead companies to strengthen their retention management. Consequently, the aim of feel-good management or happy culture managers/teams should be to increase the well-being of the employees through motivation, and inspiring events, in order to create a positive atmosphere. Based on desk research and qualitative expert interviews/a questionnaire sent to relevant feel-good managers, case studies of German hotels and hotel groups have been analysed, compared, and evaluated. The results confirm the approach of hotels to improve the situation of employees, or at least the feeling of the employees regarding their working conditions and environment. Feel-good managers can help to uncover deficits, sensitize the leadership to them and then influence the internal atmosphere towards a corporate feel-good culture. In this way, they represent the constructive interface between employees and employers. Nevertheless, all participants also confirmed the function of the feel-good management as an instrument of marketing, and a useful element of their employer branding strategy, in order to follow a certain trend by being part of this development. Consequently, there is a balance to be seen between the real and effective impact on working conditions, and the related atmosphere, impacts on retention management, as well as on branding the employer and presenting the company as modern, innovative and human.

Key Words: Corporate culture, feel-good management, reliability, retention management, reputation, happiness

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

"Feel-good management" refers to a leadership style that prioritizes creating a positive and supportive work environment for employees. The focus is on building strong relationships with team members, emphasizing employee engagement and motivation, and fostering a sense of purpose and meaning in work. This approach is based on the belief that happy and fulfilled employees are more productive, innovative, and committed to achieving organizational goals. Feel-good management often involves strategies such as providing opportunities for professional development, recognizing, and rewarding employee contributions, also offering work-life balance initiatives. It is particularly relevant in today's competitive job market, where companies that prioritize employee well-being are better positioned to attract and retain top talent (Gallup, 2018, Preuß, 2022).

This contemporary approach is used to develop answers to several market developments, such as New Work, Work-Life-Blending, and quiet quitting. In addition, the shortage of skilled workers and, also the change in values lead companies to strengthen their retention management. Consequently, the main task of feel-good or happy culture managers are to increase the well-being of the employees through his caring function, team inspiring events and the creation of a positive atmosphere (Bohne, 2023).

The successful impact of a feel-good manager depends on reliability and authenticity, the space to develop team inspiring events and structures as well as the understanding that the feel-good management can only be only element in a holistic strategy of retention management. Therefore, this paper describes a first step, a first analyses of feel-good management in the mostly traditionally structured, German hotel industry with the purpose to give a first insight about different cases as a basis for future research and discussions.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to describe and to compare relevant cases, three steps of research have been connected:
Desk research
Analysis of job descriptions of feel-good manager in hotels, published during the last 18 months

Questionnaire for feel-good managers in German hotels/hotel groups (questionnaires sent out and received between April 17th and May 30th, 2023)
In addition, the evaluation of three relevant reports is describing the impacts of feel-good management on structures and processes. These studies have been conducted between 2018 and 2021, in order to evaluate the importance of feel-good management for companies and their performance.

Gallup's report on positive management emphasizes the importance of creating a culture of recognition and appreciation to increase employee engagement and productivity. According to the report, companies that prioritize positive management practices have 21% higher profitability, 41% lower absenteeism, and 59% lower turnover rates than those that don't. The report suggests that recognition and appreciation are key components of feel-good management (Gallup, 2018).

Also, Deloitte's report on feel-good management emphasizes the importance of employee well-being as a strategy for competitive advantage. The report suggests that companies that prioritize employee well-being tend to have higher levels of employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. Additionally, the report highlights the importance of creating a culture of recognition and appreciation to foster employee well-being (Deloitte, 2018).
Slack's report is underlining, that feel-good management is becoming increasingly important in the modern workplace. The report states, that 77% of employees believe that a positive work culture is important to them, and 69% of employees said that they would be more likely to stay with a company that prioritizes employee well-being. The report also highlighted the importance of creating a culture of trust and transparency, fostering strong relationships between leaders and team members, and providing opportunities for employee development and growth (Slack, 2021).

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Based on the results of 5 responding feel-good managers representing hotels/hotel chains with appr. 10.500 rooms and appr. 950 employees in Germany, the anonymised questionnaires have been evaluated and the results have been clustered.

Table 1: Reasons, instruments, and limits of feel-good management

Reasons for feel-good management	Instruments of feel-good management	Limits of feel-good management
Image and reputation Instrument for employee recruitment and branding Strategic response to the competition ("war for talents") Expectations of existing employees and applicants Specification of the owner/managing company	Individual communication Multilingual communication Working time flexibility/ models Appreciation/ recognition/ expressing gratitude Technological innovation, e.g., internal app Financial travel and rewards Constant contact person Reconstruction of co-working spaces	Openness and interest of employee Owners/ managing company Tradition and corporate culture Different priorities of employees (salary is not important to everyone)
Main reasons: Reputation and expectations management	Main instruments: Communication and individualized (financial) recognition	Main limits: Leadership approach and traditional corporate culture

Source: Own table

The successful impact of a feel-good manager depends on reliability and authenticity, the space to develop team inspiring events and structures as well as the understanding that the feel-good management can only be only element in a holistic strategy of retention management. The role models are the executives and a constant contact person to underline the real interest of the company. Feel-good management, motivational impacts and empowerment of people is a long-term approach and needs time and energy of people involved. The goal is a sustainable change of internal values and methos of communication towards a more employee-focused, inclusive and collaborative corporate culture. For this, feel-good managers can help to uncover deficits, sensitize the executives and influence the internal atmosphere towards a corporate happiness culture. For this, feel-good managers represent a bridge of trust between employees and employers. At the same time, it has to be accepted that not everybody likes to get empowered and that feel-good management should always be understood as a

sensitive offer, not a political order. Based on positive and appreciating entrepreneurial responsibility a serious understanding of commitment to the staff should lead companies in the hotel sector to a sustainable satisfaction management which follows the expectations management towards employees (Deloitte, 2018, Bohne, 2023, Simon, 2023).
A cultural and linguistic sensitivity is as important as the involvement of employees in the development of feel-good instruments in order to develop, retain and optimize a cooperative corporate happiness culture.

CONCLUSION

Feel-good management is an approach to leadership that focuses on creating a positive and supportive work environment that prioritizes employee well-being. The concept is based on the belief that happy and engaged employees are more productive, committed, and innovative, which ultimately leads to better business outcomes. In this report, we will analyze the effectiveness of feel-good management and its impact on organizational success.
Three reports emphasizing the importance of creating a positive and supportive work environment through feel-good management practices such as recognition and appreciation. Additionally, the reports suggest that prioritizing employee well-being can lead to increased employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity, ultimately leading to better business outcomes. It is important for companies to consider implementing feel-good management strategies to achieve competitive advantage in the current job market.

Contemporary research has shown that feel-good management can have a significant impact on employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. When employees feel valued and supported, they are more likely to be motivated to perform at their best and to stay with the company long-term. Additionally, feel-good management can support the employer branding strategy and needs much time to be recognized as a long-term approach.

One of the key components of feel-good management is creating a culture of recognition and appreciation. However, it is important to note that feel-good management is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Different companies and teams require different strategies to effectively implement this approach. Additionally, it is important to balance the focus on employee well-being with the need to achieve organizational goals and meet performance metrics. And, feel-good management needs reliable instruments and should not be used to follow a trend only, or to create a position, which sounds good. The trust of employees (and applicants) can only be achieved by evolving internal traditions and cultures and not by covering the traditional way of managing people in operations.

Feel-good culture is an advantage for a hotel and needs a strategic understanding of employee-focused structures and processes based on emotional appreciation, and individualized support. Then, it really can be a beneficial and resilient bridge for the hotels and for the employees.

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DIGITAL TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY FOR TOURISM MICRO-ENTREPRENEURS IN A DEVELOPING CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

Micro-entrepreneurs are now becoming influential stakeholders due to new information technologies; however, the tourism micro-entrepreneurship journey at destinations is minimally shared. Framed within the diffusion of innovation (DOI) theory (which explains how, why, and the rate at which a product, service, or process spreads through a population or in a social system), this study explores the digital transformative journey for tourism micro-entrepreneurship in Gauteng in South Africa. A Qualitative-descriptive research method was adopted to discover the who, what, where, why, and how the digital transformation journey spreads in a social system. The purpose was to gain insights from participants regarding a digital transformation phenomenon. The results revealed the value in the digitalisation of tourism micro-entrepreneurs (from traditional to transformed micro-entrepreneurs) in three broad processes (embracing human interaction with technology, digital supply, value coordination, and embracing digital trading skills). This paper contributes towards adding to the limited academic gaze on tourism micro-entrepreneurship in a developing context, not only in Gauteng, South Africa but in other developing contexts too by identifying strategic prospects that exist in digitalisation.

Key Words: Digital transformation, Tourism micro-entrepreneurship; Digitalisation; Diffusion of innovation

INTRODUCTION

Digital technology continues to transform the world of work in the global and local context. Therefore, to grow the digital demand and for tourism organizations to prosper, it is necessary to adopt new technologies to remain competitive and to be sustainable. The Covid-19 pandemic escalated the use of digital or online technology to another level. Critically exploring the digital or digitalization of tourism micro-entrepreneurship opportunities remains an abstract process (Michael & Sergey, 2022). Hence, this paper explores the digital transformative journey for tourism micro-entrepreneurs. Digitalisation is one of the critical areas for tourism micro-entrepreneurs to have a competitive advantage, it is not a new phenomenon, and it goes back to the advent of computing in the 1950s. Aly (2020: 3) asserts that digitalisation is about the application of digital products to enhance business processes. The adoption of digitalization aligns with having a competitive advantage (created all the industrial revolution opportunities) for both foreign and domestic service providers for destinations. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, underprivileged entrepreneurs have been experiencing extensive hardship and economic vulnerability (Islam, Kedah, Safuan, & Ismail, 2022); others were decimated. Apart from the context-dependency (e.g., society, company, individual) and various perspectives on the topic (e.g., human, process, technology), particularly in the developing context (Thordsen, Murawski, & Bick, 2020), there is a need to explore the digital transformative journey for tourism micro-entrepreneurs.

The concept of transformative tourism is rooted in the tourist perspective as a phenomenon to re-invent oneself as a means of a lifestyle (Thordsen, et al., 2020). Transformative tourism is based on the concept of inner transformation or the personal perception of the tourist (Ryan & Deci 2012). The tourist in question seeks personal growth during the holiday, which can take place in areas such as well-being, spirituality, and education. Tourists want to return home with some personal tools enriched by the experience of their journey. However, the hosts' perspectives on delivering a service or experience that is transformative to tourists are minimally explored. Digital Transformation is the use of new digital technologies that enable major business improvements and influences all aspects of customers' life (Reis, Amorim, Melão, & Matos, 2018).
Micro-entrepreneurship in this study is referred to a subcategory of small businesses having less than ten employees. The subcategory can be a street vendors, home-based business, independent mechanics, and self

help groups. Hence, innovative solutions to “upskill South Africans for the growing demand in the digital and services economy is essential to unlocking more human capital – particularly among the youth” (Indlulamithi South Africa Scenarios 2030, 2019: 48). This study was conducted in Gauteng, South Africa.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformative theory needs to be grounded in what “we know about human needs and potentials” (Ryan & Deci 2012: 12). There is a call to transform the journey of tourism micro-entrepreneurship journey through digitalization. The Tourism Business Council of South Africa’s (TBCSA) leadership conference held on 14-16 September 2022 calls for the transformation and reformation of the tourism small and medium businesses through technology or digitalisation by engaging knowledge responsibly and creating a just and sustainable planet. Therefore, conceptualizing the digital transformative journey for micro-entrepreneurs in a developing context like South Africa is critical. Unpacking a concept of tourism 4.0 as a point of departure can set the scene for transforming a tourism micro-entrepreneur.

Nature of entrepreneurship and micro-entrepreneurship during the times of Tourism 4.0

Various scholars have defined entrepreneurship as the process of setting up an organisation that can bring about economic value (Schumpeter, 1965; Drucker, 1970; Onuoha, 2007). Hence, entrepreneurship is encouraged in many developing countries including South Africa; micro to medium enterprises play a central role across the tourism value chain and contribute to the total tourism experience and the attractiveness of SA as a destination. At the center of the entrepreneurship agenda is the focus on 'opportunities’ and the utilisation of resources to exploit those opportunities. The digital revolution presents a multitude of opportunities that remain unexplored and understudied. This paper evaluates some of the digital prospects that entrepreneurs could explore within the tourism context. Micro-entrepreneurship is a subset of "entrepreneurship", denoting the size of the entrepreneurial establishment (Li, Su, Zhang & Mao). It represents a large share of the undocumented and understudied population. As a subcategory of small businesses having less than ten employees, it contributes to Africa’s share of the tourism industry. There are over 5 million micro and small businesses in South Africa, of which most are located in the informal sector (Torrington, Borros, Gwele, Rutsch, Anderson, Essa, Pillay and Dila, 2020: 2). Yet, there is a well-documented informal economy of business tourism, which is particularly significant in sub-Saharan Africa (Rogerson, 2018). According to Vial and Hanoteau (2015: 143), the international standards to define micro-entrepreneurship must include organisations with fewer than five employees and self-employed individuals. Morais, Ferreira, Nazariadli, and Ghahramani (2017:75) concur that micro-enterprises employ five people or less, usually including an owner/manager/worker and family members. These businesses typically operate in under-regulated business environments with low entry barriers, but they do not provide stable livelihoods or health benefits (Morais et al., 2017). Therefore, defining a tourism micro-entrepreneurship is important. For this study, a definition by South African Tourism (2020) will be adopted which states that a tourism micro-entrepreneurship consists of entrepreneurs who operate small, micro, or medium-sized tourism or hospitality-related businesses. A business must have been in operation for less than 10 years, employ no more than 50 people, and have a turnover of not more than R10 million a year (Department of Tourism, 2021)

As one of the most interconnected and fastest-growing industries in the global economy, with vast potential to boost an economy’s GDP, the tourism industry has always embraced technology since the 1990s. Acceleration of technology adoption is inevitable in the connected tourism supply chain. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, businesses were not mainly focused on the need to improve their online presence for customers and to pay attention to understanding their customers; however, Madichie and Hinson (2022) covid-19 highlighted the importance of e-commerce online presence in the developing context. Digitalisation is one of the critical areas for tourism micro-entrepreneurs to have a competitive advantage. Digitalisation is not a new phenomenon; it goes back to the advent of computing in the 1950s.

The world is currently adopting the use of digital gadgets and cyber systems commonly referred to as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). Among the critical revolutions is the concept of “Tourism 4.0" which is derived from the use of industry 4.0 technologies to enable communication and collaboration between stakeholders in the tourism value chain (Peceny et al., 2020 cited in Sifolo & Sokhela, 2022). According to Peceny et al. (2020), the enablers of tourism 4.0 include artificial intelligence, blockchain, emerging technologies, behavioral modeling, wireless connectivity, big data, cloud computing, high-performance computing, user interface, augmented reality, the internet of things, smart sensors, and visualisation. Madichie and Hinson (2022) identified creative industries in Africa as an industry with great opportunities. For example, digital advertising, design, fashion, film and music production, digital publishing, and photography are among the innovative

developments in the global value chain. Therefore, tourism micro-entrepreneurs are presented with multiple opportunities to establish new enterprises that will shape tourism 4.0. According to Erboz (2017: 765), the following are concepts that define the future of 4.0.

- Big data assist large, complex datasets that affect the decision-making of companies through big data analytics, algorithms, software programs
- Autonomous robots help to solve complex tasks which cannot be solved by humans such as Kuka Iwaa which has the learning ability to achieve certain tasks
- Simulation, which is frequently used in mathematical modelling and algorithms that optimize the process or software programs
- Horizontal & vertical system integration, which is mostly found inside of the factory and SCs Smart factories or cloud systems.
- Internet of Things which is the connection between physical objects and systems such as Smart network
- Cloud computing consists of shared platforms that serve multiple users such as Google Drive, Blue Cloud, Windows Azur
- Additive manufacturing such as 3D printing technology used to produce mass customization and 3D printers to produce smartphones
- Augmented reality is a Human-machine interaction on maintenance tasks such as Google Glass
- Cyber security deals with cyber-attacks on business environments such as National defense systems to prevent attacks and stealing of data

These digital technologies could be adopted by several businesses and could apply to tourism micro-entrepreneurship. Tourism allows the seamless migration of people globally and is a very important economic force for any destination. The tourism industry requires revolutionary innovation as a prerequisite for development. In 2019, tourism contributed 2.0 percent to the South African economy and accounted for 8.2 percent of investment in the country (StatsSA, 2020:8). It is critical to highlight that the effects of COVID-19 severely affected the tourism and hospitality sector worldwide (Kumar, 2020). Knowledge about Tourism 4.0 would enable tourism entrepreneurs to develop new products and services for the tourism industry. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted perceptions toward developing the new tourism business models of the future. Tourism micro-entrepreneurs are presented with multiple opportunities to establish new enterprises that will shape tourism 4.0.

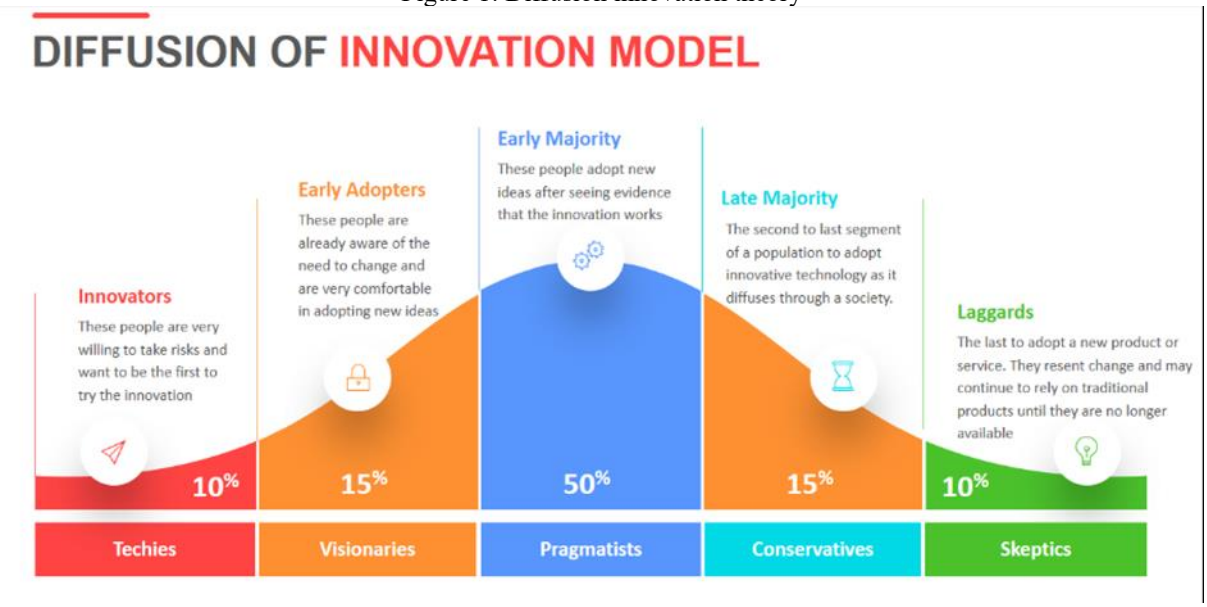
Technological theories

Throughout history, many theories were pronounced in an attempt to define why or how social change occurs. Theories provide complex and comprehensive conceptual understandings of things that cannot be pinned down: how societies work, how organisations operate, and why people interact in certain ways (Reeves, Albert, Kuper & Hodges 2008: 631). This paper adopts the technological theory as it focuses on how society changes when technology changes (Cohen, 2006). Veblen (1990: 103) defined technological advancement, as "a collective change not something that is only achieved by creative individuals". In other words, societies collaboratively work together in the process of embracing technological changes. In a social structure, technological change would require society to adapt to the new changes (especially post covid-19 hard lockdown). This could be changed in communication devices (e-mail, internet, mobile phones, etc.) that influence all aspects of social life (work, leisure, family, friendship, sports, etc.). The diffusion theory is adopted for this study.

Diffusion theory

Technological adoption can be traced back to the work of Rogers (1962), namely, the innovation diffusion theory (IDT). The diffusion innovative theory attempts to better describe why, how, and the speed at which technology spreads through society. Figure 1 depicts what would generally represent the lifecycle model denoting how social groups accept new technology within their social context. Figure 2 illustrates what would be a normal distribution plotted over time. Rogers described the different stages in the model, namely, innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Each stage represents a percentage of technology adoption rates in an economic and social setting. Van Den Berg & Van Der Lingen (2019: 126) summarised the theory as a model consisting of varying degrees of enthusiasm to adopt technological innovation.

Figure 1: Diffusion innovation theory



Source: Rogers (1962) adapted by Powerslides.com (2022)

The perception of innovation weakens based on the adopters' support or rejection of the new technology. This means that technological advancements are not simply accepted by users, there are pockets of rejection and varying degrees of acceptance. Micro-entrepreneurs (Individuals running the enterprise) would go through the different stages of adoption before appreciating innovation. This includes being aware that innovation exists, deciding to adopt or reject innovation, testing it, and possibly the continued use of innovation. In a perfect society, all those running micro-enterprises would adopt technology without hesitation. However, the reality is that social dynamics determine who has access and who does not. There are some technological advancements in the tourism sector that micro-entrepreneurs can leverage. However, the decision to adopt new technology would depend on the understanding of the need for adoption. Although this study is qualitative, the adoption of diffusion innovative theory is valued. According to Wilson and Chaddua (2010) cited in Leeming (2018), the theory affects academic understanding and can also be an action guide (Maxwell & Mittapalli, 2008).

Tourism and technological advancements

Tourism allows the seamless migration of people globally and is a very important economic force for any destination. The tourism industry requires revolutionary innovation as a prerequisite for development. In 2019, tourism contributed 2.0 percent to the South African economy and accounted for 8.2 percent of investment into the country (2020:8). It is critical to highlight that the effect of COVID-19 severely affected the tourism and hospitality sector worldwide. Hence, this paper calls for the exploration of digitisation opportunities that can further enable the sector to attract more local and international travellers. Digital tourism is revolutionizing the research approaches by the consumers; how they plan, book, and experience holidays. The literature suggests that businesses that rely on tourism will be virtually invisible without a digital presence. Technological changes have strongly influenced the development of the tourism sector immensely, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2019), the travel and tourism sector accounted for 10.4% of global GDP; even after the COVID-19 impact, the industry remains a cornerstone of the global economy through creating jobs, driving exports, and generating prosperity across the globe. The tourism sector still has numerous opportunities through investment opportunities that spur regional integration, create employment, and can contribute towards reducing poverty. Technology continues to revolutionize the way the touristic experience is perceived because nearly half of the 1.4 billion international visitors today, and many billions more domestic travellers, visit cities every year

(WTTC, 2019). Organisations today use technology devices and machinery that enable efficiency and improve employee productivity. The process of adapting to this change is rapidly improving.

METHODOLOGY

A Qualitative-descriptive research method was adopted to discover who must be involved in a digital transformative journey of a tourism micro-entrepreneurship, what must be done, and wherein the digital transformation journey should one focus at. The purpose was to gain insights from participants regarding a digital transformation phenomenon. It is exploratory and seeks to explain 'how' and 'why' a particular social phenomenon, or program, operates as it does in a particular context. It tries to help us to understand the social world in which we live, and why things are the way they are. The flexibility or variability of the qualitative-descriptive method is desirable for obtaining rich data and achieving an understanding of a phenomenon (Hyejin, Sefcik, & Bradway, 2017). Data were collected in two parts, 1) literature was reviewed through 50 publications in peer-reviewed journals, and 2) interviews were conducted with 12 micro-entrepreneurs having businesses in the tourism value chain based in Gauteng in 2023. An interview guide was developed which included questions such as how to digitally transform a journey of a person involved in micro-entrepreneurship and why? The interviews conducted were between 30 – 60 minutes per session, using different forms of communication as preferred by the participant (MSTeams, phone calls,s or face-to-face). Three broad streams were revealed from the data interpretation.

RESULTS

The results revealed the value in the digitalisation of tourism micro-entrepreneurs (from traditional to transformed micro-entrepreneurs) in three processes (embracing human interaction with technology, digital supply, and value coordination, and embracing digital skills trading). From the above summary, a common theme that exists is that digitalisation enhances the performance of tourism micro-tourism entrepreneurs.

'How' and 'Why digital transformation is necessary for micro-entrepreneurship

Tourism micro-entrepreneurs are presented with a myriad of opportunities to use digital technologies to create sustainable tourism. This expands their market reach, increases growth, improves operational efficiencies, and increases the competitive edge. How do we achieve this? Tourism intelligence and the development of digital strategy could address the change in customers' needs, the future of work, and the preservation of historical and cultural practices whilst investing in tourism intelligence and improving policy regulations. Those investment opportunities could spur regional integration, create employment, and could contribute towards reducing poverty by providing alternative employment opportunities and recovery strategies for the micro-entrepreneurs operating in the sector. Hence, in this article, we argue that digitalisation and connectivity could be a panacea towards driving investments for SMMEs whilst enhancing connectivity, among not only businesses but also customers and general stakeholders at large. The journey map of tourism micro-entrepreneurship digitalisation is illustrated in Figure 2 below;

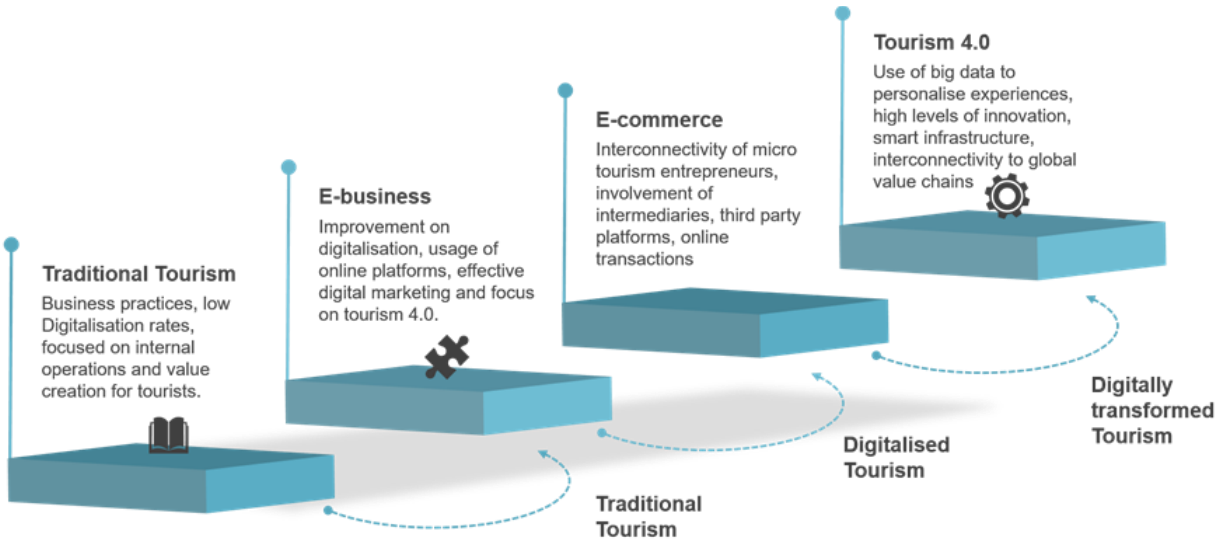


Figure 2: Micro-entrepreneurship digitalisation journey based on reviewed literature.

Source: Author's creation.

Figure 2 above illustrates the journey of digitalising tourism to the point of full transformation. Micro-Entrepreneurs in this sector should level up and move with the evolution of tourism. Tourism 4.0 is already dominating the sector, and micro-entrepreneurs in South Africa should join the bandwagon.

Digital transformative journey

Micro-entrepreneurs may employ a range of techniques to improve their performance when digital transformation affects their company model (Chen & Kim 2023). When asked how the businesses use different types of technologies in their organisation, Participant 1 indicated that "*I have a digitalised based office system for internalised business operations for daily operations such as a calendar, email system, billing process, tasks management systems, Website optimisation Social media (for planning and campaigning) Business mobile friendly systems Application of artificial intelligence, chatbots, virtual reality for experiences, live streaming*" This shows the understanding of the entrepreneur. Digital transformation has a greater impact on innovation (Chen & Kim, 2023), which contributes to the competitiveness of tourism businesses and their ecosystems. Website Optimisation was mentioned by Participants 3 and 6 as innovative way to transform the digital journey. According to Dredge et al, (2018: 6), this presents more opportunities for micro-entrepreneurs to expand their market reach, increase growth, improve operational efficiencies, and increase their competitive edge. This results in a ripple effect across the tourism value chain as it transforms the traditional roles of tourism producers and consumers, with new roles, relationships, business models, and competencies (Dredge et al, 2018: 1). Below are some of the processes that occur when digital transformation occurs in the tourism micro-entrepreneurship journey.

Digital supply and value creation and coordination

Value creation occurs when the entrepreneurship development process is clear to the tourism micro-entrepreneur. This involves entrepreneurial processes as well as an understanding of the supply and value chain. A generic understanding of the policy regulations and social networks is of critical importance.

Embracing human interaction with technology

A micro-entrepreneur needs to consider social mobilisation for micro-entrepreneurship development where the adoption of technology is possible and where the linkage to the internet is possible.

Technical skills development

Access to appropriate technology, relevant digital skill trade, and data intelligence analysis are key to achieving competitive advantage. Having the above-mentioned skills makes it possible to be effective and create value for the business, which in turn makes it easy to access micro-credit and get marketing and business counseling. Digitalising customer experiences or products promotes service excellence through strategic integration. It becomes easy to deal with relationship management and be in a position to share appropriate information.

Although the Saharan African countries are much less integrated into the world economy through demand linkages resulting in minor economic effects through global value chains (Pahl, Brandi, Schwab & Stender, 2022); the travel and tourism industry remains the backbone and/or enabler of socio-economic growth and development for most African countries. For example, Participant 9 indicated that they are struggling by mentioning that "*We are using 25% of social media because we are using only emails, WhatsApp to communicate with the staff and guests. We do have computers, cell phones and a landline. We have a point of sale, unfortunately, all these types of technologies are not linked. They work in isolation. This is because of the lack of knowledge*". Tourism micro-entrepreneurs need to digitalise secondary value chain activities and manage their accounts receivable, payables, and reconciliations. Participant 10 stated that *A reliable legal system is needed for customers who don't want to pay for services. For example, at some point we tried to get engage the Community Police Forum to intervene but it didn't work*. According to Porter's value chain model, secondary value chain activities include procurement (where a legal system presides in the business), technological development, and infrastructure (Porter, 1985: 11-12). Accelerated digitalisation, therefore, enhances micro-enterprise procurement processes, and turbo-charge technological and infrastructure development. Rural areas may benefit from digitalization. Evidence from Sohns and Diez (2018) in Vietnam indicated that in rural areas of emerging markets, the individual level dominates as both an opportunity and necessity-driven entrepreneurship. Sellers are instantaneously connected to consumers who would otherwise not have heard of them. Informal enterprises can now operate well beyond their immediate location and known circle. Platforms unlock latent demand for a host of services, including low-skilled services where the majority of South Africans are looking to earn an income. Therefore, organizations must be able to understand and respond to digital disruptions at a specific value chain level. Technology and digital tools have brought several changes that have

significantly transformed the entire scope of operations in different companies to improve efficiency. Conversely, stakeholders in the tourism value chain, have to modernize their offerings.

Therefore, micro-entrepreneurs ought to instigate innovative strategies or formulate responses to the external environment that surrounds them. Participant 10 stated that "*We use computerised software to advertise to the market. We use social media such as our website, Facebook which is the most effective tool for our business. We also do blogging on our website. We do this by targeting community groups. We use google analytics to monitor our customer relationships. Since we offer Dry cleaning services, we have technologies such as press and steam irons since they are quick. We also use tumble driers for efficiency purposes.*" An environment characterized by frequent changes such as an abundance of digital technologies, tourism industry growth, and the demand for new products and services. Smart devices such as mobile and connected smartphones, tablets, and wearable gear, offer novel tools to record and analyse new data streams that were previously either difficult or nearly impossible to capture (Torous, Onnela & Keshavan, 2017). New technologies such as augmented reality (AR) safari tours, virtual tour guides (VR), 360 photography and video tours, Internet of things (IoT), and 5G travel tech, will play a big role in the future of travel. According to Cisco's Visual Networking Index, "By 2022 there will be many connected devices in the world; they will be more than three times the global population". The magnitude of activity that occurs online is immense. In less than a minute google processes 3.8 million search queries, returning an excess of approximately 45 billion results.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The study is secondary research, meaning that it is exempt from requiring ethical approval. However, the approval for
the final feedback phase of the work was obtained from the University of Tshwane University of Technology, Research ethics committee (Ref #: FCRE2022/FR/07/021-MS (3)). Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

CONCLUSION

The concept of digitalisation enhances efficiency; it also improves procurement processes whilst balancing supply and demand. Both businesses and stakeholders such as customers benefit from digitalisation. For example, ordering goods and services efficiently and effectively. There is value in the digitalisation of tourism micro-entrepreneurs through asking questions such as who, what, when, why and how. The opportunities identified revealed that although technology has transformed greatly, Tourism micro-entrepreneurs could still benefit from the other innovations that are sustainable and suitable for the context such as solar power and cyber tracker among others. Although diffusion economic theory is relevant when exploring the digitalisation opportunities for micro-entrepreneurship, a critical issue exists in the willingness of micro-entrepreneurs, in general, to adopt new technology to promote collaboration and cooperation. This poses a threat to the realisation of Tourism 4.0 and the opportunities thereof. Through the contextualisation of the DOI theory, how and why digital transformation is necessary for tourism micro-entrepreneurs was explained. The digitalisation of tourism micro-entrepreneurs from traditional to transformed micro-entrepreneurs was presented. Insights from participants regarding a digital transformation phenomenon emerged. The three broad processes (embracing human interaction with technology, digital supply, and value coordination on, embracing digital trading skills) were presented. This work is necessary as it contributes to the digitization literature in the tourism sector in the developing context.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Some lessons can be learned from the disruptions that have occurred, not only in the tourism industry but also in the world. The African continent continues to strive to try to achieve the set 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, however, high levels of unemployment and poverty-related issues persist. Airbnb and Uber continue to teach us leases, particularly in developing communities. One may argue that although there are prospects with digitalisation, there is a reason for governments to be slow in terms of implementing technological advancements such as Artificial Intelligence because the government is grappling with key socio-economic challenges. Technology has progressed at an ever-growing rate and has driven employers to integrate technology as a key component of their overall objective (Le Roux, 2018giveshis gives direction to the SMEs regarding the effect of technological advancement work place. Digitalisation is appealing to several stakeholders, from the government to the private sector, it is critical to invest in the skills required in the future. The war for talent is imminent due to the ever-changing technologies from the internet of things (smartwatches, tv), robots, and

automation (ordering food on iPad, payments/ bookings, banks, self-checking in machines at the airport) wearable, cloud, big data, collaborative platforms. These concepts bring new behaviours across the world. Tourism micro-entrepreneurs must adapt for providing efficient services, not only for marketing but also for sustainability purposes.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There is more need for glocalisation in conducting a business for collaboration purposes. Furthermore, the systematic literature search performed in this study included information from the African continent; and the articles reviewed were limited. Therefore, future research is necessary for sharing stories around 'digitalization' for future tourism and hospitality micro-entrepreneurs.

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TOURISTS' DESTINATION PREFERENCE AND INTENTION TO VISIT CILETUH GEOPARK

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ABSTRACT

Ciletuh Geopark is a national park in Indonesia and is part of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network. We found that the study on tourist behaviour related to geoparks still needs to be explored. This study examines the effect of destination reputation, destination personality, and destination trust on destination visit intention and destination preference. This study involved 211. Data were analysed using exploratory factor analysis and a structural equation model. As a result, destination personality influenced destination trust, and destination trust affected destination visit intention and destination preference. Unfortunately, destination reputation could have a compelling influence on destination trust.

KeyWords: Destination reputation, destination personality, destination trust, Ciletuh Geopark, geopark marketing, geotourism, Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

A geopark is an area with a significant geological heritage managed for conservation and sustainable use. Geoparks typically encompass a range of geological features, such as mountains, canyons, waterfalls, caves, fossils, and cultural and natural resources. A geopark is under the designation of an international organisation called the Global Geoparks Network (GGN), which UNESCO supports. The UNESCO GGN is a program established by UNESCO that aims to conserve a healthy environment and enhance socio-economic development worldwide (Patzak & Eder, 1998). Geoparks are typically located in areas of outstanding geological importance, such as volcanic landscapes, coastal cliffs, and mountain ranges (Kusky et al., 2010; Megerssa et al., 2019; Sajinkumar et al., 2022). They also often feature unique cultural and historic sites, such as traditional villages, geological structures, geological sections, water landscapes, ancient ruins, and archaeological sites (Lahmidi et al., 2022; Sagala et al., 2018; Sajinkumar et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2019). The Geoparks aim to become a tourist destination and be part of the geotourism industry.

Some studies explore tourist behaviour in the context of geoparks, including Yuliawati and Hadian (2014). Both inquired about the perception of international tourists regarding geoparks. Their study found that tourists associate geoparks with ecotourism. Cheung et al. (2014) assess the impact of demographic attributes and preferences of Geopark visitors on willingness to pay. They claim that those two predictors are significantly associated with willingness to pay. In addition, Yusof et al. (2021) investigate the effect of destination brand engagement and destination trust. These scholars state that they significantly affect the revisit intention of tourists into the geopark. Besides, Hudrasyah (Hudrasyah, 2022) mention that self-development, cultural and heritable knowledge, mixing with fellow backpackers, and relaxation affect geopark visit Intention. While Goumelar and Hudrasah (2021) test the impact of tourists' motivation on their intention to visit Ciletuh Geopark, Hidayah (2022) examines the impact of the destination attribute on tourists' loyalty intention. The destination attributes include accessibility, attraction, accommodation, amenities, and activities. They conducted their study in Pongkor Geopark. Ciletuh and Pongkor Geopark are in Indonesia. Kiu (2013) also examines tourists' loyalty to visiting geopark and is shaped by their satisfaction. On the other hand, tourists' satisfaction is due to

motivation, performance quality, and experience quality. Furthermore, Tang and Liang (2022) pay attention to the staged authenticity and nostalgia of tourists visiting Jiayang Geo-park in China. They believe mining historical heritage stimulates authentic and nostalgic values throughout the visit. The researchers also revealed the role of authentic experiences and personal nostalgia in forming the quality of travel motivation.

Despite much research on tourist behaviour related to geoparks, research on destination reputation, destination personality, and destination trust still needs to be completed. For this reason, this study examines the effect of the factors (destination reputation, personality, trust) on destination preference and visit intention. This study takes place at the Ciletuh Geopark setting. Ciletuh Geopark is in the West Java Province, Indonesia. The official design as a UNESCO Global Geopark occurred in 2018. Ciletuh Geopark has a total area of 128,000 hectares covering eight districts and 74 villages. The Ciletuh Geopark is known for its stunning natural beauty, diverse landscapes, and unique geological features, including waterfalls. The geopark is also home to a rich biodiversity, with various flora and fauna species (Faqqar & Andriani, 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination Reputation

Destination reputation refers to the perceived image, identity, and brand of a particular location, such as a city, region, or country, among potential visitors, tourists, and other stakeholders (Ermen, 2006; Su et al., 2020). It is a critical aspect of destination marketing and management in tourism, as it shapes expectations, preferences, and behaviours and influences the decision-making process (Girish et al., 2021). Some factors establish the reputation of a destination, including the natural and built environment, culture, history, politics, society, and the quality of tourism products and services. Positive factors such as safety, cleanliness, friendliness of locals, a wide range of attractions, and convenient transportation facilities, can lead to a favourable destination reputation.

Destination Reputation and Destination Trust

Previous studies take a chance to evaluate the impact of destination reputation on destination trust (Artigas et al., 2017; Hassan & Soliman, 2021). For example, Artigas et al. (2017) employ reputation, cognitive perception, and affective evaluation to predict trust. This study was undertaken in Chile and found that the consequences of a strong destination reputation resulted in the formation of destination trust.

Destination Personality

Destination personality refers to a series of human-like characteristics and traits attributed to a destination, such as a city, region, or country (Zhang et al., 2019). Destination personality is an adaptation of brand personality (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006). Individuals can differ from one another due to their personalities. Some scholars use a dimensional approach when including destination personality in their studies. Kvasova (2015) discusses some dimensions of sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. This researcher directs these dimensions to measure eco-friendly tourist behaviour. Another study by Hosany et al. (2006) breaks down destination personality into sincerity, excitement, and conviviality.

Hultman et al. (2015) state that destination personality can lead to tourist satisfaction, identification, promotion, and intentions to revisit a destination. Hultman et al. (2017) also mention that the destination personality of tourists can result from their awareness of advertisements about a destination. According to Papadimitriou et al. (2015), urban destination personality might consist of excitement and sincerity. Excitement is marked by exciting, online, spirited, and original. Meanwhile, sincerity includes being honest, reliable, wholesome, and down to earth. According to them, destination personality can predict the overall image of the urban destination. Furthermore, destination managers choose various marketing tools to promote their destinations, one of which could be advertising.

Destination Personality and Destination Trust

Destination personality can affect destination trust (Chen & Phou, 2013; Kumar, 2016). For example, in Kumar's (2016) research, destination loyalty is predicted by several variables, including destination personality and destination trust. They conducted this research in India and involved foreign tourists, and the study reveals the importance of destination personality in generating destination trust.

Destination Trust

Destination trust refers to the confidence and reliability that tourists have in a destination to deliver on its promises and provide a safe, secure, and enjoyable travel experience (Jensen & Svendsen, 2016; Taheri et al.,

2020). It is a critical consideration in decision-making, and its power affects satisfaction, behaviours, and choice of destinations among tourists (Endah et al., 2017; Hsu & Cai, 2009). Various factors determine destination trust. These include destination reputation, safety and security measures, hygiene and health standards, quality of infrastructure and services, and the level of hospitality and customer service. Tourists evaluate these factors through various sources, such as online reviews, recommendations from friends and family, media reports, and official travel advisories.

Destination Trust and Destination Preference

We found a need for studies that measured the effect of destination trust on destination preference. We should note, however, that several previous studies have explained the significant effects of brand trust on brand preferences (Chinomona et al., 2013; Cuong, 2020a, 2020b; Pir & Evrim, 2020). For example, Cuong (2020a) chose brand trust, perceived value, and brand preference to determine purchase intention. For this study, they recruited electronic supermarket consumers in Vietnam. This Scholar found that brand trust had a great chance to strengthen brand preference.

Destination Trust and Destination Visit Intention

Some studies examine the impact of destination trust on visit intention (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016; M. Kim & Kim, 2020; Su et al., 2020). For example, in the study of Abubakar and Ilkan (2016), the intention to visit a destination is measured by online WOM and destination trust. They involved tourists visiting Turkey to get health services and reported that the destination trust had an essential impact in increasing their intention to visit the country.

Figure 1 is a research model proposed to test. Destination reputation and destination personality are associated with destination trust. In addition, destination trust links to destination preferences and destination visit intention.

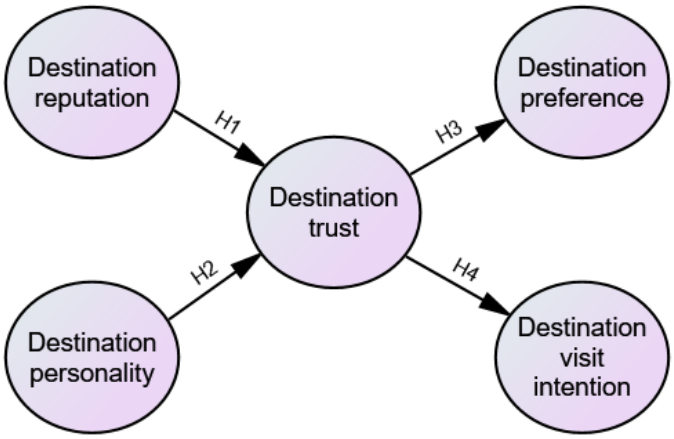

Figure 1 The Proposed Model

METHODS

Measures

This study enters five variables, each measured by indicators adapted from previous studies. Indicators that determine destination reputation were taken from Artigas et al. (2015), (2015), while those from Ekinci and Hosany (2006) were to measure destination personality. In addition, indicators taken from the study of Su et al. (2022) measure destination trust, and those by Mao and Zhang (2014) measure destination preference. In addition, the indicators of Kim et al. (2009) and Su et al. (2022) measure the destination visit intention. All measured indicators use a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 6: 1 representing 'Strongly Disagree' and 6 'Strongly Agree'.

Data Analysis Techniques

The researchers analysed the current study's quantitative data in three stages. The first phase ran exploratory factor analysis to test the validity of each variable using SPSS software version 29. The researchers will consider an indicator valid if it has a factor loading of 0.4 or greater. The second phase is conducting a reliability

test after considering Cronbach's alpha score. We will consider a construct reliable if it has an alpha score of 0.7 or greater. The third phase, implementing a structural equation model with AMOS version 29 software, is used to test the four hypotheses. As shown in Table 1, we selected four criteria for establishing a model fit, including probability, CMIN/DF, CFI, and RMSEA, with their respective ideal scores. In addition, the researchers will declare a hypothesis accepted if it has a critical ratio (CR) score of 1.98 or greater.

Table 4 Criteria of a Fitted Model

Criteria	Rule of Thumb	Resources
Probability	$0.05 < p < 1.00$	Schermelleh-Engel et al. (2003)
CMIN/DF	$0 \leq CMIN/DF \leq 2$	Tabachnick et al. (2007)
CFI	$0.95 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$	Hu and Bentler (1995)
RMSEA	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.06$	Hu and Bentler (1999)

RESULTS

Profile of Participants

Table 2 contains a profile of the participants. Participants are tourists who have travelled out of town in the last three months and have heard of Ciletuh Geopark. They were chosen using the convenient sampling method and invited to complete the online questionnaire. In total, 244 participants were involved, but only 211 met the criteria consisting of 161 women (76.3%) and 50 men (23.7%). Regarding age, 122 participants (57.8%) among 21 and 24 years, and 168 participants (79.8%) were Unmarried. In addition, 107 participants (50.7%) were Unemployed, and 102 (48.3%) had a high school education. In addition, 151 participants (71.6%) experienced visiting Ciletuh Geopark.

Table 5 Profile of Participants

Profile		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	50	23.7
	Female	161	76.3
	Total	211	100.0
Level of education has been completed	Less than high school	12	5.7
	Diploma	19	9.0
	Postgraduate	3	1.4
	Undergraduate	75	35.5
	High school	102	48.3
Marital status	Unmarried	168	79.6
	Separated/divorced	3	1.4
	Married	40	19.0
Occupational status	Employed	77	36.5
	Unemployed	107	50.7
	Self-employed	27	12.8
Age	>39	7	3.3
	17-20	37	17.5
	21-24	122	57.8
	25-29	25	11.8
	30-34	11	5.2
	35-39	9	4.3
Experience visiting Ciletuh Geopark	No	60	28.4
	Yes	151	71.6

Validity and Reliability Tests

Table 3 shows the validity and data reliability test results. Destination visit intention consists of two dimensions: The first dimension consists of six indicators, and the second has four with alpha scores of 0.871 and 0.815, respectively. Destination reputation has five and an alpha score of 0.871. Furthermore, destination personality has two dimensions: The first dimension maintains eight indicators with an alpha score of 0.905, while the second dimension holds four with an alpha score of 0.805. In addition, there are two dimensions to destination

preference. The two consist of two indicators, and each obtained an alpha score of 0.825 and 0.813, respectively. In addition, destination trust rescued five indicators with an alpha score of 0.827. An alpha score above 0.7 for all constructs indicates they are all reliable.

Table 6 Results of Data Validity and Reliability Tests

	Variables and Indicators	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha
	Destination Reputation		0.871
Dr4	Tourists talk very well about Ciletuh Geopark.	0.884	
Dr2	Ciletuh Geopark has a better reputation than other similar places.	0.815	
Dr3	Tourists respect Ciletuh Geopark.	0.802	
Dr1	Ciletuh Geopark has an outstanding reputation.	0.796	
Dr5	The excellent reputation of Ciletuh Geopark gets support from its history.	0.767	
	Destination Personality (1)		0.905
Dp6	Ciletuh Geopark is exciting.	0.915	
Dp8	Ciletuh Geopark is original.	0.900	
Dp11	Ciletuh Geopark is family oriented.	0.830	
Dp10	Geopark Ciletuh is friendly.	0.677	
Dp12	Ciletuh Geopark is charming.	0.671	
Dp5	Ciletuh Geopark is good	0.625	
Dp9	Ciletuh Geopark is vibrant.	0.609	
Dp1	Ciletuh Geopark is reliable.	0.537	
	Destination Personality (2)		0.805
Dp3	Ciletuh Geopark is smart.	0.911	
Dp2	Geopark Ciletuh is honest.	0.903	
Dp7	Geopark Ciletuh is daring.	0.687	
Dp4	Ciletuh Geopark is successful.	0.477	
	Destination Preferences (1)		0.825
Dpr2	Ciletuh Geopark is more interesting than other destinations.	0.933	
Dpr1	Geopark Ciletuh is my first choice.	0.914	
	Destination Preferences (2)		0.813
Dpr4	I intend to visit destinations other than Ciletuh Geopark shortly.	0.925	
Dpr3	I am more interested in visiting other destinations besides the Ciletuh Geopark.	0.910	
	Destination Trust		0.827
Dt5	There are clear service management standards at Ciletuh Geopark.	0.791	
Dt4	There are clear guidelines for services at the Ciletuh Geopark.	0.783	
Dt2	I hope that the service facilities at Ciletuh Geopark will be humane.	0.772	
Dt1	The managers of Ciletuh Geopark will actively offer help when I am in trouble.	0.766	
Dt3	The managers of Ciletuh Geopark will try to understand my needs.	0.751	
	Destination Visit Intention (1)		0.871
Dv10	I have extensive knowledge about travelling to Ciletuh Geopark.	0.938	
Dv7	I am collecting data or information about a trip to Ciletuh Geopark.	0.803	
Dv8	I want to experience a trip to Ciletuh Geopark as often as possible.	0.779	
Dv2	I prefer to visit Ciletuh Geopark compared to other destinations.	0.745	
Dv4	In the next 12 months, I can visit Ciletuh Geopark.	0.660	
Dv9	I can tell my friends about travelling to Ciletuh Geopark with confidence.	0.529	
	Destination Visit Intention (2)		0.815
Dv6	I am very interested in travelling to Ciletuh Geopark.	0.845	
Dv5	I want to visit Ciletuh Geopark.	0.841	
Dv1	I hope to visit Ciletuh Geopark in the future.	0.801	
Dv3	If everything goes as planned, I intend to visit Ciletuh Geopark.	0.633	

Hypotheses Testing

Figure 1 demonstrates a structural model of the hypotheses tested. This model meets the criteria as a fit model with a probability score of 0.158 and a CMIN/DF score of 1,256. In addition, this model has a CFI score of 0.989 and an RMSEA score of 0.035.

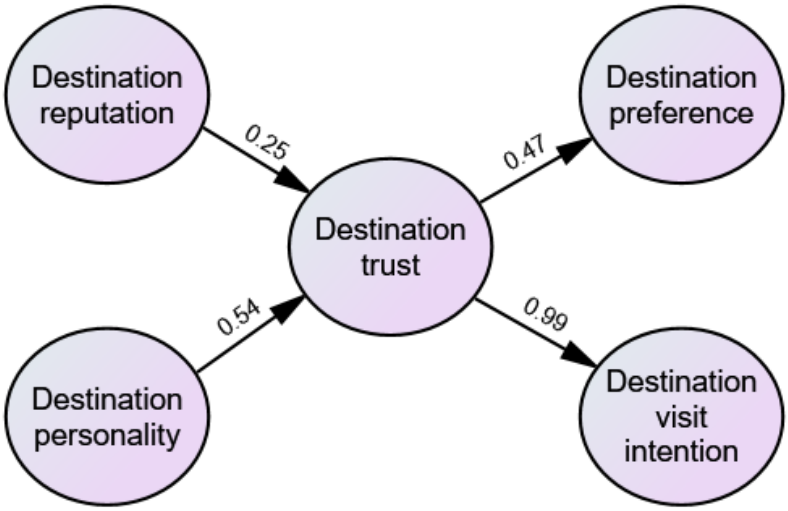

Figure 2 Structural Model of the Hypotheses Testing

Table 4 presents the results of the fourth hypothesis testing. One hypothesis (H_1) obtained a CR score below 1.98, while three (H_2, H_3, and H_4) each obtained a CR score greater than 1.98.

Table 7 Results of Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Paths	C.R.	P	Results
H_1	Destination reputation > Destination trust	1.677	0.094	Rejected
H_2	Destination personality > Destination trust	2.415	0.016	Accepted
H_3	Destination trust > Destination visit intention	7.190	***	Accepted
H_4	Destination trust > Destination preference	2.174	0.028	Accepted

DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis predicted the role of destination reputation in creating destination trust. This hypothesis achieves a CR score of 1.677. According to Hassan and Soliman (2021) destination reputation is vital for strengthening the destination trust of tourists. Ciletuh Geopark should have a reputation, and it will play a significant role in influencing the destination trust of tourists. In this case, we realise that Ciletuh Geopark is a relatively new destination, established in 2018 (Yuniarti et al., 2022). While it is gaining popularity among domestic and international tourists, it may still need to establish a strong reputation compared to other more well-established destinations.

This study examined the effect of destination personality on destination trust. This hypothesis obtains a CR score of 2.415. Chen and Phou (2013) stated that destination personality significantly affects destination trust. Destination personality refers to the collection of human characteristics attributed to a destination, such as warmth, friendliness, and trustworthiness. Tourists are more likely to trust and feel positive emotions toward a geopark destination if they perceive it to have positive personality traits. The personality of Ciletuh Geopark can significantly affect tourists' destination trust, as it can influence their perceptions of the geopark's friendliness, safety, and commitment to sustainability. If tourists perceive Ciletuh Geopark as being friendly, safe, and welcoming, they are more likely to trust that it is an excellent place to visit and feel comfortable making travel plans.

This study measured the effect of destination trust on destination visit intention, and this path obtained a CR score of 7.190. Chinomona et al. (2013) claimed that destination trust significantly affected destination trust. Tourists' trust level in a destination significantly affects their intention to visit the Ciletuh Geopark destination. Trust is crucial in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly in the tourism industry. Destination trust refers to the extent to which a tourist has confidence in the ability of a particular destination to meet their expectations and provide a safe and enjoyable experience.

The fourth hypothesis predicted the contribution of destination trust to increasing tourist preference for Ciletuh Geopark. This hypothesis obtains a CR score of 2.174. According to Kim and Kim (2020), trust affected destination preference significantly. The factor of trust is crucial in any decision-making process, especially when choosing a travel destination. Tourists want to feel confident that their chosen destination is safe, reliable, and can meet their expectations. Destination trust can have a significant effect on destination preference for Ciletuh Geopark. In Ciletuh Geopark, a relatively new destination, the trust may be more crucial for attracting tourists.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to test the effect of destination reputation, personality, and trust on destination visits and preferences. This study found that destination reputation failed to predict destination trust. On the other hand, destination personality had an essential role in increasing destination trust. In addition, destination trust affected destination preference and destination visit intention.

These findings successfully extend the study of destination reputation and personality, primarily related to geoparks and geotourism, which past studies did not reach. The reputation of an agency or a tourism destination is generally a significant concern for public relations practice. For this reason, the findings of this study can deepen the study of public relations in the world of tourism.
The manager of geoparks, especially Ciletuh Geopark, can benefit from the findings of this study. Destination reputation, destination personality, and destination trust are critical factors in managing Ciletuh Geopark because they can significantly impact potential tourists' and visitors' decision-making and behaviour. By focusing on destination reputation, destination personality, and destination trust, the management of Ciletuh Geopark can create a positive tourism experience for visitors, leading to increased tourism revenue and tremendous success for the destination.

Some of the limitations of this study are that, although the participants have heard of and most of them have visited Ciletuh Geopark, data collection that still needs to be done on the site will be full of risk. In addition, most participants are women, while geoparks are a destination that requires a more strenuous effort when visiting it. These limitations may affect the findings causing the first hypothesis we rejected it.

Further research on these topics can provide valuable insights into improving the tourism experience in Ciletuh Geopark and attracting more visitors to the destination. Research on tourist behaviour related to geoparks can directly test tourist perceptions about destination reputation, personality and trust with different sample groups, such as those who actively have outdoor activities and those who do not like going outdoors. In addition, choosing social media activities and marketing tools as predictors is also essential to measure their impact on tourists' perceptions and intentions to visit the Geopark. In addition, taking the time to conduct empirical studies can help explore the experiences of tourists, hosts, and geopark managers.

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Part II - EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

RESILIENCE OF TOURISM BUSINESSES TO CRISES: THE CASE OF KANAGAWA PREFECTURE, JAPAN

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ABSTRACT

This preliminary study aims to explore key factors increasing business resilience to crises using the case of tourism businesses in Kanagawa prefecture, Japan. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted to 7 tourism businesses from September to November in 2022. Qualitative analysis found 5 key factors that are the inherent strengths of their businesses, including repeat, the local community, social media, sports and visitors' behavioural changes. The preliminary findings of this study are expected to contribute to developing a theoretical model that makes tourism businesses inherently resilient and a practical strategy to increase the resilience of tourism businesses to crises.

Key Words: COVID-19, crisis, Japan, resilience, tourism business, tourism marketing

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the global tourism industry. Due to the pandemic and travel restrictions in many countries and regions, numbers of domestic tourists declined, and many tourism businesses suffered the loss of demand and revenue. Without exception, tourism businesses in Japan suffered and face challenges in recovering. Conversely, some tourism businesses are highly resilient and are not severely damaged by crises (Dahles & Susilowati, 2015). The aim of this preliminary study is to explore factors increasing business resilience to crises, using tourism businesses in Japan as a case. The significance of the study is to propose a strategy for tourism businesses to not simply prepare for or promptly recover from crises but rather to grasp them as an opportunity to grow their business.

METHODS

To acquire an in-depth understanding of the factors increasing resilience in Japanese tourism businesses, this study employed a qualitative approach and conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with tourism businesses in Kanagawa prefecture. Seven businesses that received more visitors in 2020 than 2019 were selected to participate following a pre-questionnaire delivered to 3,084 tourism businesses asking about the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic. All the interviewees were presidents or managers with the authority to decide their business strategy. Each interview took approximately 60 to 90 minutes and was recorded with the participant's permission. The transcribed data were examined using content analysis to explore trends, patterns, frequencies, networks and co-occurrence of words used in the interview (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The analysis was conducted following the basic processes developed by Elo and Kyngäs (2008) with the support of KH coder text mining software.

PRELIMINBARY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The preliminary findings show some key factors of business resilience in a time of crisis, including repeat, the local community, social media, sports and visitors' behavioural changes. These businesses hardly needed to adapt to the changing environments caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Rather, the inherent strengths of their businesses, such as focusing on repeat visitors, continuously communicating with their local communities and making outdoor sports and spaces available, were suitable and favourable for visitors who changed their travel behaviours, including spending more money and enjoying leisure time on weekdays. The study is expected to contribute to the tourism literature with a model that makes tourism businesses inherently resilient. Practically, the study will contribute to the development of a strategy to increase the resilience of tourism businesses to crises.

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A CLUSTER ANALYSIS OF LUXURY CONSUMERS ON PRIVATE SALES TRAVEL WEBSITES

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ABSTRACT

Luxury consumption through private sales travel websites is a paradox because of the luxury-discounts antagonism. Our research wants to study the motivations of luxury consumers to consume or not luxury hotels through such websites. First, we interviewed 37 consumers of 5-star hotels and palaces. Emerging from our qualitative data analysis, we underlined four consumers' profiles according to their luxury motivations and importance of price as an indicator of prestige. Second, to validate these profiles, we used a quantitative approach with a structured online questionnaire. After running a cluster analysis on our 140 respondents, results emphasized four clusters of luxury consumers.

Key Words: Private sales websites; luxury tourism; prestige-seeking behavior; twofold methodological approach; typology

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The Internet has become a key player notably in the luxury and tourism sectors. In this context, private sales travel websites (PSTW) have emerged for a few years now. Their business model includes an online private club where the members benefit from a selection of luxury trips and leisure activities around the world for a limited time, with discounts of up to 70%. But luxury consumption through such websites is an intrinsically paradox because of the antagonism between luxury and discounts (Roux, 2009; Senol et al., 2015).

Therefore, this research aims at better understanding and studying the motivations of luxury consumers to consume or not luxury hotels through such websites. Specifically, we address the following research questions: Do consumers consider price as an indicator of prestige when booking on these platforms? What are their personal and/or social motivations to consume or not on such websites? Are there different categories of luxury consumers booking through these platforms? We use a twofold methodological approach, that is, qualitative and quantitative.

First, we interviewed 37 consumers of 5-star hotels and palaces. To analyze and interpret our data, we used a manual thematic analysis (Gioia et al., 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Emerging from this analysis, we highlighted four profiles of luxury consumers according to their luxury motivations (personal or social) and the importance of price perception as an indicator of prestige (low or high) on PSTW.

Second, to validate these profiles, we used a quantitative approach with a structured questionnaire administrated online to luxury consumers through a non-probabilistic sampling method. To be considered in our final sample, we imposed three screening criteria: respondents must be at least 18 years old, had stayed at a 5-star hotel in the past 2 years and to be a member of at least one PSTW. Our final sample is composed of 140 respondents. After running a cluster analysis (Hair et al., 1998) on the three factors pertaining to the price perception as a signal of prestige, results identified four clusters of luxury consumers: "The Quality Seekers"; "The Snobs"; "The Nonchalants"; "The Perplexed Hedonists". We used different variables to profile these clusters.

In terms of contributions, our findings support the existence of different types of luxury consumers with different luxury motivations (e.g., Correia et al.,2019; Roux et al., 2017) and price perceptions as signaling prestige (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). However, the four groups identified in our typology do consume luxury hotels through PSTW. These results do not confirm the findings of the qualitative study showing that two of the

four identified profiles do not book on such websites. Moreover, it seems that some luxury consumers (The Snobs and The Perplexed Hedonists) that consider price as a signal of prestige do agree to book at discounted prices even if they do not perceive hotels on these websites as luxury. Finally, our findings could also help managers by providing PSTW with a segmentation tool they can use to identify different luxury consumers' profiles.

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MODELING EXPERIENCESCAPES, MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES, AND LOYALTY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON TAIWANESE BICYCLE TOURISTS

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the destination attributes of bicycle tourism, their antecedents, and consequences using the experiencescape framework. 428 Taiwanese citizens who participated in bicycle tourism in 2022 were surveyed using a non-probability sampling method. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used for analysis. Results show that the bicycle tourism experiencescape is the critical mediator between antecedents and positive outcomes. The study provides insights into bicycle tourism planning, emphasizing the importance of tailoring tourism services to unique needs for competitive advantages, improved experiences, and loyalty, ultimately benefiting the tourism industry sustainably.

Key Words: bicycle tourism, experiencescape, memorable experiences, destination management.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a surge in cycling, as people worldwide turn to this activity for transportation and exercise (Büchel, Marra, & Corman, 2022; Rérat, Haldimann, & Widmer, 2022). Researchers have observed a growth in cycling, with higher rates on weekends in the USA and European countries, indicating an increase in recreational cycling (Buehler & Pucher, 2021). After the initial period of the pandemic, cycling habits persisted, with individuals cycling more frequently or maintaining their previous frequency (Costa, Félix, Marques, & Moura, 2022). Cycling as a recreational activity is expected to continue growing in the post-pandemic era. Cycling tourism is also on the rise, with growing popularity and advancements in electric bicycles likely to attract more cycling enthusiasts (Han, Lho, Al-Ansi, & Yu, 2020). Therefore, destination management organizations (DMOs) should focus on enhancing cycling infrastructure, making cycling more accessible and appealing, and attracting more tourists to their regions.

Previous studies have identified destination attributes critical for attracting bicycle tourists, including the physical environment, local bicycle culture (Nilsson, 2019), and supportive norms (Meng & Han, 2019). While valuable findings have been obtained, most studies have only examined a single aspect of the destination using case study research methods, limiting the systematic evaluation of these features' impact on tourists' experiences. The experiential nature of bicycle tourism makes it important to utilize theoretical models that analyze tourism experiences. This approach can help researchers and practitioners systematically evaluate various components and determine the current state of a destination. Jernsand, Kraff, and Mossberg (2015) suggest that analyzing the tourism experience through the experiencescape concept can lead to a more comprehensive understanding and enable researchers to study specific aspects of the experience.

Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to apply the experiencescape theory to comprehensively assess the touchpoints that influence bicycle tourists' perceptions and behaviors. Furthermore, it is necessary to understand the antecedents and consequences of visiting a well-designed bicycle tourism destination, as it can lead to positive outcomes and increase revenue. Hence, the second objective of this research is to understand the factors that positively influence bicycle tourists' perceptions of a bicycle tourism experiencescape and establish a model that examines the antecedents and consequences of these perceptions. By clarifying the relationships among these factors, destination planners can develop evidence-based strategies to attract more bicycle tourists.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of Bicycle Tourism Research

Bicycle tourism is a special interest tourism where tourists actively or passively participate in cycling events or tours, which can be independently organized or as a part of commercial trips (Ritchie, 1998). Anyone who perceives cycling as an integral part of their holiday can be considered a bicycle tourist, regardless of owning an expensive bike or participating in competitive events (Nilsson, 2019; Ritchie, 1998). Bicycle tourism has become popular in Europe, North America, and Asia-Pacific, attributed to factors such as urban development,

well-constructed infrastructure, public acceptance of bicycle sharing systems, and international bicycle events (Downward & Lumsdon, 2001). The development of bicycle tourism has provided opportunities for the industry to attract bicycle tourists through special products or services such as bicycle rentals, cycling tour operators, and bicycle accommodations (L.-H. Chen & Chancellor, 2020; Han et al., 2020; Yeh, Lin, Hsiao, & Huang, 2019). Bicycle tourism studies can be categorized into three major themes: 1) the influence of physical settings, 2) social dimensions, and 3) personal characteristics and perceptions, including topics such as cycling path choices, preferences, influences of bicycle infrastructure, motivations, market segments, and travel careers (Meng & Han, 2019).

Physical settings, including facilities, weather, and landscapes, significantly impact bicycle tourists' satisfaction, intention, and overall experience (Chang & Chang, 2009; Fitt, 2015; Krenn, Oja, & Titze, 2015; Nilsson, 2019). Social dimensions, such as the influence of travel companions, are also important in determining preferences (L.-H. Chen & Chancellor, 2020). The influence of demographics and socio-economic factors on bicycle tourism is another research theme. Some researchers have examined the emotional experience of bicycle tourism (Han et al., 2020; Ho, Liao, Huang, & Chen, 2015), and the concept of experiencescape has been suggested as a more holistic approach. However, little research has been done on the application of experiencescape in bicycle tourism. Therefore, expanding on the current theoretical models and including other factors that shape the bicycle tourism experiencescape may contribute to the progression of bicycle tourism studies and aid practitioners in finding innovative marketing and management strategies to attract modern tourists.

Hypothesis Development

Individual differences, such as behavior patterns (L.-H. Chen & Chancellor, 2020) and psycho-social factors (Han et al., 2020; Ho et al., 2015), can impact bicycle tourists' perception of destination attributes. To develop a comprehensive theoretical framework of bicycle tourism experiences, identifying antecedents that contribute to diverse perceptions of destination features is crucial. Environmental awareness (Meng & Han, 2016) and leisure involvement (C.-F. Chen & Huang, 2021; Ho et al., 2015) are two such factors that have been found to influence cyclists' decision-making processes. While prior research has established their impact on destination preferences and cycling behavior, none has integrated them into the same model. Therefore, this study proposes hypotheses that model environmental awareness and leisure involvement as antecedents of destination attributes:

Hypothesis 1: Bicycle tourists' environmental awareness has a significant positive effect on their perception of the bicycle tourism experiencescape.

Hypothesis 2: Bicycle tourists' leisure involvement has a significant positive effect on their perception of the bicycle tourism experiencescape.

Studies have demonstrated that cycling around a destination can result in positive emotions and provide functional and cognitive values for tourists (L.-H. Chen & Chancellor, 2020). Furthermore, it has been suggested that well-constructed bicycle tourism destinations can lead to a sense of goal achievement and the belief that tourists have made the right decision in selecting the destination (C.-F. Chen & Huang, 2021; Falcous, 2017). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: The perception of bicycle tourism experiencescape is positively associated with both (a) emotional and (b) cognitive values for bicycle tourists.

Zhang, Wu, and Buhalis (2018) argued that memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) are more significant than lived experiences, as they can affect tourists' future decision-making. Well-constructed bicycle tourism destinations can also create MTEs, as unique features positively influence tourists' satisfaction and memorable experiences (C.-F. Chen & Huang, 2021). Tangible and intangible elements in the destination can generate unique stories that stimulate mental responses, leading to hedonic benefits and extraordinary experiences (Mei, Hågensen, & Kristiansen, 2018). This study proposes:

Hypothesis 4: The bicycle tourism experiencescape positively influences bicycle tourists' MTEs.

Hypothesis 5: Positive emotional and cognitive values lead to MTEs among bicycle tourists.

In the competitive tourism market, attracting new customers and retaining existing ones is a challenging task for destination planners. However, repeat visitors are more profitable and more likely to promote the destination. Studies have found that bicycle tourists who are repeat visitors have a more positive attitude towards the

destination, leading to long-term success. Additionally, due to the reduced funding for tourism promotion caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on continuous intention and word-of-mouth (WOM) intention is crucial for destination marketers (Rather, Hollebeek, & Rasoolimanesh, 2022; Zhang et al., 2018). Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 6: Values positively impact bicycle tourists' (a) continuous and (b) WOM intentions.

Hypothesis 7: MTEs positively impact bicycle tourists' (a) continuous and (b) WOM intentions.

METHODS

Research Sites

The East-Asia region has vigorous cycling activity, yet research on this area is limited compared to Europe and North America. Cultural and geographic differences suggest that research results from the West may only partially explain the causes in the East. Taiwan is considered the best place for cycling and public bicycle use in this region, with various bicycle paths and a public bicycle system called YouBike. Studies show that a significant number of YouBike users ride for leisure or tourism purposes, making Taiwan a suitable research site for investigating the research questions of this study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The model constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale with items reviewed by experts in tourism and bicycle research to ensure content validity. A non-probability sampling method collected data from 428 Taiwanese citizens who participated in bicycle tourism in 2022. The questionnaires were posted on online bicycle forums with screening questions to ensure target population representation. Data were analyzed using the PLS-SEM approach, which allows for examining complex models and identifying the relationships among all relevant factors. The data analysis involved six stages: screening for missing values and assessing the constructs' reliability, convergent and discriminant validity. The hypothetical model was tested on the aggregate data level to investigate the causal relationships among all relevant factors. The data analysis process ensured the validity and reliability of the results.

RESULTS

Respondent Profile

The sample is balanced in gender, with 49.1% male and 49.3% female, and the largest age group is 31-40 (49.8%). Most participants hold a college or equivalent degree (64.7%) and fall into the NTD $30,001-40,000 income group. Most participants engaged in bicycle tourism 2-5 times (53%) and leisure cycling in everyday life (79.2%). Public bike rentals (34.8%) or bringing their bike from home (34.3%) were the most common transportation methods for bicycle tourism, and they usually rode for less than one day (63.1%). The sample is suitable for answering research questions with insightful information, as they align with prior research on Taiwanese leisure cyclists' characteristics

Measurement Model

This study used self-reported measures and found no common method bias with the total variance extracted by one factor was 31.23%. PLS-SEM was chosen over covariance-based SEM due to non-normal data distribution. The measurement model demonstrated internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. All measurement items were retained despite some factor loading values below the ideal threshold. The experiencescape framework of bicycle tourism was established, achieving the first research objective.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

The VIF values for all paths were below 5, indicating minimal collinearity. The results show that all hypotheses with direct relationships among factors were supported (Table 1). Furthermore, the result indicates that the bicycle tourism experiencescape acted as the key mediator between antecedents and positive outcomes (Table 2). The effect sizes (f^2) for paths in the linear model ranged from 0.030 to 0.953, indicating medium to large effects. The R^2 scores further indicate that all exogenous constructs have moderate to substantial explanatory power in predicting the five endogenous constructs. Thus, the study has successfully achieved its second research objective by developing a systematic understanding of essential destination attributes for bicycle tourism and their antecedents and consequences.

Table 1

PLS-SEM Results of the Structural Model

Hypothetical relationship		Path coefficient	Effect sizes (f^2)
	Direct effects		
H1	Environmental awareness ➔ Bicycle experiencescape	0.295***	0.093
H2	Leisure involvement ➔ Bicycle experiencescape	0.269***	0.077
H3	Bicycle experiencescape ➔ Values	0.698***	0.953
H4	Bicycle experiencescape ➔ MTEs	0.133***	0.030
H5	Values ➔ MTEs	0.735***	0.902
H6a	Values ➔ Continuous intention	0.271***	0.034
H6b	Value ➔ WOM intention	0.475***	0.164
H7a	MTEs ➔ Continuous intention	0.318***	0.047
H7b	MTEs ➔ WOM intention	0.313***	0.072

Note: MTEs = memorable tourism experiences; WOM = word-of-mouth

Table 2
Specific indirect effects

Specific indirect effects	Path coefficient	*p* value
Environmental awareness➔ Bicycle experiencescape ➔ MTEs ➔ Continuous intention	0.012	0.020
Environmental awareness➔ Bicycle experiencescape ➔ Values ➔ Continuous intention	0.056	0.004
Environmental awareness➔ Bicycle experiencescape ➔ MTEs ➔ WOM intention	0.012	0.018
Environmental awareness➔ Bicycle experiencescape ➔ Values ➔ WOM intention	0.098	0.000
Leisure involvement ➔ Bicycle experiencescape ➔ MTEs ➔ Continuous intention	0.011	0.021
Leisure involvement ➔ Bicycle experiencescape ➔ Values ➔ Continuous intention	0.051	0.014
Leisure involvement ➔ Bicycle experiencescape ➔ MTEs ➔ WOM intention	0.011	0.017
Leisure involvement ➔ Bicycle experiencescape ➔ Values ➔ WOM intention	0.089	0.001

Note: MTEs = memorable tourism experiences; WOM = word-of-mouth

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant changes in transportation patterns, leading to a surge in bicycle tourism. This study aimed to provide practical recommendations for destination marketing organizations (DMOs) and advance the understanding of bicycle tourism experiences in the post-pandemic era. The study made several significant contributions to the bicycle tourism literature:

Firstly, previous research on bicycle tourism has focused on individual destination attributes without a comprehensive framework to evaluate the critical dimensions of a destination. This study addressed this limitation by integrating cycling studies and the experiencescape theory to create a multidimensional framework. The study identified five components of an attractive bicycle tourism destination. The results showed that bicycle culture, natural environment, social interactions, built environment, and tourism amenities were significant destination dimensions, with bicycle culture being the most crucial attribute. This finding challenges previous studies that have emphasized the quality of bicycle lanes or tourist attractions as the most attractive destination attribute. The study highlights the importance of intangible components in bicycle tourists' assessments of a destination, emphasizing the politeness of other road users as the most critical factor in shaping positive perceptions.

Secondly, this study provides empirical evidence to support the hypothesized relationships among environmental awareness, leisure involvement, bicycle tourism experiencescape, values, MTEs, continuous intention, and WOM intention. The results reveal that bicycle tourism experiencescape serve as critical mediators in the model, significantly shaping bicycle tourists' perceptions and experiences. The study reveals that environmental awareness and leisure involvement positively affect bicycle tourists' perceptions, with environmental awareness having a slightly more substantial effect. Additionally, a well-constructed destination can lead to positive values and MTEs, with values strongly predicting bicycle tourists' MTEs, continuous

intention, and WOM intention. These findings provide valuable insights for DMOs in navigating the post-pandemic era and generating revenue.

In conclusion, this study contributes to understanding bicycle tourism experiences in the post-pandemic era by providing a comprehensive framework to evaluate destination attributes and empirical evidence supporting the hypothesized relationships among critical variables. The findings emphasize the importance of intangible components in shaping positive perceptions of a destination and highlight the significance of destination attributes in shaping bicycle tourists' perceptions and experiences.

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DEVELOPING A THEORY OF AWE FROM THE FOOD TOURISTS TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

Despite being a core element of the tourist experience, awe as a concept has received scant attention. Awe is a triggering element for transformative experience to occur. Despite being a crucial aspect for transformational behaviour to occur, to the authors' knowledge there is a dearth of studies on the element of awe. Hence, the purpose of this research is to develop a theory of awe, by focusing on the food tourists' transformative experience. This study uses a phenomenological approach based on interviews with food tourists. Theoretically the study contributes to the tourism experience literature by developing a conceptual framework of awe and its linkage to transformational behavior.

Key Words: awe; transformative experience; tourists experience; food tourists; phenomenology

INTRODUCTION

Experience is at the core of any tourism activities. It has long been documented that tourists look for experiences that not only fulfil their functional needs but are also intellectually stimulating and can enhance their worldviews. In short, they seek experiences that are perceived as transformative in nature. Transformative experiences are defined as those epiphanic moments in an individual travel, which have the power to induce change in behaviour (Reisinger, 2013).
Research has shown that transformative experience is facilitated by both contextual and psychological elements (e.g., Kirillova, Lehto and Cai 2017; Wu, Li, Wood, Senaux and Dai 2020). Kirillova, Lehto and Cai (2017), for instance, found that elements such as meaningful social interaction, properties of experience, awe, and self - inquiry play a crucial role in the tourist transformative experience. Of particular interest is the notion of awe, a core element in the process of transformative change (e.g., Goolaup 2023; Teoh, Wang and Kwek, 2021). Awe is defined as a highly intense emotion triggered by vast and overwhelming phenomena that can lead to feelings of oneness and caring for others. Its importance stems from the fact that it has a range of positive effects on individuals, leading to less self-concern, and more prosocial behaviour (Prade and Saroglu, 2015).

Extant research has also portrayed awe as a prototypical emotion in which an individual feels overwhelmed, perhaps disoriented, confused and even humbled. Awe is facilitated by individual personality traits, openness to experience, as well as the ability to engage in self-reflection (Chen and Mograin, 2020). In terms of consumer studies, the theoretical lens of awe is closely related to the psychological aspects of consumer decision making (White, Habib and Hardisty, 2019) and can impact individual's perception towards positive inclinations to mobilising change (Quesnel and Ricke, 2017). There is an increasing interest in studying the impact of awe on consumer behaviour aspects such as conscious consumption (Hu et al, 2018), social conformity (Yang et al, 2021), and cognitive coping mechanisms (Yang et al, 2020). In addition, there is evidence of awe as an emotion-based link to wellbeing due to its potential to create change and elicit behavioural transformation (Stepanova et al, 2019), leading to stronger well-being mechanisms in individuals (Rudd et al, 2012).

Despite being a crucial aspect for transformative experience to occur (Wang and Lyu, 2019), there is a dearth of studies on the element of awe, the antecedents to awe and transformative experience, and its impact on instigating behavioural transformations. This underlines the importance of understanding the nuances of awe as a rational and emotional construct in theorising transformative experiences. In terms of knowledge impact, a deeper understanding of the notion of awe within the domain of transformative experiences and transformational behaviour can be used towards creating practical and policy implications in the area of sustainable tourism

behaviour. Likewise, result from this study have much implication for tourism studies, in terms of how destination managers can design the experiencescape to facilitate transformational experiences.
In particular, the context of food tourism is of interest in this study since previous research has shown that the construct of awe involves encounters with the 'otherness' or the 'unknown' as well as an interaction with others, that can facilitate change and transformative experience (Goolaup, Soler and Nunkoo, 2017). In the food sector, for example, the impact of positive awe and negative awe on green food consumption during the pandemic is an influencing factor for consumption decision making (Sun et al, 2021). However, more studies are needed in the theoretical connections between emotion, cognition, and behaviour in various contexts for stronger evidence of the impacts of awe and its antecedents on transformational behaviour (White et al, 2019). Hence the *purpose of this study is to explore how awe as a rational and emotional antecedent contributes to the food tourists' transformative experience.*

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Transformative experience

Transformative experience is a fuzzy concept that has been defined differently by scholars, depending on their worldviews, contexts, and purposes (Kirillova et al. 2017; Phillips, 2019; Walter 2016). Transformative experiences are meaningful encounters that have the potential to change the attitude and behaviour of the participants. Goolaup (2023), portrayed it as attitudinal, behavioural and values change that facilitate the instilling of sustainable behaviour. As a concept, it is seen as self-flourishing and positively influences the tourists' well-being. Hence, transformative experience that leads to change in behaviour has significant importance to sustainable tourism. Indeed, the connection to transformative experience is considered as the cornerstone of responsible tourism, since it has the potential of promoting behaviours that are environmentally, socially, ethically, and politically sustainable. Research has also shown that transformative behaviour has helped with the actual implementation of strategies and policies that has resulted in many good practices and improvements such as energy savings, recycling, a reduction of waste and emissions and attempts to improve the livelihood of the local population (Mihalic, 2016; Pung, Gnoth, and Del Chiappa, 2020).

Research has shown that transformative experience is facilitated by numerous factors. Teoh et al. (2021), for instance, highlighted that the landscape (natural/constructive), social dynamics (social bond, socialization) and properties of experience (risk, challenge, novelty) as well the tourists' state of mind are key facilitators in the experience of transformative experience. On the other hand, Neuhofer, Celuch and To (2020), found that positive surprises, physical appearance, stage designs, lineup as well as other effects are crucial in fostering transformation. Whilst recently Goolaup (2023), found the transformative experience is likely to occur in a liminal world and facilitated through a multitude of factor consisting of both psychological and contextual factors. Psychological factors are seen as the underlining expectation of the tourists' perception, motivation, memories, awe, personal values, level of readiness and openness, as well as the personal characteristics of the tourists. The contextual factors, which is in the form of form of; (1) physical environment; (2) social dynamics and (3) thematization around a story likewise contribute in the making of an experience that can be labelled as transformative.

Awe and transformational behaviour

Awe has often been equated to a gratitude and compassion. Awe is the feeling of wonder and amazement of being in the presence of something vast that transcends one's current understanding (Keltner & Haidt, 2003). Awe has been conceptualized as both a positive and negative emotion Like other emotional, awe is mostly conceptualized as a positive emotion and that consist of interest, surprise, and amusement, awe tracks changes in one's understanding of the external world (Keltner & Shiota, 2003). Similar to other prosocial emotions like gratitude and compassion, the concept of awe reliably predicts increased sharing, assistance, and generosity (Piff, Dietze, Feinberg, Stancato, & Keltner, 2015Negative awe is conceptualized a form of fear and anxiety that has a negative effect on well-being, as it is often perceived as being accompanied by personal threat (Chen and Mongrain, 2020). According to Gordon et al. (2017), awe as a negative emotion arise when individuals are exposed to threatening stimuli such as natural disasters. Awe is also seen as perceiving generosity.

METHODOLOGY

To provide insights on how food tourists' experience awe in a transformative encounter, data are collected using an existential phenomenological approach. Existential Phenomenology as a method is commonly used in consumer studies and is based on understanding the lived human experiences (Goulding 2005; Thompson, Locander and Pollio 1989). This methodological approach is deemed appropriate since it can capture the unique

and subjective live experience of the food tourists. Similarly, it also mirrors previous studies that have used such methodological framework to capture the meanings that the tourists' attach to the experience (e.g., Chen et al. 2020; Goolaup and Nunkoo 2023).

Following the existential phenomenological approach, a purposive sample was used to identify food tourists from mainstream travelers. The food tourists are basically those tourists who are primarily motivated to travel for food experiences. In particular, the context of food tourism is deemed to be of interest since previous research has shown that it involves encounters with the 'otherness' or the 'unknown' as well as interaction with others, that can facilitate change and transformative experience. Hence, a purposive sample was applied by selecting participants based on the following criteria: (1) they have a deep interest in food; (2) traveling for food is the main motivation; and (3) they had a food experience that they labelled as transformative in nature. Since, it was difficult for the researcher to identify the target participant from the mainstream traveler, a snowball sampling was further applied. As a result, a total of 10 participants have been interviewed up to now. The table 1 below provides a short description of the study participants. Out of the 10 participants, 6 of them were women and 4 were men. They reflect a broad range of demographic background with the majority being Swedish and in their 50's and 60's.

Interviewee Participants	**Gender**	**Nationality**	**Age**
Lena	Female	Swedish	64
Christopher	Male	British	58
Andy	Male	British	60
Marianna	Female	Swedish	58
Eliza	Female	Swedish	55
Jesper	Male	Swedish	54
Klara	Female	German	37
Sara	Female	Swedish	40
Peter	Male	Swedish	42
Fiona	Female	Australian	54

Table 1: Description of the study Participants

In-depth interviews following the existential phenomenological approach was applied. This mean the questions were framed in such a way that it enabled the interviewer to get a deep understanding of the food tourists' transformative experience. The opening question, 'Can you describe a transformative food experience you have had while traveling?' was set. The other interview questions were formulated as each participant described their experiences. These questions were substantiated by descriptive follow up questions such as 'How did you feel?', 'What do you mean by that?' and 'Can you explain further?' were used to get as much detail as possible. Particular attention was paid in terms of how awe was experienced. On average each interview lasted for 50 minutes, was recorded with the permission of the participants, and was transcribed immediately after completion.

The data was then analyzed and interpreted using an iterative process based on the principles of existential phenomenological analysis outlined by Thompson, Locander and Pollio (1989) and Thompson (1996). The analysis entails an iterative process of reading, documenting, and systematizing the interview transcripts. The reading phase started by the researchers familiarizing themselves with the transcriptions. It also consisted of identifying key phrases and patterns of meanings to grasp thematic similarities, differences among the different interview transcriptions and meaning-based linkages. This iterative process which refers to the spiral logic of (pre) understanding-interpretation-understanding, with the aim of meanings condensation (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009) was continued until insights were gained on how the food tourists experience awe in their transformative food experiences.

FINDINGS

Preliminary findings show that awe is a multi-faceted and highly complex concept that are experienced differently by the food tourists. Based on a preliminary analysis of the data collected, results show that food tourists are likely to experience awe through a multitude of factors that are likely to trigger their sense of awe that eventually leads to transformational behavior. For instance, preliminary data shows that interaction with the

local people, learning about the history of the food, eating with the local people as well understanding the cooking techniques and the reasons for using certain ingredients have created the aspect of awe and the possibility to engage in behavior that can be labelled as transformative in nature. Results from this study will also have significant implication for practitioners on the elements that should be incorporated in the design of an experiencescape that provides tourists with an experience of awe facilitating the transformative experience.

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EXPLORING THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN DESTINATION MARKETING, CONSUMER-BASED DESTINATION BRAND EQUITY AND DOMESTIC TOURIST SATISFACTION AMID PROLONGED CRISIS

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the disproportionate susceptibility of African tourism destinations to global shocks and crisis events due to African destinations' considerable over-reliance on international arrivals compared to other tourism regions (World Economic Forum, 2019). Considering that the global transition from tourism's pandemic response to global tourism recovery was substantially domestic tourism-driven, Africa's pre-pandemic domestic tourism permeation rate of only 50% suggests that Africa would lag in terms of tourism recovery compared to all other tourism destination regions [domestic tourism accounts for an estimated 80% and 76% in the Americas and Asia-Pacific regions, respectively] which have significantly higher domestic tourism demand (OECD 2020; Toyama, 2021). Notwithstanding the myriad of non-marketing challenges associated with domestic tourism in Africa, this study explores the influence of destination marketing on domestic tourist satisfaction. We apply the S-O-R model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) to explore the relationship between South Africa's domestic tourism-oriented destination marketing efforts (*stimuli*) and domestic tourist satisfaction (*response*), considering the potential intervening effect of the country's consumer-based destination brand equity (*organism*).

A quantitative cross-sectional deductive study was conducted. Data were generated from a final online panel sample of n=400 South Africans via a structured survey administered by a reputable South African research firm between the 16th of November and the 3rd of December 2021. Using PROCESS Macro Model 4 in SPSS, the hypotheses posed by the study were tested via mediation analysis. The resultant mediation model indicated the direct positive effect of destination marketing on consumer-based destination brand equity and domestic tourist satisfaction, respectively. Additionally, consumer-based destination brand equity had a direct positive effect on domestic tourist satisfaction. Crucially, a statistically significant partial mediation is established: consumer-based destination brand equity positively mediated the destination marketing - domestic tourist satisfaction nexus. Theoretically, the study extends the seminal theory to domestic tourist satisfaction during crises from an African tourism perspective. Hence, the study addresses the discernible need for more academic inquiry into domestic tourism-oriented destination branding, particularly within the South African and broader African context. Moreover, from a practical perspective, a better understanding of the intervening effect of a destination's consumer-based destination brand equity on the influence of destination marketing on domestic tourist satisfaction amid a prolonged crisis aids in repositioning South Africa's value proposition as a domestic tourism destination. Thus, supporting government and quasi-government agency efforts to promote domestic tourism in South Africa as a stop-gap measure in tourism recovery.

Key Words: Consumer-based destination brand equity, destination marking, domestic tourism, tourist satisfaction, South Africa

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BREAKING BOUNDARIES: THE EMPOWERING EXPERIENCES OF IRANIAN WOMEN IN TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the perceived empowerment of Iranian women working in the tourism industry, a topic that has received limited attention in prior research. Using a qualitative methodology and conducting 21 semi-structured interviews, the findings suggest that working in the tourism sector contributes to Iranian women's psychological strength, connection to the community, financial independence, knowledge development, and a greater sense of control over their lives. The results highlight the potential of the tourism industry to support women's empowerment and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, particularly in Muslim nations like Iran.

Key Words: Women's empowerment, sustainable tourism, qualitative, Iran

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism development can lead to positive outcomes such as high employment rates, gender equity, and resident empowerment. Resident empowerment is a social process that can be achieved through community-based initiatives, with women often being the focus of these efforts. In Iran, the tourism industry has been identified as a potential tool for empowering women economically and socially (Rezaei, 2017). However, due to the patriarchal social structure and discriminatory laws against women, Iranian women are underrepresented in the workforce and their perceived social empowerment in the tourism industry is low. Seyfi *et al*. (2022) argued that Iranian women working in the tourism sector relate their empowerment to being game changers in the community where they can change the existing social norms and stand out by holding a position in the society. While the significance of women's empowerment to tourism development has been recognized, there is little research on the nature and dimensions of women's empowerment in emerging societies, particularly in Muslim and Middle Eastern countries. Therefore, this study employed a qualitative approach to explore Iranian women's personal interpretations of working in the tourism industry and their insights into women's empowerment, contributing to a scarce area of research.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Empowerment is a multifaceted concept that has been defined and interpreted in various ways in the literature (Aghzemani & Hunt, 2017; Eger et al., 2018; Scheyvens, 1999). Numerous models have been proposed to examine the complex nature of empowerment, but due to its context-specific nature, there is no widely agreed-upon definition of the term (Boley et al., 2017; Joo et al., 2020; Scheyvens, 1999). Despite the lack of consensus on its precise definition, there is a general recognition that women's empowerment encompasses multiple dimensions, including economic, social, political, psychological, and educational aspects.

In recent years, there has been a growing focus on the role of tourism in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (Boley & McGehee, 2014; Park et al., 2023). In 1999, Scheyvens proposed a theoretical framework emphasizing the importance of considering multiple dimensions of empowerment, including psychological, social, political, and economic aspects, when evaluating the impact of tourism on resident well-being within sustainable tourism development. Building upon this framework, Boley and McGehee (2014)

developed the Resident Empowerment through Tourism Scale (RETS) to measure the degree to which tourism can empower residents, consisting of psychological, social, and political empowerment dimensions. The RETS has been widely used to understand residents' perspectives on tourism development (Boley et al., 2017; Joo et al., 2020). Moswete and Lacey (2015) classified empowerment in tourism development into two to six dimensions, with psychological, economic, social, and political dimensions being the most commonly employed.

METHODOLOGY

The literature review above has emphasized the intricate and personal character of empowerment, as well as the various elements linked to it. While this poses difficulties for studying women's empowerment, the subjective nature of the topic lends itself well to an exploratory qualitative research design that adopts an interpretivist perspective (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This study used purposive and snowball sampling techniques to conduct in-depth, semi-structured, and face-to-face interviews with 21 Iranian women from different tourism businesses in Iran, such as lodgings, travel agencies, airlines, handicraft businesses, tour guides, and the public sector. The interviews were conducted individually in Farsi, ranging from 40 to 50 minutes each. Participants were encouraged to share information about their backgrounds to create a comfortable and trusting atmosphere. The questions centered around the participants' experiences working in the tourism industry and their perceptions of empowerment. Participants ranged in age from 20 to 48 and were single, married, or divorced. The majority of participants were from middle to lower socio-economic status but were considered educated individuals.

FINDINGS

The analysis of interviews with 21 Iranian women suggests that employment in the tourism industry has made a significant contribution towards enhancing their perceived empowerment across various dimensions, including psychological, social, educational, political, economic, spiritual, and cultural. Major findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: The Dimensions of Iranian Women's Perceived Empowerment

Dimensions	**Concepts**	**Participants' Statements**
Psychological	Self-esteem Confidence	*"I became very confident; I couldn't speak in front of others, but after working in this industry, I feel more confident in my behavior and communication"*
Social	Sense of cohesion Contribute to community	*"I try to positively influence the students coming here for internships to spark their interest in working in the tourism industry"*
Educational	Acquire new skills Professional development	*"I didn't have enough knowledge about tourism when I started this job, but I gradually learned a lot through interacting with others, and taking training courses "*
Political	Having a voice Challenge gender norms	*"Actually, my job enabled me to help my brothers, I have proved that being strong is not related to gender"* *"If there is a problem in the workplace, I will go and try to be the voice of my colleagues"*
Economic	Economic independence Improve financial condition	*"Since I started working in the tourism industry, I have become financially independent, even though my salary is low. I can still handle my expenses and satisfy my needs."*
Cultural	Pride in Iran's historical and cultural value	*"Our country has a great historical and cultural heritage and can make a lot of money through tourism which does not require a huge investment"*

Spiritual	Grow and consolidate individual's faith, values, and attitude toward life	*"My husband and I became less materialistic, and we are taking life easier"* *"My employment in the tourism sector made my life more meaningful"*

CONCLUSION

Women's empowerment is a complex concept with multiple dimensions that vary across different contexts. This study identified seven unique dimensions of women's empowerment in the Iranian context, including psychological, social, educational, political, economic, spiritual, and cultural dimensions. These findings demonstrate that women in traditional and patriarchal societies can achieve empowerment. The study also proposed that women's empowerment experiences in Iran have similarities and differences compared to those in the Western world. The inclusion of spiritual empowerment as a new dimension contributes to a deeper understanding of empowerment in a Muslim society.

These findings have implications for policymakers and tourism planners in emerging markets. To empower women in the tourism industry, policies and initiatives promoting gender equity and women's leadership and professional development should be prioritized. Efforts must be made to challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender equality in education and training. Ultimately, promoting women's empowerment is essential for sustainable tourism development and achieving the United Nations' SDGs. Therefore, policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders must recognize its significance and work collaboratively to create more equitable and sustainable societies.

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THE DILEMMA OF INDEPENDENT TAIWANESE VEGETARIAN TRAVELERS' DINING EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores Taiwanese vegetarians' dining experience and coping strategies during their independent travel overseas. A total of 21 Taiwanese who have been a vegetarian for more than one year and had independent travel overseas experience was recruited by purposeful and snowball sampling. Semi-structured in-depth interviews and participant observation for a group on an independent vegetarian trip in Tokyo, Japan, were conducted. The thematic analysis results concluded three dietary situations and different dietary coping strategies at three stages of the trip, which enhanced the understanding of international vegetarian travelers' dining experience.

Key Words: Taiwanese vegetarian, independent travel overseas, dining experience, dietary situations, dietary coping strategies.

INTRODUCTION

In international tourism, food is not only a basic element in maintaining physiological needs but is also commonly treated as a highlight of the trip. Savoring food at the destination is a direct sensual and immersive cultural experience for international tourists. However, not all international tourists freely experience local food. As the number of international visitors increases, so does the demand for their diverse diet needs. Oktadiana, Pearce, and Mohammadi (2020) reported that special dietary requirements often come from religious beliefs, health issues, or lifestyle choices. Some scholars have evaluated the consumption values of tourists with special dietary needs, such as halal food for Muslims (Rodrigo & Turnbull, 2019) and the perceptions of kosher food for non-Jewish customers (Jeong, Yang, Lee, & Bosselman, 2019) to enhance the satisfaction of tourists with special dietary needs. Other scholars have brought greater awareness of special diets, such as food allergies, including celiac disease, to the hospitality industry (Towers & Pratten, 2003).

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Vegetarians constitute the largest special dietary group due to the relationship of vegetarianism to health advocacy, animal welfare, climate change issues, and religious convictions. Kaminski, Skonieczna-Zydecka, Nowak, and Stachowska (2020) used Google Trends from 2004 to 2019 and found that among 47 diet topics searched by Google users worldwide, "veganism" ranked first in 23 countries and "vegetarianism" ranked first in 14. Different types of vegetarian diets ranging from vegans to flexitarians and occasional vegetarians have gained a lot of attention globally.

Given the increased interest in vegetarian diets in the tourism market, recent studies in China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan have explored tourists' experience of temple cuisine or religious tourism (Kim, Lee, & Ryu, 2018; Lin & Fu, 2019; Son & Xu, 2013). These studies investigated tourist attitudes, experiences, and motives to develop a niche to attract special interest tourists. Some vegetarian studies have examined the travel experience of a domestic vegan tour in China (Li, Liu, Cai, & Scott, 2020), and others have investigated the relationship between vegetarians' dietary constraints and the travel intentions of outbound tourists in Taiwan (Huang, Chen, Lu, & Shen, 2019). These studies tended to identify vegetarians' travel behaviors and their needs for tour planners to boost vegetarian tourism.

On vegetarians' travel experience, Huang et al. (2019) found that the major travel constraint is dietary constraints. This not only shapes their choice of travel companions but also their choice of travel destinations. Some food service providers may be unaware of or misunderstand vegetarians' diet restrictions, and others could only customize their needs with using narrow food choices, which lead to unpleasant dining experience (Dewan, 2017; Dilek & Fennell, 2018; Rivera & Shani, 2013).

Because there is a global trend toward the vegetarian diet, making up a growing population in the international tourism market, the hospitality industry must recognize the dining experience of vegetarian tourists. This study explores what Taiwanese vegetarians encountered during independent travel overseas and how they overcame difficulties resulting from their vegetarian diet using a qualitative method. This provides an in-depth understanding of the dining experience and travel behaviors of international vegetarian tourists.

METHODS

A total of 21 Taiwanese travelers who had been vegetarians for more than one year and had independent overseas travel experience were recruited by purposeful and snowball sampling. The definition of vegetarian in this study included vegan, lacto-vegetarian, ovo-vegetarian, lacto-ovo-vegetarian, and five pungent spices vegetarian diets, which are the five main types of vegetarians in Taiwan. Semi-structured in-depth interviews and participant observation of a group on an independent vegetarian trip in Tokyo, Japan were conducted. The informants were asked about their previous independent vegetarian travel experience overseas, especially their pre-trip preparation, their dining experience during the trip, and their reflections after the trip. Basic demographic information such as gender, age, religion, and vegetarian background, including years as a vegetarian, types of vegetarian, and motives for being a vegetarian, were also collected. The informants were interviewed in person or online depending on the informants' convenience. Interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese and were recorded digitally. Each interview lasted 42–95 minutes with an average of 1 hour.

RESULTS

There were 11 females and 10 males of 21 informants. About 76.2% of the informants were 20–39 years old. Regarding their religions, 62% of informants were I-Kuan Tao, 23.7% were Buddhism, and 14.3% were not religious. Their years as vegetarians ranged from 1.5–32 years, with an average of 19 years. About 81% of the informants were vegetarians for more than 10 years. It is interesting to note that there were 8 informants who are lifelong vegetarians (their mothers were vegetarians when they were pregnant). Regarding the types of vegetarians, 71% of the informants were lacto-ovo-vegetarians, and 19% were vegans. Although they were all vegetarians, different types of vegetarians have different dietary restrictions. Their motives for being a vegetarian included animal rights (38.1%), religious belief (28.6%), health concerns (9.5%), environmental concerns (9.5%), and other reasons (14.3%). Their travel companions were friends (62%), family (19%), colleagues (9.5%), or solo (9.5%). Regarding the countries they visited as independent vegetarian travelers, there were a total of 16 countries, with 9 in Asia (56%), 6 in Europe (37.5%), and one in Oceania (6.5%). The two most frequent countries they visited were Japan (21.2%) and Germany (12%).

Results of the thematic analysis identified three dietary situations on independent oversea travels: 1. Tour planning context: the accuracy of online information and meal budget control. 2. Sociocultural context: differences in the definition of "vegetarian diet" and cooking methods. 3. Interpersonal interaction context: coordination of travel companions and local communication issues. In addition, different dietary coping strategies were categorized by the three stages of the trip. At the pre-trip stage, two behavioral coping strategies were being prepared in advance and the motto: better safe than sorry. During the trip stage, two cognitive coping strategies were adjusting mindset and shifting the focus. At the post-trip stage, two behavioral coping strategies were learning from the experience and enhancing the abilities.

At the pre-trip stage, it was found that information on vegetarian restaurants found on online travel platforms was usually outdated or incorrect. Preparing vegetarian food in advance and bringing cooking equipment along on the trip were common behavior strategies for the informants. During the trip stage, the cultural differences were easily found in the definition of "vegetarian diet," which increased the difficulty in their dining experience; some informants prepared vegan cards to communicate, and others always brought extra food to address their dietary needs. In addition, when the travel companions were not vegetarians, the informants tended to dine out in general restaurants to prevent causing the non-vegetarians any inconvenience. The informants often took cognitive strategies to lower their expectations in tasting local food or shift their focus to the scenery or local

heritage instead of local food during the trip. At the post-trip stage, previous independent travel experience became the nutrients for enhancing their communication skills and flexibility.

CONCLUSION

Vegetarians were once marginalized in the tourism industry; however, the global trends in vegetarian diets have changed in recent decades. This study explored the dining experience and coping strategies of independent Taiwanese vegetarians by a qualitative method. Most of the informants in the study were 20–39 years old and long-term vegetarians for more than 10 years. Diverse subtypes of vegetarians face different degrees of dietary difficulties during their independent trips overseas. Behavior and cognitive dietary coping strategies were found at three stages of their trip. This study provides some insight for the hospitality industry to understand international vegetarian tourists' dining experience. Hospitality practitioners, including restaurants and hotels, should take international tourists with vegetarian diets more seriously and diversify their food service to meet different vegetarians' dietary needs. The tourism industry and destination management organizations wishing to attract vegetarian tourists should provide more vegetarian-friendly services or products to enhance their international travel experience.

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MAKING TOURISM, LEISURE, AND RECREATION EXPERIENCES ACCESSIBLE FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER AND THEIR FAMILIES

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ABSTRACT

Tourism, leisure, and recreation activities are expected to substantially improve people's quality of life (Hamed, 2013). However, in light of World Tourism Organization reports, some groups, including individuals with disabilities, have been found to be unable to fully participate in these activities (WHO.int, 2022). This study focuses on families with children on the autistic spectrum, a population that has been almost ignored in the tourism research literature. A qualitative research approach was utilized. Accordingly, 14 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to clarify the obstacles autistic children and their families face and offer possible solutions. The findings contribute to the literature as well as to the practice of tourism, leisure and recreation, offering means to improve autistic children and their families' quality of life.

Key Words: Accessibility; Autism; Leisure; Recreation; Tourism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder (Senecky, et al., 2009) characterized by impaired social development, weakened language and communication skills, difficulty dealing with changes and a desire for routine actions (Volkmar et al., 2018). Over the past two decades, the diagnosis of ASD has significantly increased (Zeidan, et al., 2022). Despite this, there is a noticeable dearth of studies on tourism for individuals with autism. This gap is surprising given the rising number of individuals diagnosed with ASD and their increasing representation in the population, as well as the significant growth of the tourism industry worldwide. Moreover, there are growing efforts to make tourism, leisure and recreation settings accessible to more diverse populations, which further highlight the need for research about accessibility for people with ASD (McCabe and Diekmann, 2015, Sedgley et al., 2017).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study examines how tourism, leisure, and recreation environments can be made accessible to children on the autism spectrum, by investigating the barriers and challenges families confront, clarifying the adaptations required to make their experiences more accessible, and suggesting applicable managerial solutions. In line with the research objectives, this study focuses on the following goals: (1) Recognize the challenges faced by autistic children and their families during tourism, leisure and recreational experiences, and (2) Identify the mechanisms employed to overcome the difficulties and challenges encountered. Moreover, implementable managerial implications to tourism, leisure and recreational businesses will be suggested.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research strategy was adopted in this exploratory study. Fourteen interviews were conducted with parents of children diagnosed with autism between the ages of three and 17. Eleven participants were mothers and three were fathers. Four of the participants had more than one child on the autism spectrum, and in two

families, the child on the spectrum was an only child. A total of 19 children with ASD were part of the study, of which 10 were diagnosed as high functioning, five as middle functioning and four as low functioning.

The interviews, lasting two hours on average, focused on the participants' experiences staying in a hotel, eating out at restaurants, going to the beach/pool, as well as visiting shopping malls, playgrounds, museums, and amusement parks. Participants described the challenges they faced and proposed solutions to improve their experience. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed using ATLAS software.

FINDINGS

The analysis revealed four recurring themes, which were observed across the different settings. Concentrating on beaches and hotels, the main identified themes included (1) parent's anxiety and insecurity towards children's safety in general and specifically the danger of escaping; (2) public's offensive reactions to non-normative embarrassing behavior; (3) heightened sensitivity to sensory stimuli such as noise, lights, crowds; and (4) challenges associated with adapting to unfamiliar environments.

The analysis revealed that in order to accommodate autistic children and their families, physical adaptation of the environment is required. For example, hotel rooms must be properly arranged in a safe and secure way by removing certain amenities and minibars, rearranging potentially dangerous or sharp furniture, and installing extra locks on windows and doors. At the beach, enclosing a certain section with a fence would help reduce parents' anxiety and fear that that their child may run away.

The findings also indicated that families often felt embarrassed by their child's unusual behavior in the public areas of the hotel such as the lobby and dining hall. Some reported being offended by uncomfortable stares and comments from other tourists. Moreover, some of the interviewees expressed their desire to "label" their child, visually indicating to other tourists and service providers that their child is autistic. Autism is often known as a hidden disability not immediately noticeable, and as such, some families considered using shirts, hats or bracelets to make it clear their child is autistic and may exhibit unconventional behavior. This issue was also relevant at the beach, where children with ASD may take snacks or toys from other children.

Participants explained that their children may be sensitive to different stimuli and can become overwhelmed by certain noises, smells, and textures as well as big crowds. At the hotel, participants specifically described the overstimulating environment in the dining hall and their preference to sit in quiet corners or, if permitted, to take the food to their room. To avoid over stimulation, some participants arrive early to the dining room before other guests, to provide a quieter and calmer environment for their child where they do not feel overstimulated. On the beach, some parents choose to arrive early in the day to avoid large gatherings of people and prefer quieter beaches without loud music.

Children with ASD often find it difficult adapting to new surroundings and environments. Interviewees explained that preparation is key in helping lower a child's sense of uncertainty and anxiety of visiting a new place. For example, showing pictures of the hotel room, dining hall, and lobby help children with autism anticipate what they are going to experience at the hotel. Before spending time at the beach, parents showed photos of the actual beach they planned to visit and told their children a special 'social story' to depict the step-by-step schedule of their day.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings highlight the importance of making tourism, leisure, and recreation environments accessible to children with ASD and their families. The research has provided valuable insights into the barriers and challenges that families face when participating in these activities and the mechanisms they use to overcome these difficulties. The study also suggests that physical and human environments should be modified to improve accessibility and that there is a need for public education to reduce stigmas and promote the acceptance of children with ASD. Finally, the study contributes to the literature by shedding light on the experiences of families with children with ASD. This information can be used to guide future research on how to make leisure and tourism activities more inclusive for marginalized groups.

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COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS OF EVOLUTIONARY PSHYCHOLOGY AND HOW TO RECTIFY THEM

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ABSTRACT

Evolutionary psychology (EP) has in recent years led to intriguing and novel findings across a wide range of disciplines through its central assumption: That humans have inherited psychological mechanisms which, when activated, motivate them to behave in ways which would have increased the chances of survival and reproduction for their ancestors (Kock et al., 2018). In hospitality and tourism research, scholars have, for example, employed an evolutionary lens to explain a diverse set of phenomena such as host-tourist interaction (Fennell, 2006), risk-taking (Kim and Seo, 2019), and the preference for service robots (Kang et al., 2022), and researchers have provided detailed proposals for how tourism scholars can benefit from an evolutionary lens and how such research can be conducted (Crouch, 2013; Kock et al., 2018; Kock et al., 2020). However, because EP represents a significant departure from the standard social science model which much research has been based on (Saad, 2006), scholars across various domains have frequently misunderstood the discipline's underlying assumptions (Buss and Hippel, 2018; Saad, 2020; Winegard et al., 2014). A poor understanding of EP has then resulted in the discipline receiving unjust criticism and its adoption within the wider business and social sciences has been hindered. We therefore aim to identify and rectify common misconceptions of EP with a focus on tourism and hospitality research. In doing so, we will first outline the nature and existence of the misconceptions. We will then explain what EP actually stands for and provide examples of the types of tourism and hospitality research that can be conducted by taking point of departure in an accurate understanding of EP. The misconceptions and their rectification are as follows:

- Misconception: The conflation of proximate and ultimate explanations → Rectification: EP distinguishes between proximate (i.e., immediately obvious) and ultimate (i.e., evolutionary) explanations (see e.g., Kock et al., 2020)
- Misconception: EP represents one, unified theory → Rectification: EP represents a broad meta-theory (see e.g., Ketelaar and Ellis, 2000)
- Misconception: Human behaviors cannot be meaningfully compared to those of animals → Rectification: While different species all have their uniquenesses, human and animal behaviors share similarities in many domains (see e.g., Sng et al., 2018)
- Misconception: The notions of nurture and nature are in opposition and EP focuses on the latter → Rectification: EP dissolves the binary distinction between nature and nurture and argues that an understanding of both is necessary for a more complete account of human behaviour (see e.g., Confer et al., 2010)
- Misconception: EP justifies the existence of racism, sexism, and various other problematic phenomena → Rectification: EP can be used to describe and explain the origins of problematic behaviors but does not imply that such phenomena are uncontrollable and should be accepted (see e.g., Saad, 2020)

In rectifying the above-mentioned misconceptions, we hope to inspire tourism and hospitality researchers to avoid dismissing EP based on misunderstandings and to consider the added theoretical depth that this perspective can provide.

Key Words: Evolutionary Psychology, Tourist Psychology, Tourist Behavior, Hospitality

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TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF RESEARCH ON DARK TOURISM: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews and systematizes the scientific research on dark tourism achieved along a twenty-five-year time span (1996-2021). Dark tourism is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that describes tourism at places associated with death, suffering, and the macabre. Over the past twenty-five years, dark tourism has become an increasingly significant sub-sector of the cultural tourism industry and has gained interest in the Academia as the subject of a growing number of papers.

The achieved systematic literature review consisted of the following phases: i) Planning – A preliminary analysis was undertaken to identify the research topic and the set of keywords for article extraction; ii) Execution – Articles were extracted from the EBSCO and Scopus databases. The search was limited to scholarly contributions written in English and covering the fields of business and management, sociology, communication, and criminology. Record identification was accomplished using Boolean modifiers including the following terms: dark tourism, trauma tourism, thanatourism, morbid tourism, grief tourism, fright tourism, death tourism, horror tourism, hardship tourism, tragedy tourism, warfare tourism, genocide tourism, which were applied to titles, abstracts, and keywords. This resulted in 574 articles. Next, the authors read the abstracts and keywords to exclude duplicates and eliminate works unrelated to the research subject. This screening resulted in a final sample of 234 articles for analysis; iii) Evaluation – To identify the main topics, the article titles and abstracts were manually coded by two independent researchers. The data were processed using descriptive coding followed by pattern coding, and the main themes were identified and qualitatively analyzed.

In the manuscript, the results are organized in three main sections. First, the origins of dark tourism are illustrated highlighting the common sociological roots with secular pilgrimages and public executions. Second, a classification and systematization of all types of dark tourism is provided. Third, a conceptualization of dark tourism is advanced by categorizing the existing body of knowledge on the phenomenon.

Lastly, based on the study results, future research avenues are identified, and managerial and policy recommendations are proposed.

Key Words: Dark tourism, death tourism, hardship tourism, thanathourism, trauma tourism, bibliometric analysis

ROARING SENIORS GO ON A CRUISE: APPLICATIONS OF INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION TO BOOMERS' TOURIST EXPERIENCE, A LITERATURE REVIEW

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INTRODUCTION

The demographic changes of the last fifty years, characterized by a constant and rapid aging of the population worldwide and a growth in the income gap between seniors and younger generations, imply a fundamental reflection on the new economic and managerial opportunities inherent to the older generations' consumer and tourist experience. The progressive aging of the population is a phenomenon of global interest that is seen with greater incidence in countries characterized by advanced economies and the resulting better living conditions (Eurispes, 2022), globally in fact as many as 80 percent of the over-65s reside in the twenty most advanced economies. The relationship between economic well-being and extra years lived with a better quality of life is a key factor (European Central Bank, 2022). The growth of the over-65s, according to United Nations data, is a growing phenomenon: it is expected to increase by five percentage points in 2040, from 9.5 percent of the world's total population to 14 percent, for a total of 10 billion individuals (United Nations, 2022). According to Istat forecasts, the phenomenon of population aging particularly affects Italy, among the longest-living countries in the world. In Italy today, the over-65s represent 23% of the total population, or 14 million people, with a growth rate that is fueled by several demographic and social phenomena (Osservatorio sulla spesa pubblica e le entrate, 2020). The centrality of the over-65s is in fact due not only to the size of one of the most populous generational cohorts ever but to a more nourished spending capacity of its members, due to better income conditions and the decumulation phase resulting from leaving the workforce (Shu & Shu, 2018). The aging of a generation of consumers who tend to be privileged, optimistic, confident, more youthful than the over-65s of a few decades ago, tech-savvy, and able to occupy their leisure time with social relationships, activities, and hobbies presents a major marketing opportunity. The aging of Baby Boomers is an arena of increased time and spending, resulting from greater income and asset security, but also better health and mobility skills. Baby Boomers now constitute a fundamental pool of interest for the tourism and hospitality market (Stončikaitė, 2022), and it is estimated that the senior market will be one of the most important driving forces of international tourism in the future (Balderas-Cejudo, Patterson, & Leeson, 2019; Francescato, Maierhofer, Minghetti, & Trinkaus, 2017). Indeed, the European Commission estimates an expected 140 million tourists over 60 in Europe in 2030, four times the number in 2010; most will come from Asia, followed by Europe, North and South America. In 2013, 76 million over-65s traveled. Their preferences were identified in the market segments of luxury travel, cruises, visits to family or friends, stays in beauty farm wellness centers, cultural travel, and medical tourism. Finally, the Baby Boomers are attractive consumers for technological innovations applied to various target markets. In the case of the tourism market, digital transformation has implemented the dimensions of today's senior tourism with tools to support the tourism experience and tourist journey, such as biometric sensors and wearables, remote body control apps, artificial intelligence, voice assistants, virtual reality and mixed reality, but also through robotics and home automation to support silver tourism (Poste Italiane, 2021). Based on these considerations, we identified cruise tourism as the application field of this research, as cruise tourism is recognized as a successful baby boomers' travel choice (Norwegian Cruise Line, 2022) and innovation and automation (e.g. smart hospitality on board, smart ship and energy management) emerged as top priorities for the cruise industry, resulting in more sophisticated and technologically-empowered cruise ships (Buhalis & Papathanassis, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

This research aims to understand (i) which aspects of Italian Boomers' tourist experience are influenced by the application of intelligent automation; (ii) which intelligent automation devices Italian Boomers use on holidays and in which phase of their tourist journey they create value (iii) which are benefit and risk perceptions in the

use of these devices. In this regard, this research is based on the theoretical frameworks offered by the Technological Acceptance Model (TAM) and Motivated Consumer Innovativeness (MCI), the variables of perceived technological self-efficacy (Kamin et al., 2017) and perceived safety of technology (Boise et al., 2013) were also considered. Based on this model, we aim to administer semi-structured interviews to Italian Boomers who in the last year went on a technologically-empowered cruise. To structure valid and credible interviews and to cover relevant topics and questions, we conducted a pilot literature review. The results of this preliminary literature review are presented in this abstract.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Intelligent automation represents a major challenge and opportunity today in service industries, and in particular for the tourism and hospitality industry, by increasing productivity and reducing costs whilst promoting sales growth (Belanche et al., 2020) and a more enjoyable experience for tourists. Coombs et al. (2020) define intelligent automation as "the use of technologies, (e.g., AI and its sub-fields) to replace human capabilities, particularly those involving cognition such as learning and problem solving(...)". The application of computer technology to the automation of several tasks has been previously described in literature as computerization (Frey & Osborne, 2017), virtualization (McAfee & Brynjolfsson, 2017) or automation (Davenport & Kirby, 2016). The technologies with a leading role in the application of intelligent automation to tourism are artificial intelligence (AI), nanotechnologies, quantum computing, internet of things (IOTs), smart wearable devices, domotics, autonomous vehicles and robotics (Tussyadiah, 2020; Schulze, 2019). Furthermore, the review revealed that variables such as tangibility, empathy and service assurance (de Kervenoael et al. 2020), interaction and outcome quality (Choi et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2018), perceived ease of use, perceived usability, perceived engagement and self-efficacy (Go et al., 2020), physical ambiance (Choi et al., 2020), information sharing capabilities (Go et al., 2020), trust (Tussyadiah et al., 2020) have a positive effect on tourists' adoption of intelligent automation (Goel et al., 2022). As for the benefits of the applications of intelligent automation in the Boomers' tourist experience, they can increase efficiency and cost savings, safety and security, and improve support for tourists (Huang & Rust, 2018). From a strategic perspective, intelligent automation could also track and record tourists' preferences and anticipate their desires and needs, while simultaneously providing information and customizing the tourist experience based on analytics, contextual awareness, and machine learning (Buhalis & Papathanassis, 2022). As for the risks, the challenges of connectivity at sea still rely on expensive satellite internet connections, not suited for the tourists' demand for free, unlimited and fast connectivity. Furthermore, privacy and cyber-security issues remain very relevant, in particular for the baby boomer target (Koman, 2016).

FRAMING SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOUR IN RURAL FOOD EVENTS

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ABSTRACT

Food festivals are essential for tourism growth, particularly in rural communities (Getz, 2005). They produce economic benefits, build a sense of communal pride, and provide chances for rural communities to develop sustainably (Edwards, 2012). Food festivals are also considered advantageous because they promote patterns of food consumption that are favourable for policy reasons. As a result, they are introduced as tools for sustainability within the frameworks of national agricultural policies. The practicalities of increasing sustainability through food festivals are difficult to comprehend. Though sustainability is frequently phrased widely within legislation that touts the benefits of food festivals, social justice remains a largely unexplored idea in sustainability research (Khanal et al., 2021), especially within the context of food events. Previous research indicates that localised festivals and events have received inadequate attention (Jepson et al., 2019). There is a need for research that focuses on dissecting the social dimension of sustainability in rural communities from a Global South perspective. Exploring how food festivals promote social justice and sustainable behaviour can provide insights into the sustainability narrative that is grounded and controlled by Western discourses. The current study explores how *nhimbe*, an agricultural food festival, contributes to social justice and sustainable behaviour using the framing technique and social capital. The study was conducted in the context of Bikita, a rural area in Zimbabwe's Masvingo province. A framing technique was used, with emphasis on the building and negotiation of what is happening in the research domains of food events, social justice, and sustainable behaviour. Furthermore, there has been little use of the framing technique in research on food festivals, social justice, and sustainable behaviour. The concept of social capital was also utilised to better comprehend the power dynamics between social groups. 30 interviews with community members and leaders were conducted to collect the data. The results suggest that the *nhimbe* festival improves social sustainability by enhancing communal bonding and providing increased food security. Social cohesiveness is influenced by social capital and power dynamics, which impedes social integration for all community members. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that the event allows community members to share experience and talents, which improves social sustainability. Lastly, the study also showed that through the food festivals, community members can align their behaviour sustainably. By exploring community attitudes, the study adds to the literature on food events and sustainability.

Key Words: Social sustainability, social justice, framing, rural area, social capital, nhimbe, sustainability

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DESTINATION ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND TOURIST BEHAVIOUR: A NEW APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

This study examines Destination Environmental Responsibility (DER) as a specific construct to assess how visitors perceive the destination's environmental performance. Moreover, the effects of DER on loyalty, mediating by satisfaction, reputation, and trust, under the moderating role of COVID-19 travel anxiety. PLS-SEM and SPSS were applied to analyze data gathered in a survey of 2.027 domestic and international tourists spending holidays in the Algarve, Portugal, in the summer of 2021. The result reveals that DER significantly enhances loyalty through satisfaction, reputation, and trust. COVID-19 positively influences the link between trust and loyalty. Contributions, limitations, and future line research are presented.

Key Words: Tourist Behaviour; DSR; Environmental Responsibility; Sustainability; COVID-19.

The adoption of sustainable practices in the tourism industry has been growing in recent years, especially in the environmental dimension, induced by customers' concerns and organisations searching for competitiveness and reducing ecological impacts. Its importance increases as it becomes a strategy for mitigating climate change effects. Moreover, an attribute to decision-making as tourists perceive environmentally sustainable destinations as more attractive, enhancing tourists' motivation toward loyalty. However, more is needed to know how destinations' environmental performance explains tourist responses. Also, sustainability in tourism is still challenging due to its lack of a practical approach. Literature indicates that Destination Social Responsibility (DSR) is a framework that facilitates the implementation of sustainable practices.

Nevertheless, further investigation is required to explore each DSR dimension's role and impact on tourist behaviour. Nowadays, the environmental responsibility dimension, although relevant, has been assessed within the scope of DSR. In addition, the new form of thinking and feeling of tourists produced by COVID-19 and its impacts on travel needs examination. To address these gaps, this study presents Destination Environmental Responsibility (DER) as a specific construct to assess how visitors perceive the destination's environmental performance. It also examines the effects of DER on tourist behaviour, specifically loyalty, mediating by satisfaction, reputation, and trust, under the moderating role of COVID-19 travel anxiety. An extended S-O-R model is introduced to elucidate the relationship between DER as a stimulus; satisfaction, trust, and reputation as positive psychological factors (organism); and loyalty (response). To test the model, data was collected via a survey of 2.027 domestic and international tourists spending holidays in the Algarve, Portugal, in the summer of 2021. The sample was stratified by country of origin, observing a proportional number of tourists visiting the destination by nationality. Partial least squares-structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) and SPSS Statistics were used to analyse the data.

Findings indicate that tourist perception of DER on Loyalty is positively affected by the high cleanliness and hygiene standards, unpolluted/unspoiled environment, a green image, and no air and noise pollution in the destination. The result reveals that DER significantly enhances loyalty through satisfaction, reputation, and trust.

And the influence is explained to a greater extent by satisfaction (45%) and to a lesser extent by reputation (7.4%), trust (3.7%), and 1.1% by DER. The moderation analyses demonstrate that COVID-19 travel anxiety positively influences the link between trust and loyalty. That suggests a higher degree of travel anxiety could improve the perception of trust, which may positively impact their loyalty toward a destination. On the contrary, moderation is insignificant in the relationships between DER, satisfaction, reputation, and loyalty. To summarise, tourists' perception of preserved natural areas can positively influence satisfaction and loyalty. This article can provide valuable guidelines to researchers in analysing tourists' responses to DER perception instead of DSR. Also, it can help Destination Management Organizations develop strategies to promote the well-preserved environment as a factor of competitiveness while helping mitigate the climate change effects.

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IN(VISIBILITY OF ACCESSIBLE TOURISM CONTENT IN PORTUGAL'S HIGHER EDUCATION – A DEBATE BASED ON A STUDENT SEGMENTATION

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ABSTRACT

This study intends to analyse the skills on accessible tourism acquired by the Portuguese students enrolled in higher education tourism programs (HETP). A questionnaire survey was conducted, between October 2019 and June 2020, among students attending Portuguese HETP (N=508). Through a hierarchical cluster analysis, based on the perceived knowledge and skills related to accessible tourism obtained, three different clusters were identified: cluster 1 – "the unaware"; cluster 2 - "the relatively more aware on the global topic" and cluster 3 – "the relatively more aware on specific contents".

Key Words: accessible tourism, higher education tourism programs (HETP), people with special needs, segmentation, curricula.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The development of sustainable tourism requires the improvement of the accessibility level of tourism industry. Accessible tourism is an essential condition to allow all people to access tourism, with equity and dignity. However, there is a large number of people, specifically people with disabilities (PwD), seniors and persons with functional limitations, that face several constraints to participate in tourism activities (Figueiredo et al., 2012). Many of these constraints are related with the absence of skills of human resources in the tourism industry, not prepared to work with this market (Liasidou et al., 2018; Eusébio et al., 2022). The relatively limited academic and industry debate in this field highlights that tourism professionals are unaware of the relevance of this market and of its needs. To transform tourism into an accessible and inclusive industry, it is therefore crucial to change the curricula of higher education tourism programs. Students, as future tourism professionals, must acquire the required skills to work with this specific market. Only by knowing its characteristics, needs and desires, it is possible to be a transforming agent.

Although limited, the literature is clear in showing the relevance of education as an agent of attitudinal change in tourism and hospitality staff. However, the results of these studies show that accessible tourism is not yet an important topic in the curricula of higher education tourism programs (HETP). Consequently, tourism students do not obtain the necessary skills to satisfy the needs of people with special needs (PwSN). This study intends to further discuss this topic through an analysis of the skills on accessible tourism acquired by the Portuguese students enrolled in (HETP). To achieve this aim, data collected between October 2019 and June 2020, in a

questionnaire-based survey addressed to students attending a HETP in Portugal (N=508) was carried out. A hierarchical cluster analysis based on the perceived knowledge and skills acquired by students regarding accessible tourism was performed to identify homogenous groups of students. Additionally, Chi-square, ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to compare the segments identified. Results show that accessible tourism contents are almost absent from Portuguese HETP, although also some heterogeneity is observable. Three students' clusters were identified: Cluster 1 – "the unaware" representing 34.45% of the sample) includes students who have practically no knowledge related to accessible tourism. Cluster 2 - "the relatively more aware on the global topic" (the biggest cluster, representing 42.52% of the sample) – includes students with some knowledge on definitions of accessible tourism, characteristics and needs of this market. Finally, in cluster 3 – "the relatively more aware on specific contents" -, students reveal relatively more specific knowledge related to accessible tourism, such as the social framework of disability, universal design and communication strategies directed as this market. Differences among the clusters were identified in terms of characteristics and activities developed in the HETP, frequency of interaction with the accessible tourism market, attitudes towards this market and behavioural intentions related to acquiring more knowledge in the area. The paper concludes with recommendations to increase visibility of accessible tourism contents in HETP.

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HOTEL DECISION MAKING IN A POST-COVID-19 WORLD: LOW-EFFORT HIERARCHY PERSPECTIVE

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Key Words: hotel decision making; low-effort hierarchy; post-Covid-19

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought unparalleled impacts to the global tourism and hospitality industry, thus stimulating a wave of research. For instance, research conducted by Kaushal and Srivastava (2021) in India identified hygiene and sanitation as the expected drivers of hotel guests' accommodation behaviour and preferences.

The research on hotel decision making showed that health and safety, the price-quality nexus, risk aspects and quality related health and safety were four main concerns in guests' accommodation decision making. Despite the fact that these studies contribute significantly to our understanding of hotel choice decision making, they are primarily conducted from the standpoint of the high-effort hierarchy. Such a high-effort hierarchy usually assumes that consumers engage in thinking, which leads to attitudes that then result in conscious behavior or choices.

Yet, this traditional high-effort hierarchy is not applicable to all decision-making situations. Often, after a hotel booking decision has been made, while staying at a hotel, the guest evaluates the hotel and develops an attitude depending on how well the hotel meets his/her needs (Wayne et al., 2012). In this regard, hotel choice decision was made with low effort, following a think-act-attitude sequence (Wayne et al., 2012), which remains largely unexamined. Therefore, this study aimed to examine low-effort hotel decision making in a post-COVID-19 world. More specifically, we investigated how guests' perceived risk and emotion elicited their actual accommodation behaviors, leading to their satisfaction and revisit intentions as shown in Figure 1.

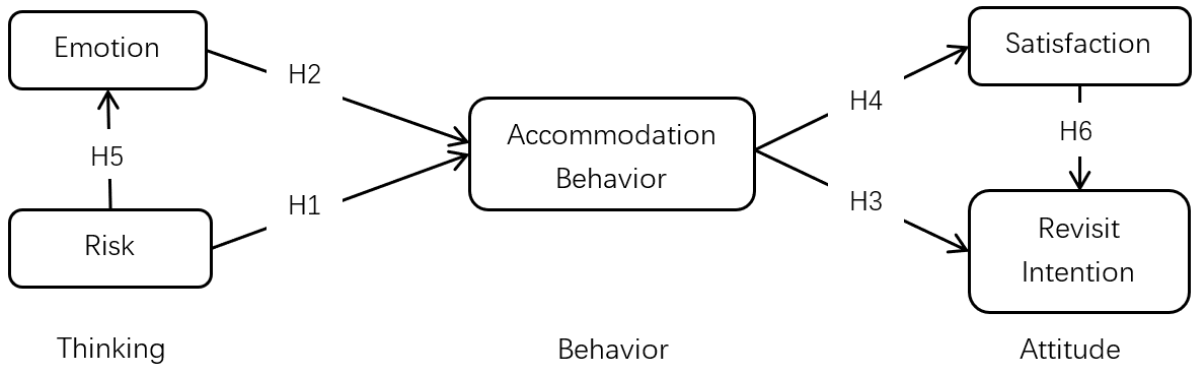

Figure 1 Research framework

METHODOLOGY

To test the research framework, a total of 570 questionnaire data were collected from July to August 2020. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, responses were screened by attention check question and cleaned by removing those completed in short time (less than 5mins) and with inconsistent content, thus resulting in a final sample of 427 effective responses. A series of statistical analyses, including descriptive analysis, factor analysis, and structural equation modeling (SEM), were conducted to test the hypotheses in Figure 1.

CONCLUSION

Anderson and Gerb (1988) proposed a two-step method for examining the measurement model and subsequent structural equation model (SEM). Data analysis revealed that the model indicated good construct and composite reliability and satisfied convergent, discriminant, and external validity (Hair et al., 2009; Kline, 2016). The structural model was then conducted, centered on the interactions among the latent components. As shown in Table 1, the data analysis using SEM showed that emotion had a statistically significant effect on accommodation behavior, supporting H2. Accommodation behavior was significantly associated with satisfaction and revisit intention. H3 and H4 were accordingly supported. Risk perception significantly influenced emotion, supporting H5. Satisfaction had a statistically significant impact on revisit intention, lending support to H6. The SEM analysis also offered empirical support for the importance of accommodation behavior as a mediator, influencing the relationship between emotion and satisfaction. Such a study will not only mend the research gap on hotel decision making in low-effort situations but also provide new insights into hotel managerial practices.

Table 1
Hypothesis Testing Results and Mediating Role of Accommodation Behavior

Structural Path	Test result
H1：Risk perception → Accommodation behavior	Not Supported
H2：Emotion → Accommodation behavior	Supported
H3：Accommodation behavior → Revisit intention	Supported
H4: Accommodation behavior → Satisfaction	Supported
H5: Risk perception → Emotion	Supported
H6: Satisfaction → Revisit intention	Supported
Emotion → Accommodation behavior→ Revisit intention	Supported
Emotion → Accommodation behavior→ Satisfaction	Supported
Risk perception → Accommodation behavior→ Revisit intention	Not supported
Risk perception → Accommodation behavior→ Revisit intention	Not supported

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PANDEMICS AND DISEASE OUTBREAKS IMPACTING TOURISM INDUSTRY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH THE LENS OF TOURIST EXPERTS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Disease outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics have long provided selective societal and economic changes and transformations. The travel, tourism and hospitality have been substantially affected during the major pandemics and disease outbreaks of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Abrantes et al., 2021). However, as a crucial force in globalization, tourism has also contributed to the spread of the diseases (Hall et al., 2020), and the Covid-19 pandemic was one the most significant examples of this relationship (Seabra, et al., 2021). The travel, tourism, and hospitality industries were severely impacted by the global pandemic of Covid-19, leading to an unprecedent crisis in the recent history of humankind (Chen et al., 2022). As never before, the mobility was restricted for safety reasons worldwide. Following the introduction of multiple constraints and regulations that limited the free circulation of passengers, the restart after Covid-19 pandemic was marked by severe restrictions in the international travel with mandatory medical certificates, clearance, and vaccination (Bhatt et al., 2022).

The Covid-19 pandemic led to a cut of 62 million jobs worldwide in the travel and tourism industry only in 2021. At the end of 2021, despite the improvement in travel and tourism, the sector reported around 44 million fewer jobs compared to 2019. During these hard times, hotel industry and all the travel and tourism sector struggled to maintain the operations, taking the opportunity to renew processes and reformulate their operations in order to become more robust and took steps to transform the adversity into an opportunity (Sigala, 2020; Vaz Serra & Seabra, 2023). In fact, the recent pandemic was faced as a chance to restart the sector contributing to a more resilient industry (Persson-Fischer & Liu, 2021). However, and despite the extensive research on the severe impacts of Covid-19 in the tourism industry, most of the studies concentrated their efforts on the negative side of the pandemic and on the consumer side. It is time now to focus on the positive changes that this pandemic brought (Seabra & Bhatt, 2022), specifically directing the research on the views and perspectives of managers and stakeholders.

The present work is original producing a diagnosis of the main impacts of Covid-19 in the tourism and hospitality sector from the perspective of professionals in the field, using Portugal as the study context. The main goals of this work are not only to identify the impacts of Covid-19 in the tourism and hospitality sector, but mainly to classify the future trends in a post-Covid world, according to the perspective of tourism experts. Using a panel of experts, including trade professionals, decision-makers and academics, a mixed-method research study was used. Data collection was carried out through a questionnaire with closed and open questions available online and sent by email invitation to experts in the tourism sector in Portugal.

According to participants in this study, economic impacts have been the most impactful ones, in particular unemployment. The Covid-19 period demonstrated the vulnerability of tourism jobs. Although participants agreed that the economic impact dimension is significantly higher than that of any other dimension (i.e., financial/liquidity, operational, organizational, or technological impacts), they identified significant impacts in all these areas, which showed how they perceived Covid-19 to have been disruptive for the tourism industry.

Lack of liquidity was the main financial impact identified in line with other studies (Sigala, 2020). In terms of organizational impacts, participants highlighted the emergence of new forms of organization, such as telework, and the need for a greater flexibility in terms of staff. Concerning team management, participants emphasized the importance of valuing human resources and improving stability. Hence, participants expressed seemingly contradictory opinions concerning the simultaneous need for flexibility/team reduction, and stability/valuation of human resources. This highlights the importance of finding the right balance between flexibility, job security, and social protection to accommodate both businesses' need for structural changes and workers' need for security.

Concerning operation and technological impacts, the majority pointed out a complete change in procedures and "a race for technology." This pandemic brought opportunities to the acceleration of digital adoption through the development of virtualization of experiences, remote working, and the acceleration of digital adoption, as concluded by other studies (Hall et al., 2020; Sigala, 2020).

Respondents considered that this crisis could turn into an opportunity for Portugal due to the quality of tourism products and the country's image of safety. The main future trend identified concerned sustainability and the decrease in mass tourism, which is in line with previous studies (Hall et al., 2020). Other trends identified were the increasing importance and use of new technologies, improved safety and hygiene standards, and a greater focus on the customer experience. Participants also estimated that domestic tourism would grow while borders remained closed in several countries. In the short-term, domestic tourism might be a strategy to minimize losses during the pandemic. In the long-term, it may become a trend in a context of decarbonization of the tourism and reduction of the ecological footprint which is in line with the trend of sustainability also identified by participants.

Key Words: Pandemics; Tourism; Hospitality; post-Covid trends

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THE NIGHT IS RISING: HOW MAGICAL STORIES AND ANIMISM INFLUENCE WINTER TOURISM LIGHT TRAILS

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and

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This paper makes an original contribution to tourism research by how nature enhances technological immersion in the context of animism at winter light trails.

The study offers an original view on light festival literature by taking into account their more-than-human, natural features such as local wildlife, the forests in which these events take place and the skyscapes above the event. Light trails are popular visitor attractions. They are often used during the winter months in cities, or the grounds of historic properties, to extend the tourist season, disperse visitors and attract new audiences to historic and natural sites. They are designed to be immersive phenomena, illuminating overlooked aspects of locations to bring the night to life for visitors. The study extends the work of Lovell and Griffin (2022) who explored how enchantment is produced by light installation designers using folkloric narratives. This work expands on this idea by negotiating the influence of animism in 70's children's magical literature series *The Dark is Rising* by Susan Cooper and Alan Garner's *The Owl Service* on the creators of these trails. A theoretical framework is provided by conceptualising 'new animism' (Ingold, 2006; MacFarlane, 2019) which suggests that the technological immersion of light trails is shaped around and by the spirits of place, those guardians of the natural world.

The methodology combines autoethnographic reflections on visits to light trails captured during the winter of 2022-23 while reading Cooper and Garner, with semi-structured interviews conducted with the creative designers of light trails in early 2023, which was examined using thematic analysis. The light trails examined include *Green Space: Dark Skies*, a national project, part of the UK Unboxed Festival. Thousands of participants used hand-held lights in conjunction with drones to illuminate the dusk in the four highest mountains of the United Kingdom. The study also explores the Christmas Lights trails staged by the organisation Culture Creative at Leeds Castle and Bedgebury Pinetum in Southern England. Lastly, National Trust property Anglesey Abbey in the East of England is the site of a multi-layered event based on *The Lost Words* book of spell-songs by Robert MacFarlane and Jackie Morris, which is about animism. These diverse events offer a variety of scenarios in different locations, National Trust properties to mountains.

Two main themes have emerged from the analysis to shape the discussion: designed and undesigned nature. Examples of undesigned nature include the movement of wind altering the effect of acoustics and the contribution of cold temperatures. Organisers and designers discuss the effects of clear skies, birds, bats corridors, badger baffles, full moons, frosty ground on the presence and atmosphere of the events. The draws attention to the focus placed on the sky above the trail, which serves as a larger mirror of the lights below, leading to animistic reflections of dark skies and the reverse gaze. Designers also discuss their sensitivities to the welfare on wildlife. These findings address a gap in our knowledge about the undesigned, natural world as an animistic, active contributor to light installations.
The findings reveal the awareness of lighting designers about animism and their respect for the environment, which is often informed by their childhood reading of seminal magical fiction. This in turn leads to constructions of "designed nature," for example the positioning of installations by water to double spatial effects and defamiliarise environments by changing their dimensions. Other designed forms of nature include soundscapes rich with night calls, rustles and activities that disorientate by suggesting that the darkness is alive with unseen creatures. Finally, the projections of trees and animals, often onto trees and natural surfaces creates a double effect of nightlife that sees and is seen, on occasion by the animals they strive to depict.

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MARKETING DECISION SUPPORT USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS APPLICATION IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence is the best-known of the new technologies that have emerged as a result of the recent, rapid evolution of data. A growing number of hoteliers are utilizing big data to enhance the guest experience and differentiate themselves in the fiercely competitive hospitality sector. Big data enables businesses to investigate unexpected trends in their markets, customers, and industries. Additionally, it aids in improving their comprehension of consumer behavior, which is a crucial competitive edge in the hospitality industry. The hospitality and tourism industries actively employ big data to create value. Knowledge-based information systems can be seen as tools of progress in the hands of marketers that allow them to make evidence-based decisions in complex situations. We will develop an intelligent information system out of advanced data analysis, neural networks, and knowledge display technologies in the form of an intelligent information system so that we can do the marketing of the tourist destination. Previously, knowledge engineering methods were analyzed and evaluated for extracting and modeling relationships, clusters, and hidden patterns of permanent presentation that described a market phenomenon or customer behavior. The feasibility of managing these findings in the knowledge base—which can be reused and shared and is machine-understandable knowledge—was proved by the results obtained from the research that was conducted on the issue of hospitality on Kish Island. In this study, we intend to continue these developments and apply the findings to the hospitality industry in Cyprus, to develop methods using the category of artificial neural networks. In this study, we are able to demonstrate conclusively the effectiveness of collective data in sustaining firm performance in the hospitality industry. We particularly wanted to deepen and explore the relationships between the variables in this study. Adoption of artificial intelligence is considered a driver factor for an increase in competitive advantage and marketing capabilities. However, using technology advancement in any form is essential to forming a bigger picture regarding sustainable marketing performance for organizations operating in the hospitality sector. The adoption of knowledge management and the integration of big data into strategic planning are credited with enhancing an organization's capacity for big data analytics. Collaboration between customers on social media and a proactive social media mindset have a positive effect on sustainability marketing, which can result in intangible assets and a competitive advantage. Notably, using social media can improve the effectiveness of marketing efforts. The conclusion builds on earlier research's findings and has applications to sustainable marketing and the hospitality industry.

Key Words: Artificial intelligence, destination marketing, customer behavior, neural networks, hospitality marketing.

ORGANISATIONAL WELLBEING: CONNECTING EMPLOYERS WITH EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

The primary focus of this study is to design an early-stage value proposition aiming at helping organisations to drive competitive advantage from employees' personal development and wellbeing. The empirical research relies on a mixed approach: qualitative, conducted through interviews with 3 human resources leaders and quantitative, obtained through a questionnaire administered to 20 employees. Preliminary findings show the existence of a potential market, therefore, confirming the desirability assumption (Brown and Katz, 2009) for designing a value proposition. The new offering was articulated by adopting the Value Proposition Canvas Framework (Osterwalder et al., 2015). The proposed service is: "a web and mobile platform that allows organisations to introduce, manage and track personal growth programs based on science".

Key Words: Organisational wellbeing; personal development; value proposition design.

INTRODUCTION

The Covid 19 pandemic caused significant shocks for organisations and individuals at an economic, social and technological level. Evidence shows that employees shifted their priorities, becoming more demanding about personal development, meaningful work, and quality of life in the work environment. (Malnight et al., 2019). Furthermore, the social distancing restriction imposed by most countries to contain the pandemic outbreak was the engine for an unprecedented, accelerated pace of digitalisation (Pollack and Perreault, 2021).
In response, organisations had to reassess their strategy, become more human-centric and invest in their people as a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Quinn and Thakor, 2018).
The primary focus of this study is to design an early-stage value proposition aiming at providing organisations and employees with a practical tool to fulfil the priorities mentioned above.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Identify how employees' priorities and needs changed due to the Covid pandemic and how the organisations react.
2. Analyse the market dynamics of the personal development and coaching industries and identify the competitive scenario.
3. Evaluate theories and frameworks for introducing new value propositions and business models.
4. Design the value proposition based on the literature review and empirical research findings.

METHOD

The empirical research relies on a mixed approach. Qualitative data was obtained through interviews with 3 human resources (HR) leaders. The sample was selected on a convenience basis among the researcher's contacts of HR leaders working for corporations above 250 employees. Each interviewee was given a set of pre-prepared semi-structured questions. The interviews were realised through the video conferencing tool Zoom.us and recorded upon getting the participants' approval. Quantitative data was obtained through the vehicle of the questionnaire; 20 responses were collected. The questionnaire was anonymous, the sample was selected on a random basis, and the questions were submitted through the survey tool Qualtrics.com and administered to the Warwick Business School student and alumni portal.

LIMITATIONS

The focus of this research is to design an early-stage value proposition. Therefore, further experiments and hypothesis validation and testing must be conducted. The on-convenience basis sample selection for the HR leaders' interviews and the reduced number of interviews cannot be considered an exhaustive representation of

reality. However, they can satisfactorily represent an insight sufficient for generating the first version of a value proposition. The same principle applies to the sample selected for the questionnaire.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

The literature review suggested that following the Covid 19 pandemic, organisations are looking to find ways to respond to their employees' increasing demand for a structured wellbeing and personal development process. The review also highlighted that leaders are aware of the strategic importance of aligning the organisational purpose and values with the ones of their employees. However, despite the awareness regarding the above priorities, there is a gap between theory and practice, as confirmed by the empirical research. Organisations and employees need help translating those priorities into structured processes. The research showed the existence of a potential market, therefore confirming the desirability assumption for offering a value proposition to fill the gap. Adopting the Value Proposition Canvas framework, the proposed service is: "a web and mobile platform that allows organisations to introduce, manage and track personal development programs based on science."

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NEW CHALLENGES FOR AN OLD TRAJECTORY: EDUCATIONAL TOURISM IN POST-PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

Stemmed from several factors including increased mobility, awareness, and wealth in communities, a huge growth has occurred in educational tourism in different parts of the world in recent decades. However, despite its significance and long history, educational tourism has received little attention in the literature. Particularly, how educational tourism was affected after the emergence of the COVID-19 outbreak is under-researched. Bodge (1998) defines educational tourism as any program in which people travel in a group to a destination with the initial aim of learning. During the last few decades, educational tourism has experienced continuous growth. For instance, in 2020 over one million international students enrolled in the United States while the number was half a million in England.

Globally, many countries have a share in educational tourism and international students. Affected by the Coronavirus, a considerable number of these international students were at risk of not returning to educational institutions worldwide (Statista, 2020). This interruption can lead to economic problems for all of the hosting countries especially, those destinations that are heavily reliant on the revenues generated from educational tourism such as Northern, Cyprus. Northern Cyprus is a Mediterranean island state known as an educational tourism hub, where thousands of international students from 110 countries travel to this destination for educational purposes (Rezapouraghdam et al., 2022). The economy of the region is dependent on the service sector including tourism and higher education. Thus, any obstacle in these sectors can affect Northern Cyprus negatively
Since 2019 tourism and hospitality were drastically affected by the pandemic and travel-related controls were enacted by many countries in order to reduce the risk of transmission (Rezapouraghdam & Karatepe, 2020). Although such restrictions are gradually getting ceased, the psychological effects of this unpleasant incident may remain with us for a long time (Courtet, Olié, Debien, & Vaiva, 2020). More importantly, a recent study argued that the socio-psychological side effects of COVID-19 have influenced students' perception of education (Rezapouraghdam, Alipour, Kilic, & Akhshik, 2022). It seems that now and more than before they get used to distance learning approaches and this can be one of the main challenges for host communities.

Therefore, to fill the aforementioned gaps, the current study will interview academicians and experts who are in close interactions with educational tourism and edu-tourist in Northern Cyprus. The main objective of the study is to understand the challenges created by the Coronavirus for the educational tourism sector and oversea students' education. This can generate avenues for finding solutions and implications to overcome the identified barriers.

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TOWARD SUSTAINABLE EDUCATIONAL TOURISM: EVIDENCE FROM A MEDITERRANEAN ISLAND

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ABSTRACT

Educational tourism (Edu-tourism) has been introduced as one of the main sources of economic development in Northern Cyprus for the past four decades (e.g., Rezapouraghdam et al., 2022). Although in comparison to the mass, the presence of this alternative type of tourism may positively contribute to the sustainable development of the destinations, to date, little research is available on the sustainability of this so-called niche market.

Particularly, little evidence is available on the sustainability of edu-tourism in Northern Cyprus which is highly dependent on this market (Alipour, Fatemi, & Malazizi, 2020). The notion of travelling for the sake of education is not a new phenomenon and it has a far history (Bodger, Bodger & Frost, 2004). Edu-tourism refers to any type of travel in which learning is a major purpose for tourists and international students are one of the most prominent forms of edu-tourism in the current century (Rezapouraghdam et al., 2018). On the other side, the definition of sustainable tourism denotes an activity that is developed and maintained viable over an infinite period without degradation of the social and environmental well-being of destinations (Rezapouraghdam & Akhshik, 2021). Therefore, ecologically sensitive communities such as small islands need to make sure that the major tourism activities in their territory are sustainable or not (such as edu-tourism in this study).

To find an answer to the aforementioned crucial issue, the authors of the current research will use a qualitative approach and through conducting interviews with several social, economic, and environmental experts will try to get comprehensive knowledge about the positive and negative impacts of edu-tourism. Apart from the primary data that the authors will obtain from experts in various governmental officials in tourism, economic, and, environmental departments the purposefully selected samples will also include academicians and non-governmental organization bodies. The findings of the study can provide valuable implications for policymakers and practitioners in the study setting. The outcomes of the research can also extend the knowledge in sustainable educational tourism literature.

Key Words: sustainability, edu-tourism, small islands, sustainable development.

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THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND PERCEIVED RISK OF CONTRACTING COVID-19 ON RESIDENTS' OPPOSITION TO TOURISM

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Key Words: Residents; Theory of Planned Behaviour; Conservative; Liberal

INTRODUCTION

Since the SARS-CoV-2 (or COVID-19) virus began its deadly impact worldwide, approximately 649 million cases have been reported, resulting in 6.7 million deaths (JHU, 2022). Arguably, the riskiest places to be found are in densely populated areas where individuals have the greatest potential contact with others (Lai, Webster, Kumari, & Sarkar, 2020). The U.S., with 86% of its population living in urban counties, is a prime example of a country with most of its residents living in proximity (Dobis et al., 2021). As of December 10, 2022, approximately 100 million cases have been documented in the U.S., sadly leading to 1.1 million deaths (JHU, 2022). With the virus and the resulting pandemic being so politicized within the U.S. COVID-19, this research employed a modified theory of planned model to determine how political ideology and perceived risk of contracting COVID-19 influenced residents' opposition to tourism. As such, 11 hypotheses (as illustrated in Figure 1.) were examined.

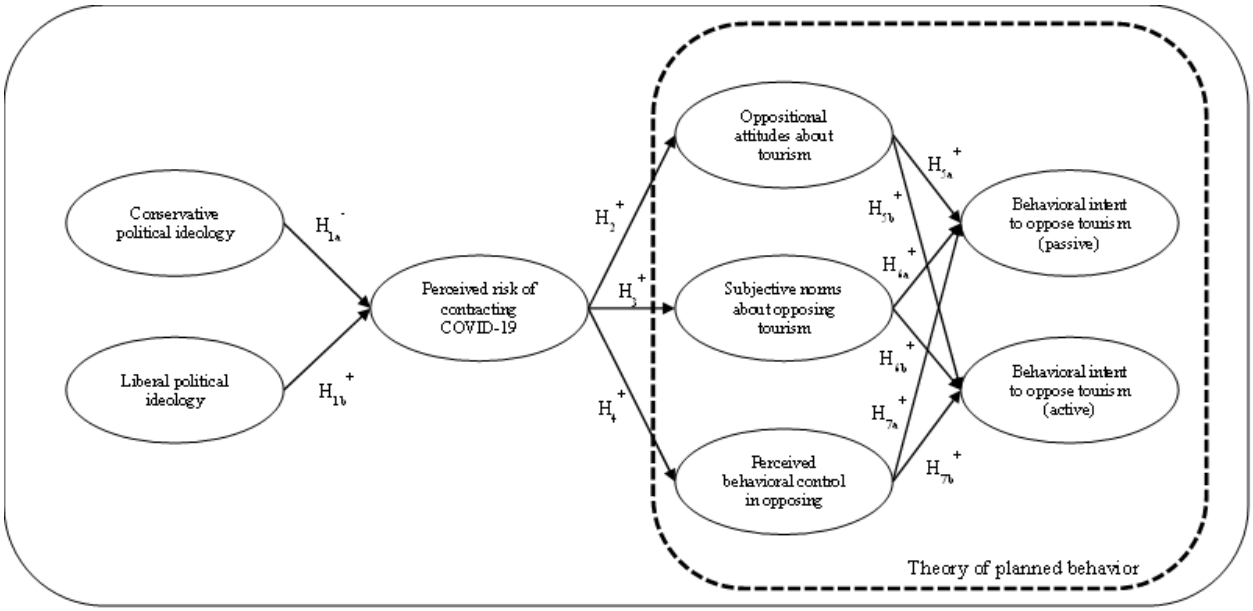

Figure 1. Conceptual model

METHODS

Residents of the 25 most-populated U.S. counties that also have historically high rates of COVID-19 comprise our study population, which ranged from 21.0% to 35.5% (JHU, 2022; World Population Review, 2022). To secure a sample from the population, we identified and joined 380 different online community groups across the 25 counties via Facebook (i.e., Groups and Pages) and Reddit; approximately 15 groups per county. Survey data were collected between March and May of 2022 by posting the questionnaire link (hosted in Qualtrics) to community groups. Nine hundred fifty-six individuals submitted a questionnaire. We removed 426 questionnaires that were either incomplete, took less than 322 seconds, or filled out by individuals who resided outside one of the 25 counties; the final sample size was 530 participants.

The following is a breakdown of items and their sources: Political ideology (14 items; Pew Research, 2021); perceived risk of contracting COVID-19 (five items; Joo et al., 2021); oppositional attitudes about tourism (six items; Erul et al., 2020); subjective norms (five items; Erul et al., 2020); perceived behavioural control (three items; Wu et al., 2017); behavioural intent to oppose tourism (12 items; Erul et al., 2020; Wong & Lai, 2021). Data were analyzed following a CFA-SEM procedure.

FINDINGS/IMPLICATIONS

The CFA resulted in a model fit of $\chi^2(n = 530) = 1651.35$, $df = 644$, $\chi^2/df = 2.49$, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.95, IFI = 0.96, and RMSEA= 0.05. From the CFA, most (32 of 39) items had standardized factor loadings in excess of 0.70; the remaining five were in excess of 0.50. Composite reliabilities for factors were greater than 0.70 as AVE were at least 0.50. These three estimates demonstrated convergent validity. Discriminant validity was shown by square roots of each factor's AVE being greater than the inter-factor correlations.

The SEM resulted in a model fit of $\chi^2(n = 530) = 1968.38$, $df = 679$, $\chi^2/df = 2.90$, CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.94, IFI = 0.94, and RMSEA = 0.05. Nine of the 11 model hypotheses were supported ($p < 0.001$), with the two rejected hypotheses being H_{6a} and H_{7b}. From the SEM model, the following variances were explained: Perceived risk of contracting COVID-19 (36%); oppositional attitudes about tourism (76%); subjective norms about opposing tourism (64%); perceived behavioural control in opposing tourism (44%); passive opposition of tourism (81%); and active opposition of tourism (71%).

This study furthers the application of the theory of planned behaviour in the context of COVID-19 and community residents' perspectives of tourists. While much work employing the framework is in positive contexts, the current research demonstrates how political ideology and perceived risk of contracting COVID-19 sheds light on the theory of planned behaviour antecedent constructs focused on the opposition of tourism. In terms of explaining the perceived risk of contracting COVID-19, it did not matter whether people agreed with more conservatively worded or liberally worded political ideology items. The most powerful construct in the model was perceived risk of contracting COVID-19 as it explained the three traditional theory of planned behaviour predictors. Managerial implications will be discussed further.

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SELF-REPORTED EMOTIONS AND EMOTIONAL SOLIDARITY: CLOSING THE LOOP ON RESIDENTS' SOCIAL DISTANCE WITH TOURISTS

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Key Words: Tourism development; United States; Residents; Emotional solidarity.

INTRODUCTION

Long before politicians and agency officials used the term "social distance" in the context of COVID-19 (albeit incorrectly), Bogardus (1933) first championed the notion of the construct in his sociological research. Nearly a century later, operationalization of the construct has evolved, and we are seeing more work undertaken in social psychological research, most notably within the applied field of travel and tourism. Since the early tourism work by Thyne and Zins (2003), researchers have offered a plethora of potential predictors of social distance; from number of days on trip, previous visits to destination, number of friendships (Yilmaz & Tasci, 2015) and residents' attitudes about tourism (Thyne et al., 2022), as well as have examined differences in social distance across cultures (Thyne, Watkins, & Yoshida, 2018). Rarely have researchers modelled antecedents of social distance within the tourism literature. Given the proposed relationship between emotions and emotional solidarity (Joo et al., 2023) and the existing relationship between emotional solidarity and social distance (Joo et al., 2018), this work tests a more robust model including the three constructs. Therefore, 12 hypotheses (as illustrated in Figure 1.) were examined.

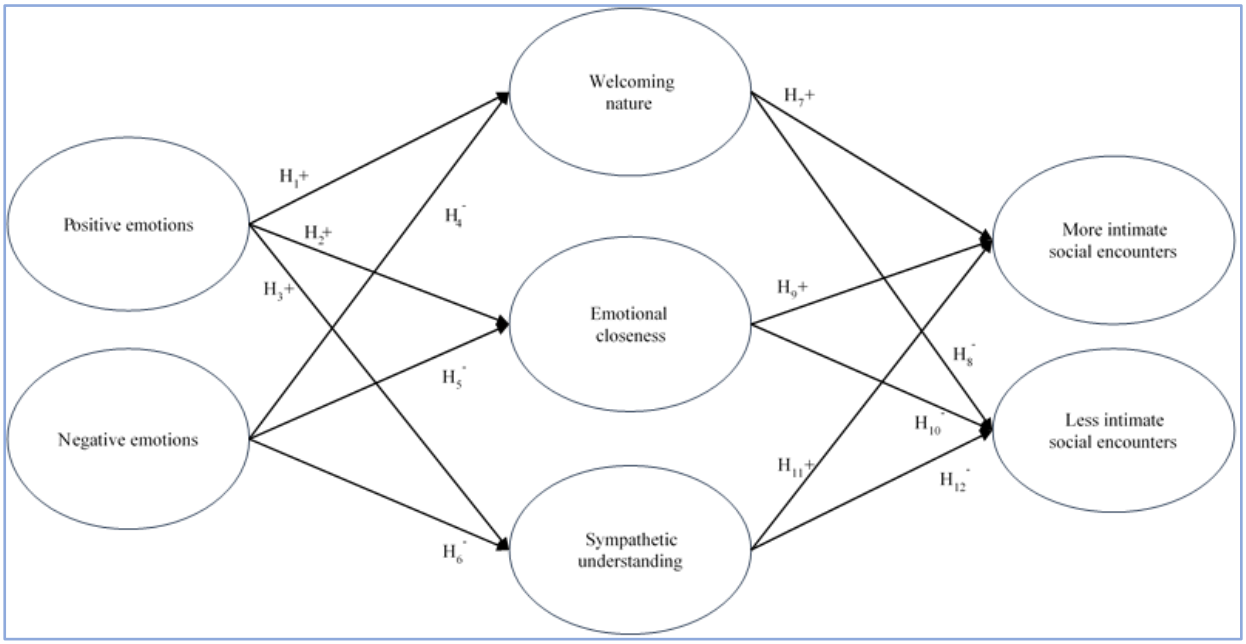

Figure 1. Conceptual model

METHODS

Residents of McCurtain County, Oklahoma—one of the fastest tourism developing counties in the state (Dean Runyan Associates, 2021)—comprised the population for this study. Data were collected both onsite and online. The former was undertaken using a multi-stage sampling approach whereby the research team visited homes within the county and asked individuals to participate (conducted May-June 2021). The latter was done via a Facebook group page dedicated to residents of the county (conducted June-August 2021). Overall, 511 completed responses were secured (i.e., 134 from the onsite portion and 377 from the online portion); yielding a 58.7% response rate.

The following is a breakdown of items and their sources: Positive and negative emotions (10 items; Ouyang et al., 2017 and Zheng et al., 2020); emotional solidarity (10 items; Woosnam & Norman, 2010); and social distance (10 items; Thyne et al., 2022). Data were analyzed following a CFA-SEM procedure.

FINDINGS/IMPLICATIONS

The CFA resulted in a model fit of $\chi^2(n = 511) = 891.77$, $df = 369$, $\chi^2/df = 2.42$, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.97, IFI = 0.97, and RMSEA= 0.05. From the CFA, most (28 of 30) items had standardized factor loadings in excess of 0.70; the remaining five were in excess of 0.50. Composite reliabilities for factors were greater than 0.90 as AVEs were 0.67 and higher. These three estimates demonstrated convergent validity. Discriminant validity was shown by square roots of each factor's AVE being greater than the inter-factor correlations.

The SEM resulted in a model fit of $\chi^2(n = 511) = 1000.12$, $df = 375$, $\chi^2/df = 2.67$, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.96, IFI = 0.94, and RMSEA = 0.06. Eight of the 12 model hypotheses were supported (six at $p < 0.001$; two at $p < 0.01$), with the four rejected hypotheses being $H_{4,5,6, \text{ and } 10}$. From the SEM model, the following variances were explained: Welcoming nature (72%); emotional closeness (51%); sympathetic understanding (66%); more intimate social encounters (67%); and less intimate social encounters (65%).

This study helps to shed light on how affective and cognitive assessments of tourists in a burgeoning community explains residents' willingness to engage in social encounters with visitors. Interestingly, negative emotions did not predict any of the emotional solidarity factors within the model. Rather, positive emotions not only significantly predicted the three factors; the relationships were the powerful (based on standardized β and t values). Not surprisingly, welcoming nature was the best predictor of willingness to engage in more intimate social encounters with tourists. Managerial implications will be discussed further.

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FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS FOR DESIGNING A BRAND SPACE IN THE METAVERSE

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ABSTRACT

The age of the metaverse is emerging. This allows enhanced digital e-retailing and effective branding through an immersive environment with a unique experience. Based on the previous literature, this research is a conceptual paper of considerations on fundamental elements in designing a 3D virtual brand space. We identify that the fundamental elements in virtual space overlap with the elements important in designing a physical brand space; however, the application and focal considerations of the elements may differ. The study discusses two main themes: 1) the fundamental elements in designing a 3D metaverse brand space; and 2) the difference in applying the elements and additional considerations in designing a 3D metaverse retailing.

Key Words: virtual reality, retail, metaverse, brand space, brand management, digital marketing

INTRODUCTION

Retailers have been integrating branding across platforms for decades due to increasing multichannel shoppers. These shoppers are those who consume both online and in Brick-and-Mortar stores. Even before the COVID pandemic, visits to retail stores were reported to be declining, whereas retail sales through digital channels, including mobile sales, have been increasing and thriving with customers (The Verde Group & Jay H. Baker Retailing center, 2012).

Retailing has evolved from traditional retailing (mostly product-oriented) to evolving retailing (a customer-oriented space using Web and email promotions) and eventually to pervasive retailing (experience-oriented space with more entertaining and interactive activities) (Bourlakis, Papagiannidis, & Li, 2009). Retailers are conscious of providing an unforgettable experience and advantages to entice customers by integrating branding across multiple platforms. In experience-oriented retailing, customers value a new and unique experience where their interaction and participation are essential. This phenomenon is described as ‘retail theatre’ in retailing literature (Harris, Harris, & Baron, 2001).

Value in experience-oriented retailing influenced traditional retailers to focus on creating omnichannel to offer unique and engaging experiences to customers (Mishra, Singh, & Koles, 2021; Sopadjieva, Dholakia, & Benjamin, 2017). The omnichannel strategy hinges on the idea of providing a seamless shopping experience through a variety of physical and digital channels. The majority of digital channels in the current market are 2D virtual spaces such as websites and mobile applications. Although 2D digital channels are regarded as a faster and more convenient way of shopping, creating a unique retail theatre environment is limited (Bourlakis et al., 2009) as it only contains texts, images, and multi-media files that provide a 2D experience. Due to technological advances, the 3D metaverse with VR (Virtual Reality) experience suggests a possibility to overcome the limited retail theatre effect in 2D digital channels.

Researchers acknowledged the emerging era of the 3D metaverse and highlighted the considerations and determinants in metaverse retailing since 2004. Related studies highlight that metaverse retailing can provide valuable insights to create better brand space and improve customer experience, thus encouraging customer participation and experience co-creations (Gadalla, Keeling, & Abosag, 2013). Especially in the 3D metaverse

sphere, users can create their own avatars and explore various brand spaces offering a collaborative, immersive, and open-ended experience. Although it is still an early stage for brands to create a brand space in a fully 3D metaverse environment, an increasing number of brands are interested in creating a unique brand space semi-virtual world that is in between the 2D and 3D metaverse. Advanced technology has dramatically changed the environment and the tools for virtual life experiences within several years. Luxury fashion brands such as Gucci and Chanel collaborated with the social network platform ZEPETO allowing users to dress their avatars by shopping in a specialised showroom on the platform to expand their brand reach. Meta (formerly known as Facebook) acquired Oculus in 2014 and created a virtual social platform, Horizon. Horizon enables people to work, learn and entertain themselves by experiencing an immersive virtual environment and feeling the presence of real life. This movement forces the brands to build a virtual brand space in the metaverse in various forms. In the music and entertainment industry, Travis Scott performed a live concert in Fortnite to 12.3 million gamers in the metaverse. Balenciaga designed a video game 'Afterworld' as a Fall 2021 fashion collection, which leads players to travel through a showroom-like wonderland and pass through avatars dressed like models. The Seoul Metropolitan Government launched the metaverse Seoul in 2022, designed to expand its public services for the users to visit tax offices, youth counselling services, exhibitions, and enjoy seasonal content with their avatar in the metaverse.

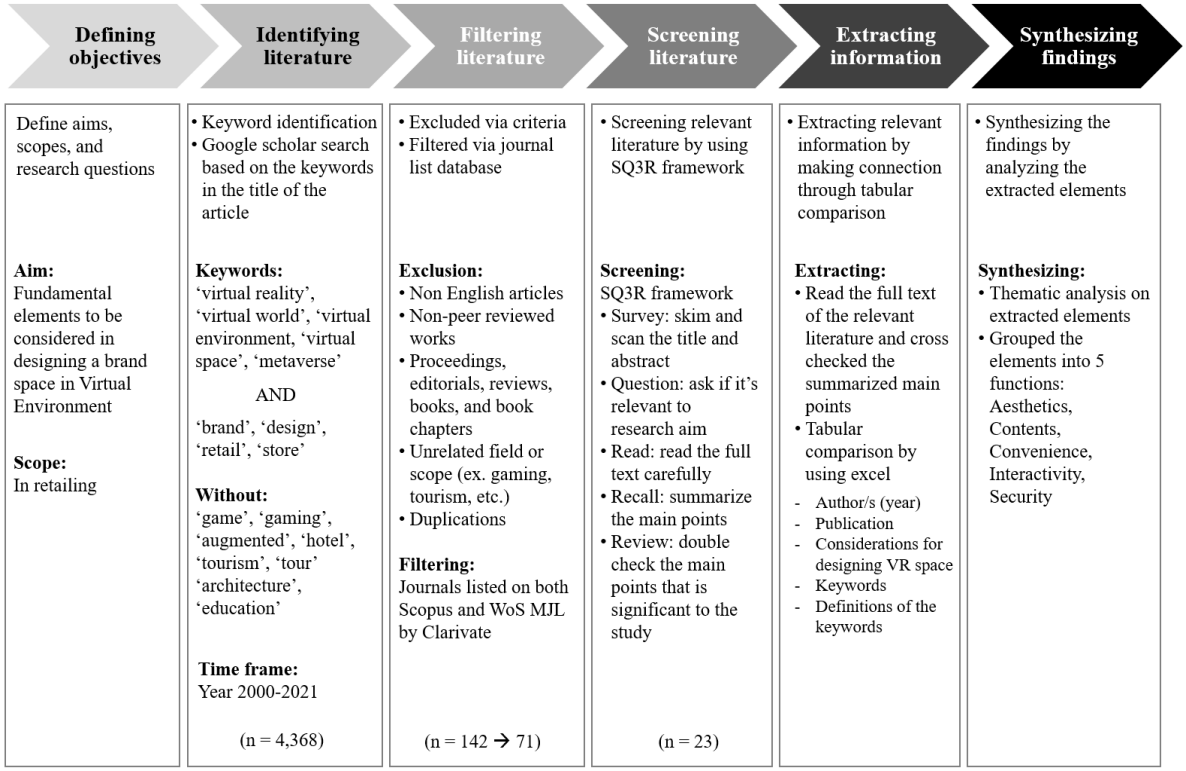
To adapt to this transformation and to lead the market, it is critical for brands to identify the fundamental elements in creating a 3D virtual brand space and understand the characteristics of the metaverse. Therefore, this research explores the essential elements and functions that should be considered in designing a brand space in the metaverse, focusing on the virtual reality environment in a retail setting. In this study, the virtual reality in the metaverse refers to the 3D environment of the virtual space where the users control their own avatar and are connected to a 2D PC/Mobile or wear an HMD (Head Mounted Device) for maximum presence and immersion.

METHODOLOGY/APPROACH

Given that this study aimed to explore the fundamental elements for designing a brand space in the metaverse, a systematic review was conducted. The review process follows the protocols of the papers that employed the systematic literature review process: 1) Defining objectives; 2) Identifying literature; 3) Filtering literature; 4) Screening literature; 5) Extracting information; 6) Synthesizing findings (Figure 1).
The focus of the study is to provide some insights when designing a virtual brand space in retailing. Therefore, the scope of the literature search was mainly on the retailing sector other than gaming or tourism. Google scholar was utilized to locate articles published in the past 21 years (2000 to 2021) using combinations of the following keywords: "virtual reality", "virtual world", "virtual environment", "virtual space", "metaverse", "presence", "immersive", "brand", "design", "retail", and "store" in the title of the article. Excluded keywords were "game", "gaming", "augmented", "hotel", "tourism", "tour", "architecture", and "education". The search result was around 4,370, and the author again filtered out by skimming the title to exclude irrelevant fields such as gaming, tourism, education, product design, and medical. The following were also excluded in this process: non-English articles; non-peer-reviewed works; proceedings; editorials; reviews; books; book chapters. Only the publications listed in Scopus and Web of Science Master Journal List (WOS MJL) by Clarivate were included among the peer-reviewed works. The author organized the relevant literature on Excel and excluded the duplication. By the end of this process, 71 articles remained.

The author screened out and reviewed the relevant literature using the SQ3R framework (Ridley, 2012), focusing on retailing. The SQ3R framework consists of five processes: Survey- skimming and scanning the title and abstract; Question- checking the relevancy with the research aim; Read- reading the full text; Recall- summarizing the main points of the article; Review- double-checking the main facts whether it is relevant to the study. In the first two stages, half of the listed articles were excluded. Then, PDFs of each piece were downloaded, read, recalled, and reviewed. The final data remained was a set of 23 articles. The final dataset of papers was carefully read in detail and summarized in Excel to conduct tabular comparison (Popay et al., 2006). The data were summarized and organized using the following category: author, year, publication, extracted keywords for designing VR space, and definitions of the keywords. Finally, thematic analysis was conducted to synthesize the findings.

Figure 3
Systematic review process



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

It is identified that there were commonalities in the fundamental functions and elements of virtual brand space and physical brand space. The functions that are essential in physical retailing are also essential in virtual brand space; however, in terms of the description and elements, the function varies. In this section, we explicitly explain the fundamental functions and elements of virtual retailing, its difference from physical retailing, and considerations that need to be addressed in designing the 3D metaverse.
The brief summarization of the critically reviewed literature is as follows. Vrechopoulous et al. (2004) focused on identifying the impact of layout design on customers' perceived usefulness, ease of use, entertainment, and spending time in a virtual store. This study was undertaken to compare the authors' experimental layouts, which are freeform, grid, and racetrack. Bourlakis et al. (2009) examined the evolution of retailing from traditional to electronic to metaverse retailing and highlighted the key challenges and opportunities each sphere faces. Gadalla et al. (2013) identified the emerging set of four overarching determinant elements in the metaverse Retailing service quality: customer service; produce dimension; store dimension, and a 3D platform dimension.

Presence and immersion are the keys

In order to increase the presence and the immersive experience of its customers, physical retailers such as casinos and Department stores tend to eliminate the window and provide entertainment content. This allows the customers to be blocked from the real world, not knowing how much time they spend in the brand space. Presence and immersion are also identified as essential and distinctive characteristics of virtual reality. Presence refers to a sense of 'being there' (Pizzi, Vannucci, & Aiello, 2020) and a real-world-like experience (Bourlakis et al., 2009). Immersion is the extent to which the subject's senses are isolated from the real world and stimulated by the virtual world (Lee & Chung, 2008). Therefore, it is crucial to design a brand space to feel presence and immersion. Five fundamental elements to be considered when designing a metaverse brand space for presence and immersion were identified: aesthetics, contents, convenience, interactivity, and security (Table 1). The identified elements are also essential in designing a physical space; however, the detailed functions may differ when applied, whether physical or virtual.

Five fundamental function and its elements

Aesthetics

The physical brand space image, shaped by store attributes, is known as one of the important factors affecting customer behavioural orientations (Erdem, Ben Oumlil, & Tuncalp, 1999). The same as in a Brick-and-Mortar stores, aesthetics are an important factor in building a virtual brand space. Aesthetics is related to the sensory appeal of the brand space, which consists of authentic ambience, graphic quality, layout design and sensory stimuli.

Authentic ambience refers to designing a differentiated brand space expressing the brand's unique identity. This can be created and distinguished through colour tone, background music, and font/typography, influencing the overall space design (Gadalla et al., 2013; Pizzi et al., 2020). The authentic ambience is regarded as one of the important dimensions of customer decision-making as a space with a pleasing design and atmosphere can become a customer's favourite location to visit. To provide a memorable brand experience, designing multiple sensory dimensions, such as visual, auditory, and tactile, simultaneously with consistency is crucial (Pizzi et al., 2020). As highlighted in past research, atmospheric variables are a central part of the retailer's toolbox and represent a variety of factors that can be manipulated for positive influence on customers (Turley & Milliman, 2000).

Layout design is an essential decision-making cue towards creating a brand space image (Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal, & Voss, 2002). A store layout is a critical determinant in creating an image and atmosphere of a store, and it strongly influences in-store traffic patterns as well as customer satisfaction and loyalty towards the brand (Vrechopoulos et al., 2004). This will not be different from the virtual brand space. Layout design can be formed through how products are displayed, the layout of the store, and how a store is designed. High-quality graphics with vivid graphics are essential due to their positive impact on simulating user experience, creating higher levels of brand engagement (Papagiannidis *et al.*, 2013) and increasing the level of the simulated retail environment (Papagiannidis et al., 2017). Bourlakis et al. (2009) emphasized that brands should devote enough effort to designing 3D products with high-quality and resolution, considering Armani's mistake in failing to deliver high-quality virtual clothing.

One of the biggest advantages of designing a 3D metaverse brand space is that the store design does not necessarily have to be a replica of the physical store. It can be an innovative and fantasy-oriented space that physical stores cannot provide. Vrechopoulos et al. (2004) valued that a brand space should be entertaining, which should be fun to explore and aesthetically appealing. 3D metaverse brand space can provide more immersive, real-life-like, and context-rich experiences, which can be distinguished from simple online websites and apps (Bourlakis et al., 2009). A metaverse brand space can be located anywhere, often in the most luxurious and exotically beautiful landscapes that are difficult to experience in real life or 2D online space (Gadalla et al., 2013).

Content

Customers are constantly seeking new experiences and prefer to be entertained. The retailers, both physical and virtual space, are expected to provide added value for the customers to visit their brand space. The content of the virtual space can provide added value for the customers. Contents refer to the ongoing activities in the space, including information, promotions, reviews, and entertainment. In retail, accurate and honest product information is crucial in helping consumers' purchase decision-making (Gadalla et al., 2013).

The following can be included in this category: the newly released product, product details, and descriptions of using the product. In addition, providing customers with promotional content such as product trials, targeted promotions, and discounts is a critical determinant in decision-making (Gadalla et al., 2013). In customer decision-making, reviews and feedback from other users and community ratings are also essential (Bourlakis et al., 2009; Gadalla et al., 2013). A 3D virtual reality environment can be distinguished from a simple online website in that it can create a storyline and narratives when providing the content (Ahasan & Väyrynen, 1999).

Table 1
Defined fundamental functions

Fundamental functions		**Details**	Vrechopoulos et al. (2004)	Bourlakis et al. (2009)	Gadalla et al. (2013)	Papagiannidis et al. (2013, 2017)	Violante et al. (2019)	Schnack et al. (2020)	Xue et al. (2020)
Aesthetics		Authentic ambience			O				O
		Graphic quality				O			O
		Layout design	O		O				
		Sensory stimuli							
Content		Entertainment	O		O				O
		Information			O		O		
		Promotions		O	O				
		Reviews		O					
Convenience		Customization			O				O
		Ease of control	O	O	O	O			O
		Ease of Navigation	O		O		O		
		Search		O	O				
interactivity	Social	Competence			O				O
		Courtesy			O				
		Human Contact			O		O		O
		Responsiveness			O		O		O
		Emotional Expressiveness			O				
	Technical	Connectivity					O		
		Locomotion					O	O	
		Smooth interaction	O		O				
Security		Security & Privacy		O	O				

Providing entertainment content is a distinctive function, especially in the 3D metaverse brand space. Although a 3D virtual brand space product trial may not be as realistic as real life, it can enrich the customer experience and motivate customer engagement through fantasy products (Gadalla et al., 2013). Fantasy products are related to the entertainment aspect, which offers the looks and features of an avatar or products not available in real life (Cowan & Ketron, 2019; Phillips Melancon, 2011). Entertainment content can be applied to the demonstration of the product or service by stimulating the user's imagination. For example, a customer's avatar trying on a new pair of shoes and walking along the aisle can automatically provide an effect as if walking in the air. In a 3D metaverse, this experience can provide a realistic feeling as if the customer is walking in the air, creating a sense of freedom and joy.

Convenience

Convenience refers to accessibility and comfort, including customization, ease of control, navigation, and search functions. The customization function enables the user's personal preference in displaying the menus and layouts for convenience (Gadalla et al., 2013). Targeted promotions delivering customized and personalized messages may help customers easily find and buy what they want (Bourlakis et al., 2009). In addition, it provides customers with personalized recommendations for saving effort upon making purchase decisions (Xue, Parker, & Hart, 2020). Therefore, having a 3D immersive metaverse brand space not only enables the retailers to operate an omnichannel retail strategy but also allows the customers to have more options to select the right brand space for their personal preferences and circumstances.

The ease of control function is known as a key determinant in virtual retailing as it captivates users of computer-based activities and creates a high level of user engagement (Kim, Fiore, & Lee, 2007). It is related to user-friendliness and easiness when controlling an avatar during a virtual experience journey (Bourlakis et al., 2009; Gadalla et al., 2013; Papagiannidis et al., 2017). In addition, it is related to how easy it is to become skilful to and operate the control (Vrechopoulos et al., 2004).

Similar to the physical space, navigation is essential in creating a user experience. If consumers suffer in finding a way or gets lost while exploring, their stress level may rise and build a negative experience. Navigation refers to the ease of navigating through store layout, helpful in searching for and buying the product (Gadalla et al., 2013; Vrechopoulos et al., 2004), and location- specific brand space layout design impact not only provides a unique atmosphere of a brand space but also impacts customers' convenience. Vrechopoulous et al. (2004) highlighted that a certain store layout ("grid" layout in their study) is perceived as more convenient than others. A store with a chaotic and maze-like layout can make the customers difficult to navigate and confuse the users, which can be a big drawback in exploring and shopping.

Location-specificity is related to visualizing the store locator in online maps. This can decrease confusion and helps the customers easily find the item they are looking for (Violante, Vezzetti, & Piazzolla, 2019). Consumers getting lost and being confused can negatively impact their shopping journey. In order to eliminate confusion, shopping centers in the real-world display a map with a 'current location' sign for the customers to easily find where they are. This should also be considered in the metaverse to prevent confusion when finding a way.

Controlling and navigating in a 3D environment may not be straightforward nor convenient, which may lead to decreased accessibility. Although current web-based or mobile-based retailing may be a faster and more convenient way of shopping, 3D metaverse can provide a more immersive and enhanced experience. Especially customers seeking rich context and entertaining experience may prefer the latter.

Interactivity

Interactivity refers to communication interacting with one another. This interaction also can be formed among people and between a person and a machine. The former is categorized as social interactivity, and the latter as technical interactivity.

Social interactivity

Social interactivity is the interaction between avatars. It can be not only between customers and service agents but also among customers. As social beings, social interaction is essential to us. In a virtual space, similar to the physical store, it is identified that customers seek human contact and prefer a salesperson or an AI assistant with emotional expressiveness, courtesy, and knowledge capable of responding to their inquiries (Gadalla et al., 2013; Violante et al., 2019; Xue et al., 2020). However, in a 2D online retail with chat-based customer service communication based on text only. In addition, the shopping experience in 2D online using a website or an app can be a lonely decision-making process without any human touch. Having a service agent avatar in the brand space may add a sense of human touch in the shopping experience.

One of the benefits of metaverse brand space is that the users can select the best shopping environment option whether to interact with other users or to have a private moment. Customers can interact with each other and participate in the overall experience (Bourlakis et al., 2009). Customers can present themselves in the metaverse brand space through a self-created

identity representative avatar. Avatars focuses on social interaction with high mutual awareness and immersive interaction. Avatars may help customers to feel the similar interaction they feel in a physical store as they can feel the facial expression and responsiveness. Having an avatar is especially a distinctive characteristic in a 3D metaverse compared to website-based digital retailing. In a 3D metaverse, it is possible to communicate by talking to the agent along with the facial expression of the avatar. Customers do not simply search and consume the product or service, but they anticipate interacting with others and experiencing the 3D immersive environment. For those who prefer to have a quiet and private shopping experience, they can select an option to hide the other users and not to interact with them.

Technical interactivity

Technical interactivity refers to the interaction between the user and the program, such as providing a smooth interaction without lagging (Gadalla et al., 2013; Vrechopoulos et al., 2004), supporting locomotion system (Schnack, Wright, & Holdershaw, 2021), and connectivity (Violante et al., 2019). Although technological complexity may enhance the customer experience, it may result in customer dissatisfaction due to its perplexing nature (Bourlakis et al., 2009).

In terms of locomotion, which is the process of moving from one place to another, there are two kinds of techniques for movement in the 3D metaverse: instant teleportation and motion-tracked walking. Schnack et al. (2021) identified the locomotion technique did not result in changes in engagement, excitement, or stress. In addition, it did not have an impact on basket size, the amount spent, trip duration, private label shares, the probability of purchasing unfamiliar products, product handling times, and the number of unplanned purchases. However, the locomotion technique needs to be addressed in relation to motion sickness. This is because many users claim motion sickness when controlling their avatar to navigate and explore in the metaverse. Motion sickness can be a critical issue in metaverse retailing as it provides a negative experience on the overall shopping experience.

Security

Security refers to a safe transaction and privacy protection (Bourlakis et al., 2009; Gadalla et al., 2013). Security and privacy regulations enable customers to trust communication and shopping which is related to trust towards the brand. According to Gadalla et al. (2013), customers tend to visit the website/app and buy online which they trust. In addition, personalized promotional campaigns, which is regarded as a useful function, can lead to privacy issues (Bourlakis et al., 2009). Customers feel negative feelings when their email was publicized (Gadalla et al., 2013), therefore, it is critical to consider securing the customer's private data. Providing the cookie-less option for the users to select can decrease privacy sensitivity.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

By reviewing previous literature on virtual reality and metaverse retailing, this research identified the key functional elements in designing a brand space in a 3D metaverse. The identified essential elements are aesthetics, content, convenience, interactivity, and security. These elements are also regarded as essential in designing a physical brand space. However, the physical and virtual space considerations differ in many ways. Among the differences, we would like to highlight two things. First, in a 3D metaverse brand space, the store layout does not necessarily need to replicate the physical store. It can be an innovative and fantasy-oriented space that is entertaining to explore and aesthetically appealing. Second, brands can provide an enhanced shopping experience through personalized options and a sense of human touch when interacting with other user avatars and service agent avatars. In addition to these differences, this study illustrates the considerations when designing the 3D metaverse brand space.

ORIGINALITY/VALUE

There are growing number of papers regarding virtual reality and the metaverse in retail and design; however, not much has been conducted in terms of branding. Therefore, the findings were extracted and synthesized based on the multidisciplinary literature in marketing, design, technology, ergonomics to provide a holistic insight through a systematic review. This research contributes to defining the fundamental functions to be considered in designing a brand space in the metaverse from a branding perspective, which adds richness to the literature and may provide insight into practice.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

The findings of this research are based on the literature review limited to only English peer-reviewed journals listed on SCOPUS and WOS MJL. However, since Metaverse and virtual reality are emerging fields of study, researchers may also consider taking time for peer-reviewed articles in international journals, alongside conference papers, books, dissertations, and thesis, to grasp insights from various sources. In addition, while the author followed the transparent and structured

systematic process, the interpretation of the data remains relatively subjective. Therefore, future follow-up studies are expected to add evidence and richness to the literature.

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RE-DEFINING CULTURAL TOURISM EXPERIENCES: THE ROLE OF THE IHERITAGE MED DIET MOBILE APPLICATION IN INTANGIBLE HERITAGE IN TAVIRA, PORTUGAL.

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ABSTRACT

The scientific-technological agenda of interactive research of the iHERITAGE project (B_A.2.1_0056) offers a cultural, historic, and immersive experience of the intangible cultural heritage of the Mediterranean Basin. The University of Algarve (UAlg) as one of the partners in this project, follows the approach of innovative ecosystems within the world of sustainability, tourism, and new technologies. The methodology is centred on a systematic organization of content creation, multidisciplinary research, and configuration processes in Algarve's geography, historical background, and cultural legacy. Therefore, the development, the architecture, and functionalities of the iHERITAGE MED DIET, a mobile application, are highly dependent on trust and reputation management and subscribe to the possibility of territorial cooperation and proper instalment of the virtual setting, as well as the suitable management of all content related to the internal processes of the Mediterranean Diet (MD). The contribution of national and regional entities through MOU's (Memorandum of Understanding) and RA's (Research Agreements) entails the measures for a correct analysis of audio-visual and written documentation, as well as the necessary tools for market research, budget, and graphic design of the app and sequential back office. The subscription of this cultural experience is directed to the local community, the flow of tourists, and every internal activity and decision-making process concerning the sense of identity of Algarve within the app is presented to UPIG's (users, providers, influencers, governance) in Living Labs and Local Supporting Groups for further joint research and enrichment of content.

Key Words: Intangible Cultural Heritage; Tourism; Tourist Experience; Augmented Reality; Sustainability; Identity; Mediterranean Diet.

INTRODUCTION

In the present circumstances, it is becoming easier to approach a fairly innovative concept developed with the purpose of offering a greater meaning to a growing global awareness – the model of social interactions opens up to other means of communication, and this change in history determines the need to reconfigure stopovers upon traditional, social and cultural structures.

The county of Tavira, located in the coast of Algarve, Portugal presents itself, as it should, as one of the most beautiful cities in the region – influenced by the various Peoples who lived there (Phoenicians, Ligures, Celts and Turdetans and, later, the Romans and Carthaginians), Tavira was constantly disputed due to its geographical location (Anica, 1993; 2001). Several centuries later and with a vast legitimate and rich historical background, Tavira, from the Arabic *at-Tabira*, became a rooted symbol of a deep connection to the land, sea and an overall lifestyle – the Mediterranean Diet (MD). As part of the iHERITAGE project (B_A.2.1_0056), with the support of the Research Center for Tourism, Sustainability and Wellbeing (CinTurs) of the University of Algarve (UAlg), the case-study follows Tavira's testimonies of those who live and practice the Mediterranean Diet, recognized by UNESCO in 2010 as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, Tavira being a distinctive MD representative since 2013 (Gonçalves, 2020).

In a general perspective, the research monitors the association of MD with three other concepts; hospitality, culture and tourism with sustainable social media strategies. From here, the aim is to better promote and improve intangible heritage activities in an accessible and integrated way, by building virtual bridges across the Mediterranean and beyond. Locally,

UAlg has been unifying technology, communication, tradition, culture, history and the power of social and artistic distribution into a system that serves regional frameworks amongst tourism-related stakeholders. In addition to this outline, cultural heritage research not only addresses the revolutionary reality of economic and sustainability issues, as it reveals the legacy of the applied "smart" concept of tourism events today (Gretzel et al. 2015). The logical move from traditional tourism to the basis for innovation and technological orientation in general industry is in line with the widespread adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT) in tourism (Law et al. 2014; Koo et al. 2015) as with new cultural tourism trends (Richards, 2014). This growth, of course, continues with the widespread adoption of social media by tourists and travel agencies (Abou-Shouk & Hewedi, 2016), who recognize technology as a tourism infrastructure (Gretzel et al. 2015) to adopt a variety of intelligent computing technologies that integrate hardware, software and network expertise in optimizing business processes and business performances (Washburn et al. 2010) as to record activity across tourism information and tourism consumers (Wang et al. 2012).

Accordingly, this paper outlines the technological approach to local intangible cultural heritage and the appreciation of social and cultural elements schedule, connected in different ways to history and memory. Concerning the prospects of the digitalization of cultural routes and virtual storytelling, this publication will explore how the outline of a profound connection to the land over generations built the foundation of a research based on innovative processes in marketing and Extended Reality technologies. Past the development of a mobile application, previously named MARINADE, now iHERITAGE MED DIET, the focus is on the improvement of a virtual socio-cultural experience, creating a path towards an interdisciplinary application framework. Here, the basis from which to argue for the continued relevance of structural analyses of technological development in tourism is set in transcultural subjects such as sustainability and heritage – however, culture and tourism can have a very destructive relationship (Hughes, 1989; McIntosh, Hinch & Ingram, 2002) and this publication does not claim to offer a proposal for the academic community concerning sustainable management in the digital environment but rather a sanction for the introduction of unique stories of rural Tavira, the history of olive oil and how urban areas highlighting the Mediterranean Diet in contemporary issues is maturing the process of a virtual cultural route, allowing not only a closer interaction between tourists and locals, but endorsing as well the rise of technological development in a platform with a reduced environmental and ecological threat.

Intangible heritage is an element of a more difficult nature to explain and clarify to an audience, so the association between virtual, physical and mobile applications might enhance storytelling by provide an innovative way of mediation to reach visitors, reinforce local identities, and contribute to the safeguard of not-so-well-known intangible culture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Technology and tourism provide tools for engaging local communities into political, cultural and economic dialogue, while also capturing the ideas of a multifaceted festival of “heritage enhancement” (Dorsch, 2021). Despite its bizarre exquisiteness, the commercialization of cultural heritage acts as a facilitator for creating economic, environmental and social value of the world’s economy (Munsters & Richards, 2021; Dorsch, 2021; Nyseth & Viken, 2009). This topic unravels the problems of over-tourism in many destinations and concerns about the effects of unlimited economic growth have led to the development of more sustainable communities and measures of wellbeing to gauge progress (Torkington, Stanford & Guiver, 2020). Nevertheless, this debate needs to acknowledge the interpretations of tourism in the parameter of economic growth, identity negotiations and cultural sensitivity; **(1)** tourism as a discursive concept of a non-returnable economy linked to an inconsistent and embedded discourse that reproduces the thought that economic growth is good and enhances wellbeing for all. Although the combination of tourism and culture is an extremely potent economic engine (Richards, 2009), more often than not, local institutions are kept with a low degree of control over spatial, activity, temporal and cultural limitations, with a malfunctioning economic return (Dorsch, 2021; Torkington, Stanford & Guiver, 2020; Viken, 2006; Pettersson, 2004). Moreover, consumers have registered a need for hedonistic values and unforgettable experiences in destination sites over traditional values and ecological knowledge (Kim & Chen, 2019). Therefore, tourism is often defined as **(2)** an institution with little attention to issues of culture and identity, without thoughtful reflections on historical context – e.g. standardizing representations and narratives, intensifying the authenticity of an individual or geographic location, while also manufacturing an identity for the tourist. The idea of a collective past appropriated and incorporated into today’s contemporary existence is the reflection of modern social life reorganization (Tonkinson, 1999) – proof of this reality is the increasing number of countries looking to use tourism as a vehicle for economic development for the regeneration of run-down areas, local economies and property values (McIntosh, Hinch & Ingram, 2002; Richards, 2009). Additionally, in the analytical discussion of living things, local tourism activities influence the cultural integrity of real and mobile life, which takes place in front of the audience and is reflected in history. Naturally, the closing remark falls upon **(3)** the destructive effects of tourist activities on the ecological environment of tourist destinations (Cheng & Chen, 2022; Heberlein, Fredman & Vuorio, 2002). Although complex in its nature, the relationship between tourism and the

environment displays two sides; (i) the effects of tourism on natural resources, environmental pollution and physical environment and (ii) how tourism can contribute to environmental conservation (Sunlu, 2002).

The scientific knowledge and research developed on tourism and, on social and cultural impacts assessment, improved the way how tourism is being planned and managed – "*The commercialization of cultural resources through tourism, product development and their preservation by means of protective measures seem to be contradictory and incompatible objectives. What may be good for tourism, is not necessarily good for culture and vice versa*" (Munsters, 2021:35). Therefore, the idea behind iHERITAGE is to find a balance between various conflicting aspects of tourism, culture and sustainability – and nowadays, emergent new technologies and the evolution of social media propose a neutral ground that favours open participation and stakeholder dialogue (Portalés et al. 2018; Budeanu, 2013). Moreover, the growth of social media driven sustainable development in the tourism industry can also propagate direct resources to agreed national goals and modern tourism businesses might have a chance to grow into what might be called a *sustainable corporate citizenship behaviour* (Sarkar & George, 2018). Additionally, social media platforms can offer sustainable development shared equitably among the various groups of stakeholders interested in the future of tourism (Zdonek, Karasek & Hysa, 2022; Hysa, Karasek & Zdonek, 2021). Following the same line of thought in the triad tourism/culture/sustainability, different scholars hold distinct views on the concept of the tourism experience (Li, Chen, Hua, 2021; Na, Xie, Gursoy, 2019; Xie, Qu, 2014; Xie, 2010; Graefe, Vaske, 1987; MacCannell, 1973).

Given the complex essence of tourism experience and the meaning behind it, the academic community has not yet reached unanimity on the dimensions of tourism experience, and yet there is a collective understanding that tourism experience is a significant and projecting factor in tourists expressing positive attitudes and behaviours (Kim & Chen, 2019; Fu, Morris & Hong, 2015). However, on the other side of the coin, a core concept for an improved entrepreneurial business environment is the introduction of sensitivity (Olsen et al. 2019) – letting local communities determine how their culture is used in tourism and by embracing challenging objectives, they set out a framework for deciding priorities and indicate which motivations are likely to win governmental support and influence how tourism develops for many years with the need to innovate and modernize consumption and improve quality, as well as the value of experience. Here, the internet and its unique features and capabilities of learning can facilitate knowledge sharing – online social forums and applications represent new ways of communicating and exchanging knowledge for various social groups around the world (Nezakati et al. 2015).

The prompt expansion in immersive technology is heightening the presence of Extended Reality in Tourism and Marketing, often working with other mobile technologies, including camera and GPS tracking, which increases the value of travel while giving tourists new ways to discover new places and learn about new cultures (Kwok & Koh, 2021; Haywood, 2020; Tsai & Chen, 2019; Chiao, Chen & Huang, 2018; Ramos, Henriques & Lanquar, 2016). Moreover, the iHERITAGE MED DIET mixes into three important stages of the tourist experience; the planning process, the mission of the trip and the memories of the trip (Larsen, 2007) – in this context, data will influence several aspects of a tourist's decision-making, in particular, the destination (Gursoy & McCleary, 2004; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Next, social media like blogs, online social networks, media sharing websites, social bookmarking sites and other platforms will help find, organize and share a tourist's memories and experiences (Leung et al., 2013). The systematic reviews register an impending need for organising and understanding current knowledge and formalise societal, scientific, and technological challenges of trust-free and trust-regulated systems based on blockchain technology (BCT) in the tourism industry (Calvaresi et al. 2019).

METHODOLOGY

Focused mainly on the diffusion path and communication mechanisms between all elements of the local community, stakeholders and stages of the tourist experience, this research unlocks the door to a specific relationship between the latter characteristics and environmentally responsible behaviour. The relevant case-study is based on the research of cultural experiences, passed down from generation to generation, in response to the environment, landscape history and the sense of identity and continuity of knowledge. Research content revolves around the whole olive press process, whose fieldwork emphasizes a detailed presentation of the olive oil production practice and the functions of the production chain, following didactic translation and dissemination of information on the protection and preservation of olive oil – a historical research part in the Mediterranean Basin.

In regards to techniques and tools for data collection and analysis, it was decided to use a wide methodological technique applied in conservation research: the interview. Based on the study of the contact between the ethnographer and his object, in which all the information gathered and the experience of capturing reality takes place, the interview allows a flexible and in-depth analysis from relatively small sample size and places the emphasis on inquiring participants views. Every interview was either unstructured or semi-structured (Mason, 2002; Corbin & Morse, 2003). For the semi-structured ones,

the aim was to capture specific topics on camera, already with an interview guide for the purpose of a small documentary series about local agro-families businesses and institutional MD-related entities. Here, recording interviews was considered a suitable option, creating an easier platform for UAlg's team of researchers to focus on the content of the interview and the verbal challenge, allowing then the development of a "literal transcript" of the interview. For the unstructured interviews or far less formal conversations, the focus was to develop a relationship with local key informants, aimed to gather testimonies of agro-life and cultural episodes of a more particular nature. Usually, when this occurred, there was never a pre-planned script with questions to follow.
The direct involvement of the community also provides a deeper understanding of Tavira's reality, part of the debate between tourism, heritage and culture – between authenticity and subjectivity, empirical evidence and reflexivity. Moreover, the sample of participants used in the study consists of the available population - individuals selected according to availability of residence and not a result of statistical probabilistic criteria. Moreover, Living Labs and Local Supporting Groups are occasions that function as both offer and demand stakeholders. These events can be seen as training sessions, held multiples times in the year, where invited groups of people and enterprises (UPIG's: users, providers, influencers, governance) focus on the role of tourism and technology in a debate and learning setting. On a deeper note, these gatherings reinforce the contact of locals and tourists, whilst planning for complementary content for the iHERITAGE MED DIET App. All data is transferred through MOU's (Memorandum of Understanding) and RA (Research Agreements) and examined before the final application in the back office of the mobile application.





Figure 1. Interviews and Living Labs entail part of the project's initiative. The sessions are a part of the technological approach to intangible cultural heritage and the appreciation of social and cultural elements schedule, connected in different ways to history and memory. The Living Labs are taught in Portuguese and English, motivating a necessary debate in the innovation driven development and technological transfer of the Algarve's cultural reality. Source: iHERITAGE-Partner 7, University of Algarve's Team.

RESULTS

One of the aims of this research is to offer a part of the classical Mediterranean olive press antiquity combined with AR technology. The availability of multimedia and design of the mobile application allows users to create catalogues and inventories of their favourite points of interest (POI's). Furthermore, geo-localization and AR tags throughout the usage of the app will trigger the delivery of audio-visual support, providing further embedded information about a certain object/place, shared experiences and connectivity between the AR applications and users. Apart of the obvious benefits to app users (tourists and locals) concerning direct updates and the exchange of information and tips, the app can function as a complementary guide to a route that delivers specific historical facts upon request, consequently reducing the effect of information overload, considered to be irrelevant or redundant (Kounavis et al. 2012). Regarding the Research Agreements, AR applied to MD will take advantage of the distinctive characteristics of mobile devices, offering the possibility for social interaction among app users through the exchange of daily activities, planning of experiences following the trail of nutritional facts, food science and palatability in local gastronomy, including as well, art events, workshops, and traditional festivities. Making their own tailor-made cultural touristic experience, based on resources available, will be another major achievement.

iHERITAGE MED DIET Digital Routes
The research of data collection and the creation of digital routes allows the iHERITAGE team to apprehend the breadth of cultural tourism in Tavira. Through the extended international and academic agenda of the iHERITAGE project, UAlg is creating the necessary synergies for the management and safeguarding of research in the field of MD, its connection with the chosen geographic locations and the analysis of virtual routes that assemble the topics of interest of the olive industry

and the fruit's journey from the mountains to the sea and to every house and business in the region. Today, the virtual experience in the landscape of cultural content and cultural routes has a potentially new and important role to play (Richards, 2011) – the routes and the virtual nature of the project associate a completely unique and proper characteristics to the innovative aspect, with the opportunity of masking this concept with motifs that toughen the binds of a shared heritage. Additionally, to provide route guidance and to deliver a digital map with accurate content, one must understand the importance of authenticity in smart tourism as a truthful and genuine experience rather than a forged practice in the context of physical objects (Gilmore & Pine, 2007).

In this digital era, the opportunity to engage actively in culture through a more memorable and immersive experience has tourists converted into dynamic actors rather than passive consumers (Kim et al. 2020). Following this train of thought, tourists are the heart of tourism success and without services and products that offer a contemporary journey for truthfulness travel, tourists cannot seek escape from everyday life and allow a fully entertained engagement. The iHERITAGE MED DIET digital routes propose a controlled digital system employed to implement the project's components, thus providing a sustainable and manageable structure. The app approaches sites, buildings, monuments and objects, integrating projection technologies into everyday activities of a tourist, naturally depending on location, weather and time. The architecture and the presentation of the AR component in all possible routes within the Algarve region have a modest interface to interact with one's surroundings and in particular with smart devices. As a result, broadening the potential market, always respecting the art of storytelling and acknowledge what related implications and challenges may appear in designing and executing this digital strategy in the world of tourism.

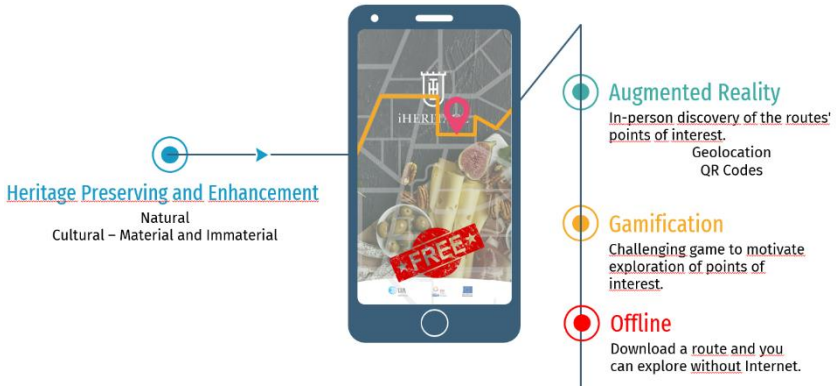

Figure 2. iHERITAGE tool contextualization. Source: Mauro Figueiredo, member of the iHERITAGE-Partner 7, University of Algarve's Team.

DISCUSSION

The fast advancement of data innovation, AR devices (e.g. mobile applications) and outlet sharing significantly affects the travel industry. In this regard, the world has created new ways for the tourism industry to connect with their visitors while travelling (Kennedy-Eden & Gretzel, 2012). Commonly, applications are logged on through mobile devices with GPS tracking, giving the user the opportunity to gain additional benefits and navigate interactively with the help of clarifications of specific geographical sites. Furthermore, the data within an AR application is structured and distributed through the use of various multimedia formats (sound, image, video, 3D models and hyperlinks) that can steer the route or geo-location of the user outside the application (Palos Sánchez et al. 2018; Kounavis *et al.* 2012). The iHERITAGE MED DIET app (case-study), although still in its embryonic phase, is a free and interactive platform with a multimedia guide, featuring photos, audio, and explanations of geo-localization. The app will be self-contained once downloaded and will not require Wi-Fi or data connection to ensure its exploratory and informational features.

Through the management of workflows within the digital scenery, the elimination of repetitive tasks and improvement of service levels, the centralized and effective management of all documentation related to the Mediterranean Diet internal process, and improvement of the speed, efficiency, and security of access to content, as well as the classification and filing of data according to UAlg's adopted rules, the template will align the virtual exhibition and route of the olive press heritage manifestation (objective component) to the community of people (subjective or social component) and to the cultural space

(spatial component). Also, the supportability of all data is synchronized with the expectation of cultural entertainment within the tourism and travel industry.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Technological development has impacted many fields, being the travel and tourism industry one of the examples, which in itself is constantly changing. However, following the discussion on AR devices, regarding mobile applications and the successful implementation of smart tourism, there are key areas of research that need to be discussed; (1) Privacy and the digital footprint left by app users – while location-based services are useful, they also show consumer vulnerability and the ability to take advantage of the digital footprints they leave behind when they travel from spot to spot. Data capture associated with smart tourism poses major challenges for information management and the correct capture of information value (Tallon, 2013); (2) Technology Mediation – expenditures of data of info-structures are not calculated, following assessment concerns over sustainability costs (e.g. energy consumption and e-waste) (Gretzel et al. 2015; Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010); (3) Human resources and artificial intelligence – although tourism promotes healthy cooperation between different social actors, it is not an industry that attracts knowledge workers (Gretzel et al. 2015); (4) Content translation into social media platforms – attaining already developed contents – writing scripts and visual data from other sources – about the intangible items to be included in the MED DIET app. In addition, the iHERITAGE team also encountered digital access restrictions on some geographic sites due to a lack of signalling and adequate geo-mapping evidence, which made it difficult to combine identified movable and immovable property. Moreover, one of the emerging problems identified by the research is the proliferation of mobile application's service offers and the lack of integration of information related to tourism destinations. Additional observations result from the difficulties to choose interesting narratives that are able to keep the tourist's curiosity alive and make the digital experience memorable (Gonçalves, Dorsch & Figueiredo, 2022).

However, mobile apps are allowing a smooth experience for both tourists and locals, answering questions concerning the ability to recreate a safer environment for the community and an unforgettable and meaningful experience for the tourist, and app user. In striving to obtain such a significant involvement in the cultural scenario of a particular region, the research is always careful in managing content for cultural attractions and historical context – showing a cultural identity and a lifestyle to the willing public vouches for a respectful management for the benefit of the community. Naturally, with the lack of understanding that sometimes happens in this field of research, heritage and economic value, tourists may show insensitivity in degradation, prejudice and offense of traditional principles, beliefs and legacy. However, the linkage between technology and tourism products, in this case, intangible heritage, is highly dependent on trust and reputation management – the case-study content on scientific confirmation and cultural authentication is habitually centralised and delegated through the project's coordinating team in UAlg, only then systematized and submitted to a scenery of tech inspired processes in tourism based research. The framework follows the premise of technological growth, development and innovation delimited by brand strategies for the affirmation and better knowledge of intangible realities, within the Mediterranean Basin, ultimately culminating in the growth of the iHERITAGE MED DIET app.

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THE IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON UNDERGRADUATE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM EDUCATION IN JAMAICA

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has been unprecedented and its global impact is obviously devastating. It has severely affected the education system across the world and according to the United Nations (2020), the pandemic has affected approximately 1.6 billion learners in over 190 countries and across all continents. They further reported that the closure of schools and other learning spaces has affected 94 percent of the world's student population, representing almost 99 percent in low and lower-middle income countries. A similar report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/ UNESCO (n.d) indicates that a large percentage (87%) of the world's student population including schools and universities were impacted by the pandemic.

The pandemic had a major impact on education in the Caribbean. According to Parker and Alfaro (2021), the closure of education facilities from March 2020 and beyond, affected almost 12 million learners in 29 countries in this region. The small island developing state (SID) of Jamaica, which is located in the Caribbean Region, has felt the brunt of the pandemic, when the virus was first identified in the country in March 2020. Due to the implementation and enforcement of the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Act which was used as a measure to regulate and control the spread of the virus, educational institutions were closed. This was important to do as schools are densely populated and according to Chu et al., (2020), being highly contagious, the virus spreads from person to person through close contact. School administrators and teachers/lecturers therefore, had to find resourceful means of making contact with students and carry out teaching and learning functions among other duties.

There was no exception to hospitality and tourism education. Higher-level education institutions offering programmes in hospitality and tourism education and training had to do likewise; mainly pivoting to the virtual space to facilitate classes and other curricular and non-curricular activities. Many of these programmes have practical components that could not be facilitated by online or virtual teaching modalities. This situation created a crisis as opposed to traditional higher education programmes (Ye & Law, 2021). This is because the curriculum of the hospitality and tourism management programmes is diversified with both theoretical and practical components (Liburd et al., 2018). Hence, they differ from traditional programmes (Ye & Law, 2021) as they provide the opportunity for practice, not only at the local level of the industry, but globally (Liburd et al., 2018). Accordingly, these programmes are designed for students to develop practical skills for the hospitality and tourism industry. Classes in food preparation / culinary arts, dining room management, housekeeping, bar and beverage operations and management, mixology and, events planning and management are among the practical areas offered in hospitality and tourism education.

Internship or work experience for students to gain practical knowledge and skill is also a major component of the curriculum. This was also impacted as border closures among other DRM measures resulted in scaled down operation and in many cases, closure of businesses within the various sectors of the local industry. Some internship programmes are facilitated overseas and these would also have been affected by similar local factors. Beside these, internship / work experience arrangements require communication among educators, industry personnel and students. Personal contact poses a high risk in terms of transmission of the virus when travelling and meeting between and among the parties involved (Ye & Law, 2021).

Work and study programmes overseas are also a component of some hospitality and tourism curriculum. These are usually done during the summer period when students would be formally engaged in a paid work arrangement. This is a formal arrangement between the institution and the entities. The variation to this modality; the work and travel programme is where students make their own arrangements with a broker for jobs overseas while studying and this was also severely impacted. In fact, some students rely on these programmes to pay their tuition and fund other expenses.

The pandemic also affected co-curricular activities on the campuses such as sports, clubs and societies among other areas. Students were unable to meet face-to-face with each other and this impacted their social interaction. Ostensibly, this juncture in the education system directly has an effect on the hospitality and tourism industry, which is a major part of its

supply chain for qualified pool of individuals for the labour market. Lo (2006) underscores that the ultimate purpose of higher education in hospitality and tourism is to provide professionally trained talents for the industry.

Many institutions pivoted to the virtual space for teaching to reduce the risk of the infection. Platforms such as ZOOM and Google Classroom were readily used. However, not all students were equipped with the device and internet connectivity to benefit from this accommodation. It is customary for students from rural sections of their country to seek living accommodation on the campus or nearby housing, hence, upon returning to their homes, it's likely that they would have experienced limited or no internet access. UNESCO (2022) confirms that due to the lack of connectivity and devices, at least a third of students worldwide were excluded from pursuing learning remotely, and this became a global challenge.

Nonetheless, educational institutions gradually improved on their resources to acquire on-line teaching platforms such as Blackboard Collaborate. The hospitality and tourism management programmes were able to benefit from this. Goh and Sigala (2020) posit that information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been very important in the delivery of hospitality and tourism education. It has provided advantages in the teaching and learning environment and both teachers/lecturers and students can benefit from ICT. Its adaptation and integration into the teaching and learning environment provides more opportunities for them (Lawrence & Tar, 2018). For instance, lecturers can bring various examples and cases into the classroom activities by way of on-line programmes (UGWU & Nnaekwe, 2019) and students' creative and critical thinking skills are stimulated by the online discussions (Ladyshewsky & Taplin, 2014) as well as they are usually afforded with more time and space flexibility (Goh and Sigala, 2020). The institution also benefits as according to Goh and Sigala (2020), the cost of human resources is reduced.

The implementation of ICTs is not void of challenges. The lack of funding, poor attitude of the intended users and lack of accessibility are major barriers to its implementation (Goh & Sigala, 2020). Lunney and Sammarco (2009) purport that there can be miscommunication among teachers and students and Davis et al., (2019) speak to the ills of time management and lack of class participation by students with low self-esteem and self-motivation. Goh and Wen (2020) also indicate that online educational delivery can negatively impact the relationship between teachers and students. One justification is that this type of communication has the potential to influence psychological distance among people (Darke et al., 2016). Despite the drawbacks of ICT, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic caused many institutions to pivot to the virtual space for teaching and learning to reduce the risk of the infection.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research seeks to explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on hospitality and tourism education in Jamaica. It will specifically study higher education institutions (HEIs) that offer hospitality and tourism education at the undergraduate level. Hence, the objective of the research is to explore how undergraduate hospitality and tourism education programmes were able to deliver their curriculum during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, at the onset of the pandemic, information regarding COVID-19 was sparse. Its unprecedented occurrence and uniqueness posed several decision-making challenges. The study will therefore, employ the information gap theory to explain how the unavailability of information can impact decision-making in these institutions. According to Harp and Vesselinov (2013), any decision-making that is under severe lack of information can in fact impact the decision. Based on the purpose of the study and respective research objective, the literature will be reviewed to develop the theoretical framework to provide background on the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on hospitality and tourism education. The literature will also be reviewed to expound on the information gap theory and how it can be applied to the objective of the study. Relevant recommendations to manage any future events will be presented at the end of the study.

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The research design will take the form of an exploratory study to provide insight regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on hospitality and tourism education in Jamaica since it has not been previously studied in depth. This approach is supported by Churchill et al., (2010) who indicate that exploratory research is required when relatively little is known about the phenomenon to be researched and to garner insights so as to provide a better understanding of the situation. Although some researchers have classified exploratory research as a qualitative approach (Churchill et al., 2010) and is thus used as an inductive mechanism to derive hypotheses and theories for future studies, it has also been used in quantitative research as identified by Swedberg (2020) in reference to the work of Merton et al; (1957).

For this reason, an exploratory research approach will be used to clarify the nature of the problem in this study, employing the survey technique. The survey will be administered to the academic managers of the hospitality and tourism education

programmes within the HEIs which include universities and community colleges. There are approximately 12 of these institutions in Jamaica and with this small population, all of them will be included in the study. The study is expected to derive both inductive and deductive outcomes, respectively by way of the exploratory approach and the use of the information gap theory to explain the findings.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will be beneficial, as it will provide both practical and theoretical implications. The findings of the study will be of significance to stakeholders in the education sector, specifically tertiary/ higher education institutions that offer hospitality and tourism education at the undergraduate level. The findings can also be generalized to other educational institutions and programmes in SIDS in the Caribbean and developing countries across the world. Although there are various studies on hospitality and tourism education, due to the currency of the pandemic, research on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on hospitality and tourism education is very new. The study will therefore advance the literature in this area and provide the platform for the development of hypotheses and future studies.

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TO ENGAGE OR NOT TO ENGAGE? ASSESSING CONSUMER INTERACTION WITH HOTEL GROUPS ON FACEBOOK

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ABSTRACT

Group of hotels are struggling around the world to increase their performance in the digital universe and social media are having an important role. This article intends to analyse the digital performance of Portuguese and international group of hotels using as a case, their digital strategy on the Facebook. The objectives are related with the digital activity of hotel groups. So, results allow to verify that Sana Hotels is the group of hotels with more posts and the one with less is Minor hotels. Accor is the group of hotels that most involves its customers, as can be seen as it has the most reactions, comments, and shares. Following, new avenues for future research are presented followed by theoretical and practitioner contributes.

Key Words: Social media, Inbound marketing, Facebook, Group of hotels, Portugal

INTRODUCTION

Group of hotels are struggling around the world to increase their performance in the digital universe. Social media are having an important role in the communication of hotel groups. So, this article intends to analyse the digital performance of Portuguese and international group of hotels in the Portuguese territory, using as a case, their digital strategy on the Facebook. The objectives are related with the digital activity of hotel groups, users 'engagement, the creation of digital content (emojis and hashtags) and Facebook posts categorization.

As there is scarce research on how hotels are building capacity for supporting a smart destination, this study aims at uncovering current efforts of the hotel sector in joining and building the smart destination challenge, by answering the questions: are hotels prepared to be part of a smart destination? And how can technology support hotel engagement with customers adopting a co-creation approach?

The pandemic context that we have been experiencing has increased the importance of digital in all sectors, including Tourism. In this context, it is important to understand the behavior of group of hotels in Portugal, both national and international after the 2nd lockdown. The period chosen was the low season, when the hotel groups are more active in communicating with their audiences. This social interaction and the growth of digital platforms has increased the importance of social media for companies 'investment. The Hootsuite Report (2022) shows that the Facebook network is one of the 10 social media with the highest growth, in addition to being one of the 5 social media, where managers are most willing to invest in 2023.

This manuscript has the following structure: A literature review is presented about Social media, Engagement, Facebook and Communal and Exchanges Relations. The next section presents the methods, followed by Sample Characterization, Data collection tool and categorization. After that, findings are showed charted by its discussion. Last section is dedicated to the conclusions and the presentation of theoretical and managerial contributes, limitations and further researcher.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As the pace of marketing innovation continues to accelerate, the travel sector must follow and set their focus on the newest trend: inbound marketing (Barna et al., 2019). Inbound marketing (IM) has increased in importance in the tourism industry, while outbound marketing has become less effective. Inbound marketing means making content available to customers when and where they want it, leading them to "hub sites" (e.g., the corporate website, a corporate blog) (Maurer, 2021).

IM represents an organic marketing form, based on the close relationship between the company and its prospects or customers, who have expressed their interest in the company's products voluntarily (based on subscription to newsletters, blog, social networks.) and who have been attracted and involved by a high quality of the content marketing (Loredana, 2017). Similar to using travel micro moments to engage with potential customers, inbound marketing involves serving up the right content at the most opportune time, which, according to Smith (2018) differs from outbound marketing, that in tourism not only encompasses the travel brochure and billboard, but it also includes mass email marketing, cold calling, traditional print publications, among others. Inbound marketing emphasizes a 'pull' methodology, while outbound prefers a 'push'. With the former, tourism enterprises create content that addresses the problems and needs of ideal customers, pulling them in with answers and information (Smith, 2018). According to Opreana and Vinerean (2015), this new approach of marketing is prioritizing the attraction of potential customers with quality, search-friendly content, such as videos, still images or GIFs, and stories that get attraction if they fulfil the usefulness or emotional criteria (or the utilitarian or hedonic dimension of consumer behaviour).

Moreover, this content is syndicated on various social media outlets that must be relevant to the brand and its overall integrated communications (Opreana &Vinerean, 2015). According to the authors, the four components of Digital Inbound Marketing are content creation, search engine optimization, social media marketing and brand-focused marketing communications. Content is the corner stone of digital inbound marketing. There are various forms of content, from the basic ones, such as video, image, text, to the more specific ones, such as: blogs, eBooks, infographics, slideshow presentations, interactive content, among others (Opreana &Vinerean, 2015).

Engagement

In order to build online engagement with consumers, marketers seek to invest heavily in social networks, which have changed the way consumers interact with each other and with brands (Dolan et al., 2019). Attfield et al. (2011) describe user engagement as an "emotional, cognitive and behavioral link that exists, at any moment and possibly over time, between a user and a resource" (p. 2). This connection is currently created in the digital world, where consumers seek greater involvement, interaction and sharing of information and content with users with common interests. Users are not looking for promotional content, but interesting, fun and informative content (Ryan, 2014).

User-generated content refers to data, opinions, information and creative content created by users and published on the internet. These contents have had a rapid growth, since they are provided by users for free. This process is rewarding for users who share content, as it allows them to receive recognition for their contribution. From the point of view of content consumers, in addition to the possibility of obtaining free information, it provides access to real data, offered by other people, regularly provided by the brands themselves (Krumm et al., 2008).

A hashtag is a sequence of letters, numbers, or emojis preceded by the hashtag symbol (e.g., #hotelsector). The inclusion of a hashtag alongside a user's post enhances its searchability. The utilization of hashtags resulted in a significant increase in the average number of likes and comments, as revealed by Almeida et al., (2022) findings. In their research, which do a comparison between Iberian hotels and the use of hashtags, the chain of hotels with more hashtags was Accor: #Accorhotels There is a significant increase in the average number of likes and comments when the mentioned hashtags were employed, both across different time periods and when considering the specific day of the week on which the posts were published (Almeida et al., 2022). The efficacy of hashtags is bigger in the use of giveaway/contest, product placement, exclusive offers, and collaboration resulting in heightened website traffic (Buinac and Lundberg,2016).

METHODOLOGY

Hence, the research question of this investigation is: What are the communication strategies adopted by group of hotels present in Portugal on their Facebook pages, after the 2nd lockdown caused by COVID-19. To answer this question, the following objectives are defined: i) to explore the activity of hotel groups profiles on the Facebook; ii) to analyze user´s

engagement according to the type of publication on the Facebook pages; iii) to identify content (emojis and hashtags) on the posts descriptions and its dynamics on the hotel groups Facebook pages; and iv) to categorize the content posts on the Facebook pages of each hotel group. The study will focus content analysis and thematic analysis are two prominent methods used for the analysis of message content. To carry out the data collection, the Facepager digital tool was used for gathering data from *Facebook* and the analysed period was low season and after the second lockdown.

So, in order to achieve these objectives, the Facepager digital tool software was used to analyze the digital presence of 10 hotel groups (6 Portuguese) and (4 international) in the Facebook page.

Table 1. Name of the hotel group link of Facebook´ profile

National Hotel Group	**Link of Facebook´ profile**	**Nº of posts**
Hoti Hotéis	https://www.facebook.com/hotihoteis	20
Pestana Hotels and Resorts	https://www.facebook.com/pestanahotelsresorts	78
Sana Hotels	https://www.facebook.com/SanaHotels	116
Turim Hotels	https://www.facebook.com/turimhotels	66
Vila Galé	https://www.facebook.com/vilagale	89
Vip hotels	https://www.facebook.com/VIP-HOTELS-108141615968	27
Total		**396**
International Hotel Group	**Link of Facebook´ profile**	**Nº of posts**
Accor hotels	https://www.facebook.com/ALLaccorPT	50
InterContinental hotels	https://www.facebook.com/InterContinentalLisbon	68
Marriott Hotels	https://www.facebook.com/marriottbonvoy	68
Minor hotels	https://www.facebook.com/minorhotels	4
Total		**190**

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Concerning results and after analyzing the number of posts in the facebook is possible to verify that Sana Hotels is the group of hotels with more posts and the one with less is Minor hotels. ACCOR is the group with more reactions, comments and shares. Still on the engagement metrics ´photos' was the type of post with more reactions. Pestana was the hotel group that publish more 'call to actions' and Marriot did not do any. Although Marriot was the group with more posts about 'promotion'. ACCOR and Turim both use 'discounts and offers' posts to communicate with their clients through the Facebook page. Moreover, this is an on-going project so, findings will be faced with the theory of communal and exchanges relations. The authors believe that the online interactions of consumers with different hotel groups (between national and international hotel groups) could be explained through the above reference of communal and exchange relations (Aggarwal, 2004).

Hotel posts were analyzed regarding the number, language, engagement obtained, type of publications, emojis and hashtags present in the descriptions of the posts. The types of publication (photo, video, photo with link, text, carousel, and event) used by hotel groups in publications will now be analyzed, followed by user interaction regarding each type of post, in order to understand which format generates more public attraction.

Engagement

Firstly, user interactions will be analyzed for each type of post. 'Photos' are the format most used by hotel groups, since it represents more than 70% of publications. Pestana was the hotel group that published the most through photography (78). The second most frequent type of publication on the pages of the hotels was the photos with link, most recurrent on the Vila Galé facebook page (46). It should be noted that the text, carousel and event formats were formats only used by the SANA group. Portuguese hotel groups were the ones that shared more posts in all analyzed formats.

Table 2. Engagement Metrics according to the type of publication

Type of Post	Frequency of Total	Reactions	Comments	Shares
Photo	413	55673	1916	4981
Video	31	735	45	119
Photo with link	112	5974	405	838
Text	3	0	0	0

Carousel	26	361	4	11
Event	1	8	0	1

Secondly, it appears that the photography resource was the one that obtained the highest engagement values. This resource garnered 89% of reactions, 81% of comments and 84% of shares, which can be justified because it is the format most shared by hotel groups. Photo with link is the second type of publication that generates more engagement from users, with reactions being the main method of response of followers to this format. The remaining formats had a lower level of interaction, as they were also shared less by the hotel pages.

Posts Descriptions and its Dynamics

A word cloud was carried out in order to analyze which emojis were most used in the publications, which hotel groups used them and what is the average number of emojis used in the publications of the hotel pages, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Emojis contained in the description of hotel group publications



Source: Authors own

As the image shows, through the larger emojis, the five most frequently used symbols were: the Portuguese flag (PT; 109), the English flag (GB; 104), the camera (📸 ; 62), the finger pointing right (👉 ; 46) and the arrow pointing down (⬇; 37). The two most used emojis, the flags, allude to the languages present in the publications of hotel groups. They were frequently present in SANA publications, as well as the camera and the finger pointing to the right. The arrow pointing down was most used in Vila Galé posts.

When analyzing the use of emojis in the publications of each hotel group, it was concluded that SANA was the hotel group that used the largest number of emojis (311), with an average of 2.68 emojis present in each post. On the contrary, Marriott only shared 5 emojis in its 68 posts, which equates to an average of 0.07 emojis per post. Once again, a comparison was made between national and international groups, and it was concluded that nationals made greater use of this tool. In addition to the emojis, the hashtags present in the description of the publications were also analyzed.

The most prominent hashtags are #lisbon (53), #travel (52), #intercontinental (51), #intercontinentallife (51), #intercontinentalhotels (51), #ihg (51), #ihghotels (51), #intercontinentallisbon (51) and #visitlisbon (51). Some of these hashtags can be clearly associated with the InterContinental hotel group, such as the hashtags #intercontinental, #intercontinentallife, #intercontinentalhotel, #ihg, #ihghotels, #intercontinentallisbon, which were always used together in 79% of the hotel's publications. That said, InterContinental was the hotel group that most used this tool, 484 times, obtaining the highest average of hashtags per post, about 7.12 hashtags per post. Hashtags #lisbon and #travel were also more frequent on the page of the same hotel group and the hashtag #visitlisbon was more used in the posts of the VIP hotel. It should be noted that the SANA group did not use any hashtag in its publications. Unlike emojis, foreign groups used hashtags more often than Portuguese groups.

CONCLUSION

This research sought to analyze the communication strategies of Portuguese and Foreign group of hotels on the social network Facebook in a low season time (October to March 2022) and after the 2nd lockdown caused by the pandemic. Once tourist activities were suspended, hotels were forced to adapt their communication strategy to the situation that the world was facing. With the experience of the first lockdown, researchers' intents to identify how hotel groups uses social networks, in particularly the Facebook to attract new guests and to augment the engagement with their users.

As one limitation, this research shows only the facts concerning the performance of group of hotels in the Facebook, but don't explain the reason why. As future research and considering the results of this research, could be interesting to analyse

other social media, beside Facebook, including some comparison between the group of hotels performances in social media strategies. Another important issue to research in the near future is the identification of the reasons which explains the present results. The suggestion is a qualitative study, developing interviews with the group of hotels managers or social media managers in order to identify the motives of this behaviours, including suggestions to improve the engagement of the hotel brands with their customers.

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THE POST COVID 19 SPORT EVENT TOURIST: INSIGHTS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Sport event tourism has historically been a key tourism subsector in South Africa, contributing to the country's economic and social development. In South Africa, sport tourism and its related events have been identified as a unique niche product. As such, the South Africa government has strongly encouraged the provision of facilities, training, marketing and the promotion of sport tourism in the country (Swart & Bob, 2007; Nyikana & Tichaawa, 2018). The result of this has been that South Africa as a country has identified sport tourism as a means of creating a national identity and as a catalyst for economic growth and overall development (Nyikana, 2016). Due to the strong focus on sport tourism development, South Africa has emerged as one of the leading sport tourism destinations in the world, hosting a number of sport events ranging from smaller scale recurring events to major once-off events that all attract large numbers of attendees (Nyikana, 2016).

Despite the above, the sport tourism event sector is extremely vulnerable to crises and has therefore been significantly impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic, bringing its associated potential positive impacts and future sustainability into question. Research conducted by South African Tourism (2020) showed that towards the end of 2020, the South African tourism industry began to show signs of recovery following the pandemic with an increase in visitor arrivals from African countries, as well as an increase in domestic travel. Although the sport tourism industry and sport events have suffered significant negative impacts as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, the tourism industry is recognized for its resilience and ability to overcome crises, creating employment and assisting the economy to recover (UNWTO, 2020). For the success of sport event tourism recovery measures and to ensure that the subsector can once again be used as a tool for economic and societal development, it is essential to have an understanding of how the pandemic has influenced sport event tourists.

The current research examines changing sport event tourist behaviour following the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic. A mixed methods research approach was used to elicit information from key sport event tourism stakeholders and sport event attendees. Qualitative data was gathered through key informant interviews with 14 sport event tourism stakeholders while quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire administered to 1002 sport event attendees in South Africa. The empirical findings of the study found that the behavior of sport event tourists in South Africa has changed significantly since the onset of the pandemic, with a new demand for more client centered products, the increased use of technology and guarantees of attendee safety and wellbeing. The study contributions include insights into sport event tourism behaviour and perspectives of sport event tourism stakeholders and attendees in the context of a developing nation. These inform the development of new and innovative sport event tourism products and marketing techniques to ensure the future sustainability of the subsector.

Key Words: Sport event tourism, COVID 19 recovery, South Africa

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MEASURING DESTINATION INTERFIRM COORDINATION: A FRAMEWORK AND PROPOSAL FOR A COMPOSITE INDICATOR

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ABSTRACT

While coordination has been extensively investigated in the economic literature, it has yet to garner the same level of attention in tourism and hospitality research. Therefore, this study proposes a conceptual framework for investigating destination interfirm coordination in a holistic manner, bridging the existing fragmented knowledge on the subject. Accordingly, this study draws from both tourism management and tourism economics literature to cover all stages of the coordination process and its underlying mechanisms. Its six constituent dimensions relate to proximity, associationism, competitive advantage, comparative advantage, co-production, and contextual factors. This thorough understanding of coordination may serve as a foundation for further research on the topic. From a practical perspective, it may help individual businesses identify their strengths and weaknesses, thus supporting them in increasing their performance and competitiveness. Finally, by operationalizing the concept of coordination, this contribution seeks to support decision-making processes at the business, network, and destination levels.

Key Words: Tourism destination, Coordination, Conceptual framework

INTRODUCTION

Tourism destination firms are highly networked since a multitude of independent suppliers is linked in the offer of a product consisting of a bundle of complementary and substitute goods and services that is perceived, however, by tourists as a unitary product (Zach and Hill, 2017). In this sense, the concentration of complementary firms within a tourism destination can be considered a diagonal cluster (Michael, 2003), where each firm's activities add value to the products of the others to jointly reach individual and collective goals (Novelli et al., 2006; Stienmetz and Fesenmaier, 2018). Accordingly, coordination among these interconnected firms is crucial for overcoming the limits of tourism supply and meeting tourism demand, thus increasing the destination's competitiveness.

A recent review of Messori and Volo (forthcoming) systematizes the literature on relational dynamics amongst destination stakeholders to facilitate an operationalization of the construct that considers both the management and the economic perspectives. Indeed, coordination has recently gained research attention in tourism and hospitality research (Zhang et al., 2009), although, to date, studies are still scarce. In particular, a tool to measure the degree of destination interfirm coordination is still lacking. Hence, this study seeks to fill this gap by proposing a conceptual framework that could constitute the starting point for a subsequent development of a destination interfirm coordination Composite Indicator (CI). The framework's goal is to clearly describe the phenomenon to be measured and its constituent parts, setting the ground for the identification of the individual indicators and relative weights.

The CI will be functional for measuring coordination as a multidimensional phenomenon and for practitioners and policymakers' interpretation of the information it encompasses. Concurrently, the CI will enable a detailed analysis of each of its constituent dimensions and an assessment of their influence on overall coordination. The research questions guiding this study are "what factors affect destination interfirm coordination?" and "which indicators are most convenient for practitioners and policymakers?"

LITERATURE REVIEW

Coordination in tourism

The theoretical economic underpinning of coordination strategies may be traced back to Williamson (1981), who theorized that any transaction incurs monitoring, controlling, and management costs, which can be reduced by coordination. As a result, firms' interdependencies can be managed through vertical or horizontal coordination mechanisms, depending on whether the interdependencies are across or within supply chain levels respectively (Barratt, 2004). Thus, through joint planning and execution of supply chain operations, individual firms can enjoy higher success than when operating separately (Simatupang and Sridharan, 2002).

This also applies to the tourism industry, which is considered coordination-intensive since its fragmented production system comprising highly heterogeneous firms has to supply tourists with a seamless experience despite the heterogeneity of the tourism product, the predominance of small and medium-sized enterprises, ownership specificity, the local character of tourism, and increasing international competition (Bregoli, 2013; Farsari, 2018; Maggioni et al., 2014). Hence, the competitiveness of a tourism destination relies on the ability of its firms to coordinate their complementary assets and pursue the common goal of successfully offering an integrated product (Ness et al., 2021; Perles-Ribes et al., 2017; Song, 2012; Zhang et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2010; Zhao and Hou, 2022). Partnerships are therefore necessary to manage firms' different competencies and meet tourism demand. Multiple forms of partnerships exist within a destination, depending on whether coordination is limited to only some components of the tourism product or extended to all through the creation of an all-inclusive package (Andergassen et al., 2017).

Moreover, the tourism and hospitality literature has been investigating whether a destination's -and consequently its stakeholders'- success depends on the destination's governance form. This debate originated by Flagestad and Hope's (2001, p. 8) distinction between "community model" and "corporate model" of destination organization. In the former "specialized individual independent business units operate in a decentralized way and where no unit has any dominant administrative power or dominant ownership within the destination", whereas in the latter "destination management is often represented or dominated by a business corporation" and is extended to include the recent paradigm of destination tourism organizations (DMO). This dichotomy resulted in a fertile ground for further investigations on the topic aiming not only to perform a categorization but rather to understand whether a successful tourist activity has to be tied to a well-established organizational structure or can emerge from the relationships between stakeholders (Beritelli et al., 2007). Starting from Beritelli's (2011) assertation that most of the existing research on coordination within a tourism destination has investigated the role played by local institutions, the present study focuses on coordination dynamics and strategies originating from destination stakeholders rather than from a centralized node. As previously mentioned, destination stakeholders are characterized, among others, by interdependence and resource exchange. Zooming on their formal and informal relationships may be an interesting lens through which to study the complementarity of the tourism product and the dynamics originating from it.

To facilitate the reading of this paper, it has been adopted the terminological choice of uniquely employing the term "coordination." However, as highlighted by Messori and Volo (forthcoming), a plethora of terms -encompassing cooperation, collaboration, co-opetition, and coordination- have been used in the tourism and hospitality literature to denote tourism stakeholders' relational dynamics and strategies, resulting in a fragmented and inconsistent body of knowledge. Given that all these different terms "convey a sense of cooperation, the involvement of more than one entity, and to some degree common objectives" (Plummer et al., 2008; p. 504), this paper, drawing from the economic literature, exclusively uses the umbrella concept of "coordination" to denote the abovementioned dynamics and strategies.

METHOD

The present study develops a theoretical framework functional for the subsequent development of a CI. Most studies that build a CI are based on the guidelines produced for this purpose by the OECD and the JRC (2008). This study is based on the extension -for tourism studies- proposed by Mendola and Volo (2017). The dimensions of this study are derived from Messori and Volo's (forthcoming) systematic literature review on relational dynamics among destination stakeholders. In their systematic review of the existing tourism management and tourism economics literature on the topic, the authors present several dimensions, some of which are herein used to create a framework and some useful propositions. This allows to identify the various sub-groups constituting destination interfirm coordination and develop their linkages.

RESULTS

The results of this study can be organized into a theoretical framework of six dimensions and six fundamental propositions, each corresponding to a sub-group of dimensions of the framework offering the basis for a holistic conceptualization of destination interfirm coordination and the subsequent construction of a CI.

Proximity: the spark to coordination is often before one's eyes

Within a tourism destination, the co-location of co-producing firms (Haugland et al., 2011) plays a key role in fostering coordination dynamics and strategies between destination firms (Czernek, 2013; Czernek-Marszalek, 2021; Yang, 2018). This holds not only for the greatest but also for minor attractions, as attractions close to one another are more likely to meet tourist demand under time constraints (Czernek, 2013; Yang, 2018). Furthermore, firms' geographic proximity enables them to benefit from agglomeration economies and, among others, get access to skilled labor, lower transaction costs, share the costs of specialized labor, infrastructures, and marketing, and foster the exchange of information, knowledge, technology, and learning processes (Camison et al., 2016). However, to coordinate and integrate resources and activities, firms' ease of contact is necessary (Aarstad et al., 2015; Camison et al., 2016). Hence, an active engagement in coordination is also dependent upon the social connection of the parties involved, which is in turn influenced by the frequency of stakeholder participation in events, workshops, and workgroups (Pechlaner and Volgger, 2012; Waligo et al., 2013).

In this context, trust (Beritelli, 2011; Camison et al., 2016; Czernek, 2013; Czernek-Marszalek, 2020; Czernek-Marszalek, 2021; Fyall et al., 2012; Jensen, 2009; Maggioni et al., 2014; van der Zee et al., 2017; Yang, 2018), and cultural and business congruence (Czernek-Marszalek, 2021; Pechlaner and Volgger, 2012) play a key role. In contrast, distrust (Czernek, 2017; Fyall et al., 2012), tensions (van der Zee et al., 2017), or attitudes such as envy, egoism, rivalry, and parochialism can easily inhibit coordination (Pechlaner and Volgger, 2012). Moreover, coordination may be hindered by the costs associated with traveling to a meeting place or negotiating and closing contracts (Czernek, 2013; Czernek, 2017; Czernek-Marszalek, 2021). However, not only spatial distance but also the sociocultural and psychological distance between the individual actors hinders coordination (Pechlaner and Volgger, 2012).

Associationism: the process matters
According to Andergassen et al. (2017), coordination is most profitable when it is driven by the private sector rather than enforced top-down by policymakers. Coordination can take place according to informal interactions (Beritelli, 2011; Maggioni et al., 2014) or formal agreements (Jensen, 2009), typically consisting of memberships in local, national, and international associations (Webb et al., 2021). According to Della Corte et al. (2021), formal agreements tend to accompany the early phases of the establishment of a partnership between tourism firms since they tend to be more cautious, fearing opportunistic behavior by their counterparts. Later, as the relationship matures, an atmosphere of trust develops, leading firms to opt for informal arrangements to cut administrative costs and accelerate decision-making processes.

Comparative advantage: or the power of attraction of resources
Firm complementarity is another key driver of destination interfirm coordination (Haugland et al., 2011). Because one firm rarely holds all the resources – defined by Crouch and Ritchie (1999) as a destination's comparative advantage- required to successfully supply a tourism product, coordination with a firm offering complementary goods or services enables it to do so (Della Corte et al., 2021; Wilke et al., 2019). However, some resources, such as tacit knowledge, are more difficult to access, especially if one of the involved parties is a family firm (Perles-Ribes et al., 2017).

Competitive advantage: no man is an island
Tourism competitiveness is not exclusively reliant on a destination's resources. All those supporting and qualifying factors, such as infrastructures, accessibility, enterprises, and safety, are necessary to use "a destination's resources efficiently and effectively over the long term" (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999, p. 143). Hence, in the context of coordination, learning, and gaining advice on doing business (Czernek-Marszalek, 2020) is an example of a relevant source of competitive advantage. The same applies to the successful management of the seasonality of tourist demand and employment (Czernek, 2017; Kuokkanen and Bouchon, 2021). If coordination might help firms improve their low-season performance, the large staff turnover deriving from the seasonality of employment implies, on the one hand, greater dissemination of knowledge, but, on the other hand, it also poses a barrier to knowledge diffusion and absorption because coordination agreements might terminate when employees or owners change jobs.

Co-production: evaluating the costs and benefits of coordination
Coordination benefits several parties. First, consumers are presented with a wider variety of goods and services (Andergassen et al., 2013). Then the destination witnesses higher employment rates (Pavlovich, 2014) and a better atmosphere because of improved social relations (Czakon and Czernek-Marszalek, 2021). Finally, the firms involved in coordination see their profits increase owing to a higher rate of product and process innovation as well as the functional benefits of bundling and network economies (Czakon and Czernek-Marszalek, 2021; Elvekrok et al., 2022; Maggioni et al., 2014; Zach et al. 2021). However, firms also must bear the additional costs associated with investing in coordination, meeting with partners, and monitoring their reputations (Czernek-Marszalek, 2021; Fyall et al., 2012). Therefore, before engaging in coordination, firms are found to perform a cost-benefit evaluation (Czernek-Marszalek, 2021; Pechlaner and Volgger, 2012).

Contextual factors: context matters

It seems intuitive that coordination depends on the political and economic setup. Hence, local, regional, national, and European policies aiming to allocate funds or other forms of support to coordinating firms provide a strong incentive and support for destination interfirm coordination (Czernek, 2013; Czernek-Marszalek, 2021). Changes in institutional factors, in tourism demand, environmental turbulence, increased competition, globalization, and technological progress (Czernek, 2013; Fong et al., 2018; Waligo et al., 2013) are also considered relevant coordination antecedents, because firms are more likely to form close ties, and consequently coordinate, when they perceive uncertainty (Aarstad et al., 2015). Firms that actively expanded their networks were found to be more resilient and capable of adapting to changing circumstances, seizing opportunities, and mitigating risks (Pforr et al., 2014; van der Zee et al., 2017).

CONCLUSIONS

The importance of coordination is recognized in the economic literature, and recently, papers investigating this issue have also begun to appear in tourism and hospitality research. However, to date, an instrument to measure the degree of coordination of a tourism firm with other destination firms still needs to be developed. Therefore, starting from the systematic assessment of the tourism and hospitality coordination literature by Messori and Volo (forthcoming), this study seeks to fill this gap by proposing a multidimensional framework to study coordination and support the construction of a CI. The framework has been organized into six propositions pertaining to proximity, associationism, competitive advantage, comparative advantage, co-production, and contextual factors. The construction of the composite indicator is the next step. This instrument can bring managers' attention to the importance of coordination with other tourism stakeholders and encourage policymakers to consider implementing policies to promote coordination within tourism destinations. The main limitation in this work stems from data quality and availability, a problem typical of composite indicators due to the difficulty of collecting reliable measurements on many elementary indicators. Hence, data availability will define and refine the next steps in constructing the CI.

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WILDLIFE TOURISM BRANDING AND WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR WILDLIFE TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF HUAI THAB SALOA – HAU RABAM NON-HUNTING AREA, UTHAI THANI PROVINCE, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were to 1) identify tourism branding of wildlife tourism of Huai Thab Saloa – Hau Rabam Non-Hunting Area, and 2) determine visitors' willingness to pay for the wildlife-based ecotourism in Huai Thab Saloa – Hau Rabam Non-Hunting Area. Brand identity development for wildlife-based ecotourism was identify based on supply-side perspectives. To determine willingness to pay for wildlife tourism, the 400 questionnaires were collected both on-line and on-site survey, during August 2021 – February, 2022. The results indicated that the abundance of wildlife and naturalness were the core identity of area. The presences of iconic species was the significant pull factor of the destination. For willingness to pay for wildlife tourism, overall, the majority of tourists were willing to pay to support tourism development in the range of 1,001 – 5,000 Baht/person/trip, representing 31.25 percent (average = 4,118 Baht/person/trip: 1USD = 35 Thai Bath approximately). Additionally, the results confirmed that the independent variables affecting the value of willingness to pay for wildlife tourism development were education level (EDU), income level (INC), length of overnight stays (NN), and experience in wildlife tourism (EXP) with statistically significant at the 0.1 level.

Key Words: wildlife tourism branding; willingness to pay; Huai Thab Saloa – Hau Rabam Non-Hunting Area; World Heritage site

INTRODUCTION

Huai Thab Saloa – Hau Rabam Non-Hunting Area, Uthai Thani Province is an important part of buffer area of Huai Kha Khaeng World Heritage Site (HKK), as of one of Thailand's most important biodiversity areas due to biological diversity, natural pristine scenery and integrity of terrestrial ecosystem. The objectives of non-hunting area establishment are 1) to protect the species of wildlife in the area, 2) to protect natural habitats suitable for wildlife, 3) for research on natural resources and the environment and nature education, and 4) for maintain the balance of conservation and utilization of natural resources. However, this protected area has been facing many threatening factors, including wildlife poaching, illegal logging, collection of forest products, especially encroaching on buffer zone areas for agriculture and livestock.

These threats truly affect the sustainability of the biodiversity of Huai Thab Saloa – Hau Rabam Non-Hunting Area. In this manner, the wildlife tourism concept has been adopted for managing strategies. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has drawn the plan to develop wildlife tourism in Huai Thab Saloa – Hau Rabam Non-Hunting Area with hope that wildlife tourism will be served as a tool to support the management of the HKK buffer area and promote tourism development in accordance with national development strategies.

Wildlife tourism is a form of nature-based tourism that is growing rapidly due to tourists' conservation attitudes and behaviors. Aside from the importance of wildlife tourism in the dimension of economic driving force, in the dimension of natural resource conservation and local community development, wildlife tourism also recognized as one of the powerful tools to incentivize local communities around protected areas to support wildlife conservation and habitat restoration. Therefore, in order to effectively and efficiently manage wildlife tourism in accordance with the development goals, it is necessary to analyze the wildlife tourism branding or destination branding specifically for this area and also analyze willingness to pay of tourists in order to determine the target groups of tourists and the determination of fees for wildlife

tourism to support wildlife conservation and wildlife habitat management activities. Along with the development of tourism in the area, which will support economic development and conservation to be developed simultaneously in accordance with the objectives of sustainable development in the area.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study were:

- Identify tourism branding of wildlife tourism of Huai Thab Saloa – Hau Rabam Non-Hunting Area
- Determine visitors' willingness to pay for the wildlife-based ecotourism in Huai Thab Saloa – Hau Rabam Non-Hunting Area

STUDY AREA

Huai Thap Salao - Huai Rabam Non-hunting Area is under the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation covering an area of approximately 26 square kilometers. It is a protected area located between HKK and Thap Salao Dam, as an important buffer area of the Huai HKK World Heritage Area. This protected area is untouched by nature. It is a source of food, habitat and reproduction of wild animals. The wildlife found in the area are, i.e., Asian elephant (Elephas maximus), tiger (Panthera tigris), leopard (Panthera pardus), banteng (Bos javanicus), gaur (Bos gaurus), wild boar (Sus scrofa), hog deer (Axis porcinus), eld's deer (Rucervus eldii), sambar deer (Rusa unicolor), barking deer (Muntiacus muntjak), dhole (Cuon alpinus), Asiatic jackal (Canis aureus) (Pongpattananurak, et.al., 2022). The annual average temperature at 27.10◦C with the lowest temperature at 16.23◦C in January and the highest at 37.05◦C in April. The annual total precipitation is on average 1462.83 mm, and the relative humidity is on average 79.95%. More than 75% of this protected area is classified as "deciduous forest", including two subtypes: deciduous dipterocarp forest (aka dry dipterocarp forest) and mixed deciduous forest (Phumsathan, et.al. 2022).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the first part, brand identity development for wildlife-based ecotourism was identify based on supply-side perspectives. This study applied the mixed methodology by conducting 1) field observation to explore the attractions of the targeted area and 2) focus group meeting and semi- structured interviews with the groups of the representative, i.e., the tourism enterprise, the tourism government agencies, the local administrative organizations, the government officers, and community leaders. A number of 23 key informants were interviewed. Content analysis was applied with the aim of identifying the perception of wildlife-based ecotourism development, wildlife tourism identity of this area, and other issues related to destination brand identity development.

To determine willingness to pay for wildlife tourism, the 400 questionnaires were collected both on-line and on-site survey, during August 2021 – February, 2022. Visitors participating in wildlife tourism were selected based on convenient or voluntary random sampling in order to obtain complete information. The willingness to pay of tourists was assessed based on willingness to pay for a 2-Days 1-Night package tour developed by local community. Analysis of factors affecting willingness to pay to support wildlife tourism was analyzed using Contingent Valuation Method: CVM by applying Tobit regression analysis. The model for studying factors affecting willingness to pay for wildlife tourism support can be expressed as equation (1)

$$WTP = f(AGE, GEN, MAS, EDU, INC, ENM, ATT, KNO, NN, EXP, SAT) \quad (1)$$

WTP = willingness to pay for wildlife tourism

AGE = age of wildlife tourist

GEN = gender of wildlife tourist

MAS = marital status of wildlife tourist

EDU = education level of wildlife tourist

INC = monthly income of wildlife tourist

ENM = conservation group membership of wildlife tourist

ATT = attitude towards wildlife tourism of wildlife tourist

KNO = knowledge of the impact of tourism on wildlife of wildlife tourist

NN = night of stay during travel of wildlife tourist

EXP = experience in wildlife tourism of wildlife tourist

SAT = satisfaction from wildlife tourism in the past of wildlife tourist

RESULTS

Wildlife Tourism Branding

Branding of the wildlife tourism in protected area plays an important role in the process of forming its attractiveness for the currently growing target market. For this study, the results indicated that the abundance of wildlife and naturalness were the core identity of area. The presences of iconic species (i.e., banteng, tiger, elephant, gaur, sambar deer and muntjac) was the significant pull factor that effects on tourist's motivation to visit the destination. Additionally, identity and physical uniqueness of resource-based, ecological uniqueness of resource-based, beautiful landscape and scenery, and richness of natural resources-based were mentioned. Additionally, wildlife tourism in this area should be promoted as international wildlife tourism destination and education center in national level. Moreover, wildlife tourism development in this area should promote how to maximize the benefits of wildlife tourism to wildlife conservation, natural environment, visitors, and host community (Figure 1).

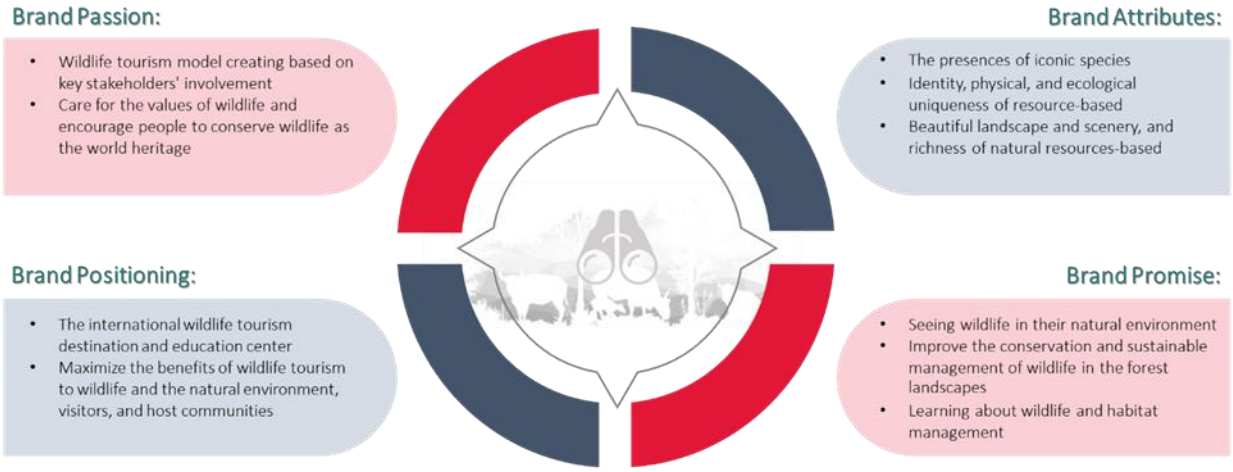

Figure 1: Brand identity development for wildlife-based ecotourism in Huai Thap Salao - Huai Rabam Non-hunting Area

Willingness to Pay for Wildlife Tourism

This study was based on a sample survey of 400 tourists. From the survey data, it was found that the proportion of tourists were male and female with not much difference, with 53.50 percent being male while being female 46.50%. Nearly 70% of tourists were between the ages of 21 and 40. However it was noted that almost 10% of the tourists were travelers aged 51 and over. The majority of wildlife tourists (more than 50%) were single. Most of the sampled tourists had experience in wildlife tourism (70.00%). Most of them had more than 5 years of experience in wildlife tourism, while 30% had no experience in wildlife tourism. The majority of wildlife tourists travelled with small group and wanted to experience the beautiful nature rather than wildlife education/watching. The results presented that the wildlife encounter or opportunity to see wildlife in natural setting is an important factor that can persuade tourists to visit the area and relate to their satisfaction from tourism. This factors also affect their willingness to pay to further wildlife tourism development. Regarding the level of knowledge and attitude about wildlife tourism of the wildlife tourists, the results confirmed that most of the wildlife tourists have knowledge about the impact of tourism on wildlife at a relatively high level. Most of the tourists have appropriate attitudes toward wildlife, either positive or negative aspects. The majority of wildlife tourists have prepared with appropriate clothes/attire and researched information about the destination before travel.

For willingness to pay for wildlife tourism, the results presented that about 80 percent of the samples was interested in traveling in the destination. Overall, the majority of tourists were willing to pay to support tourism development in the range of 1,001 – 5,000 Baht/person/trip, representing 31.25 percent, followed by Unwilling to pay accounted for 21.25 percent and willing to pay in the range of 501 - 1,000 Baht/person/trip, representing 17.00 percent, respectively (average = 4,118 Baht/person/trip: 1USD = 35 Thai Bath approximately) Additionally, the results confirmed that the independent variables affecting the value of willingness to pay for wildlife tourism development were education level (EDU), income level (INC), length of overnight stays (NN), and experience in wildlife tourism (EXP) with statistically significant at the 0.1 level (Table 1).

Table 1: Analysis of factors affecting the value of willingness to pay for wildlife tourism development of tourists

Variables	**ß**	**Standard Error of Mean: SEM**	**t**	**p-value**	**mean**
GEN	95.533	305.641	0.310	0.755	0.535
AGE	-8.344	17.619	-0.470	0.636	33.880
EDU	691.236	335.059	2.060	0.040	0.700
INC	-568.946	318.857	-1.780	0.075	0.490
MAS	-274.836	385.011	-0.710	0.476	0.550
ENM	32.910	533.568	0.060	0.951	0.095
ATT	-332.822	240.379	-1.380	0.167	4.009
KNO	-66.673	69.300	-0.960	0.337	6.775
(NN)	-418.854	244.957	-1.710	0.088	0.718
(EXP)	809.913	320.939	2.520	0.012	0.515
(SAT)	-175.147	169.274	-1.030	0.301	3.700
Constant	3,689.402	1,349.911	2.730	0.007	
Sigma	2,882.966	117.865			
Log-likelihood	-3,043.326				
LR Chi2	22.930	Prob	0.018		
n	400				

The results presented that the variables that correlated with the value of willingness to pay for wildlife tourism in the same direction were education level (EDU) and experience in wildlife tourism (EXP). That is, for tourists with a bachelor's degree or higher, the willingness to pay was higher than for tourists with education below a bachelor's degree. Additionally, the willingness to pay of wildlife tourists with more than a year of wildlife tourism experience was higher than those with less experience (less than a year). This may be due to tourists who have an education level and long experience in wildlife tourism have a better understanding of wildlife tourism and its impact on wildlife (Pedroso and Kungu, 2019; Aseres and Sira, 2019).

The variable group that correlated with the value of willingness to pay for wildlife tourism in the opposite direction was income level (INC). That is, tourists with a higher income tend to be less willing to pay than those with low income. This result was inconsistent with previous studies of Platania and Rizzo (2018), Murphy et al. (2018), and Nie et al. (2019). The results also founded that the number of overnight stays (NN) was found to have an inverse relationship with the value of willingness to pay for the wildlife tourism development. This could be explained that more nights in a stay leads to a decrease in willingness to pay. This may be due to the fact that tourists travel for a longer period of time, resulting in higher

travel expenses. As a result, the rest of the budget to support the development of wildlife tourism is reduced. When taking the only variables that significantly correlate with the value of willingness to pay for wildlife tourism development, the average value of willingness to pay was 4,118.80 baht/person/time (approximately 117-120 USD) (Table 2).

Table 2: Willingness to Pay for Supporting Wildlife Tourism in Huai Thap Salao - Huai Rabam Non-hunting Area

	constant	EDU	INC	NN	EXP
z		0.700	0.490	0.718	0.515
Beta	3,689.402	691.236	-568.946	-418.854	809.913
Sigma	2,882.966				
z*Beta	3,689.402	483.865	-278.783	-300.527	417.105
Z*B	4,011.061				
Z*B/Sigma	1.391				
cdf.	0.918				
pdf.	0.152				
cdf.*(Z*B)	3,681.883				
pdf.*(Sigma)	436.934				
E(WTP)	**4,118.817**				

Remark: * sum of z*beta

** Calculated by Spreadsheet: function (NORM.S.DIST(Z*B/sigma,TRUE))

*** Calculated by Spreadsheet function (NORM.S.DIST(Z*B/sigma,FALSE))

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of wildlife tourism branding indicated that abundance of wildlife, naturalness, and the presences of iconic species were the core identity of area and significant pull factor of the destination. These results lead to the process of creating a tourism program for learning about wildlife with local participation. The main concept of the tourism program design consists of 2 themes. Firstly, wildlife tourism in this area should present the strengths and identities of HKK World Heritage Buffer Area including the presence of rare species; the uniqueness of ecosystems in natural sites; and physical aesthetics and landscapes of natural sites. This is an important element that makes tourism in targeted areas different from others. Secondly, create a tourism program with presenting wildlife tourism as the primary activity such as game drive, wildlife watching, and also create activities connecting with interesting sites in the community in order to distribute benefits from wildlife tourism to community development. For setting fees for wildlife tourism, setting reasonable fees that support the quality of the wildlife tourism experience is the important issues to be considered. Firstly, the fee should not exceed the willingness to pay of wildlife tourists. Secondly, how to distribute this fee for local community development and supporting wildlife conservation have to be cleared.

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THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE IMPORTANCE OF AIR QUALITY IN TOURISM TRIPS: A CLUSTER ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to analyse the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the importance that air quality has in tourism trips. A questionnaire survey was conducted in 2021, among Portuguese people (N=266). Through a cluster analysis based on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the relevance of air quality on the planning of tourism trips, two clusters were identified: Cluster 1 – The unconcerned with AQ -; Cluster 2 – The concerned with AQ. They differed in various aspects. Cluster 2 tends to have sustainable behaviours at destinations. This study provides guidelines to design strategies towards the sustainable development of destinations.

Key Words: Air quality, COVID, pandemic, tourism trip, planning, environmental sustainability.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Environmental sustainability is a major challenge in the field of tourism, not only due to the pollution caused by the tourism activity, but also because visitors are increasingly requiring environmental preservation in the scope of tourism. There is a growing interest on the impact of air quality on tourism trips, even though this topic has been widely disregarded for years. Moreover, the literature on the COVID-19 pandemic and tourism highlights changes on the attitudes of people towards tourism trips, including all the decision process, and even the behaviour during the trip. However, no studies are known that analyse the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the importance of air quality in tourist trips. Therefore, the main objective of this research is to analyse the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the importance that air quality has in tourism trips. To achieve this aim, a questionnaire survey was conducted between August and October 2021, among Portuguese people. A total of 266 valid questionnaires were obtained. Data were first analysed using descriptive statistics to characterise the sample, as well as to examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the importance of air quality in tourism trips. Some factor analyses were also performed to identify the main dimensions of some constructs. In addition, a hierarchical cluster analysis was carried out based on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the relevance of air quality on the planning of tourism trips, in order to identify distinct segments of visitors concerning this issue. The variables corresponded to the contribute of the pandemic to assign more relevance to AQ and search for more information about it during the planning of tourism trips. Clusters were then compared using t tests and Chi-square tests.

The results suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to increase the importance of air quality in the planning of tourism trips. However, changes on the search for information related to air quality and the adoption of behaviours related to air quality in tourism destinations were quite low. Two clusters emerged from the cluster analysis: The Cluster 1 – The unconcerned with AQ - and the Cluster 2 – The concerned with AQ. Differences on the profile of these two clusters concerning their sustainable daily behaviours, behavioural changes regarding tourism trips due to the COVID-19, attitudes towards COVID-19, sustainable behaviours at destinations; and the existence of health problems related to air pollution. Among other aspects, findings show that the Cluster 2 – The concerned with AQ – are more likely to have sustainable

behaviours at tourism destinations. This study extends previous research on COVID and AQ in the field of tourism. It also provides relevant guidelines to managers of organisations related to tourism and environment design policies and strategies towards the sustainable development of destinations. Furthermore, the present study may serve as a basis for future investigations about this topic.

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RESTAURANT EMPLOYEES' EMOTIONAL LABOUR AND GENDER: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF A POTENTIAL CONNECTION

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the connection between emotional labour and gender in the F&B department of hotels. Different emotions can be asked of employees depending on the nature of their work or the standing of the establishment. It is therefore interesting to ask whether the required emotions also differ according to the gender of the worker. In the same situation, are a waiter or a waitress expected to express the same emotion? The different emotions required are important to analyse because they can change the way emotional labour is managed by employees and can influence the employer when hiring certain profiles.

Key Words: emotional labour, gender, hospitality, restaurant.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Emotional labour is defined by Hochschild (1983) as: « *the way to manage emotions in order to give oneself a physical appearance consistent with what is expected socially; this takes place in exchange for a salary*». It is an essential component of the work of employees in the service sector. In the past years, emotional labour has been increasingly studied as it has become more visible with a multiplication of cases of emotional imbalances at work (Giacomel, 2019). Emotional management has become a topic of health and economic importance in the tertiary sector (Giacomel 2019) for scientists and large hotel groups. Yet, very few workers are familiar with the concept because its rules are implicit, and emotional labour is not officially recognized and valued as part of the job. The emotions displayed by service employees are often simply considered natural.

Meanwhile, the concept has been studied under the prism of different disciplines, such as marketing, psychology, hotel management or human resources. Apart from marketing, most of the studies looked at the negative aspects of emotional labour and the links with employees' mental health, absenteeism, or high turnover in the hotel industry. Moreover, most studies concerning emotional labour in the hotel industry focus on front office jobs. Studies on Food & Beverage (F&B), management, housekeeping and sales positions are rare.

The gender distinction regarding emotional labour is hardly ever made in these studies. Gender Research has rather been focussing on the links between gender and emotion from a psychological perspective, or on the links between jobs/position and gender from a social sciences and human resources perspective. Therefore, it is interesting to explore the potential connection between emotional labour and gender in the hotel industry and more particularly in the F&B department.

It is indeed possible to distinguish between different practices among men and women, for instance, some cultures encourage rather women than men to move towards emotion rather than action and inviting those who occupy jobs in the service to manage their emotions towards customers (Hochschild, 1983). According to Baranger et al. (2016), services address two types of needs of the customer: the main need related to the use of the service, and the secondary need for esteem. Emotional work responds to the secondary need of esteem of the client, but it adds a degree of uncertainty in clients' perceptions of service because their expectations are subjective. In addition, the client himself plays a role in bi-directional interaction (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). Different emotions can be asked of employees depending on the nature of their work, the expectations of the clients, the standing of the establishment, the pace of work or even depending on the services (breakfast, lunch, dinner).

For this study, Purcell's categorization of jobs according to gender (Purcell, 1996), was taken into account because she is one of the first to have studied occupational segregation which influences so many positions in the hospitality industry. It classifies jobs into three categories: "gender-contingent jobs", "gender typified jobs" and "patriarchally-prescribed jobs". In gender-contingent jobs, demand is gender-neutral as employers mostly want low-skilled workers to pay them as little as possible. Gender typified jobs use sexuality and gender as an explicit or implicit reason for hiring. In the hotel industry, the

search for the “right type of personality” is often an argument put forward in hiring staff. Patriarchally-prescribed jobs refer to a social relationship marked by power and domination, who’s oppressors and beneficiaries must be identified (Bereni et al. 2012). Opinions may differ, but in the context of this study, the jobs of waiter and waitress have been placed in the category of gender-contingent jobs. These jobs represent a significant part of the operating cost and are quite mixed, the main interest being therefore to have an inexpensive staff. However, although this occupation is not specifically gender-related, the required emotional labour may be different depending on the employee’s gender.

For example, according to Fellay (2010), the waiter profession is not mixed in its hourly distribution; Employers would tend to hire more women for morning and noon services while they would hire more men for evening service. This can, among other things, be explained by the different requirements of emotional labour of women and men. Other studies have confirmed the link between gender distribution of jobs and emotions (Petrovic et al. 2014, Rafaeli 1989). Rafaeli (1989) states that women express more positive emotions towards clients than men for several reasons: they have a better capacity for empathy and show their emotions more easily (La France and Geddes, 2000) They are also generally perceived as more expressive, sensitive and welcoming than men (Broverman et al., 1972). Moliner, Vinet, and Suquet (2004) found that stereotypes identify women as soft and sensitive, and Bereni et al. (2012) highlighted thoroughness, repetitiveness, care, dedication, patience, charm, and seduction as female attributes. For men, values are more about working life and ambition, power, success or action and individualism. To this, we can add dominance and strength (Moliner, Vinet & Suquet, 2004) as well as ambition, authority and rationality (Buscatto & Fusulier, 2013). These studies are to be considered with caution as reducing individuals to typically female or male behaviours would remove the singularities resulting from their own character (Banon, 2015). Articles classifying men and women in common traits are nevertheless very common and for this reason it is necessary to take them into account. They reflect some of the gender stereotypes in society that influence the behaviour of employers (Banon, 2015, Li and Leung 2001).

The waiter profession mainly consists of welcoming customers, presenting the menu, taking and bringing the order, clearing, presenting the addition and cashing. All these tasks must be carried out with a good organization and a good sense of welcome and service. The main required qualities are a good relationship with customers, good resistance to stress, speed, agility, good memory and interest in cooking and catering. In addition, the principal required emotional labour of customer-facing employees is the display of positive emotions. This work is even more challenging when combined with practical and logistical work requirements.
The required emotions are important to differentiate because they can change the way emotional labour is managed by employees, but also influence the employer when hiring certain profiles. It is therefore interesting to ask whether the required emotions differ only according to the profession trades or whether they also differ according to the gender of the worker. In an equal position, are a man or a woman expected to express the same emotion?

In psychology, fundamental emotions include mainly negative emotions. For example, Paul Eckman (1972) studied the six fundamental emotions: joy, fear, sadness, anger, disgust, surprise. In this palette of fundamental emotions, only one is fully positive: joy. Yet emotional labour for employees in the hospitality sector requires the display of a whole range of positive emotions. The range of Eckman’s emotional possibilities is thus very small, making it impossible to obtain satisfactory results in this study context. It is necessary to refer to other theories offering a wider range of positive emotions, while keeping a reasonable number of emotions so that the results can be interpreted. For pragmatic questions of lack of finesse, the research is based on the eight emotions of Plutchik’s model (1980) (joy, sadness, confidence, disgust, fear, anger, anticipation) combined to have 16 complex emotions. This model allows to integrate an intensity to the emotions. In in-depth interviews, waiters and waitresses had the opportunity to express themselves on the subject, allowing adding additional emotions that may not be reflected in the existing primary and complex emotions typologies. In addition, as the concept is very little known to employees, familiar emotions and gestures related to emotional labour, such as being welcoming, cheerful, smiling, keeping calm, have been used to identify perceived emotional labour.

Looking for the impressions and feelings of restaurant service employees, the choice was made for semi-directional interviews. This method makes it possible to obtain more spontaneous and richer answers than a simple written questionnaire or a directed interview and to address more delicate subjects such as gender stereotypes in the field of work. As part of the critical analysis of a potential connection between restaurant employees’ emotional labour and gender in hotels, various methodological challenges had to be addressed. One challenge was to define gender in the study context. Gender is generally understood as a culturally constructed social category attributed to groups according to their sex. It is still often the belief that sex/gender separation simply reflects the division between biological traits (presumed immutable) and attitudes, behaviours, and roles (presumed flexible) (Löwy, 2003). It was also challenging to differentiate and identify relevant culturally biased stereotypes and proven theories. Indeed, although certain stereotypes have long been refuted, some remain very present in common beliefs and still influence behaviours in the hospitality sector and are reflected also in the hospitality studies.

Emotional labour presents real challenges and issues, both for employees and employers, and it is still hardly known. A wider diffusion of studies could help to draw attention to the concept, contributing to improving working conditions in the sector. As the research allows highlighting the different required emotions and how male or female workers perceive their emotional labour, the conclusions of this work will serve to open the discussion on gender aspects in emotional labour. They will be applicable in the hotel sector, but also in other tertiary sectors.

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CHANNEL RELATIONSHIPS OF TOURISM ENTERPRISES: A CASE OF HOTELS AND TOUR OPERATORS IN JAPAN

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a highly coordination-intensive industry in which tourism products and services are jointly offered by a number of individual actors in the distribution channel system. the competitiveness of any tourism firm is dependent on the value co-created with other members in the tourism distribution channel systems (Zhang et al., 2009) and firms can barely benefit without efficient and effective relational exchanges with other firms (Ingram and Roberts, 2000; Mwesiumo and Halpern, 2016). Due to the fact that social exchange theory (SET) concerns both economic and social interactions, it has been a popular theoretical framework and widely used in exploring inter-organizational relationships (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Lambe et al., 2001; Lioukas and Reuer, 2015). However, research on relationships between tourism enterprises based on SET is still of a rarity in the tourism context (Brookes et al., 2015; Jeong and Oh, 2017).

This exploratory study aims to address past research negligence on the application of SET in the tourism context. In doing so, in-depth interviews were conducted with 14 hotels and nine tour operators in Japan to explore the dynamics of their relationships and exchanges in the tourism channel system.

Most respondents identified both negotiated and reciprocal exchanges in the relationship between accommodation providers and tour operators. Due to the fact that hotels or ryokans in Japan engage in business with tour operators based on implicit rules, practices, and socializing interactions instead of signing formal contracts, respondents perceived their negotiated exchanges as mainly non-binding. Compared with negotiated exchanges, respondents stated reciprocal exchanges more frequently, like doing a favor to their counterpart and expecting rewards to continue such a relationship. Respondents of accommodation providers identified that they tried to keep good relationships with tour operators through socializing interactions, office visits with sweets, and free offers to their customers.

All the respondents clarified that accompanied by the advancement of ICT, accommodation providers have long been less dependent on traditional tour operators than before, resulting in the power shift from offline to online in the tourism industry. In terms of relationship satisfaction, hotel respondents were satisfied more with the up-to-date market knowledge than the economic gains in their relationship with tour operators. In contrast, small-scale tour operators reported their dissatisfaction with the economic relational exchanges due to unfavorable pricing policies offered by accommodation providers. Although most of the respondents showed a relatively low level of satisfaction with their relationships between accommodation providers and tour operators, no respondents mentioned consideration of relationship termination with their counterparts.

Besides theoretical perspectives, this study also provides valuable managerial implications for both accommodation providers and traditional tour operators.

Key Words: Channel relationship, social exchange theory, negotiated exchanges, reciprocal exchanges

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EFFECTS OF TRAVEL VLOGGERS' ATTRIBUTES ON TOURISTS' INTENTION: THE ROLE OF CYNICISM

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ABSTRACT

With the popularity of short videos, a growing number of tourist destinations have begun to pay attention to their marketing value. Given this heightened attention, vloggers have increasingly been shooting tourism videos. This study establishes astructural equation model (SEM) based on the literature review on vlogger attributes, parasocial interaction, cynicism and travel intention. The research found that vlogger attributes positively affect parasocial interaction, which subsequently positively influences travel intention. Meanwhile, cynicism negatively affects parasocial interaction and has no impact on travel intention. This article also provides practical suggestions for tourism destination managers and tourism video vloggers.

Key Words: vlogger attributes; parasocial interaction; cynicism; travel intention

SEASONAL DIFFERENCES IN URBAN PARK EXPERIENCE ATTRIBUTES: RESULTS OF UGC TOPIC MODELLING

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ABSTRACT

The experience attributes of urban parks are crucial for both visitors and city managers, as the natural environment can provide numerous benefits to them. Researchers conducted a topic modelling analysis using user-generated data from TripAdvisor, employing the Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) algorithm. We identified 20 experience attributes of urban parks and validated their correlation with visitor satisfaction ratings. Additionally, the researchers determined the seasonal variations of these experience attributes. In warmer seasons, visitors are more inclined to engage in outdoor activities and get closer to nature. Conversely, in colder seasons, visitors are less willing to expose themselves to the outdoors. This article makes theoretical and practical contributions to the field.

Key Words: Urban Park experience; User-generated data; Latent Dirichlet Allocation; Seasonal

DO FESTIVALGOERS' MOTIVATIONS FOR ATTENDING AND FOSTERED POSITIVE EMOTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO SATISFACTION LEVELS? A U.S. NATIONAL PANEL OF ATTENDEES

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INTRODUCTION

In the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic, festivals throughout the world, ceased to exist. It was not for lack of interest or desire on the part of attendees, rather the health of all those potentially participating trumped anything else. That said, in many parts of the world, festival venues (especially those held outside) are opening back up and welcoming attendees. In fact, some festival and events researchers might even concede that examined relationships prior to the pandemic may now be relevant once again. So, in essence, relationships involving popular constructs in festival contexts (i.e., motivations, emotions, and satisfaction) may once more be on the table for consideration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As Li, Liu, and Su (2021) contend, mixed findings exist on the relationship between individuals' motivations and their elicited emotions. Though Lin and Nawijn (2020) were unable to demonstrate a significant link between the two constructs, Kassim and Musa (2009) and Li et al. (2021), did indeed reveal how motivations significantly explained perceived emotions. Such inconsistencies have also been noted concerning the relationship between emotions and satisfaction levels. Al-Msallam (2020), Han and Jeong (2013), and Pestana, Parreira, and Moutinho (2020) each found that satisfaction was directly explained by visitors' emotions. However, Lee, Lee, Lee, and Babin (2013) reported that only positive emotions (and not negative emotions) significantly predicted satisfaction. Based on these noted mixed findings, the purpose of our work was to employ a model encompassing motivations, emotions, and satisfaction and the relationships between the three constructs. Therefore, 15 hypotheses (as illustrated in Figure 1.) were examined.

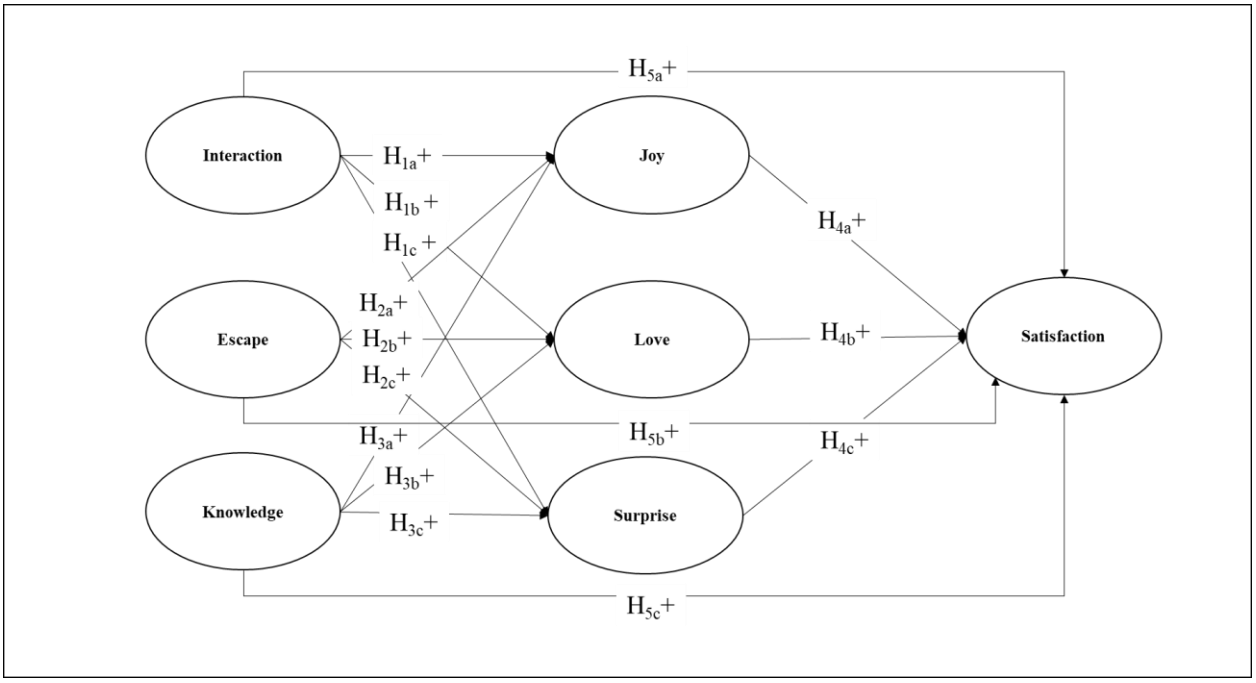

Figure 1. Conceptual model

METHODS

U.S. residents who had visited a festival within the last 12 months comprised the study population. A panel of participants was secured following a convenience sampling strategy utilizing Amazon Mechanical Turk. Individuals who completed the Qualtrics-based questionnaire were provided with a USD 1 incentive. Motivations for attending was measured through 10 items (across the dimensions of *interaction*, *escape*, and *knowledge*) based on the work of Woosnam, McElroy, and Van Winkle (2009). Positive emotions were measured using Prayag, Hosany, Muskat, and Del Chiappa's (2017) destination emotion scale (13 items across the dimensions *joy*, *love*, and *surprise*). Two items captured festival satisfaction as Yuruk, Akyol, and Simsek (2017) envisioned.

Overall, 581 completed responses were secured. Three cases were removed (due to either straight-line or incomplete responses), resulting in a final sample size of 578. Data were analyzed using CFA (to establish a measurement model) followed by SEM (to assess each of the 15 hypotheses).

FINDINGS/IMPLICATIONS

The CFA resulted in a model fit of $\chi^2(n = 578) = 576.14$, $df = 205$, $\chi^2/df = 2.81$, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.96, IFI = 0.97, and RMSEA= 0.05. From the CFA, all but one item had standardized factor loadings in excess of 0.70; the remaining one was in excess of 0.50. Composite reliabilities for factors were greater than 0.77 as AVEs were 0.53 and higher. These three estimates demonstrated convergent validity (see Table 1). Discriminant validity was shown by square roots of each factor's AVE being greater than the inter-factor correlations.

The SEM resulted in a model fit of $\chi^2(n = 578) = 675.59$, $df = 209$, $\chi^2/df = 3.23$, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.95, IFI = 0.96, and RMSEA = 0.06 (See Table 2). Nine of the 15 model hypotheses were supported (six at $p < 0.001$; two at $p < 0.01$; one at $p < 0.05$), with the six rejected hypotheses being $H_{2a, 2b, 2c, 4b, 5b, \text{and } 5c}$). From the SEM model, the following variances were explained: Love (19%); joy (22%); surprise (32%); and satisfaction (32%).

This study provides support for the relationships between motivation and emotions and emotions and satisfaction. Interestingly, the motivation of escape did not explain any variance in the three perceived emotions (nor satisfaction overall). Further, the two emotions, joy and surprise along with the motivation to interact significantly explained individuals' satisfaction with attending festivals. Managerial implications will be discussed further.

Table 1
Measurement Model Results

Constructs and Indicators	**Factor Loadings**	**t-statistics**	**Composite Reliability**	**AVE**
Escape			0.78	0.55
To recover from my usually hectic pace.	0.73	N/A[a]		
To reduce built-up tension.	0.90	14.74***		
To relieve boredom.	0.56	12.31***		
Interaction			0.77	0.53
To be with others who enjoy the same things I do.	0.72	N/A[a]		
To spend time with friends.	0.72	14.24***		
To be with a group of people.	0.74	14.48***		
Knowledge			0.78	0.65
To learn something new.	0.80	N/A[a]		
To increase my knowledge of a local culture.	0.80	11.83***		
Love			0.91	0.78
I feel a sense of *affection* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.88	N/A[a]		
I feel a sense of *caring* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.88	29.42***		
I feel a sense of *love* for the city/town where festival occurred.	0.89	30.23***		
Joy			0.96	0.84
I feel *cheerful* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.86	N/A[a]		
I feel a sense of *delight* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.91	35.94***		
I feel a sense of *enthusiasm* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.93	33.49***		
I feel a sense of *joy* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.94	33.92***		
I feel a sense of *pleasure* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.91	31.79***		
Surprise			0.92	0.70
I feel a sense of *amazement* about the city/town where festival occurred.	0.84	N/A[a]		
I feel a sense of *astonishment* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.88	33.60***		
I feel *fascinated* about the city/town where festival occurred	0.86	24.34		
I feel a sense of *inspiration* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.84	23.27***		
I feel a sense of *surprise* toward the city/town where festival occurred.	0.72	19.44***		
Satisfaction			0.97	0.93
Overall, I am satisfied with the festival.	0.98	N/A[a]		
As a whole, I am happy with the festival.	0.96	33.97***		

[a]In AMOS, one loading has to be fixed to 1; hence, t-value cannot be calculated for this item.
Scale: All items were asked on a 1-pt scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree.
Note. ***p < 0.001 level (one-tailed); CR= composite reliability; AVE= average variance extracted

Table 2
Fit Indices of Measurement and Structural Model

Fit indices[a]	CMIN(χ^2)	*df*	p-value	χ^2/df	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Measurement Model	576.140	205	0.000	2.810	0.967	0.959	0.966	0.05
Structural Model	675.590	209	0.000	3.232	0.958	0.949	0.958	0.06

[a] CMIN: Chi-square; *df*: Degrees of freedom; p-value: Probability level; IFI: Incremental Fit Index; TLI: Tucker-Lewis index; CFI: Comparative fit index; RMSEA: Root mean square error of approximation.

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Part III - Special Track - Food and Events in Tourism as Catalyst for Social Change

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CRAFT-BREWERS IN A MAJOR TOURISM DESTINATION?

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INTRODUCTION

The craft beer business raises the question of how small companies can stand still and thrive under apparent disadvantageous conditions in front of their counterparts: The giant corporations flooding the market with industrial, and notably cheaper, beer. The latter's economic resources and massive scale production allow them to make their product available and accessible almost everywhere worldwide (Garavaglia, 2018).

Within this scenario, the emergence and continuous growth of craft beer tourism along the neolocalism trend may be factors supporting the establishment of craft breweries. However, how these factors may interplay in major tourism destinations is still to be understood. Thus, we conducted a study in Cusco (Peru), a major tourism destination in Latin America, to elucidate on the role that 'Location' plays when establishing a craft brewery in a market dominated by a large corporate company (*Cusqueña*).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The Resource Partitioning Theory posits that small businesses can not only survive, but also be successful in a highly competitive market dominated by large firms by applying four mechanisms: attaching the business to a specific *location*, alluding to consumers' *anti-mass production sentiment*, meeting specific segments' needs through *customization*, and providing a *conspicuous status* through the consumption of their products (Carroll, 1985; Carroll & Swaminathan, 2000; Carroll et al., 2002). The emergence and invigoration of neolocalism, a market trend in which consumers seek out local products as a way to connect with its place of origin (Flack, 1997; Holtkamp et al., 2016), has spiked the need to elucidate the meaning and reach of *location*. Neolocals tend to uphold their consumption behavior when they travel, thus, they look for products reflecting the local culture and to contribute to their economies (Francioni & Byrd, 2012; Simoes Ferreira et al., 2021).

A better understanding of the location mechanism is especially important given the growth and popularity of craft beer tourism among travelers whose main purpose is to visit local breweries in their chosen destinations (Reid, 2021). Craft beverage tourism brings many benefits to destinations, notably, it promotes the entrepreneurial activity and encourages investment from local governments that improve the residents' quality of life (Knollenberg et al., 2021). Of utmost importance is the potential that craft beer tourism has to diversify the tourism offer in destinations, like Cusco, that are highly dependent on iconic resources (Becken, 2005), such as Machu Picchu World Heritage site.

METHODOLOGY

Data were garnered between November 2021 and February 2022 from 25 craft beer entrepreneurs located in Cusco region through semi-structured interviews that lasted on average 45 minutes. Thematic analysis yielded three themes: geographic delimitation, culture, and engagement, which along their sub-themes extend the meaning of *Location* beyond the geospatial bound.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In terms of geographic delimitation, participants stated that they selected a specific location (e.g., Cusco city, Yucay town) based on factors such as good conditions for business development and work-life balance, and emotional factors (e.g., family ties) that attach them to the place. The culture theme refers to the manifestations of the local culture in the breweries'

branding and products, and the reasons why brewers have adopted this strategy beyond marketing purposes. The engagement theme explains the breweries' relationship with the local community and the surrounding environment. Findings show that Cusco's craft brewers take pride in the cultural and natural resources of their chosen location and that their firms' identity is founded in the local culture. Regardless of the brewers' place of origin (local or foreign) they showed passion for sharing the special features of their location through their branding, all attributes that are valued by neolocal tourists. Participants also showed eagerness to attract tourists into their locations instead of moving to more touristic areas because they can maintain a work-life balance and engage with their communities' wellbeing.

On the one hand, this study confirms that craft breweries make conscious efforts to establish and nourish their link with specific locations (Schnell & Reese, 2014). However, this link does not only serve marketing purposes, as craft brewers have demonstrated their sincere appreciation for the community's traditions, customs, and beliefs. On the other hand, findings challenge the Resource Partitioning Theory in that many craft brewers feel comfortable with remaining peripheral instead of moving to central areas where there is a stronger presence of their industrial counterparts (Carroll et al., 2002). Study findings can serve to inform craft beer entrepreneurs with information that will help them enhance the value of their products, marking their distance with the giant beer corporations. Doing so can support the fortification of the craft beer sector in Cusco, which appeared entrenched into the tourism influx, and can set the basis for the development of craft beverage tourism in this region. Moving forward, findings can also inform craft brewers on the value of incorporating local culture as to capitalize on the neolocalism trend, especially when catering to neolocals travelling to Cusco.

CONCLUSION

This study showed that Cusco craft brewers are effectively responding to the neolocalism trend to take advantage of the current tourist flow in the region. However, future research is needed to examine other social trends shaping consumers' behaviors and influencing their preferences, such as locavorism and the Zero-km food movement that are related to the location mechanism of the resource partitioning theory and that have not yet been studied in the craft beer business. Altogether, our findings enhance our understanding on the meaning of location related to the Resource Partitioning Theory. They also provide insights for craft brewers seeking to establish their business in a major tourism destination, especially on how to capitalize on the location mechanism to differentiate themselves from mass beer corporations.

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AGRITOURISM AND SOCIAL CHANGE: THE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM ANGLE

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ABSTRACT

Since the green revolution, the way in which food is produced and distributed has distanced the food producer-consumer connection. Agritourism, defined as the offer of educational and recreational activities in working agricultural settings, emerged as a scheme with the capacity to (re)establish such a connection. Seeking to validate whether agritourism can serve that purpose, we collected data from 328 adults and 605 children (2018-21; USA) before and after visiting an agritourism farm. Our findings support recognizing agritourism as a suitable catalyst to strengthen the producer-consumer relationship, which can promote social change focusing on building, restoring, or strengthening local food systems.

Key Words: quasi-experimental design, farm visit, local food, place-based education, pro-environmental behavior, sustainability

INTRODUCTION

The green revolution changed how food is produced (e.g., monoculture prevalent, high inputs) and distributed (e.g., highly processed, globalized markets). Although it brought several benefits to the global population especially because of its managerial efficiency and yield increase, its crop specialization and high mechanization also distanced the food producer-consumer connection (Rotz & Fraser, 2015). As a result, many consumers, especially young adults, youth, and children, don't know where their food comes from (Pense et al., 2005; Vileisis, 2008). Agricultural intensification also challenged the survival of small family farms that were unable or amenable to make the jump into the new way of food and fiber production, thus reducing their number across the world (Barbieri & Streifeneder, 2019). Both changes in the food consumers and producers have weakened local food systems worldwide.

Agritourism, defined as the offer of educational and recreational activities on working agricultural settings (Gil Arroyo et al., 2013), has grown in popularity over the years throughout the world. Given that agritourism is developed based on individual farm resources (e.g., types of crops, human capital) and the cultural and natural values of the surrounding communities (Gao et al., 2014), agritourism tends to offer unique and varied attractions across destinations (Barbieri & Streifeneder, 2019). As such, Italy is widely recognized for wine tourism, Spain for oleotourism, the USA for offering recreational activities, notably self-harvesting and school tours, and so forth.

Research has validated the many socio-cultural and environmental benefits that agritourism brings to farmers, their families, and overall society beyond economic gains, notably increased farm revenues and profits, heritage preservation, and revitalization of surrounding economies and landscapes (Barbieri, 2020). Building upon evidence that agritourism fosters experiential and place-based education that can stimulate knowledge gain and higher-order thinking skills (Ives & Obenchain, 2006), and pro-environmental and civically engaged behaviors (Jacobson et al., 2015), our research team

investigated the effect of visiting a farm in the agricultural knowledge of kids and sustainable behaviors and intentions of adults.

RESEARCH METHODS

Following a quasi-experimental design, we collected data from 328 adults and 605 children (aged 8-13) between 2018 and 2021 across North Carolina (USA) before and after visiting a farm involved in agritourism. Research design included data collection across four treatments: families visiting a farm during weekends (family visit), children visiting a farm with their teachers (field trip), a virtual agritourism experience facilitated with a farmer (in-classroom activity), and a control group. Data collection was possible with the partnership of six farms located across the three regions of North Carolina (study sites) and 47 teachers located at 42 schools across the state. Data analyses included a series of descriptive and relational (e.g., McNemar tests, regressions, MANOVA and ANOVA) statistical tests ($p < 0.05$). In this abstract, we summarize key completed results (adults) as well as preliminary findings (children) of ongoing analyses of this multi-phased project.

RESULTS

Our results show that that farm visits increase adults' attitudes towards local foods (Brune et al., 2020; 2021). More specifically, we found that after visiting a farm, adults significantly increased their perceptions of the qualities (e.g., are good for the environment) and accessibility (e.g., know where to buy) of local foods. Adults also showed an increase of their intentions to purchase locally produced foods either directly from farmers (e.g., shopping at farmer's markets) or by making informed decisions (e.g., looking at labels to see where food comes from). Notably, adults reported their willingness to increase their monthly budget to purchase local foods by five, ten, and even twenty percent ($p < 0.05$) after their agritourism experience. Agritourism also showed to instill civically engaged behaviors in the form of advocacy for local foods (Brune et al., 2022).

Ongoing analysis is yielding evidence that children gain agricultural knowledge after engaging in an agritourism experience. When all treatments are combined (family visits, school field trips, virtual experiences), children increased their correct answers in all six topics assessed. However, the knowledge gain was only statistically significant in the three topics related to local agriculture (i.e., type of crop by region, effect of weather using North Carolina as a scenario, effect of season in North Carolina crops). The aggregated agricultural knowledge score also showed a significant increase after engaging in the different agritourism modalities. Preliminary results also indicate that the agritourism experience increases children's attitudes toward local foods. Notably, no family demographic indicators appear to predict children's attitudes toward local foods.

CONCLUSION

All results combined, our investigation supports recognizing agritourism as a suitable catalyst to strengthen the producer-consumer relationship related to local food systems. In doing so, our findings can serve to inform farmers, consumers, policymakers, and development agencies on how to use agritourism to promote social change focusing on building, restoring, or strengthening local food systems. For example, our findings indicate that efforts should place to foster closer interactions between children and farmers (e.g., increasing school field trips to farms, inviting farmers to classroom visits) and to promote local food outlets (e.g., u-pick operations, farmer's markets) as they seem suitable to (re)connect the food producer-consumer relationship.

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TRADESMEN DINERS' CONTRIBUTION TO GASTRONOMY TOURISM: THE CASE OF İZMIR

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of tradesmen's diners located in "Kemeraltı", the historical Grand Bazaar district of Izmir, Turkey in terms of their functional transformation through time. This study analyses a number of tradesmen's diners in the context of their practices of representation of the past along with their traditional serving styles and cooking techniques as well as their contribution to gastronomic tourism today. This exploratory study adopts a qualitative approach to ascertain changing functions of tradesmen's diners and consumer's eating habits. In-depth interviews, participant observation and secondary data will be used as a research method to collect data.

Key Words: Tradesmen diners, culinary heritage, gastronomy, food tourism, İzmir

INTRODUCTION

The preservation and development of historical values and cultural assets is important for a sustainable gastronomic tourism. The most important elements of these values for a gastronomic destination are culinary heritage, local flavors and traditional recipes. Consumption habits change in the fast pace of city life resulting in habit of eating fast in the same manner; thus, traditional home-style food outlets are rare and precious. This makes tradesmen diners as sought-after artisan restaurants. Consumers' interest in local food and gastronomy has increased with the effect of issues related to the environment, ethics, sustainability and local health along with awareness of authenticity in food consumption, which has spread at lightning speed thanks to power of internet and social media in recent years, in particular. (Home et al., 2020; Erdoğan and Özdemir, 2018; Björk and Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2014).

For most destination management organizations, highlighting local flavors is considered as one of the most important destination marketing strategies today, and it is also used for branding the destination as well. Discovering new tastes and experiencing new environments is a unique and memorable moment for tourists. In this respect, some destinations precede the others with their exclusive gastronomic character and therefore witness a serious increase in tourist demand (Gyimothy and Mykletun, 2009). Local restaurants has significant contributions in developing geographies of local food and revalorizing their territory; highlighting traditional cuisine and all other related practices (Duram and Cawley, 2012).

Traditional and historical bazaars and souks are important commercial districts located in most cities and towns especially in Middle East, Asia and some parts of Africa attracting locals as much as tourists. What differentiates a bazaar from any other shopping complex is its strong bond with the local culture. The cultural vitality of a bazaar should be maintained with development and support of local businesses, especially those selling local products. These bazaars stand out as meeting points for artisans, traders and various other shops of different manufacturing activities. The historical background of bazaars with a strong traditional and mostly multicultural background, contributes greatly to sustain local traditions and culture. One of these markets is Kemeraltı in Izmir where you can sense the climate of city the best. Tradesmen diners are part of these scene in the gastronomic context sustaining cultural vitality of bazaars.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Culinary heritage: Throughout history, different civilizations have created unique cuisines, but these cuisines have not developed in isolated environments. They have survived to the present day; yet, shaped by the influences of those who came before them, neighboring societies, interactions, wars or immigrants. And these influences directly or indirectly played a significant role in the shaping the food itself as well (Civitello, 2008).

Food undoubtedly shapes and defines us; both on a physiological and cultural level. All societies around the world have their own culinary cultures and diets. This diet is mainly shaped with community's cultural, geographical, economic, ecological conditions as well as historical processes forming its culinary identity and heritage. Culinary heritage is sum of

the agricultural products, ingredients, cooking techniques, recipes and food traditions as well as table manners, symbolic dimension of the meal and more material aspects, cooking and kitchenware, table settings and the dishes (Tibere, 2013).

Massive industrial developments, increasing population, global consumerism around the globe negatively affects societies and environment; threatening both natural resources and cultural assets. Due to these structural transformations, communities are experiencing strong pressures on their culture and traditions; including their food heritage or culinary identities. Under these conditions, culinary heritage configures a unique blueprint of common values; thereby food is not only an intermediary for survival but also a reflection of local cuisine and customs reverting to authentic culture (Obeidat, 2023; Alonso and V. Krajsic, 2013).

İzmir and Kemeraltı: The richness of Aegean cuisine, İzmir in particular, is based on the unique climate of the region, being the cradle of civilizations and reflection of all these on the lifestyle. The fact that Izmir cuisine was influenced by many cultures has led to the enrichment of this cuisine rather than its assimilation. As a result, İzmir cuisine is one of the richest, most privileged and most special cuisines of Turkish cuisine. When historical records about İzmir are analysed, it is seen that the history of the city dates back to 3000 BC (Tanrıver vd., 2016). Izmir, a multi-communal and multi-cultural Mediterranean city where Turks, Greeks, Sephardic Jews, Levantines, Armenians and other ethnic elements lived together, especially from the beginning of the 16th century to the middle of the 20th century; forming a multi-layered historical background. The richness that this historical accumulation and multiculturalism brought to İzmir is also reflected in İzmir cuisine. Traces of multiculturalism can be seen both in every part of the historical city and in its cuisine. It is this multicultural and cosmopolitan structure that makes today's Izmir and gives it an urban identity Vegetables, herbs and fish dishes flavored with olive oil, a culinary culture based on meat, milk and wheat of nomadic life and livestock activities, and a wide variety of street flavors are reflected in the cuisine as a feature of this cultural diversity (Yıldız, 2019).

Kemeraltı, the old grand bazaar in downtown İzmir, combines history, culture, craft, gastronomy, commerce and tourism. It is a multicultural, dynamic, constantly developing and changing center that does not lose its identity in the process of change. Due to its proximity to the port area, it has had a strategic advantage for centuries. Along with its historical values, it is an important region for İzmir in terms of its cultural and commercial values. Kemeraltı area, which is a gateway to the past in the city center with its historical, cultural, economic and social dynamics, was accepted to UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List in 2020. Kemeraltı, with its qualified immovable assets such as historical agora, mosques, churches, synagogues, fountains, caravanserais, hotels and Turkish baths is the most unique and authentic attraction for tourists visiting the city. It is also the symbol of intangible cultural values such as vibrant, colorful and lively experiences, traditional production styles that continue with master-apprentice relationships, and modern life practices. Kemeraltı promises not only a tour, but also an experience. This is how it takes its place in the collective memory of the city. Kemeraltı maintains its cultural heritage with its traditional texture, building features and hundreds of different functions (Çekindir and Aktan, 2021; Yıldız, 2021).

This bazaar has been formed since 1650-1670 by filling the sea coast and opening new settlement areas and trade houses. This bazaar, which was the heart of Izmir's commercial life in the 19th century, included old inns and covered bazaars. The shops here mostly met the needs of local people and low-income families. The bazaar consisted of blacksmiths, coal smiths, nail makers, spice shops and businesses such as the hay market. Each business house in the bazaar formed separate sections in groups. Today, Kemeraltı Bazaar has moved away from this feature and has become an important shopping center of Izmir. Although some inns with vaults and domes have preserved their characteristics, mostly modern business centers, shops, cafeterias and cinemas are gathered in the modern day. In addition to these, there are also shops where ceramics, tile panels, wooden works, metal works, flat woven mats, carpets and rugs are sold, reflecting the examples of Turkish handicrafts (izmirktb.gov.tr, n.d.).

Since Izmir has been a port city, also the western end of Silk Road, it has been a city where sea trade and caravan trade have been intense from history to the present. It was necessary to create an area where the goods of the merchants coming to the city would be loaded and unloaded, and the needs of the people coming to the city such as accommodation, food and beverage had to be met. Kemeraltı bazaar, which was built for these purposes, serves to meet the needs of its employees and guests today, as in the past.

Several tradesmen’s diners are located in ‘Kemeraltı’. Although they passed along a functional transformation through time, these small restaurants still continue to serve a wide variety of homemade soups and stews during lunchtime in a casual atmosphere as a common feature with that of back in time. Their decorations and the employees are either family members or do not change much. Usually, property ownership is passed from father to son. In this sense, it can be said that they are part of culinary scene and heritage with the recipes they practice for over decades. Though the way of interpreting food or service styles in the past and today remains almost the same, consumer profile is not quite the same. Mainly,

tradesmen constituted much of their visitation in the past; yet, bazaar visitors, both locals and tourists are also their customers now. Especially due to their geographic location; where Greek, Jewish and Muslim population blended together back in time, they constitute an important place of encounter for various material cultures, especially the dishes. Today they are subject to multiple projects which aim to promote İzmir's culinary heritage; one of which is the "Selluka Certificate and Plaque Project" that aims to evaluate diners according to criteria such as the quality of local food and service, customer satisfaction and gastronomical value. Another aim of this award is to promote the Historical Kemeraltı Renewal Area on domestic and foreign platforms, to contribute to the tourism sector in regards to gastronomy tourism, and thus to encourage other establishments in the sector to create better conditions (https://izmir.ktb.gov.tr/). Once used to be a stopover for tradesmen and artisans in the immediate vicinity for lunch; today they appear on a wide range of publications, from gourmet guides, brochures and websites as a showcase of İzmir's gastronomy. The distinct food culture offered at these eateries entices the tourist's curiosity to taste the local delicacies; which can be resembled to symbolic consumption of both the geography and history (Ekşigil, 2017).

Figure 1. Tradesmen diners



Source: Compiled by the author

Şevketi bostan (blessed thistle), arapsaçı (baby's tears), kokoreç (grilled sheep's intestines), artichoke, elbasan tava (lamb casserole with yoghurt), white bean with rice pilaf, nohutlu işkembe (tripe with chick-peas) which are among the indispensable tastes of İzmir cuisine, have been passed down from generation to generation for years in Kemeraltı artisan restaurants. In the artisan restaurants, where the best examples of local delicacies are served, a feverish work begins in the early hours of the morning; the pots boil, the dishes made from Aegean herbs, mostly with olive oil; meat dishes from the Ottoman period to the present day, each of the indispensable flavors of Izmir, is prepared and placed on the counters showcasing a visual feast that whets the appetite.

Common characteristics of tradesmen diners can be listed as follows (Çelik et al., 2020; Yolkeser, 2014; yemek.com):

- the concepts of half portion and one and a half portions
- the absence of a printed menu and server; buffet style, self-service dishes
- high speed of service and fast table turnover
- adressing the customer by name whenever possible
- water glasses, salt and pepper shakers, hot pickle jars lined up at the edge of the tables
- small rectangular pink papers tucked into glasses instead of napkins
- randomly chopped breads in big plastic containers
- fluorescent lamp and ceiling fan.
- eating at the same table with people you do not know
- tea served at the end of meal as a treat
- payment of the check to the owner of the business sitting at the cash register
- lemon cologne served with cloves and toothpicks after the payment

METHODOLOGY

The research was divided into two phases; adopting both qualitative and quantitative approaches. First, in-depth interviews were conducted face to face with 6 participants from tradesmen diners. These respondents were selected by using purposive sampling in order to reach the intended sample. Due to the nature of the study, only chefs, sous chefs and owners were included in the interview session. Each interviewee and diner was assigned a numerical code (I-1, I-2,....I-6 and D-1, D-2….D-6). To obtain relevant information and findings regards to research objectives, semi structured questions were developed. Tradesmen diners in Kemeraltı were chosen for data collection as this bazaar served as main location. The interviews were conducted in the month of January 2023 and were limited to ten to fifteen minutes, due to the intense business flow and time constraint of interviewees. The final sample size was determined as the data saturation had been reached, and no new information emerged. The interviews were first audio-taped and later transcribed verbatim. Statements

with related concepts were grouped according to core themes based on the principles of grounded theory. A survey was conducted with restaurant guests in the second part of the study to elicit data about consumer opinions about these diners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participants come from a wide range of backgrounds in terms of position such as chef, owner, chef owner or sous chef; business history that spans 27-73 years; and generation as first, second or third, still maintaining family tradition. Table 1 depicts related information for all participants:

Table 1. Participant Information

Participants	**Position**	**Years in business**	**Generation**
I-1	Chef Owner	9 years	First generation
I-2	Sous Chef	56 years	Second generation
I-3	Sous Chef	70 years	Second generation
I-4	Chef Owner	55 years	Second generation
I-5	Chef Owner	73 years	Third generation
I-6	Chef Owner	52 years	First generation

Since tradesmen diners have limited sitting capacity and limited staff who are mostly family members, self-service or buffet style is preferred rather than table service to speed up food service. Another reason is their small size in terms of square footage that aims to reduce excessive traffic by staff. Operational information of the diners are shown on Table 2.

Table 2. Operational Information

Diners	Seating Capacity	Service Style	Customer Type	Popular Items
D-1	50	Buffet	Mixed	*Kelle paça çorbası* *Nohutlu işkembe* *Şevketi bostan*
D-2	34	Buffet	Mixed	Olive oil vegetable dishes *Güveçte kuru fasülye* *Arapsaçı*
D-3	16	Buffet	Mixed	*Vegetable stews* *Artichoke* *Kuru fasülye*
D-4	68	Buffet	Mixed	*Elbasan Tava* *Şevketi bostan* Fish Soup
D-5	16	Buffet	Mixed	*Döner* *Elbasan tava* *Ciğer sarma* *Patlıcan kebabı*
D-6	10	Self-service	Mixed	*Kumru*

Table 3 summarizes interviewee opinions. Based on their opinions, six themes has emerged; these are usage of local ingredients, usage of traditional recipes and cooking techniques, usage of varied and seasonal menu items, adoption of traditional presentation styles, simplicity of the concept to emphasize food and reflection of territory and place.

Table 3. Interviewee Opinions and Emerging Themes

Emerging Theme	Related Comments
Usage of local ingredients	Interviewees stated that they provide most of their daily supplies from nearby butchers and groceries rather than supermarkets. They stated that they have a longstanding relationship with them and they don't even have to tell the butcher or grocer each time what kind of meat or vegetable they need. They also mentioned that another reason for preferring these ingredients is because they are the freshest ones and products from nearby livestock and agriculture districts such as Urla, Ödemiş, Tire, Bayındır, Menderes or Bergama. They also reported that they make substantial cost savings not having to travel longer distances to shop and overstock items. So they think that the dishes made with them taste better; they are healthier and of better quality. As İzmir cuisine is based heavily on olive oil, quality of the oil makes a significant difference on taste.
Usage of traditional recipes and cooking techniques	Interviewees are either first, second and third generations who stated that they learned all these recipes from their masters and grandparents. They never changed it and don't think about replacing them with other dishes either. They expressed themselves as the messengers of cuisine culture from their ancestors to young ones. They don't have written standard recipes, yet it is more like a verbal tradition. They also remarked that they feel proud to preserve these traditional recipes and cooking techniques. Some even have stone ovens as they insist any dish cooked in it would never taste as the one cooked on a stove.
Varied and seasonal menu items	Interviewees stated that all the dishes on their menus are signature dishes of İzmir cuisine and Aegean Region in a broader context. So they constructed their menus on the products available to the region. They said that although some stews are available all year-round, there are a lot of seasonal fresh herbs that are cooked in olive oil in İzmir cuisine; so the menu item reflects the season and convenience food items are not preferred. Yet, they mentioned some products like artichokes can be stored in vacuum bags thanks to advancements in food protection methods. But they also indicated that due to limited seating and storage available, they have to keep it to minimum and prefer seasonal items.
Traditional presentation styles	They described their restaurants as a showcase of the region presented in a buffet style service. They said that food is usually displayed in big trays and containers visible to customers to create a colourful scene stimulating both stomach and eyes. They stated that this representation of food is also the reflection of abundance and the richness of regional cuisine. They explained that customers usually choose between main dishes, rice or bulghur as accompanying dish; and mostly *ayran* as a drink. The guests point what they like from the menu, sit at a table that becomes available and get service in the quickest way as the food preparation is complete by 11:00 a.m.
Simplicity of the concept to emphasize food	Interviewees indicated that they keep their concept fairly simple in terms of tableware and cutlery. They said that customers wouldn't find any linen tablecloth or quality fabric chairs and silverware but a cozy atmosphere and good food. They also emphasized that the center of the attention should remain nothing but the buffet so they don't want to distract customers with other details. Another reason is associated with the need for a faster table turnover as they are too busy between 11:00 and 15:00 during lunch time which is the peak hours.
Reflection of territory and place	They emphasized the importance of sustaining the culinary culture as it is the main reason for people to dine in these diners; no matter either they are localers or tourists. They stated that home-style, traditional food with variety is what is expected by customers and this is the original starting point of tradesmen diners back in time. They said that even before these diners, Kemeraltı was the meeting point for all kind of

	tradesmen and embraced people from various ethnic backgrounds both as visitors and neighboring artisans; thus, the interchange among them is also evident on the menus as well. One interviewee even expressed to dine here as taking a bite from Kemeraltı, İzmir and the Aegean and as experimenting the terroir as a whole.

Besides interviewing restaurateurs, consumer were also surveyed about their opinions about tradesmen diners and how they evaluate these diners' contribution to gastronomy tourism and continuation of culinary traditions. Among the 100 respondents participated in the survey, 64% of the participants were men and 36% were women. Most of the participants who answered the survey were between 41-60 in terms of age, another 38% were between 18-40, and 1% were above 61 years old. While 82% of the respondents were Turkish; either local citizens or non-residents, 18% were foreigners visiting İzmir as a tourist. Customer demographics related to survey is shown on Table 4:

Table 4. Customer Demographics

Age	n	Gender	n	Nationality	n
18-40	38	Female	36	Turkish	82
41-60	61	Male	64	Foreigner	18
61 and above	1				

In the second part of the survey, respondents were asked to rate their opinions about tradesmen diners. Table 5 provides the numbers and mean scores of their responses. The consumers ranked the statements on a 5-point Likert scale 1 being strongly disagree and 5 as strongly agree. The ranked mean scores are reflected in Table 5.

Table 5. Consumers' Perceptions about Tradesmen Diners

	Statements	*SD*	*D*	*U*	*A*	*SA*	*Total*	*Mean*
Reflection of Culinary Heritage	I think that tradesmen diners contribute to preservation of local food culture	-	5	8	44	43	100	4,25
	I think tradesmen diners contribute to sustain culinary traditions and heritage	1	2	6	39	52	100	4,39
	I prefer to eat in tradesmen diners as the dishes reflect local territory	2	6	27	35	30	100	3,85
	I think tradesmen diners of Kemeraltı are unique places to experience local food culture	1	5	12	34	48	100	4,23
	I think the menu items in the tradesmen diners reflect local cuisine culture pretty well	1	4	14	49	32	100	4,07
Atmosphere	I think the tradesmen diners provide a local atmosphere	1	5	7	47	40	100	4,2
	The cozy atmosphere of the tradesmen diners enhances my dining experience	2	13	14	38	33	100	3,87
	I feel more comfortable when eating at the tradesmen restaurants thanks to welcoming attitude and friendliness of staff	1	7	21	33	38	100	4
	The pleasure of eating in tradesmen diners is more satisfying than other type of restaurants	3	19	27	29	22	100	3,48

	Tradesmen diners ensure a meaningful experinece to get away from the mundane	3	11	25	39	22	100	3,66
Locality	I think that tradesmen diners are representative of local community	-	1	4	51	44	100	4,38
	I think that tradesmen diners allow interaction with local community	2	7	7	63	21	100	3,94
	I think that tradesmen diners facilitate the understanding of local gastronomic identity	-	3	3	68	26	100	4,17
Food Authenticity	The dishes are prepared by using seasonal produce	4	6	10	43	37	100	4,03
	The food items are varied	-	-	-	76	24	100	4,24
	The buffets represent local specialty recipes	-	2	5	52	41	100	4,32
	Production and presentation style of the dishes are traditional	3	9	16	37	35	100	3,92

The highest mean score was allocated to diners' sustainment of culinary traditions and heritage and the second highest score was given to the statement that tradesmen diners are representative of local community. The dimension with the third highest means score was given to the statement that the buffets represent local specialty recipes. The statement that received the lowest score was about the pleasure comparison of tradesmen diners and other type of eateries.

Table 6. Expression of the Experience

About food…		*About Diner…*	
Local	88	Homy	92
Authentic	67	Inviting	75
Memorable	54	Welcoming	62
Traditional	39	Simple	41
Unique	28	Cozy	30
Varied	24		

Next, consumers were asked to express their feelings and perceptions about the food and the diner seperately with three words. The words that they used most are depicted on Table 6; with locality ranking in the first place about food; and homy atmosphere of the premises ranking first about diners. Authenticity, memorability, traditionality, uniqueness and variety are other expressions that were used to verbalize their perception and feeling about food; inviting, welcoming, simple and cozy ambience about the diners.

CONCLUSION

Adoption of sustainable culinary practices is significant to gastronomic tourism development. Promotion of local cuisine contributes to creating memorable experiences for tourists which will form their intentions for future visitations. But commodification of the such may damage or have negative implications on food heritage and this should be done by considering the long-term effects. So, there is always risk of losing the original identity unless wisely protected and maintained while being integrated to the city's destination management plans. Sometimes the reason of such deterioration is because local values melt in influences of globalization and traditional food heritage is either forgotten or loses its authenticity.

The research that was carried out with the Tradesmen Diners located in Kemeraltı revealed that they have several attributes which contribute to sustaining culinary traditions and add value to dining experience as a whole; pointing out a noteworthy potential to contribute to gastronomy tourism. Usage of seasonal, local ingredients; traditional recipes and cooking techniques, traditional presentation styles reflecting territory and place with simplicity for decades now are the most prominent authentic characteristics of these diners that local people and tourists seek. Consumer opinions also support the fact that they sustain culinary heritage and food traditions and that they are unique places to experience local food culture.

As authenticity is indeed what customers seek; the role of tradesmen diners by showing 'how locals cook and present them, how they eat; what type of ingredients they use' take an essential part in attracting the foodies. In these diners, traditional practices are handed down through generations ensuring a long-established food culture. The research shows that these diners are important in terms of preservation and survival of the culinary heritage also introducing it to future generations.

Although the number of participating diners was limited, the research makes several contributions to literature. One of these contributions is that, it touches upon an under-researched area of 'tradesmen diners'. Another is in pinpointing their role in sustaining culinary traditions and how they actively promote their own food culture. Research also includes consumers' opinions to consolidate the matter by referring to service providers and service receivers together. The findings have several implications in the context of local gastronomy, culinary heritage and gastronomy tourism; demonstrating that tradesmen diners survived to the present day without much deterioration. Besides, the existence of these diners in cooking, serving, and sale of these dishes enhances the eating out experience of those travelling to İzmir. Finally, diners directly elevates consumers' awareness and enjoyment of the dishes that they may otherwise would have limited knowledge about.

Future research could examine the role and involvement of other food mediators in sustaining culinary heritage and enriching gastronomic experiences. These studies could also reveal the extent of their contribution in their own ways to adding value to memorable culinary tourism experiences.

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Part IV - Happiness and Well-being in Hospitality and Tourism

MEASURING EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the mediating and moderating dimensions of employee retention from in the hospitality industry. It is hypothesized that by adopting a Positive Psychology approach, organizations can create a supportive and motivating work environment, which is likely to influence employees' decision to stay. The research is being conducted among Italian mid- to upper-class hotels with the cooperation of the National Association of Hoteliers.

Key Words: *employee well-being; retention, hospitality industry*

Retaining employees poses a challenge for organizations but is of utmost importance for gaining a competitive edge and achieving long-term success. High employee turnover leads to various problems, including increased recruitment and training costs, a shortage of skilled employees, and disruptions in organizational operations (A'yuninnisa and Saptoto, 2015).

Within the tourism and hospitality industry, the issue of employee retention has become even more critical compared to other sectors. Factors such as long working hours, demanding schedules, the expectation of full commitment during holidays and vacations, stagnant salaries that fail to keep up with inflation and the rising cost of living, and a lack of flexibility and clarity regarding career development have created significant challenges in retaining employees within this industry.

Scholars widely agree that employee retention is a strategic objective for companies, as it brings various benefits, including enhanced effectiveness, productivity, and cost management. Research over the years has focused on identifying the dimensions of employee retention, drawing on theories such as the Social Exchange Theory and Social Identity Theory. Additionally, researchers have explored different approaches to studying employee retention. For instance, Mitchell et al. (2001) proposed that it would be more valuable to examine why individuals choose to stay, as they may have distinct reasons for staying or leaving (De Lange et al., 2017).

Employee retention has emerged as a prominent subject within the field of organizational psychology due to the substantial costs associated with employee turnover (Coetzee et al., 2018) and the intensified competition for talented individuals. Turnover models have traditionally suggested that job satisfaction, commitment, and engagement influence employees' inclination to stay, while their absence leads to a higher likelihood of leaving. However, current evidence indicates that attitudes alone explain only a small portion of overall employee retention and turnover. Therefore, it is imperative to explore alternative avenues of research to gain a comprehensive understanding and explanation of employee retention (Steindórsdóttir et al., 2020). The purpose of this study is to investigate the mediating and moderating dimensions of employee retention from the perspective of Positive Psychology Theory, which focuses on understanding and enhancing individuals' well-being, satisfaction, commitment, and engagement in the workplace.
It is hypothesized that by adopting a Positive Psychology approach, organizations can create a supportive and motivating work environment, which is likely to influence employees' decision to stay.
The theoretical foundations of positive psychology in employee retention revolve around promoting well-being, leveraging strengths, enhancing psychological resources, encouraging job crafting, fostering a positive organizational culture, and cultivating meaning and purpose in the workplace.

By focusing on these elements, organizations can create an environment that supports employee satisfaction, engagement, and long-term commitment. Our research aims at investigating the moderating and mediating variables of employee retention.

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PROGRESS IN POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND TOURISM RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Positive psychology is a growing global research field of psychology that has flourished in the last two decades. Positive psychology suggests that the positive human future depends not only on minimising inextricable suffering but also on focusing on personal growth, well-being and flourishing. Researchers in positive psychology have focused their investigations on topics such as well-being, happiness, optimism, humour, positive emotions, and character strengths that broadly relate to quality-of-life research. This presentation provides a review of developments in positive psychology and presents an overview of the development of positive psychology, specifically in tourism research.

First, a link is made to the broader world of quality of life and tourism research. This discussion is followed by a general examination of the historical development of positive psychology as a research field and the discussion of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being as the core focus of positive psychology research. A brief overview of recent developments in positive psychology and tourism research - positive tourism research - is then presented. A discussion of positive tourism studies relating to: 1) tourists and their experiences, 2) host communities, and 3) tourism workers is provided for the conference audience. Ideas for the future development of positive tourism research will then be outlined.

Future research on tourist experiences, within the positive tourism domain, could, for example, examine the impacts of technology use on well-being. In particular, there is a need to examine virtual (digital, non-physical) tourist experiences and their effects on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, as engagement in virtual tourism becomes popular. This could include various forms of virtual tourism such as tourism live streaming and webcam travel as part of a broader research agenda on impacts of technology on human well-being. New research about tourism workers could more closely examine mental health of tourism employees, as this topic gains relevance in the post pandemic environment. In addition, using positive organisational scholarship may be a useful area of research to further understand mechanisms leading to resilience of tourism professionals. For those researchers interested in issues related to well-being of host communities, there are opportunities to examine how communities are impacted by tourism organisations that have adopted economic structures centred on the creation of well-being. These include businesses and organisations that place value on the greater good, well-being and forms of capital beyond financial capital. These new economic structures include but are not limited to, the generosity/gift economy, sacred economy, regenerative economy, creative economy and circular economy.

Key Words: tourism and positive psychology, positive tourism, well-being

PLANET HAPPINESS: A PROPOSITION TO ADDRESS OVERTOURISM AND GUIDE DESTINATION WELLBEING IN WORLD HERITAGE SITES AND BEYOND

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ABSTRACT

The tourism industry is one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries. In 2018, with over 1.34 billion visitor movements across international borders, the sector employed more than 1 in 10 people worldwide. Prior to COVID-19, the industry was unrelenting, expanding year on year and associated with a myriad of positive and negative economic, environmental and social impacts. While many destinations remain keen to promote themselves and attract growing visitor numbers, the phenomenon of "overtourism" continues to be a concern with many host communities threatened with high visitor numbers and struggling to adapt to the disruptive business practices often associated with IT companies. Planet Happiness is a global, grass roots not-for profit project that utilises IT systems and offers an innovative approach to destination planning. It focuses upon mechanisms to support responsible and sustainable tourism by placing host communities and their collective wellbeing at the heart of tourism and wider development processes.

Key Words: Tourism, overtourism, wellbeing, community wellbeing, World Heritage Sites

INTRODUCTION

Travel and tourism are inextricably linked to national and global development, affecting change almost everywhere. Following the devastating impacts of COVID-19 including the industry's loss of some 62 million jobs worldwide there is mounting pressure to recover; to reposition and prioritise the industry in the minds of all stakeholders. This repositioning requires moves to evolve the sector and engage the broadest possible alliance, committed to strengthening the industry's ability to deliver the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). From a destination perspective, three issues must be addressed, notably: tourism governance, over-crowding and the sector's carbon footprint (Rogers, 2021).

A systemic structural weakness with destination development has been its lack of inclusivity and tendency, over time, to prioritise business and government interests over the needs and concerns of host communities. Moreover, economic objectives associated with travel and tourism growth can undermine the quality of life (QoL) of host communities. Prior to COVID-19, this structural imbalance led to destination over-crowding, which coupled with the sector's carbon footprint are two of the sector's biggest sustainability threats (Rogers, 2021).

From a technical position these threats can be addressed if destinations and businesses commit to sector sustainability standards and criteria, and carbon footprint registry and reduction protocols. While businesses and governments are starting to engage in this complex arena, they can be incentivised to move at pace if they are driven by evidence-based public opinion centred upon QoL issues & metrics. As households, communities and economies continue to recover from COVID-19, a concerted global partnership is needed to: (a) engage & drive public interest in the wellbeing agenda, QoL metrics and the proposition of regenerative, flourishing destinations, and (b) incentivise businesses & governments to embrace destination wellbeing in their policy and planning frameworks (Rogers, 2021).

The above is proposed at a time when interest in wellbeing policy and practice is growing on multiple levels, from the individual to the state. Progress is underpinned by the 2011 UN Resolution 65/309 "*Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development*" and ten years' of the UN's annual Global Happiness Reports. Interest is growing as individuals and governments contemplate economic restructuring owing to COVID-19. Significantly, the wellbeing agenda aligns with the UN SDGs (Iriate and Musikanski, 2019); moreover, the inclusion of QoL science, measures and indicators in destination planning, provides a framework and narrative to (a) engage an industry-wide spectrum of stakeholders, (b) embrace wellbeing scores in destination competitiveness reporting, and (c) for travel and tourism to play a defining role in COVID-19 recovery (Rogers, 2021).

While individual and community (destination) wellbeing can be scientifically measured, how can the wellbeing agenda itself be positioned to support travel and tourism's recovery? Perhaps the biggest revolution in travel and tourism data science over the last five years, has been real-time often demand side data collated from social media, on-line booking platforms and other personal mobile device-related data. These innovations feed especially national tourism organisations (NTOs), destination management organisations (DMOs) and big business. Focusing upon visitor experiences, they often support, for example, niche-marketing, transport planning and opportunities for product development and business growth. In brief, they further empower business and government and, if not well managed, can add to the vulnerability of host communities, which in-turn undermines inclusive destination development (Rogers, 2021).

To promote more inclusive, evidence-based approaches to responsible development and regenerative growth, tourism governance requires access to more holistic data, providing 360-degree insights into not just visitor and industry data, but also the social, environmental and health conditions, sentiments and aspirations of host communities. Through objective and subjective measures, QoL data can be harvested to engage communities and civil society groups in wellbeing conversations, as well as the role that travel, tourism and hospitality can play in strengthening destination wellbeing and recent industry calls for "Net Positive Hospitality".[1] Such innovation is needed to support industry restructuring already underway with its emphasis upon domestic tourism as well as event management, product innovation and alternative travel experiences brought about by COVID-19 and the climate change imperative (Rogers, 2021).

Significantly, QoL data is also required by governments to enable them to rebuild and deliver listening, caring and inclusive societies and economies. Following the impacts of COVID-19, psychological, social and economic vulnerability are already emerging as pressing issues to manage. Hence the travel and tourism industry can position itself to call for this data, thereby: (a) elevating its political profile; (b) supporting its own regeneration; (c) breathing new life into tourism governance systems; and (d) placing people, neighbourhood, community & destination well-being front and centre, at the heart of destination planning processes (Rogers, 2021).

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS AND APPROACHES

Operating globally, Planet Happiness offers the travel and tourism industry the first framework, acknowledged by the World Economic Forum, the World Travel and Tourism Council, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and the UN World Tourism Organisation to define, value and measure travel and tourism's contribution to individual and destination wellbeing.

Its mission is to focus the attention of all tourism stakeholders on the wellbeing agenda; and use tourism as a vehicle for development that demonstrably strengthens destination sustainability and the quality of life (QoL) of host communities. The approach provides a narrative for the industry's billions of stakeholders, especially governments, host communities and businesses, to (i) comprehend and engage with the happiness, wellbeing and QoL agenda, and (ii) move our measure of progress and development *Beyond GDP,* with its narrow emphasis upon economic metrics.

In defining happiness and wellbeing, Planet Happiness builds on the use of subjective and objective wellbeing instruments by similar entities and projects in the happiness and well-being movement. One such project is the World Happiness Reports (2013-2018, with the exception of 2014) which rates nations on the basis of six factors: average gross domestic product per capita, freedom to make life choices, generosity, life expectancy at birth, perception of corruption and social support (Helliwell, Layard & Sacks, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018). A similar organization is the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) which defined wellbeing broadly to encompass civic engagement, community, education, environment, health, housing, income, jobs, life satisfaction, safety, and work-life balance in its *Better Life Index* and its *Guidelines for Measuring Subjective Well-being* (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2013, p. 169).

The instrument used by Planet Happiness to measure happiness and wellbeing is the Happiness Alliance's Happiness Index.[2] The Happiness Index is a scientifically valid (Musikanski et al., 2014) subjective wellbeing index that encompasses community, cultural, economic, educational governmental, health, social, time-balance and work factors as well as satisfaction with life, affect and psychological wellbeing. The Planet Happiness version of the survey includes questions

[1] See, for example, https://sustainablehospitalityalliance.org

[2] See https://www.happycounts.org/use-our-happiness-index-survey.html

measuring satisfaction with the way tourism is developing, that are centred around the way tourism is included in the UN SDGs.[3] These domains are depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The Wellbeing Pragmatic Shift: 11 Domains of Happiness



Each destination receives a unique URL allowing questions to be added to localise the survey. Questions can be added to engage stakeholders in discussions, steps and decision-making to reduce the destination's carbon footprint, focus upon resident-wildlife conflict issues or, in the case of Nepal's Sagamartha (Mt. Everest) National Park, for example, centre on issues related to the quality of local education and health provision.

Working with destination partners, data is analysed to produce one-page destination scorecards and in-depth data-rich reports, sparking conversations about tourism and destination wellbeing and how this relationship can be measured and strengthened.

To the authors' knowledge, Planet Happiness is unique in so far as it considers host community happiness and wellbeing as foundational to addressing issues of economic, social, environmental and other aspects of wellbeing and sustainability for World Heritage Sites and other visitor destinations. Thus, the project is pioneering a new approach to inclusive tourism planning, putting communities at the heart of the tourism planning process (Musikanski, Rogers, Smith, Koldowski, Iriate, 2019). While tourism can be viewed as a vehicle for development, the project begins with community wellbeing and aspects of social wellbeing based on the theory tourism should be planned, managed and measured to strengthen the collective wellbeing of destination communities. Alexis, (2017), Goodwin (2017) as well as Martin, Martinez and Fernandez (2018) cite community-based approaches as one means to solve problems of overtourism. Sung and Phillips (2018) found that community indicators that "embrace a wide range of economic, social, environmental (and) cultural dimensions" (p. 64) and can "paint a picture of a current direction of a community" (p. 68), help in "a community's understanding of how far it is from achieving its chosen goals" (p. 73), and "provide relevant information for governing a community and making decisions informed by data (p. 73).

The Planet Happiness methodology is grounded in the community-based processes of the Happiness Alliance provided to countries, cities, campuses and communities since 2010 (Musikanski et.al., 2019). It is composed of four steps aimed at answering four questions:

1. How happy are host communities in World Heritage Sites and other visitor destinations?
2. How can stakeholder efforts to promote responsible tourism increase the happiness of host communities?
3. How can host communities use data about their own happiness to safeguard their wellbeing and promote destination sustainability?
4. What can destination investors and visitors do to strengthen the happiness of host communities?

The steps untaken to answer these questions include:

1. Convene a destination management organization or sub-committee thereof composed of host community representatives and other stakeholders responsible for destination wellbeing and the following steps. Appoint a focal point or organization to coordinate efforts.
2. Sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Planet Happiness to use the Happiness Index and access its open-source data.
3. Gather knowledge and resources to implement subsequent steps via trainings conducted by Planet Happiness and the Happiness Alliance.
4. Raise destination awareness about happiness and wellbeing to encourage interest and engagement among local community members.

[3] See https://planethappinesssurvey.happycounts.org/survey/directToSurvey

5. Gather data using the Happiness Index from host communities. In subsequent iterations (see step 10), gather data from tourists and other industry stakeholders.
6. Analyze data, write and produce reports on the analysis. Disseminate report findings to community committee and related stakeholder groups.
7. Convene meetings to gather and discuss community and wider stakeholder feedback.
8. Select and design intervention(s) based on community feedback on the happiness and wellbeing data. In subsequent iterations (see step 10), gather feedback from entities in the tourism industry, tourists and other stakeholders in the tourism industry.
9. Implement intervention(s).
10. Gather data using the Happiness Index to measure the impact of the intervention. In an integrative process repeat steps 3-8.
11. Cooperate across sites by sharing data, learnings and best practices in a collaborative effort to solve the problems of overtourism and sustainability through community well-being and happiness.

Planet Happiness has achieved mixed results thus far. While successes have been achieved, notably including Nepal's Sagarmatha (Mt Everest) National Park[4] and Australia's Central Victorian Goldfields,[5] other sites have been unable to progress through the ten-steps owing to various issues including destination priorities surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. Dialogue continues with established, new and prospective partners in a series of other sites across Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas.

Planet Happiness aims to contribute towards more inclusive and responsible tourism planning processes. It seeks to ensure tourism planning meets the collective needs of host communities and aids in addressing the pressing and potentially mounting problems of overtourism in ways that benefit host communities, tourists and the tourism industry. The project's longer-term aim is that the reports and other information prepared by Planet Happiness and its partners will contribute to a shift in government and society to using happiness data and prioritizing happiness, wellbeing and sustainability over a singular focus on economic growth (Musikanski et.al., 2019).

MEASURING HAPPINESS

That happiness data can be used and measured by governments is not a novel idea. In 2011, the United Nations called on member nations to "pursue the elaboration of additional measures that better capture the importance of the pursuit of happiness and well-being in development with a view to guiding their public policies" (United Nations General Assembly, 2011). In addition to the World Happiness Reports and efforts by the OECD, the Global Happiness Council has been issuing annual reports about happiness and well-being policy since 2018 in an effort to encourage the adoption of happiness and well-being as a goal and the use of happiness data for public policy (see happinesscouncil.org to download the reports). Some nations have begun to adopt happiness and well-being as the primary goal of government, including Bhutan (Musikanski, 2014), the United Arab Emirates (Musikanski, 2018), and New Zealand (World Government Summit, 2019). Many other nations are collecting happiness and well-being data, but have yet to determine how to use it for public policy (Economic Performance, 2016).

With over 1.4 billion visitor movements across international boundaries in 2018 (Roser, 2019), a long-term aim is to contribute a tipping point in the happiness movement, as described by Malcolm Gladwell in his book, *The Tipping Point* (2000). To reach this goal, Planet Happiness sets a long-term target of one billion people, or about 15% of the world's population, taking the Happiness Index survey. This would enable more people to be aware that happiness can be measured and that happiness data can be used by individuals, communities, companies, and governments. In partnership with the Happiness Alliance, Planet Happiness plans to provide the inspiration coupled with tools and resources for individuals and organizations, whether host community members, tourists, or anyone else, to engage in similar processes, steps and programs to contribute to the happiness movement whereby happiness and wellbeing is the primary goal for people, communities and institutions (Musikanski et.al., 2019).

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[5] Report forthcoming

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