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Guest Editorial Note



Dear Readers,

Journal of Tourism (JoT) and its team is happy to present yet another issue with quality research papers pertaining to present need and developments in the tourism sector. Among the various research papers received by the JoT team, only six research papers were selected and recommended by the team of experts and reviewers to become part of this issue. We strongly believe that admitted research papers would energize the readers with joy and academic wisdom.

The first paper titled "Cross Cultural Differences in Hospitality and Tourism Research: where we have been and where we should go" authored by John C. Crofts explains about the cross cultural differences sticking to travel research with notable discussions of models pertaining to cultural research. Also, author discusses about the trans-border buying relationship and cultural stands, changing behavior of host population due to acculturation and its repercussions. The second paper titled "Study on the Adoption Intention of Consumers' Online Comments" authored by Wang Qiongyao and Zhang Mu outline the significance of online comments and its extent of acceptance and implications in tourism experiences. They also explored the motivating factors of user adoption intention through AMOS structural model.

The third paper titled "Creative Tourism: Paradoxes and Promises in the Struggles to find Creativity in Tourism" authored by Korstanje Maximiliano, Maite Echarri-Chavez, Lourdes Cisneros Mustelier and Babu P George argue the novel concept of Creative Tourism, its emergence and its relation with various theories and meanings. Authors draw various inputs of creativity and culture besides suggesting the space for future research.

The fourth paper titled "A Safe or Unsafe Tourism Destination: A Cross Cultural Comparison Study" by Hsuan Hsuan Chang and Sanda Plavina discuss the travelling risk and safety issues related to international travel. Authors further discuss about the natural and physical hindrances related to culture while travelling overseas besides studying its impacts.

The fifth paper titled "Homestays in Himachal Pradesh, India: A SWOT analysis"

authored by Jyoti Sood studies about alternative accommodation product-Homestays. Author also draws information about its existence in the Indian state, with inputs from government policies. Author justifies the paper with SWOT analysis of homestays lucidly.

The final paper titled "The Barriers of Community Participation in Tourism Development in Chilika Lake, Odisha contributed by Nabanita Khuntia and Jitendra Mohan Mishra is an attempt to find out major obstacles of community participation in tourism development and conceptualize the obstacles of community participation in the Chilika wetland. The authors attempted to assess these obstacles for their interrelationship and relationship with managerial issues of wetland

These six research papers include a variety of contemporary research problems to enable the readers to understand the ongoing tourism development trends and practices across the world. The views expressed in this issue of JOT are those of the respective authors. On behalf of Journal of Tourism, I am happy to extend my sincere wishes and thanks to our reviewers who have rendered their services in reviewing the received manuscripts and paving way to come out with this issue successfully. I am sure this issue would bring immense joy while reading and trigger research interest within you.

With best regards

S.C.Bagri, Ph.D.
Guest Editor

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Key Words

Cross cultural differences, national cultural differences

Cross Cultural Differences in Hospitality and Tourism Research: Where We Have Been and Where We Should Go

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Abstract

Cross cultural research is the focus of this paper. The intent is to summarize where cross cultural research has been and propose new directions in better understanding the role culture plays in hospitality and tourism research. In addition, the paper attempts to summarize the foundation and evolution of dimensional models of cross cultural research and to shed light on the potential mistakes in applying and interpreting such dimensions in tourism research in an effort to highlight future research agendas that begs for further investigation.

INTRODUCTION

Cross cultural differences is an important and relevant topic in tourism for several reasons. First, tourism is a global market place in the form of tourism demand (Pizam and Fleischer 2005). The increasing wealth in both developed and developing countries, the easing of cross border travel restrictions, improvements to international transportation infrastructures and reduced travel costs have led to steady increases in the number of international tourist arrivals over the years (Peng, Song, Crouch and Witt 2015). Second, national culture is the basis of a destination's brand personality (Matzler, Strobl, Stoburger-Sauer, Bobovnick and Bauer 2016, Pechlaner, Lange and Raich 2011) where nations showcase culture as the basis of their unique cultural attractiveness to visitors. Lastly, the industry is often considered global in nature, necessitating cooperation and negotiations between employees of differing national cultures (Choi, Stahura, Sammons and Bernhard 2013), cross border partnerships (Le Nguyen and Larimo 2011, Ayoun and Moreo 2008), franchises (Yeoung, Brookes and Altinay 2016), and buyer supplier relationships (Crotts, Aziz and Raschid 1998). The ever increasing levels of exposure to such global forces have challenged organizations that have been successful in their own cultural boundaries to consider the cultural conditions of other cultures with which they interact (Moon and Park 2011). Hence, an understanding of, and adaptation to, cultural differences is an important consideration across a variety of management and marketing disciplines.

Like tourism, the broader literature has understood the importance of national cultural differences for over 60 years. Early tourism studies employed indirect methods, yielding little more than generalized stereotypes of tourism markets (see Pizam and Fleischer 2005 for a literature review). Later, these analyses evolved to country by country comparisons in terms of destination choice, attitudes and purchasing behaviors (Reisinger and Mavondo 2006, Rosenbaum and Spears 2005, Mykletun, Crotts and Mykletun 2001). Still later, researchers came to the belief that culture is a measurable and stable construct that can be scored on various dimensions and linked to various dimensions on consumer values and behaviors (Jenner, MacNab, Briley, Brislin and Worthley 2008).

The focus of this paper is to summarize where cross cultural research has been and propose new directions to better understand the role culture plays in hospitality and tourism research. In addition, the paper will attempt to summarize the foundation and evolution of dimensional models of cross cultural research in tourism and to shed light on the potential mistakes in applying and interpreting such dimensions in tourism research in an effort to highlight future research agendas that beg for further investigation. Tourism researchers have at their disposal several well-developed cross cultural measurement schemes that are based on large and globally dispersed samples that will be discussed in the second section of this paper in an effort to aid researchers as to the appropriate model to be used.

Trend Analysis of Prior Research

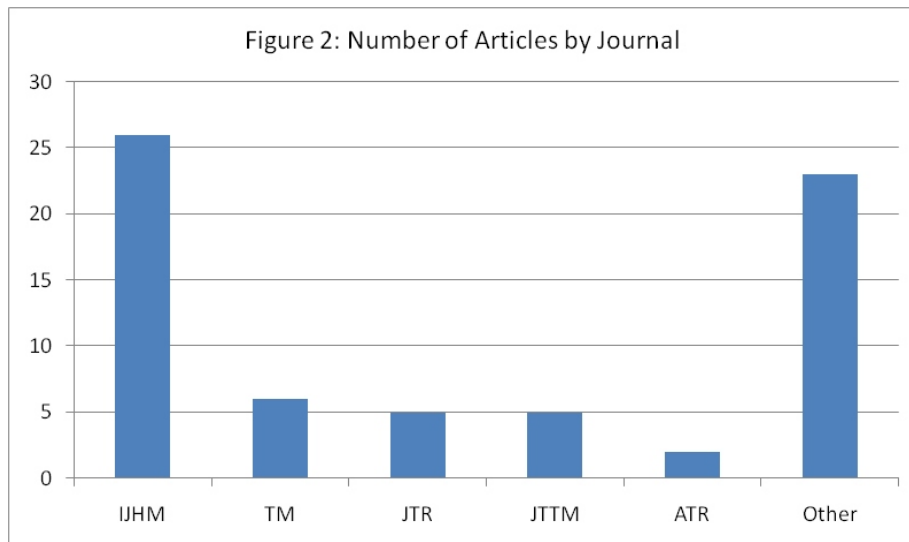
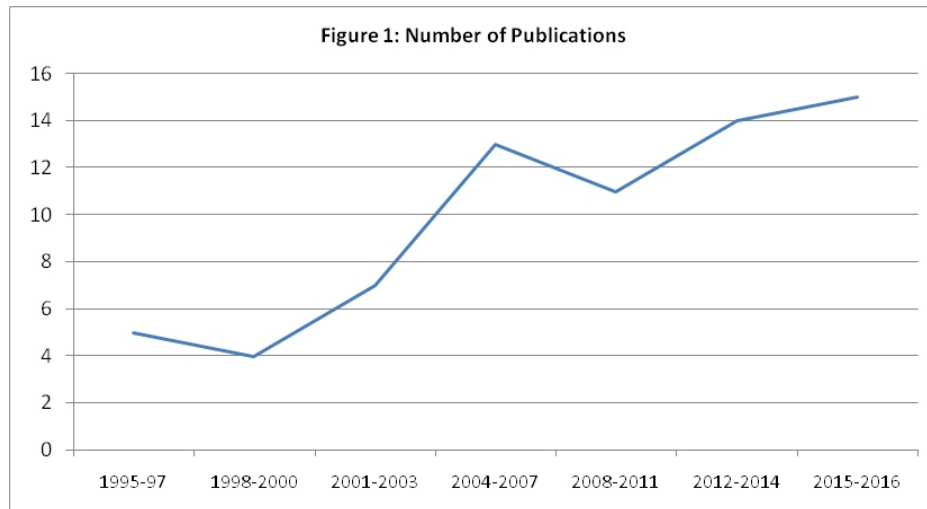
In order to assess where cross cultural research has been in a tourism and hospitality context and to suggest new directions of research, a content analysis was conducted. Researchers have performed such analysis in order to recognize patterns and development in specific bodies of the literature (Okazaki and Mueller 2007, Taylor 2005, Zou 2005).

Several steps were employed in the analysis. First, all hospitality and tourism journals that make their full-text articles available on EBSCO's Hospitality and Tourism Complete, the leading electronic hospitality and tourism management database, were searched using keywords "cross cultural differences" and "national cultural differences." Second, the highest ranked social science citation indexed journals were also searched using the same keywords to insure no articles were overlooked. These journals were *Tourism Management*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, the *Journal of Travel Research*, and the *International Journal of Hospitality Management*.

Published research articles in this analysis were excluded if: 1) the data were from student samples; 2) examined only a single country; or 3) the article devoted a minimum portion of their conclusions to cross cultural comparisons. These procedures yielded 74 articles related to cross cultural differences in tourism. Subsequently, the dominant topics were coded for each article as well as other pertinent information such as method, and basis for cross cultural comparisons.

Frequency Publications

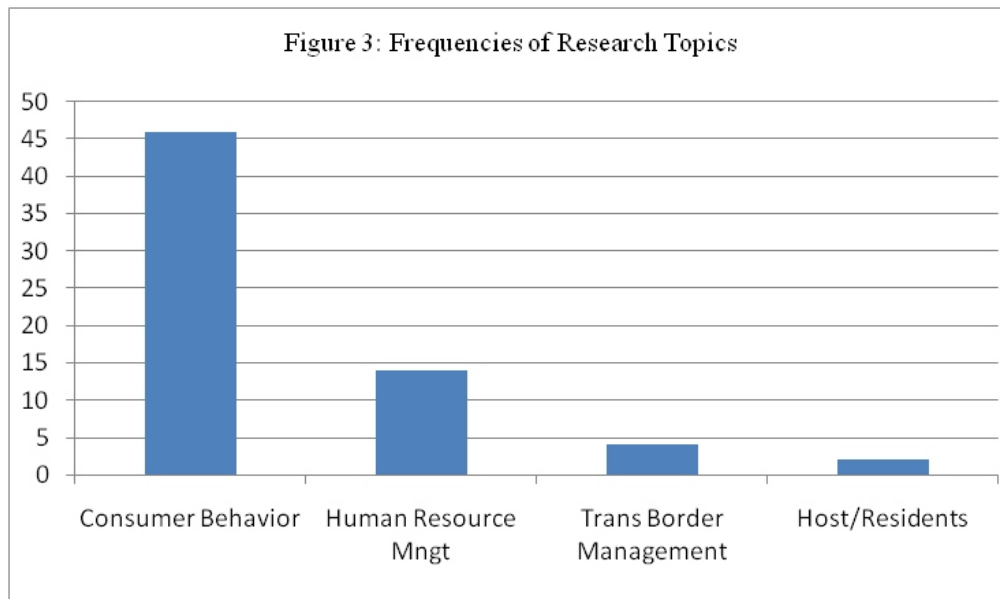
A trend in the number of publications is summarized in Figure 1. Though not all hospitality and tourism journals go back to 1995 or allow online electronic access to their articles over this time period, the analysis clearly shows a rise in the number of published cross cultural difference articles over the past two decades. By far, the journal with the highest number of articles identified was the *International Journal of Hospitality Management* with 26, followed by *Tourism Management* (6), and the *Journal of Travel Research* and the *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing* at five each (See Figure 2). The *Annals of Tourism Research* contained two identified articles as well as a number of other journals. Hence, this author contends that this is an adequate number of articles to discern meaningful patterns.



Frequency of Research Topics

All 69 research articles were content-analyzed for their dominant topic. This analysis clearly demonstrates where the emphasis has been historically focused as well as areas that are relatively under researched (See Figure 3). The vast majority of the studies could be categorized as consumer behavior focused (n=45, 66.1%) where tourist behavior of different national cultures were compared and contrasted on such themes as brand

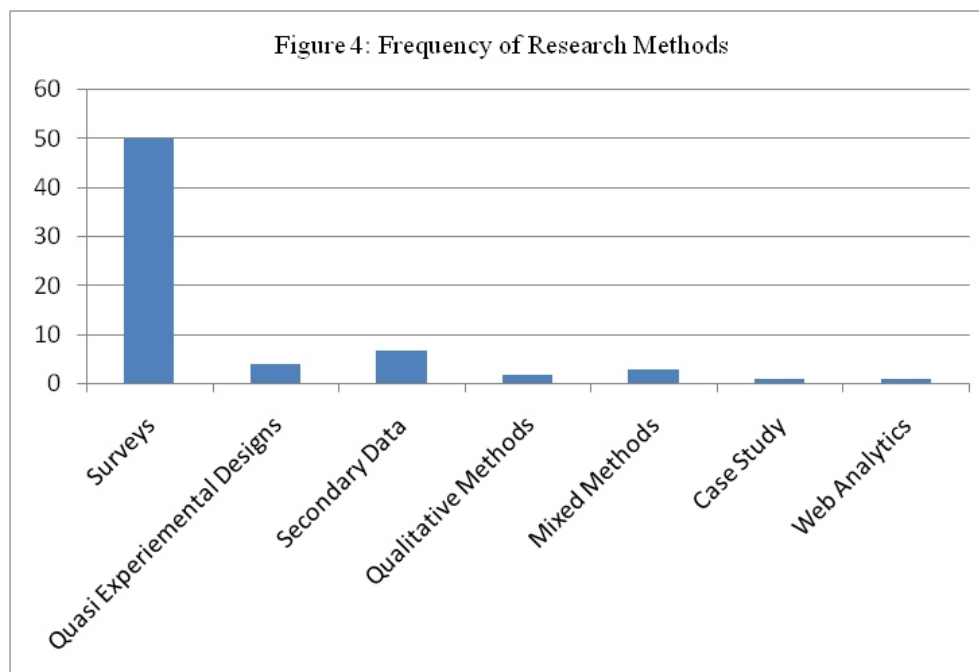
awareness, trip planning, purchase intentions, behaviors and satisfaction, etc. Another 15 studies (22.0%) in this analysis were categorized as human resource management focused in such themes as employee satisfaction, leadership, and empowerment/teamwork. Rounding out these broad categories were five (7.3%) in management (e.g., corporate social responsibilities, transnational issues) and two in host/resident interactions with tourists.



Frequency of Methodologies

Figure 4 reveals that most of the research analyzed employed survey research (n=50, 73.5%). However, eight (11.7%) employed secondary data, four (4.8%) involved quasi experimental designs, and two each

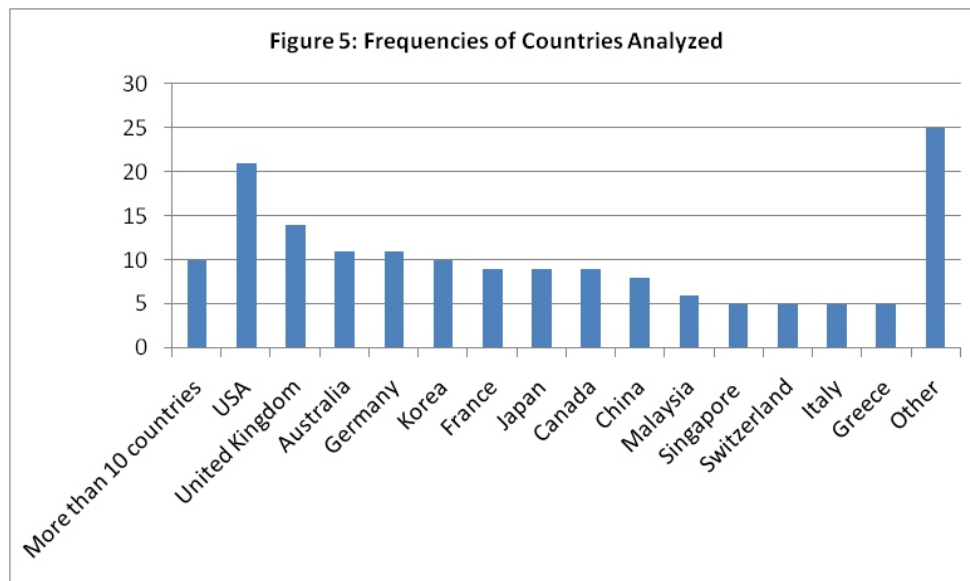
involved qualitative methods and mixed methods. One unique outlier involved web analytics, which arguably could be categorized as secondary data.



A review of the research methods yielded the means in which cross cultural comparisons were made. More than one half (n=35, 51.4%) involved country by country comparisons. Another 26 (38.2%) of the articles examined employed

Hofstede's measures assigning either his index scores to subjects' country of birth or employing his survey. Another seven identified articles employed other methods such as those developed by Hall, Schwartz, Inglehart, and Kluckhohn.

Frequencies of Countries Analyzed



The frequency of countries explored cross culturally revealed that the USA dominated with 18 studies, followed by China (8), Australia 6, France, Britain and Canada at 5 each, and Japan and South Korea at 4 each (see Figure 5). Ten of the articles included more than 10 countries in their analyses and were subsequently coded many. With 193 member nations in the United Nations, these results clearly highlight uneven coverage of national markets.

Understanding Culture as a Value Concept

An understanding of national culture begins with an understanding of values (de Mooij 2015). In the management literature, value is defined several ways, in terms of money (e.g., valuation of an asset), customer value (benefits to the customer), or in psychological terms personal and societal values. In consumer psychology, definitions

of personal value generally align with Rokeach's (1973, p.5) definition an "an enduring belief that one mode of conduct or end-state value is preferable to an opposing mode of conduct or end-state value." Hence, "people's attitudes are based on relatively few, stable societal values they collectively hold that provide the individual solutions to a limited number of universal problems. These value-based collective solutions are limited in number and universally known, ... and that different cultures have different preferences among them" (Hills 2002, p. 2). Because values concern choices between alternative end states, they can be viewed as bi-polar constructs (Horley 2012).

National cultural values represent complex collective attitudes and behaviors acting in concert across a society as opposed to personal values affecting individual

attitudes and behavior (Hsu, Woodside and Marshall 2013). The shared value structures and decreased variability often noted within a defined nationality or multinational grouping (Erez and Earley 1993) is derived in a society's historical "patterned ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting" (Kluckhohn 1954, p. 86). Though many have argued that telecommunications, economic consolidation, tourism and immigration are influencing the convergence of cultural values (Reisinger and Crotts 2012, Nowak and Kochkova 2011), national culture is one of the many forces influencing consumer decision-making (Hsu, et.al. 2013, Correia, Kozak and Ferradeira 2011, Lam 2007), and thus is important to those conducting business internationally.

What Do We Need to Consider in Selecting from Available Models of Cultural Values

Many researchers who publish in tourism and the broader literature have come to the belief that culture is a measurable and stable constructs that can be scored on various dimensions and linked to various dimensions on consumer values and organizational behaviors (Jenner et.al. 2008). Researchers have at their disposal several well-developed national cultural models in which to choose that are based on large and internationally diverse samples. Adopting one or more of the dimensional models allow for better theoretical development in understanding differences between people who come from different cultural backgrounds as well as to understand similarities between all human beings. However, all dimensional models of national culture have been produced through sample dependent measures for different purposes that may not always capture the aggregated national cultural norms or be pertinent to a research question(s). Hence, researchers attempting to incorporate national culture in their research should be selective as to which model(s) to use.

One of the key parameters of culture is that it "attempts to insure the survivability of the related societal group" (Jenner, et. al 2008, p. 164). Hence, all measurement models are focused on societal values that are stable and relatively slow to change. Efforts to measure culture quantitatively began with Kluckholm and Strodtbeck (1961). They suggested that the solutions to the following five problems preferred by a given society reflect their cultural values. Thus, aggregated measurements of the preferred solutions scored on a Likert scale reflects the cultural values of that society. The five basic problems to be solved by every society are:

- What facet of time should we primarily focus past, present or future?
- What is the relationship between human beings and the natural environment mastery, submission or harmony?
- How should individuals relate with one another hierarchically, as equals, or according to one's individual merit?
- What is the prime motivation for behavior to express one's self, to grow or become, or to achieve?
- What is the nature of human nature good, bad, or a mixture of both?

Though their method and subsequent theory was developed using survey data from a limited sample (e.g., five minority groups residing in the southwest region of the United States, their approach to scoring culture remains widely used in the broader cross cultural literature. It has been used, for example, to help negotiating parties of differing ethnic groups to better understand one another and to examine changes in intergenerational values caused by migration (See Russo 2000 for a literature review).

Later, Hall (1976) provided a communication-oriented approach to measuring culture based upon a high and

low context framework. Given that culture must be communicated to be learned, examining the way people communicate provides a unique measure of culture. Low-context cultures generally found in Western societies rely on communications that are often overtly expressed. On the other hand, communication in high-context countries generally Asian societies - contain less verbal expressions requiring an understanding of the communicator's position in society to fully comprehend the message. Assigning subjects along a continuum between low and high context societies based on their country of birth or citizenship has proven an ability to explain differences in negotiation styles (Mintu-Wimsatt and Gassebheimer 2000) and the persuasiveness of advertising messages (Paek, Yu and Bae 2009).

Soon afterwards, Hofstede (1980 2005) published the results of a cross cultural research study of 117,000 IBM workers across 40 countries where he derived four factors, later expanded to five factors, he proposed that efficiently and reliably can be used to distinguish people from various national cultures. These national cultural dimensions are:

- Power Distance- a tolerance for class discrepancies in society;
- Individualism -the degree to which the welfare of individual is valued more than the group;
- Masculinity - achievement orientation, competition and materialism;
- Uncertainty avoidance- tolerance for risk; and
- Long-term orientation the preference for stability, thrift, respect for tradition, and future oriented.

These five dimensions are based on four fundamental problems he posited all societies face. They are: (1) the relationship between the individual and the group; (2) social inequality; (3) the social implications of gender; and (4) handling of uncertainty

inherent in social and economic processes.

Hofstede's framework has been the basis of a host of studies in marketing and management and later tourism. Though Hofstede has often warned that his framework should be applied at the macro level measuring differences between national consumption patterns or organizational behavior (de Mooij and Hofstede 2002), many researchers have applied his model at the individual level with good results. The method these studies generally take are one of two forms. Employing Hofstede's (1980) original Value Survey Module (VSM 80) or Hofstede and Bond's (1988) VSM 94 instrument in survey research. This approach can be difficult if one wishes to compare a current sample's scores with Hofstede's scores since Hofstede has never been clear as to his method of weighting his data. Another common method employed simply groups respondents based on their national citizenship or country of birth. Once grouped, respondents are assigned numeric values based on their citizenship involving one or more of Hofstede's cultural traits, and these quantified cultural values are regressed or correlated with various aspects of consumer behavior (Mazatec, Crotts, Gursoy and Lu 2015).

The aforementioned content analysis of the cross culture tourism literature in part one of the paper evoked numerous studies that applied all dimensions of national culture in exploring immigrant acculturation, regional differences, brand personality, brand loyalty, corporate social responsibilities, spatial behavior, and service recovery. However, it is more common to find that specific dimensions are selected as to their relevance to the researcher's questions where, for example, uncertainty avoidance is linked to tourist risk, trip planning, gambling, and empowerment/teamwork (Boleyn, Mariam and Woodsman 2015, Osorio, Lam, Fong 2010, Money and Crotts 2003).

More recently, Schwartz (1994), Schwartz

and Ross (1995), Smith and Schwartz (1997) have proposed an alternative framework. Similar to competing models, their framework is based upon three basic issues all societies attempt to resolve. These issues are: (1) the relationship between the individual and society; (2) means to define and insure responsible social behavior; and (3) the role of humankind in the social and natural world. The cultural adaptations to resolve each of these issues constitute his framework, which consists of three bipolar dimensions, defining seven national-cultural domains. Briefly, they are:

- Conservatism versus Autonomy. Conservatism describes cultures in which the person is looked upon as an entity embedded in the collective society which emphasizes maintenance of the status quo, modesty, and restraint of actions that might disrupt a group's solidarity or the existing order. Autonomy describes cultures in which the person is viewed as a self-directed individual that finds meaning in their own distinctiveness and seeks to express their own individuality. Two types of autonomy are distinguished. Intellectual autonomy refers to the right of individuals to follow their own notions and thoughts. Affective autonomy refers to the right of individuals to pursue their own feelings and emotions.
- Hierarchy versus Egalitarianism. In hierarchical societies, socially responsible behavior is assigned through a system of inducements supporting the recognition that people of a society have shared interests that can serve as bases for voluntary cooperation. In egalitarian societies, people are socialized to internalize a commitment to voluntary

cooperate with others in that society and to feel concern for everyone's welfare. This cultural domain emphasizes transcendence of self-interests.

- Mastery and Harmony with the Social and Natural World. A society's response to the issue of humankind's relationship with the surrounding social and natural world can take two forms. Mastery connotes a societal value seeking to actively master and change the world, to bend it to our will and to assert control, and on getting ahead through active self-assertion. Harmony, on the other hand, evokes a societal value of accepting the world as it is, trying to preserve it rather than to change or exploit it.

Schwartz (1994) framework provides ratings for 31 countries on the seven domains based on country-level survey responses of large groups of people (mostly students and teachers). The items are broader than Hofstede's work-related items. On the other hand, the type of items Schwartz had in his data sets limited the derivation of the cultural domains/dimensions. Whereas the usefulness of the Hofstede framework in international marketing is well established, Schwartz's framework has yet to be applied widely. However, given its strong theoretical foundations, it offers great potential for international tourism research since, for example, Schwartz's sample of nations includes nine Eastern European countries, while Hofstede's data set contains more countries from South Asia and Latin America. To date, so far Schwartz's (1994) framework has been applied in tourism research in the study of trip planning, tourism consumption, complaint behavior, and leadership.

The most recent wave in the evolution of national cultural research has sought to measure national culture at the individual

level. Chief among them are Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz (2011) who succeeded in building their individual level CVSCALE with five Hofstede dimensions following the classical scheme of scale construction. The second is the GLOBE study (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta 2004) which expanded Hofstede's five dimensions to nine.

Attempts at validating one or more Hofstede dimensions on individual level date back to Dorfman and Howell (1988) and have continued since. Yoo, Donthu and Lenartowicz (2011) provide a review of these studies. Derived from data collected from American and South Korean undergraduate students, they provide initial evidence of a validated 26-item scale that applies Hofstede's constructs at the individual level. It is this scale that Mazenec et. al (2015) validated drawing from samples of adult populations across the United States with both the means and interest to purchase international travel.

Project GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) was a more ambitious project carried out in the 1990s as a large multi-phased cross cultural study involving over 150 scholars worldwide across 62 countries. Close to 17,000 middle managers were surveyed with an edited book published by House and colleagues (2004) in which they described the results of their collective efforts focused on leadership. One of the main findings is that there are nine cultural dimensions, each of which are represented under two variants: society as it is; and society as it should be, according to the respondents for a combined total of 18 dimensions. The nine cultural dimensions identified in GLOBE are purported by the authors to be an expansion and improvement to Hofstede's (1980, 2005) five dimensions. They are:

- *Uncertainty Avoidance* - the extent to which members of an organization or society strive to avoid uncertainty by reliance on

social norms, rituals, and bureaucratic practices to lessen the unpredictability of the future.

- *Power Distance* - the degree to which members of a society or organization expect and agree that power should be unequally shared.
- *Collectivism I: Societal Collectivism* - the degree to which societal and organizational practices encourage and reward dispersal of resources and collective action for the benefit of others.
- *Collectivism II: In-Group Collectivism* - the degree to which individuals express pride, devotion and cohesiveness in their organizations or families.
- *Gender Egalitarianism* - the extent to which an organization or a society minimizes gender role differences and discrimination based on gender.
- *Assertiveness* - the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships.
- *Future Orientation* - the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing in the future, and postponing gratification for long term benefit.
- *Performance Orientation* - the degree to which an organization or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence.
- *Humane Orientation* - the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others.

Created to extend Hofstede's cultural

dimensions, GLOBE's first three scales were intended to reflect the same constructs as Hofstede's dimensions labeled Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, and Individualism. The Collectivism I dimension measures societal emphasis on collectivism, with low scores reflecting individualistic emphasis and high scores reflecting collectivistic emphasis by means of laws, social programs or institutional practices. The Collectivism II scale measures in-group (family and/or organization) collectivism pride in and loyalty to family and/or organization and family and/or organizational cohesiveness. In lieu of Hofstede's Masculinity dimension, two dimensions were developed labeled Gender Egalitarianism and Assertiveness. Future Orientation is derived from Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck's (1961) Past, Present, Future Orientation dimension, which focuses on the temporal mode of a society. Performance Orientation was derived from McClelland's work on need for achievement. Humane Orientation has its roots in Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) work on the Human Nature Is Good vs. Human Nature Is Bad dimension. These dimensions have been applied in the tourism literature only once in the form of explaining negotiation styles.

Where Else Should We Go?

The remainder of this paper is to propose new or under researched areas of cross cultural research. They are simply based upon the authors knowledge of the literature in both tourism and broader business contexts and are not based upon any content analysis. However with several well developed national cultural measurement models in which to choose, and a clear understanding of the global nature of the tourism industry, there are clearly areas of importance that beg for research.

Cultural Change and Its Impact of Behavior

While most social scientists believe that culture is generally stable, it would be

wrong to assume that national cultures are not capable of quick changes. One of the key parameters of culture is that it "attempts to insure the survivability of the related societal group" (Jenner, et. al 2008, 164). Hence, an appreciation of the stability of the measures is warranted to produce valid results.

However, increased migration, multi ethnic marriages, and increased tourism itself are but examples of the many macro and micro economic forces influencing shifts in national cultures. Assessing the dynamics of these forces on both consumer attitudes and behaviors opens up whole new areas of research important to both management and marketing practice.

An interesting project would be to replicate Mazenec et.al (2015) US study in the European Union where the 11 regions of the US with different histories, immigration patterns, resources, linguistic patterns, and political and religious leanings, did not rise to the level of national cultural differences as purported by Woodward (2011). However, unlike the US, Europe is composed of independent nations and the move towards consolidation of economic policies, financial services, media, and migration across the EU has lasted no longer than four decades. Though Hofstede's most recent measures denote national cultural differences between member nations, measuring cultural values at the individual level holds promise in revealing if a European national culture is emerging and what macroeconomic factors are influencing the process. There is evidence of such a process may have been evoked in the recent BREXIT vote in the United Kingdom to leave the EU as well as evidence on consolidating consumer behavior in Europe from Nowak and Kochkova (2011).

Regarding cultural change, consider too the effects of macroeconomic and political forces on specific age groups. Students entering US universities in 2016, for example, were born during the dot. com

bubble, and grew up during 9-11, a long protracted Middle East war, concerns over climate change, deep emersion in social media, and the most severe economic recession since the Great Depression. Could these influence shifts in cultural values from those of their parents and if so are these shifts influencing their attitudes and purchase behaviors?

Acculturation of Immigrant Populations

National culture is a well-accepted means of segmenting tourism markets and a well-established body of the literature. However, the practice of market segmentation based on national cultural differences seldom is applied to those whose families immigrated to another culture, assuming they assimilate into the host's dominant culture. The process is called acculturation. Acculturation is "a long-term process in which individuals modify or abandon certain aspects of their original culture as they adopt patterns of the new (adopted) culture" (Park, Skinner, Ok and Spindler 2003, p. 142). Although within-group diversity will continue to exist (Reisinger and Crofts 2009), the immigrants by virtue of their immersion into the dominant host culture will, over time and generations, be incorporate these own values, norms and lifestyles (Sasidharan, Willits and Godbey 2005).

Research is needed to better understand the speed of the process of acculturation, how selective the process is, how it can be measured, and what is influencing the process. The implication of such focus rests on the increasing ethnic diversity of developed countries and the significance of this diversity to the practice of tourism marketing and management. In an effort to reach, motivate and engage in commerce with an increasingly diverse domestic population, it is important, for marketing purposes, to gauge if and for how long an immigrant should be considered to be a member of an ethnic minority with unique needs and values, and when their subsequent generations can be considered to

be a part of the mainstream. Correctly or not, many nationalities consider themselves to be a racial melting pots for their ability to absorb immigrants into a single national identity. However, there is evidence that today acculturation is a selective process where the immigrant assimilates on certain levels, but at the same time holds onto other culture traits, gradually transforming the host culture itself into a multicultural society. Hence acculturation has an influence not only on the immigrant but also on the host culture itself, explaining why in a survey of British citizens the two most popular dishes are spaghetti Bolognese and curry and rice (Mitchell 2006).

Numerous studies have looked at the degree of assimilation on recreation preferences and behaviors (see Sasidharan, Willits and Godbey 2005 for a literature review). More recently, Reisinger and Crofts (2012) administered Hofstede's (2001) VSM 80 and VSM 94 instruments measuring five dimensions of national culture to assess the address the degree and speed of acculturation of recent Korean immigrants to the US. The analysis revealed that, on average, respondents significantly differed from their host culture along the five culture dimensions, all in the directions predicted. Given that in their dataset the earliest immigrant to the US arrived in 1981, one can conclude significant shifts in acculturation must occur over multiple generations.

There are competing theoretical models describing the process of acculturation. The uni-dimensional model of acculturation posits that an individual can be placed along a continuum from low to high assimilation with the dominant host culture (Meridith, Wenger, Liu, Harada and Khan 2000). Migration status, length of residency, social affiliations, language preferences, language proficiency, cultural identity/pride and a combination of the above are often scaled as measurement constructs (Magnini 2003).

The bi-dimensional model assumes that individuals can maintain multiple cultural identities that may differ in strength (Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus 2000). Given that acculturation involves the interaction of two or more cultural legacies, the process can be characterized at times as a process of assimilation while at others a high need to maintain a traditional culture. As a result, the immigrant assimilates on certain levels, but at the same time holds onto other culture traits, gradually transforming the host culture itself into a multi-cultural society. Thus acculturation has an influence not only on the immigrant but on the host culture itself, explaining why in a survey of British citizens the two most popular dishes are spaghetti Bolognese and curry and rice (Mitchell 2006).

Magnini (2003) and Gentry, Jun and Tansuhaj (1995) extended the bi-dimensional model into a four mode conceptualization that, arguably, captures more fully the nature of multi-culturalism. The four modes are: 1) Integration - the individual adopts some aspects of the host culture while holding onto to aspects of his/her own; 2) Separation - the individual avoids interaction with the host culture, resisting acculturation; 3) Assimilation - through acculturation the individual gradually adopts the host culture, thereby forgetting his/her culture of birth; and 4) Marginalization - the individual feels rejected by the host culture while at the same time has no desire to maintain an identification with their culture of birth. All this portrays a society better described as a salad bowl or tapestry, where immigrants identify themselves as Korean-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Irish-Americans and the like, as opposed to a melting pot of fully assimilated new citizens of the host culture.

Though the multi-dimensional models are conceptually appealing, they nevertheless rely on the same scaled measurement constructs of the uni-dimensional model. Differences lie in the analysis, where

clusters are looked for in the measurement constructs.

Cultural Distance and Trans-Border Buyer-Supplier Relationships in the International Travel Trade

Cultural distance has often been employed in tourist behavior research to understand destination choice, purchases and ultimately visitor satisfaction (Ng, Lee and Soutar 2007, Ahn and Mckercher 2015). Tourists who travel independently may mitigate the effect of cultural shock by traveling to culturally similar places (Lepp and Gibson 2003, Ng et al 2007). On the other hand, more adventure some travelers may choose destinations that are culturally different, being motivated by the desire to experience the uniqueness and complexity evoked in the host culture (Kastenholz 2010). Still others may attempt to mitigate the potential friction when visiting culturally distant destinations by employing more risk-reducing strategies such as using tour operators, purchasing travel packages and traveling in larger groups (Money and Crotts 2003, Crotts 2004). Cultural distance is a productive line of consumer research both in tourism and the broader business literature.

Less researched is the impact of cultural distance on buyer-supplier relationships in the tourism industry where businesses and the organizations they do business with often span different political, economic and cultural boundaries. What is known of business-to-business relationships is that commitment to a successful long-term business relationship is dependent on the level of trust, communications, social bonding, and cooperation shared between the organizations and their key employees (Wang, Law, Hung and Gulillet 2014, Crotts, Coppage and Andibo 2001, Bouncken 200, Crotts and Turner 1999, Crotts and Turner 1999). In addition, organizations and their leaders who achieve success in their own cultural boundaries do not predict success where they attempt to expand internationally where different

cultural values exist (Moon and Park 2011). Hence, an understanding of and adaptation to cultural differences is an important consideration across a variety of management and marketing disciplines. A number of challenges will face research in this area. First, business leaders do not often avail themselves to completing surveys. Annual report data available from COMPUSTAT matched with trade magazines can often be used to identify the impact of transnational expansion and joint ventures of publically-traded companies in terms of profits. Less clear will be the impact of culture in these ventures. In addition, the measurement of cultural distance can be challenging. Often used in such studies is a composite index developed by Kogut and Singh (1988) that utilizes the four original dimensions of culture identified by Hofstede (1980) that calculates the cultural distance between two countries using Hofstede's reported data. The limitations to such an approach are twofold. First, is the datedness of the 1980 data. Though culture by definition is slow to change, even Hofstede (1980) indicated that 25 years is the extent in which cultural measures will remain beyond reproach in terms of validity. Second, is the underlying assumption that the profile of an organization will mirror the measure of a country's national population (Ahn et. al. 2015). Arguably a better approach is to base cultural differences on data collected at the individual level or the use more updated index scores.

The discovery of new cultural dimensions

As previously mentioned, one of the key constant of culture is that it is an attempt to insure the growth and survivability of a societal group (Jenner, et. al 2008). Hence, all authors of cultural measures have acknowledged the likelihood of additional cultural dimensions. The discovery of new dimensions of culture at the national level would be ambitious project which historically has required enormous efforts as evidenced by House et.al. (2004),

Hofstede and Bond (1988), Schwartz (1994).

Given that when the existing cultural dimensions were identified and validated predate the full brunt of the digital age, could perhaps a dimension that extends to the societal level the Technology Acceptance Model (Davies, Bogozzi and Warshaw 1989) that recognizes the relationship between the individual and digital technology across all cultures? Where once technology and social media simply facilitated the exchange of ideas and norms within a society, could it now be exerting a more transformational influence? In addition, might too is cultural ideology, independent of ideological content, be adding a new dimension to national cultures as well? Drawing from the work of Weber (1963) who defined religion sociologically as society deified (e.g., society worshiping its ideal self), one might argue the essence of religion and other forms of ideology have been captured in previous cultural dimensions. However, in coining the dogmatism scale, Rokeach focused not on the orientation of societies and individual's belief systems but the rigidity of those beliefs (Schulze 1960). Though only speculation of this author's part, might national cultures be distinguished along a modified dogmatism scale that measures their tolerance of others' norms and values that they might not agree?

In Conclusion

The late George Katona (1951), one of the founders of economic psychology, once wrote that a consumer's purchase decision is based on both the ability and the willingness to make a purchase. Once a consumer can be qualified as having the ability to make a purchase, the question becomes one that is social-psychological in nature. The field of consumer behavior is an applied discipline in social-psychology. Much can be gleaned from the study of individuals at the psychological level; while equally as much can be learned of

consumers at the collective or sociological level.

National cultural values represent complex collective attitudes and judgments acting in concert across a society affecting attitudes and behavior at the both the individual and collective level (Hsu, Woodside and Marshall 2013). That guide and influence the modes of conduct or preferable end-states of the individual and involve judgements as to what is good, right or desirable in a society. Hence, they provide a unique perspective in understanding of consumer markets and organizations in a

global industry such as tourism.

This paper has attempted to summarize where cross cultural research has been and propose new directions in better understanding the role culture plays in hospitality and tourism research. In addition this paper has attempted to summarize the foundation and evolution of dimensional models of cross cultural research in tourism and to shed light on the potential mistakes in applying and interpreting such dimensions in tourism research in an effort to highlight future research agendas that begs for further investigation.

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Key Words

consumers, online comments, adoption intention of users, technology acceptance model, information adoption model, AMOS

A Study on the Adoption Intention of Consumers' Online Comments

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Abstract

Tourism is an information-intensive industry. As the network technology develops, online comments have become an important channel for tourists to search for and obtain related information of tourism. Targeted at the adoption intention of users' online comments, we adopted empirical analysis method, and combined research paradigms of technology acceptance model with the ones of information adoption model to establish a new conceptual model based on review of past research findings. Then, by developing scale and hypotheses of users' adoption intention and based on data of questionnaire, we used AMOS structural equation model analysis method to explore the factors influencing adoption intention of users. Research showed that the quality of contents of online comments in conceptual model influences adoption intention of users, as it will cause positive influence on their perceived usefulness; specialty of comment providers and reputation of website influence perceived ease of use (trust) of comments from different perspectives, thus further influencing their usefulness perception and finally causing positive influence on their adoption intention. In addition, perceived ease of use (trust) and perceived usefulness are key points for tourists to decide whether to adopt online comments of other tourists or not.

INTRODUCTION

With the development of network technology, Internet has entered the era of web 2.0 and contents created by netizens become stars and hot points on web pages of website. Tourism naturally adapts to Internet because of its strong comprehensiveness and involvement of long distance and large scope. At present, online comment is one of important channels for tourists to offer feedback to tourism service providers or tourism enterprises as well as an important content for other users to refer to. Its collection and accumulation are beneficial for tourism enterprises to understand the needs of tourists at a lower cost with more convenient methods, implement customer relation management, build their brands, develop new products and constantly improve their service quality, as they are also conducive for tourists to offer real time feedback information to tourism service providers or tourism enterprises and realize double-way interaction and exchange between enterprises and consumers.

Although, a lot of tourism e-commerce websites in China have developed the function of “online comment”, most tourism enterprises do not conduct effective management or utilization of online comments, they display them simply according to sequence of comment. On one hand, excellent comments are not highlighted to attract consumers, thereby wasting limited resources of online users. On the other hand, some non-effective comments disturb purchasing of consumers and influence corporate image and benefits. So, it is an urgent task for us to solve problems on how to improve management level of online comment and how to accumulate and utilize online comments better. What kind of comments are excellent ones? What kind of comments are easier to be accepted by users? What are the features of comments which are highly accepted by users? How can enterprises screen and apply effective comments better? All of them are important points of our research. Under such situation, this paper combined research paradigms of information adoption model with the ones of technology acceptance model to establish influencing and acting model of online comments to adoption intention of consumers on the basis of clearing up past research findings of domestic and foreign scholars on online comments of consumers, and then adopted empirical research from perspective of medium and micro to study views and ideas of tourists on single piece online comment, explore the factors influencing decision of consumers to accept single piece of comment, and make clear influencing path of the factor to adoption intention of consumers, and then further proposed suggestions on management of enterprises' online comments.

Literature review

Online comment is developed with the development of Internet. Current research on online comment is mainly concentrated on four aspects: relation of online comment with online public praise and reputation,

participating motivation of online comment, spreading effects of online comment and influencing factors of online comment.

As for relation of online comment with online reputation it is an important concept in marketing and spreading science. Arndt pointed out that it is an informal interpersonal communication (Arndt, 1967). In the later half of the 20th century, online reputation appeared as extension of public praise's concept on Internet. In addition, online reputation is different due to diversity of spreading carriers and exchange platform. At present, two views are main proposed in academic cycle: one holds that online comment is equivalent with online reputation (Park & Kim, 2008); the other holds that online reputation is presented in multiple forms, with online comment to be just one of them (Bickart & Schindler, 2001). This paper adopted the second view. Participating motivations of online comments can be divided into spreading motivation and searching and reading motivation according to difference of behavior subjects. On the basis of summarizing motivations of online comment proposed by Dichter (1966), Engel (1993), Sundaram (1998) and Yoo & Gretzel (2009), the motivation was found to have two types: egoistic and altruistic. On the basis of research of Hennig-Thurau & Walsh (2003), Bailey (2005) and Hu Xingbao (2012) on searching and reading motivation of online comment, it can be summarized as: obtaining additional information, lowering perception risks of consumers, and saving information searching time and purchasing cost etc. Usually, they are also the reasons for consumers to adopt comments.

On the basis of summarizing research of domestic and foreign scholars on spreading effects of online comments, we found that their research is mainly concentrated on enterprise operation level and consumers' individual level. At enterprise operation level, scholars found that online comments will influence product sales (Zhu & Zhang,

2010), enterprise sales income (Duan, 2008), residue of consumers (Li & Hitt, 2008) and customer relation (Dellarocas, 2003). At individual level of consumers, Haubl & Thifts (2000) believed that higher reliability of online reputation will cause consumers to be interested in products. Godes & Mayzlin (2004) pointed out that online reputation has obvious influences on offline behavior intention and purchasing decisions of consumers. A lot of domestic scholars have studied influence of online comments on purchasing intention of consumers (Zhang Qiang, 2008; Fang Yanhong, 2009; Zhang Xilin, 2010) online comments can influence behavior intention and purchasing intention of consumers, thus further influencing linkage relation of consumers with enterprise. This is just the meaning for studying intention of consumers to adopt online comments.

It needs to depend on each step and factor in its spreading process for online comment to play its role. Hovland (1953) divided influencing factors of spreading effects into categories: subjects of information spreading, spreading contents and objects of information spreading, based on which Duncan & Moriarty (1998) added two types of factors and domestic scholar Xue Bozhao (2011) also added two types of factors: spreading medium of online comments, and relation of comment receivers with releasers.

In a summary, subjects of online comments (releasers and audiences), its contents and spreading channels are important factors to influence adoption intention of consumers and they will studied as important contents of our research.

Methodology

Information adoption theory

Information adoption mainly stresses initiative and consciousness of behavior subjects. Before adopting information, behavior subjects usually become aware of their own information demand and then search, process and utilize information. In the process, perception of subjects is

involved. In the following, this paper mainly analyzed ordinary model of information behavior and related theories and models of information adoption, mainly including the following four types:

Model of Consumer Information Behavior (MCIB)

Wilson (2000) proposed MCIB of consumer information behavior, holding that various information behaviors of consumers involved in the process from information demand to information utilization form an orderly circulation and can well explain the whole process of consumers from cognition of information demand to utilization of information and then further stir up their information demand based on their experience of using information.

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

ELM was proposed by psychologists Petty and Cacioppo (1983) in the 1980s and it was mainly applied in related fields like information behaviorism, communication and marketing. The particular point of the theory lies on two paths for information to influence changes of individual attitude: central line and marginal line.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

American scholar Davis (1989) formally proposed a research model targeted at technology utilization behavior from the perspective of cognition, or technology acceptance model (TAM), holding that the problem on whether behavior subjects adopt new technology or new system is determined by their behavior intention, which is determined by their adoption attitude. Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are antecedent variables of adoption attitude. It is considered as one of the most influential models for interpreting and analyzing consumers' intention of adopting technology (system).

Information Adoption Model (IAM)

In studying information adoption, Sussman & Siegal (2003) inferred IAM from ELM in double theories of information processing based on theory of TAM, holding that information quality and reliability of

information sources will influence perceived usefulness of information users, thus further influencing information adoption behaviors of subjects.

In related research on online reputation, scholars generally approve that consumers usually deal with online comment information based on double routes. But for understanding the concept of source reliability, numerous scholars have not recognized the roles of spreading medium or platform, or mix online comment releasers with platform to survey reliability of sources, such as domestic scholar Cao Yuan (2013). In addition, domestic scholar Song Xueyan (2010) analyzed mechanism of user information behavior and comprehensively explored subjective factors, objective factors and social factors influencing information adoption behavior of users on the basis of reviewing schema theory, sense making theory, expectation theory and technology acceptance theory. This paper mainly studied and surveyed objective factors influencing information adoption (quality of online comments' contents, specialty of comment providers and website reputation).

Research design

This paper mainly studied tourism consumers who check online comments, or check online related hotel, scenic spots and other online comment information of past tourists on tourism e-commerce platform or comment website and tourists or potential tourists who have the desire of touring currently or in the future so as to check online comments to help to make decisions. On the basis of affirming related theories and model knowledge of information adoption and research objects, this paper affirmed research design in three aspects: design of research model, research hypotheses and measuring scale.

Model of the research

Tourism is an information-intensive industry. Online reputation mainly aims to arouse desire of reputation receivers to have a tour and create more tourism needs. When receivers affirm their own tourism needs, they usually check online reputation information (or online comments) directly to make decisions for consumption of their tourism products (such as hotel) or refer to them for making other action plans. In the process, the problem on whether they will adopt views of online comment information is a key point for consumers to make purchasing decisions and conduct other subsequent behaviors. As the medium of online platform is added for spreading of online comments between releasers and receivers, information readers will cognize, think of and evaluate releasers and platform of online comments in addition to survey on quality of online comments.

Based on above situations, the research structured a new information adoption's conceptual model targeted at adoption intention of consumers toward online comment information. The conceptual model is based on technology acceptance model and information adoption model, but to place "external variables" of TAM model (Davis & Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1989) and "information quality and source reliability" of IAM model (Sussman & Siegal, 2003) at the same survey level and integrate traits of online comments to extend three items of contents: "quality of comment content, reliability of comment providers and reliability of website". "Perceived ease of use" of TAM mean usability of information in survey on adoption of online comments and it was extended as "trust". Specific evolution of the model was indicated in the Figure 2-1.

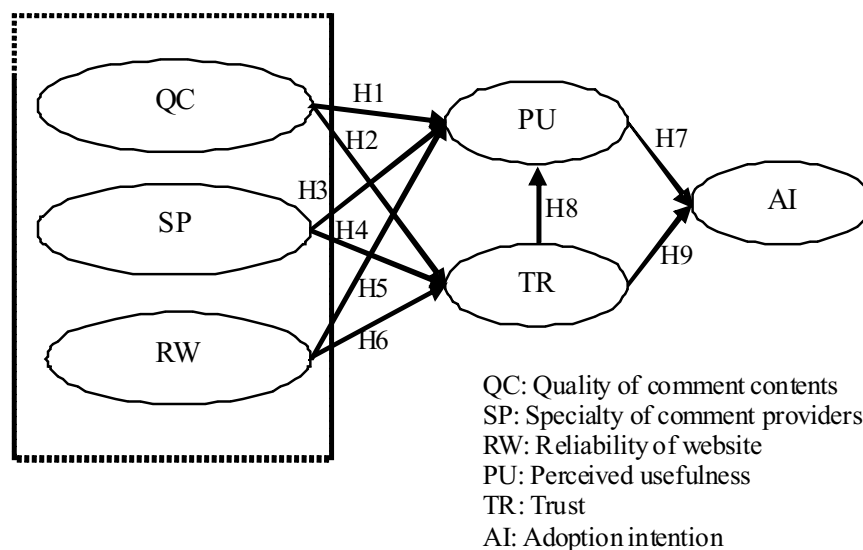


Figure 2-1 The Conceptual model

According to conceptual model of above research, we defined variables in the following six aspects.

Quality of comment contents: quality of online comments contents means perception of receivers on intrinsic functional value and structural properties of information.

Specialty of comment providers: specialty of comment providers means survey of tourists on whether such providers have ability and qualifications to provide correct information.

Website reputation: The dictionary meaning of reputation is 'prestige' and fame.

Perceived usefulness: Perceived usefulness refers to subjective perception of consumers on the degree for online comments to meet their information demand.

Trust: trust is a kind of attitude and perceived judgment on moral and ability of the other.

Adoption intention: intention means subjective probability for one individual to implement specific behaviors, or measurement of possibility (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Research hypotheses

According to conceptual model of above research, we affirmed research hypotheses of this paper in the following five aspects.

(1) Quality of comment contents and research hypotheses

Online comments can be stored lastingly and it is convenient to read them too, and contents of information can be displayed for receivers very visually. Quality of contents of online comments refers to perception of receivers on intrinsic functional value and structural properties of information and it is the most important dimension of information quality. Based on it, this paper proposed following research hypotheses:

H1: quality of comment contents has positive influence on perceived usefulness of tourists toward online comments.

H2: quality of comment contents has positive influence on trust degree of tourists toward online comments.

(2) Specialty of comment providers and research hypotheses

Specialty of comment providers means to survey features of information source

releasers. Some scholars said speciality degree of online comment releasers is one of the key factors to decide whether information can influence receivers or not and consumers tend to obtain information from professional sources as their basis of making decisions, such as Solomon (1997) and Gilly (1998). Based on it, this paper proposed following research hypotheses:

H3: specialty of comment providers has positive influence on perceived usefulness of tourists toward online comments.

H4: specialty of comment providers has positive influence on trust degree of tourists toward online comments.

(3) Website reputation and research hypotheses

In traditional reputation-based spreading, reliability of information sources mainly means whether information releasers are reliable or not. However, for spreading of online reputation (online comment), the medium of Internet is added. So, it needs to survey carriers for affirming reliability of information sources. Based on it, this paper proposed following research hypotheses.

H5: Website reputation has positive influence on perceived usefulness of tourists toward online comments.

H6: Website reputation has positive influence on trust degree of tourists toward online comments.

(4) Perceived usefulness and research hypotheses

In TAM theory, perceived usefulness means the level and degree for users to use techniques to enhance or improve their performance based on their own estimation. According to ELM, information receivers will judge whether information can meet their information needs or whether information is useful in the process of receiving information. "Usefulness" is the basic precondition for tourists to adopt online information. Based on it, this paper proposed following research hypothesis:

H7: perceived usefulness has positive influence on information adoption intention of tourists toward online comments.

(5) Trust and research hypotheses

Most scholars hold the view that trust is a multi-dimensional concept, covering cognition, emotion and behavior and other factors and it is reflected as the confidence and active beliefs on ability, honesty and kindness of the trusted. Based on it, this paper proposed following research hypotheses.

H8: trust has positive influence on perceived usefulness of tourists toward online comments.

H9: trust has positive influence on information adoption intention of tourists toward online comments.

Definition of variables and generation of scale items

According to Wu Minglong (2010), in an effective SEM analysis model, a latent variable must be estimated with more than two observed variables, and it's called the multi-index principle. Then with the conceptual model of above research, we designed measuring scale in the following six aspects:

1) Quality of comment contents: This paper mainly referred to scale of Chatterjee (2001) and McKinney (2002) and measured it with dimensions of comment contents' relevance, easy understanding, specific degree, objective degree and comprehensive degree, which can display intrinsic functional value and structural properties of online comments. For specific information, Table 2-1 can be referred.

2) Specialty of command providers: This paper mainly preferred to measuring standards used in research of Netemeyer & Bearden (1992) and Bansal & Voyer (2000) and selected knowledgeable people, experienced ones and experts to measure it. For specific information, Table 2-1 can be referred.

3) Website reputation: This paper mainly referred to research of Chen Beilie (2008) and selected industrial status, popularity degree, security and stability, and credibility to measure it. For specific information, Table 2-1 can be referred.

4) **Perceived usefulness:** This paper mainly referred to definition and measurement of perceived usefulness of Bailey & Pearson (1983) and Davis (1989) and selected five items to measure it. For specific information, Table 2-1 can be referred.

5) **Trust:** This paper defined trust as the affirmation degree of online comment releasers' ability, kindness, uprightness and spreading medium's reliability by tourists, referred to trust scale of Mayer (1995) and Chen Beilie (2008) and adjusted it in

combination with actual situation of online comments to work out 4 measuring items. For specific information, Table 2-1 can be referred.

6) **Adoption intention:** This paper mainly referred to approval, motivation and implementation of corresponding behaviors proposed by Sussman & Siegal (2003) in information adoption model to set items. For specific information, Table 2-1 can be referred.

Table 2-1 Measuring scale

| Variables | Code | Items | References |
|-------------------------------|------|--|---|
| Quality of comment contents | QC1 | The content is closely related with tourism products under discussion | Cleared up according to research findings of Chatterjee and McKinne |
| | QC2 | The comment is specific enough | |
| | QC3 | The comment is objective and fair | |
| | QC4 | The comment is clearly expressed and easy to be understood | |
| | QC5 | The content is comprehensive and complete | |
| Specialty of comment provider | SP1 | The provider is experienced in consumption field of the tourism product | Cleared up according to research findings of Netemeyer & Bearden and Bansal & Voyer |
| | SP2 | The provider has related knowledge of tourism products under discussion | |
| | SP3 | The provider is an expert in consumption field of tourism products. | |
| Website reputation | RW1 | The website is popular among consumers | Cleared up according to research findings of Chen Beilie |
| | RW2 | The website is of leading status in the industry | |
| | RW3 | It is not easy for people to attack or use the website to disseminate negative information | |
| | RW4 | The website obtains a good reputation in the industry and keeps its promises | |
| Perceived usefulness | PU1 | The comment helps me to subdivide the image of product in my mind | Cleared up according to research findings of Bailey & Pearson and Davis et al. |
| | PU2 | The comment provides new information on products | |
| | PU3 | The comment lowers the difficulty for me to gain needed information | |
| | PU4 | The comment helps me to save my time for researching needed information | |
| | PU5 | The comment is valuable for me | |
| Trust | TR1 | Comment providers care about what others want | Cleared up according to research findings of Mayer and Chen Beilei |
| | TR2 | Comment providers are honest and upright in releasing information | |
| | TR3 | Online comments of website are from true consumers | |
| | TR4 | Comment providers have the ability of contributing professional information | |
| Adoption intention | AI1 | I approve views of online comments | Cleared up according to research findings of Sussman & Siegal and Cao Yuan |
| | AI2 | Online comments encourage me a lot for my purchase | |
| | AI3 | I will refer to online comments to make my purchasing decisions. | |

Data collection

A questionnaire was developed and a list of items was generated in order to operationalize the latent constructs of the conceptual model. And in order to expand the scope of the investigation, especially to include the potential tourists, respondents were first prompted to think of a supposed occasion where they were searching the tourism online comments, and those who have ever searched the online comments before have no need to think about it. Then a pilot study with 36 respondents was conducted in order to check face validity of constructs and ensure that all questions were relevant, understandable and easy to assess. The final list of items measuring the key constructs of the conceptual model is presented in the Appendix (QC5 in table 2-1 was deleted).

In considering research objects of this paper and organizational structure of Chinese netizens, this research adopted random sampling + convenient sampling methods with online questionnaire and e-mailing of questionnaire in word version, to collect related data. Online questionnaire is set at <https://qtrial.qualtrics.com/ControlPanel/>. Link of online questionnaire was mainly sent to target groups through QQ group, Sina microblog, tourist online comment website, Tianya tourism forum and other virtual communities of tourism while the e-mail was mainly sent to classmates, friends or colleges through acquaintance network.

During surveying period, 268 questionnaires were covered. After removing 23 ones with incomplete answers or regular rules of answers, 245 valid questionnaires were found. So, effective recovery rate reached 91.4%.

Analysis and the test of hypotheses

Descriptive statistical analysis

(1) Descriptive statistical analysis on population

According to the research, men took up 48.98% to total samples, equivalent with that of women. In age of samples, interviewees between 25 years old and 45

years old accounted for about 70% to total, indicating young age of participators, but it is fit with young age of Chinese netizens. In education degree, sample participators with college degree or Bachelor's Degree account for 54.69% and the ones with Master's Degree or above took up 42.45%. As for their correspondent monthly income, the ones with monthly income between 2001 yuan and 4000 yuan took up 10.61% and the ones with monthly income higher than 4000 yuan accounted for 53.05%, indicating high education and high income features of participators.

(2) Descriptive statistical analysis of measuring indices

In descriptive statistical analysis on measuring indices, scores of observational variables were found to be between minimum value 1 and maximum value 7 and the two extreme values were selected by people, showing greatly different answers of participators of questionnaire. In average value and standard deviation, minimum average value reached 4.32 and maximum average value reached 5.84 with standard deviation between 0.9 and 1.5. Maximum absolute value of skewness coefficient reached 1.659 and maximum absolute value of kurtosis coefficient reached 4.551, within the range of standards. So, we judged: samples' data of this research conform to normal distribution and, subsequent SEM analysis can be carried out.

Test of average number difference

In questionnaire survey and analysis, t test of independent samples and single-factor variance analysis are two common methods to test difference of average number.

In t test of independent samples, analysis showed that respondents who have read online comments are significantly different from those without reading online comments in the aspects of website reputation, perceived usefulness and adoption intention. Website reputation, perceived usefulness and adoption intention in the minds of respondents who have read

online comments are obviously higher than those of respondents without reading online comments.

Variance analysis showed that respondents of different jobs do not have significant difference in quality of comment contents, specialty of comment providers, website reputation, perceived usefulness, trust and adoption intention. Variance analysis targeted at different monthly income levels showed that for judging quality of comment contents, lower income people are obviously more than high income people. For judging their own adoption intention, the situation is just opposite to it. In addition, single-factor variance analysis of each variable targeted at age and education also showed that age and education cause little difference among variables of the research.

Analysis on measuring model

Analysis of measuring model mainly includes adoption of SPSS to test internal consistency. Analysis on verifiable factors of SEM model are mainly used to estimate reliability and validity of observational variables and potential variables as well as significance level of estimate parameters, including test of internal quality of model, survey of general fitting of model and judgment on external quality of model.

(1) Test of internal quality

Testing result on internal quality of measuring model worked out in analysis on verifiable factors showed that estimated parameter values of all variables reached significance level and load of factor of each observational variable is between 0.614 and 0.879? coefficient and combination reliability of 6 potential variables is higher than 0.7 and minimum extraction of average variance reached 0.506. So, the above five judging standards are satisfied. As a result, measuring model is highly reliable and valid and its internal quality is ideal.

(2) Test of general model fitting

Test of general model fitting means to evaluate external quality of measuring

model and Amos system for analysis on verifiable factors will automatically output corresponding index value of model fitting. In test of general model fitting, analysis result showed: RMSEA=0.06, $\chi^2/df=2.548$, CFI=0.918, TLI=0.905, CN=212 and PNFI=0.934 reached fitting standard. So, we judged that general fitting of measuring model is excellent and it has excellent external quality.

From above test, we get to know high validity and resliability measuring model of this paper as well we its good fitting, indicating that both its internal quality and external quality are ideal. Based on it, this paper made further discussion and explorations on data and structural equation model of variables.

Statistical analysis based on structural equation model

A complete structural equation model should include measuring model and structural model. In his book, Wu Minglong (2010) summarized an analysis process of a complete structural equation model, deciding whether to modify model based on judgment of model fitting. If structured initial model needs to be modified due to not ideal fitting, route relations (such as public changing relations or cause and effect relation) among latent variables (such as measuring error) according to instructions of modification index can be added or insignificant routes can be deleted. But changes of route must be supported with theory or have actual meaning, but not to violate basic hypothesis of SEM model, so as to improve the fitting of model and conduct reasonable interpretation and analysis.

Analysis on Initial Model

Based on previous analysis, the research structured initial route relations among quality of comment contents, specialty of comment providers, website reputation, perceived usefulness, trust and adoption intention in analysis instrument of Amos17.0 structural equation model and adopted maximum likelihood method to

estimate parameters of structural equation mode. Indices of fitting and estimated

operating result of model parameters are shown in Table 3-1 and Figure 3-1.

Table 3-1 Testing results of route coefficient of initial model

| Route | Non-standardized regression coefficient | Standardized regression coefficient | t value | p value |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Trust < --- specialty of comment providers | 0.218 | 0.131 | 4.213 | *** |
| Trust < --- website reputation | 0.150 | 0.104 | 3.301 | *** |
| Trust < --- quality of comment contents | 0.116 | 0.061 | .687 | .492 |
| Perceived usefulness < --- quality of comment contents | 0.508 | 0.508 | 4.783 | *** |
| Perceived usefulness < --- trust | 0.105 | 0.201 | 3.389 | *** |
| Perceived usefulness < --- specialty of comment providers | 0.151 | 0.173 | 1.599 | .110 |
| Perceived usefulness < --- website reputation | 0.189 | 0.250 | 2.950 | .003 |
| Adoption intention < --- perceived usefulness | 0.529 | 0.329 | 4.790 | *** |
| Adoption intention < --- trust | 0.123 | 0.146 | 2.252 | .024 |
| Indices of adaption: RMSEA=0.080; $\chi^2/df=2.554$; CFI=0.898; TLI=0.882 and CN=202 (p=0.05) | | | | |

Note: *** means $p < 0.001$.

From the table, we can see RMSEA=0.080, reaching critical value just; $1 < \chi^2/df=2.554 < 5$ conforms to requirements and $CN=202 > 200$. However, CFI=0.898 and TLI=0.882 are less than critical value of 0.90, thus indicating ordinary general

fitting. So, it may be revised. In standardized route coefficient, estimation value of parameters like quality of comment contents, trust, specialty of comment providers, and perceived usefulness did not reach significance level (or $p > 0.05$).

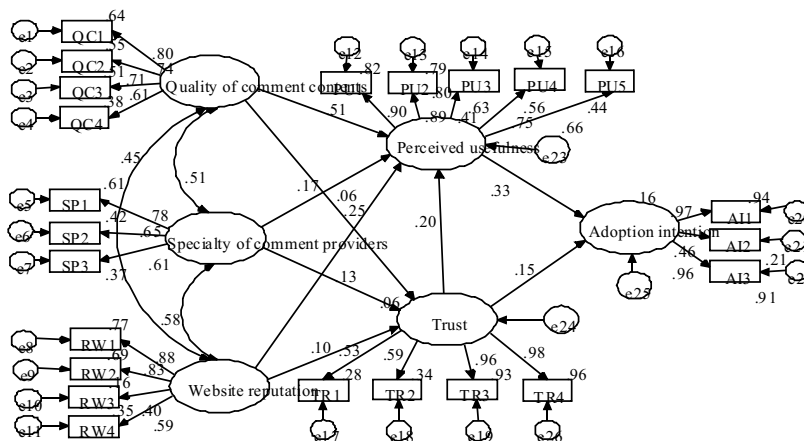


Figure 3-1 Initial model and its output results

In modified model, we considered to delete two insignificant cause and effect routes. In addition, scholars pointed out that model modification index (MI) in operating result of Amos can be taken as important reference for modification of theoretical model. Modification index of model showed that if one fixed or restricting parameter is changed into estimated free parameter, corresponding value will be reduced for chi-square value of general model. According to MI value in operating result of Amos, e17 and e18, e13 and 312,

e10 and e11 and e14 and e20 were added; and then, their public changing relations can greatly reduce general chi-square value of model and par change is also caused. So, above parameters can be released.

Modified model

According to above instructions of making revision, initial model was revised, thus causing corresponding changes to general fitting degree of model. Figure 3-2 is concerned about model route modified and Table 3-2 is concerned about testing result of corresponding model route coefficient.

Table 3-2 Testing result of modified model's route coefficient

| Route | Non-standardized regression coefficient | Standardized regression coefficient | t value | P value |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Trust <--- specialty of comment provider | 0.263 | 0.159 | 3.637 | *** |
| Trust <--- website reputation | 0.159 | 0.110 | 3.156 | .002 |
| Perceived usefulness <--- quality of comment contents | 0.476 | 0.459 | 5.768 | *** |
| Perceived usefulness <--- trust | 0.125 | 0.230 | 3.928 | *** |
| Perceived usefulness <--- website reputation | 0.592 | 0.381 | 2.576 | .010 |
| Adoption intention <--- perceived usefulness | 0.098 | 0.116 | 5.487 | *** |
| Adoption intention <--- trust | 0.263 | 0.159 | 2.407 | .016 |

Indices of adaption: RMSEA=0.063; $\chi^2/df=1.964$; CFI=0.938; TLI=0.927 and CN=213 (p=0.05)

Note: *** means $p < 0.001$.

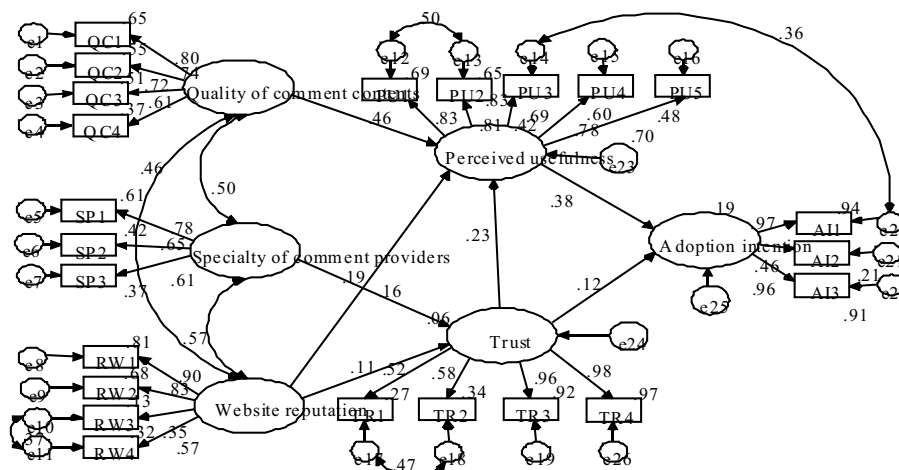


Figure 3-2 Modified model and output results

From the table 3-2, we can see that in general model fitting, $RMSEA=0.063<0.08$ and $.2/df=1.964$ are between 1 and 5; $CFI=0.938>0.9$, $TLI=0.927>0.9$ and $CN=213>200$. All of them showed ideal fitting of modified model, indicating mutual fitting of supposed route analysis model with collected data. Data test of modified model showed: standardized regression coefficient of specialty of comment providers \rightarrow trust is positive value 0.159, $p<0.001$. Suppose H4 is verified: similarly,

H1, H5, H6, H7, H8 and H9 are verified. Or t value of each route is more than 1.96, probability for them to be significant is lower than 0.05 and 7 pieces of cause and effect routes in modified model passed significance test.

Hypothesis test and result analysis

According to the above analysis, testing results of hypotheses proposed in conceptual model of this paper were summarized as:

Table 3-3 Test results of research hypotheses

| No. | Hypotheses | Test result |
|-----|---|----------------|
| H1 | Positive influence of comments' contents on perceived usefulness of tourists toward online comments | Supportive |
| H2 | Positive influence of comment contents' quality on trust degree of tourists toward online comments | Non-supportive |
| H3 | Positive influence of comment providers' specialty on perceived usefulness of tourists toward online comments | Non-supportive |
| H4 | Positive influence of comment providers' specialty on trust degree of tourists toward online comments | Supportive |
| H5 | Positive influence of website reputation on perceived usefulness of tourists toward online comments | Supportive |
| H6 | Positive influence of website reputation on trust degree of tourists toward online comments | Supportive |
| H7 | Positive influence of perceived usefulness on information adoption intention of tourists toward online comments | Supportive |
| H8 | Positive influence of trust on perceived usefulness of tourists toward online comments | Supportive |
| H9 | Positive influence of trust on information adoption intention of tourists toward online comments | Supportive |

Inspiration for updating contents of online tourism comments

(1) Improving quality of contents and scientifically optimizing display sequence

Empirical research of this paper showed: quality and contents of comment have the strongest influence on perceived usefulness of tourism consumers toward online comments and the most obvious effects on

tourism consumers' information adoption intention, their subsequent attitude, behavior intention and actual behaviors. So, tourism enterprises should place high value on management of online comments, especially emphasis and skillful utilization of high quality online comments. In particularly, they should take more scientific and reasonable methods to

exploer and utilize high quality online comments to maximum extent, such as, encouraging consumers to release high quality online comments; for sequencing of comments, placing high quality online comments at top, irregularly adjusting sequence, optimizing design of layout, increasing the opportunity for displaying and utilizing high quality online comments and digging their value to maximum extent.

(2) Exploring and highlighting professional comment providers and actively developing opinion leaders

Research of this paper study that these releasers of highly professional online comments have significant influence on tourism consumers' trust, perceived usefulness and adoption intention. On the other hand, due to limited time and energy, consumers will focus more on comments of these professional comment providers in reading them. So, tourism enterprises should make use of consumers' "altruistic" and "egoistic" motivations in releasing online comments, cooperate with website platforms to issue honorary title, customer level or title for providers of highly professional comments, such as hotel controller, experiencing master of tourism experience and three-star (five-star) comment providers, and highlight their display to create opinion leaders when connection of comment providers with readers is wean, continuously stimulate comment readers to adopt them and stir up their desires of consuming products and releasing comments.

(3) Strengthening mutual aid of enterprises with platform to achieve win-win effects

Research showed that reputation of website is also an important point to survey when tourists search for information online and conduct online consumption. So, tourism enterprises should select popular, secure, steady and credible website platforms as their cooperative partners in priority before online marketing or online sales so as to enhance page view and click rate of their

products. E-commerce website of tourism or third party comment websites should strengthen total quality management for their membership tourism enterprises, urge them to focus on online comments and conduct relational marketing with tourism consumers, and maintain and improve reputation of their own. Both of them should conduct mutual aid and cooperation to enhance reputation of website, provide secure and steady information inquiry and online reservation consumption environment for tourists online so as to improve adoption intention of tourists toward online comments, enhance viscosity of consumers to the website platform, increase revisiting rate and conversion rate and improve benefits of websites and enterprises. All of them will be employed to achieve the purposes of mutual benefit and win-win effects for both enterprises and tourism website platforms.

Results

With above analysis and verification following conclusion can be drawn:

(1) Quality and contents of online comments have positive influence on perceived usefulness of tourists, thus further influencing their adoption intention. Importance of surveying standards on quality and contents of online comments is sequenced as: relevance with tourism products; specific situation of comment information; and whether comments are objective and easily understandable. In addition, the requirements of tourists for contents to be comprehensive and complete are not very strict.

(2) Specialty of comment providers influences trust of tourists toward online comments, thus further influencing their perceived usefulness through their trust. The situations on whether comment providers have related knowledge of tourism products and whether they are experts in tourism experience and whether they are experienced tourists will influence information receivers' evaluation on their specialty. If specialty of comment providers

is higher, tourists will trust their online comments more.

(3) Reputation of website has positive influence on tourists' perceived usefulness and trust toward online comments, thus further influencing their adoption intention. Those with high reputation can attract more consumers to release more comments, meaning that their contents are more trustworthy and will enhance tourists' perception of usefulness. In addition, measurement of traffic also shows that popular tourism websites usually have more active users and are more trustworthy.

(4) Perceived ease of use (trust) and perceived usefulness are key points for tourists to decide whether to adopt information and views of online comments. Online comments which are different from information collected through other channels and help tourists to sub-divide specific tourism products are usually regarded to be useful by information users, who will actively adopt them.

Limitation of the study

There are some limitations in this study. First as, the data collection is carried out by means of questionnaire, the idea of the respondents can't be fully reflected, and the

survey results may be a certain deviation. Secondly, the data collection process in this study used a random sampling method, high level of education and income characteristics of the sample is more obvious and failed to effectively cover a broader group of tourists, the universality of research results needs to be strengthened. Therefore, future research directions can be considered from the following aspects: One need to distinguish different feelings of the online comments (positive or negative), try to find whether there are differences between the path coefficients in the model during the comparative study. The other is to try to incorporate the consumer's own characteristic variables into the research model. Third, one can distinguish different types of online reviews of tourism products, such as hotels, attractions, tourist destinations and tourist routes, etc.. They can also be considered for comparative analysis.

Acknowledgment

This study was sponsored by the OCT Enterprises Co. Foundation: Smart Tourism Attractions Construction Research: Path Selection, Technical Architecture and Application System.

APPENDIX

Measuring scale

| Variables | Code | Items | References |
|-------------------------------|------|--|---|
| Quality of comment contents | QC1 | The content is closely related with tourism products under discussion | Cleared up according to research findings of Chatterjee and McKinne |
| | QC2 | The comment is specific enough | |
| | QC3 | The comment is objective and fair | |
| | QC4 | The comment is clearly expressed and easy to be understood | |
| Specialty of comment provider | SP1 | The provider is experienced in consumption field of the tourism product | Cleared up according to research findings of Netemeyer & Bearden and Bansal & Voyer |
| | SP2 | The provider has related knowledge of tourism products under discussion | |
| | SP3 | The provider is an expert in consumption field of tourism products. | |
| Website reputation | RW1 | The website is popular among consumers | Cleared up according to research findings of Chen Beilie |
| | RW2 | The website is of leading status in the industry | |
| | RW3 | It is not easy for people to attack or use the website to disseminate negative information | |
| | RW4 | The website obtains a good reputation in the industry and keeps its promises | |
| Perceived usefulness | PU1 | The comment helps me to subdivide the image of product in my mind | Cleared up according to research findings of Bailey & Pearson and Davis et al. |
| | PU2 | The comment provides new information on products | |
| | PU3 | The comment lowers the difficulty for me to gain needed information | |
| | PU4 | The comment helps me to save my time for researching needed information | |
| | PU5 | The comment is valuable for me | |
| Trust | TR1 | Comment providers care about what others want | Cleared up according to research findings of Mayer and Chen Beilei |
| | TR2 | Comment providers are honest and upright in releasing information | |
| | TR3 | Online comments of website are from true consumers | |
| | TR4 | Comment providers have the ability of contributing professional information | |
| Adoption intention | AI1 | I approve views of online comments | Cleared up according to research findings of Sussman & Siegal and Cao Yuan |
| | AI2 | Online comments encourage me a lot for my purchase | |
| | AI3 | I will refer to online comments to make my purchasing decisions. | |

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Creative Tourism: Paradoxes and Promises in the Struggles to Find Creativity in Tourism

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Abstract

Creativity is both the glue that binds together the fundamental building blocks of tourism and also the lubricant that makes the tourism system evolve into new dimensions. In this paper, the authors argue that creativity is vital to our understanding of tourism. In particular, it is demonstrated how even traditionally 'given' tourism products like culture and nature are not accepted passively by tourists: creative tourists actively engage in the co-production of their natural-cultural experiences as tourists. For 'the creative class', authenticity is in the co-created experiences; it is not something residing inherently in the objects of consumption. However, for tourism system to sustain, the need for change in creativity should be tempered with a corresponding need for continuity. Successful tourism enterprises, thus, embody a dynamic equilibrium between continuity and change.

INTRODUCTION

Though creativity and authenticity are two concepts which historically has been useful for tourism marketing, no less true is that no intention or little attention was paid to the limits of authenticity in the current specialized literature. Is tourism a commodity to be consumed by international demand or a golden opportunity for poverty alleviation and community development? Over decades, such questions accompanied not only the growth of tourism studies worldwide, but also the culture-oriented paradigm that formed its epistemological pillars. The encounter between guests and hosts as it was originally documented has led to hot debates about the role played by culture in tourism, as adamantly discussed by Smith (2012). Dean Maccannell, an American anthropologist who was a pioneer in the study of cultural tourism, argued convincingly that modern tourism emulates the quest for exceptional landscapes, which means the needs of obtaining unique, authentic and exceptional experiences (Maccannell 1976). However, as Maccannell alerts, this process is based on a paradoxical situation because while tourists ensure to consume authentic experiences, what they meet turns unauthentic (Maccannell, 1973; 1976; 2001).

This paper not only echoes some criticism on the concept of “creative tourism”, but also explains why this type of new emergent form of tourism is used now, and not before. It endorses to a preliminary debate on creative tourism to produce further engagement between tourists and locals. In this section, we hold a hot-debate respecting to the needs for creative tourism to be reconsidered. At some extent, some evidence suggests not only creative tourism is useful for aboriginals, but conducive towards their inclusion to main Western cultures. This stance, far from being criticized, is widely replicated by many studies which focus on the utterance of tourists and aboriginals. At a deeper level, however, “creative tourism” has not been analyzed with profundity. Since many of studies in creative tourism are centered on what people overtly utter, they ignore one of the essence of ethnographies, which claims that often interviewees lie or are incognizant with their inner-world. This suggests that further steps and methodologies, beside the open or closed-ended questionnaires' administered by tourism researchers, are necessary. Secondly and most important, as Urry puts it, cultural behaviour are enmeshed into a cultural matrix which merits to be discovered. Not only fieldworkers are far from understanding the complexity of cultural issues only asking “others” but the introduction of obtrusive methodologies obscure more than it clarifies. The main thesis of this essay-review is that creativity and creative tourism derive from exhaustion (consumption) of local resources that augments the logic of scarcity proper of capitalist system, which is prone to the escalation of “conflict” and “competence”.

Tourism and Economy

The intersection of tourism and economy was widely studied by John Urry. He argues convincingly that tourism derives from a cultural matrix, where the otherness is culturally fabricated and commoditized to gazers (tourists) who pay for feeling

authentic experiences (Urry 2002). In his book jointly to Scott Lash, he contends that economies are being transformed to abstract platform where commodities are exchanged by the legitimacy of sign. This happens only because “local resources” have been exhausted (Lash & Urry 1993). Authors toyed with the idea that cultural tourism aims to create new commodities at low costs for capital owners. In this respect, Korstanje (2012) exerted a radical critique against cultural tourism by two main reasons. On one hand, cultural tourism hides an ethnocentric point of view, where the non-western other is commoditized and subordinated to the stereotypes of West. On another hand, the discourse of cultural difference exhibits serious problems not only to understand the “Other”, but also avoiding old prejudices enrooted in nineteenth-century paternalism. Colonial powers expanded their hegemonies to other peripheral economies once an ideological discourse was enthralled. The question whether Europeans envisaged “the non-white” others as inferior was adjoined to the fact they were really concerned in protecting the aboriginal heritage. This paternalist viewpoint paved the pathways for aboriginals to internalize the so-called supremacy of white Lords (Lippard, 1999; Tzanelli 2007; Korstanje, 2012). This debate begs some interesting questions such as is cultural an invention of Occident?, or simply it was systematically used to dominate the other?, or even, is creative tourism a buzz-word which is intended to produce center-periphery dependency?.

At the time we embrace the Marxian concerns on the theory of culture, we ignore the benefits and opportunities many debarred tribes have obtained by the introduction of cultural and creative tourism. Rather, if we flesh out an enthusiastic version of creative tourism, we left behind some pungent fieldworks that alert how cultural tourism, in some conditions, aggravates long-simmering conflicts (Comaroff & Comaroff 2009).

What remains clear is that the industry of ethnicity plays a vital role not only revitalizing dormant institutions, but bringing fresh profits for locals. Quite aside from this, the paradox of culture as it was formulated by Maccannell remains unresolved. While tourists are in quest of authenticity, staged-authenticity emerges (Omi & Winnant, 2014). In this difficult context, some voices theorized on the possibility new practices where visitors play an active role in host-guest encounter, would resolve the dichotomies of authenticity. The concept of creative tourism boosts not only local economies, but engenders a climate of reflexivity where the borders between hosts and guests are indeed blurred. Unlike other segments did, these tourists are attracted by more narrow and radical forms of connection with “the Other” (Korstanje 2012).

Are these new forms of tourism conducive to status quo?, or as Urry observed, is creative-tourism representing the predatory nature of capitalism respecting to local resources?.

With the benefits of hindsight, Korstanje (2012) and Tzanelli (2013) made clear observations on the fact that “paternalism” is useful for all stakeholders but first and foremost for elite, which slides its responsibilities for policies happened in past-time. While status quo elaborates plans towards “cultural recovery”, the imposed discourse tells only part of the real story. In this vein, the ethical responsibilities of elite for perpetrating genocides or onslaughts fade away. No less true is that new products of tourism has been surfaced over the recent decades. These kinds of segments oscillate from the visit to disasters-spots (dark tourism) to sites of extreme poverty (slum tourism). The archetype of beauty which was commercially exploited by mass-tourism sets the pace now to new allegories that re-frame the classical concept of attractiveness. The sense of fabricated beauty that once characterized the tourism experience faded away. In the

present-day world, where uncertainty and risks rule, and when global markets seem to experience serious turbulences and crises, tourism is not an exception. Policy makers and practitioners have paced up research to develop more new more fragmented forms of tourism which are based on low-cost programs. The concept of sustainability as it derived from Burtland report ushered in this industry a drive to re-discover new channels towards non-polluting consumption modes. Because of time and space we are limited to limit our foci only to creative tourism, leaving dark or slum tourism behind.

Creative Tourism: Co-Creating Authentic Experiences

The call for living engaged in a dynamic equilibrium with nature and culture is undoubtedly the broader context in which contemporary creative tourism arises. Understood as an attempt to create empathy, creative tourism results from a cultural trend where hosts and guests are oriented to the co-creation of a product. This process not only gave further tolerance for inter-ethnic conflicts among the stakeholders, but also generated a renewed commitment with environment. Underpinned in the proposition that creative tourism serves to pedagogical goals, UNESCO acknowledges,

“Creative tourism is travel directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture (UNESCO: Creative Cities Network, 2006:3)”.

Alienated within their respective societies, creative tourists move for experiencing an atmosphere of authenticity, which is produced and offered by natives, to create a reflexive dialogue marked their lives in a long term. However, though cultural and creative tourism were widely accepted by public opinion, some conceptual clarifications should be made. What is

creative tourism and why we use that term? Does creativity hurt efficient use of resources? How is creativity related to risk management policies in tourism?

In the present review, the meaning of creativity is placed under the lens of scrutiny. We will also associate our views with the idea of a 'creative-class', a term originally coined by Richard Florida in his book *The Rise of Creative Class* (2002). By theorizing the contributions of creative tourism to the specialized literature, a third position emerges as a valid answer to the some of the above outlined questions. As Greg Richards pointed out, one of the quandaries of creative tourism relates to the eternal quest for authenticity and how such a quest cannot remain untapped by the sales pitches of mass marketers.

This is one of the worries that led Richard Florida in his seminal book, *The Rise of Creative Class* (2002) to question the problems of creativity in the modern world. Creativity is reimagined as a capitalistic virtue; the power of such reinterpretation being that it enslaves workers with the promise of opportunities to be creative and reap the extra rent associated with the same.

However, far from being a radical detractor, Florida understands that post-industrial societies generate new types of decentralized authority. Organizations are now being educated into a culture of creativity to boost further marginal profits at lower costs. Nonetheless, these so-called benefits have some risks. Though numerous studies validate the belief that creative people are more tolerant than others, no less true is that new kinds of pathologies as distress, uncertainty, or insomnia arise. What is clear in this discussion is that any class derives from an economic process, so, creative or leisure classes are socially constructed terms which merit to be hermeneutically deciphered. In a world fraught of risks creativity posits as a valuable discourse widely-accepted in politicians, policy-makers and tourism

researchers. In more stable living conditions, as the World of our grandparents, creativity was unnecessary, but now, creative situates as the mainstream cultural value of post-modern capitalist societies.

The Promises of Creative Tourism

In cultural tourism, the respect for differences takes a center stage, connecting host cultures with the visitors' idiosyncrasy (Richards, 2007; Germann-Molz 2012; Den Dekker & Tabbers 2012). As Richards & Raymonds pointed out, this is the context which offers a fertile ground for the acceptance of creative tourism. The co-active participation in the production of a shared object mediates between hosts and guests. Their creative potential is developed by the experience of living as, or being part of local culture (Richards & Raymond, 2000). It was unfortunate though the parallelisms between cultural and creative tourism abounds in tourism literature, less is known respecting to this new segment. The contours of this object of study not only remain fuzzy, but also lacked of a clear definition of how authenticity evolves (Richards & Wilson, 2006). As we have noted, experience plays a vital role narrowing a bridge which otherwise would be impossible but this is not enough.

Studies in creative tourism should focus on something else than the profit-oriented perspective (Richards, 2011; Richards & Wilson 2006; Jelincic & Zuvela (2012). In this vein, Greg Richards adds, creativity is a useful resources that helps locals to boost their incomes and economies or in other case revitalize the glitches generated by capitalist economies, but what is more important is the possibility to overcome cultural barriers, stereotypes, racism and prejudices that often lead to conflict. The global financial crash occurred in 2008 poses a great dilemma for the industry since it should be re-invented. Beyond a relational perspective, creative tourism offers instrument towards progress and development that gives to locals and

tourists new skills in their quest of unique experiences (Prentice 2001). In other conditions, it exhibits a platform to discuss new segments of market (McRobbie 2010) or even yielding open societies interested for the ethnic difference (Florida 2002). Among the benefits of this new trend we can find that creative tourism:

- Weaves new networks to get authentic experiences.
- Establishes programs of development to bolster a fluid dialogue among nations.
- Allows easier circulation of knowledge and skills otherwise would be monopolized by privileged groups.
- Develops social capital, in significant ways.
- Revitalizes local economies and solves the glitches created by economic forces.
- Adopts new forms of 'sensitive hospitality' that is more open to refugees, exiles, and needy people in general.

These points are examined by Martha Jusztin (2012) who explains that modern tourists are motivated by the quest for uniqueness. Being part of something special, as the work of art creation, painting, or the participation of cooking classes are activities first-world tourists are interested to perform. Neither these needs not only escape to the logic of market, nor the profit-oriented interests.

Some detractors of creative tourism claim that unless the obsession for authenticity or the quest of novelty is controlled, the possibilities to produce standardized experiences diminish (Richards & Wilson, 2011). Quite aside from this, Florencia Cueto Pedrotti (2012) observes that the process of learning rests on the needs of both parts in a creative exchange. Say, one of the aspects of the current educational crisis is given by the lack of interests both shows on what is learnt. Not only creative

tourism allows overcoming obstacles like this, but hearing the other is a good option to understand other cultures. Tourism has expanded to all corners of this world by the mouth-to-mouth recommendations. Lay-people, unlike in the past, are more open to new experiences and cultures accepting multiculturalism as never before.

Although specialists have discussed how faster creativity may revitalize the local resources in the midst of economic crises, less attention was given to its relational nature. As Jelincic & Zuvela (2012) documented, in those places characterized by higher levels of conflict, creative tourism is used to undermine the in-group hostility. Per these researchers, creativity should go beyond the pejorative label of consumerism where it is associated by some voices. A first glance reveals that it is something else than a mere marketing tool. In part, while one side is not native of the visited place, the other introduces the newcomer to its culture. This cultural meeting facilitates the things for locals to revitalize their own identity. The problem, anyway, lies whenever fieldworkers face resistances or the interests of community are opposed to investors. This concern validates the assumption that those success cities whose brands have been globally consolidated have more opportunities to embrace creative tourism than others which lack of the necessary symbolic capital to prosper. This explains the reason why under-developed cities fail to develop creative tourism.

Globalization produces hybrid forms of aesthetic existences where cosmopolitanism alternative immaterialities are molded. As M. Meskimmon overly says,

Imagining ourselves at home in the world, where our homes are not fixed objects but processed of material and conceptual engagement with other people and different places, is the first step toward becoming cosmopolitan. Art is specially able to convey the intimate relation between the material and the conceptual

that this requires, invoking the contingency of home by positioning us at the nexus of the real and the imaginary, while using the sensory force of object, image, and spaces to engage memory, desire, and cognition” (p. 8)

In this respect, the rupture accelerated by global art articulates a cosmopolitan imagination so that people gain further understanding of others but at the same time, there are some dangers to the difference to be commoditized into standardized acritical products (Meskimmon, 2011). Last but not least, L Marques (2012) gives further details on the fieldwork conducted in Siby (Mali). In this community, creative tourism exists much time earlier than the term was coined by Florida or Richards. The social change promoted by means creative tourism is feasible, is based on a rich cultural legacy, conjoined to technological breakthroughs to help decentralizing authority. As a result of this, the fusion between consumption and production resulted in new channels of power that correct arbitrariness or autocratic regimes. However, if creative tourism is not duly regulated, some negative effects threaten the local environment. As noted, Marques adds, the quest for authenticity opens the doors for the adoption of new branding-related strategies, but in so doing, places are commoditized and subordinated to a financial dependency of periphery respecting to centre. By this way, the fieldwork of den Dekker & M. Tabbers (2012) reveals that creativity and attractiveness are inextricably intertwined. Those small communities or places where creativity flourishes, have further potentialities to become in a tourist destination, than densely-populated urban cities. This happens simply because citizens in larger cities are more insensible to the presence of Otherness or disinterested by cultural tourism.

Creativity in Packaging Cultures

Investments in culture are often low cost but the rewards often outpace some of the

most lucrative industries for any business man. What it all takes is an exclusive misappropriation of our common heritage and the cultural resources contained within it. Cultural consumption has widely expanded its scope to eat into economies that would otherwise have collapsed (Comaroff & Comaroff 2009; Korstanje 2012; Ashworth 2013). May be, a suboptimal existence is considered better than valorized death as an idealist.

To put culture in straights, we need to explore the history. In ancient times, philosophers as Aristotle, or Anaximander referred to “customs”, “habits” to explain human behavior, but not culture. The term, derived from *cultus* (where comes culture and cult) was originally introduced to social science by Heinrich Rickert -1863-1936 (one of the most influential voices of XIXth century). As his mentor, W. Windelband and Max Weber, he envisaged society as an amalgam of values, beliefs and expectations which may be orchestrated into an all-encompassing entity, culture. Ideal types embedded with cultural values can explain our preferences and cosmologies of the external sensible world. From that moment onwards, the project of nation-state and culture were historically linked. As Laurajane Smith observed, the problem with culture and heritage seem to be in the one-sided gaze it takes. For example, we are accustomed to see “Great Britain” as a free nation that promoted democracy elsewhere. At time we confirm, the liberal nature of British thinking we ignore or even forget its bloody colonial past. England not only promoted slavery when it was conducive to its interests, but also legitimated a social order in basis with the oppression in its colonies. The current dispositive of heritage, employed to remind the greatness of Great Britain does not contemplate the history of slavery. Though some museums in recent times have posed attention on this troublesome past, which creates dissonance, visitors never alter their previous beliefs. This reminds one of the

paradoxes of culture, since it follows a selective logic gathering some values but excluding others.

Visitors who access spaces of cultural consumption reinforce their earlier conceptual background instilled by the officials. This leads to legitimate the original discourse where heritage-making process has evolved (Smith, 2015). In her book, *Unspeakable Violence* Nicole Guidotti-Hernandez exerts a radical critique of the roots of culture as well as nationhood. Her analysis centres on the formation of US-Mexican borderlands, and the role played by modern tourism in fabricating biased allegories of history. The discourse of cultural tourism alludes to ethnocentric stereotypes that affirm the legitimacy of status-quo. Given this conceptual backdrop, Guidotti-Hernández explains that the racialized violence exerted against Mexicans, which is based on stereotyped discourses, works as an instrument of indoctrination conducive to maintaining the status quo. For example: In 1885 a Mexican woman (Juanita) is lynched in Downietown, California. This tragedy, like many others examined by the author, is taken as the epicenter of a much broader discussion about how violence and nationalism converge. Guidotti-Hernandez argues convincingly that the tourist magazines which advertise the Downietown tour are not only being superfluous in respect to the reasons behind this awful crime, but also serve to continue to legitimize this gendered act of violence. It is an example of how tourism and death may be commoditized and sold in spectacular narratives which visitors consume (Guidotti-Hernandez 2011).

The fact is that culture is a social construct invented to homogenize dispersed ethnicities into the same territory. Cultures, for their sustenance, have to channelize creativity in ways that don't destabilize their roots. As Guidotti Hernandez puts it, Nation states are formed under process of differentiation and its economic re-

organization of territory. Far from being a site of frank dialogue, stability, and understanding, the US-Mexico border shows a legacy of territorial disputes and conflict. At the same time, nation-states administrate racism and sexism to control their citizens, who under some circumstances may defy the economic conditions that sustain the class hierarchy. A much broader selective memory narrates some events or over-exaggerates certain aspects of politics while silencing others. Following this argument, it is important not to lose the sight of the idea that borders are spaces of multiple identities that need violence to exist; in so doing, when multi-racial communities enact violence on each other they serve to perpetuate both their own cultural values and amnesia (Guidotti-Hernandez 2011).

Secondly, to what extent, people adopt heritage or creative tourism voluntarily, or are pressed by other reasons to do it, are the main questions to be discussed in this section. In the *Corrosion of Character*, Richard Sennett focuses on the decentralization of production accelerated by late-modernity. At a closer look, in a climate of extreme competence, workers should innovate into new tactics to get a job. Those who are less tolerant to change perish. The precariousness of work encouraged by liberal market poses workers as co-manager of their own risks (Sennett 2011). Following this, we have no clear way to answer whether creativity is part of the problem or solution. Christopher Lasch has paid heed to the effects of limited work in the individual psychology. Capitalism has expanded thanks to two combined factors, decline of labor opportunities, and the conception of security.

The concept of work decades earlier guided the world of our fathers and set the pace to consumption. We are not interested in working hard but in making profits. It is important not to lose the sight that the struggle for survival ushered workers into a cold atmosphere of indifference where

social ties are undermined (Lasch 1991). Our obsession for creativity relates to the needs of gaining resources in the competence of all workers against workers the liberal market needs. Two prominent scholars, Peter Taylor Gooby (2004) and Robert Castel (2000; 2010) have alarmed on the problems generated by the expansion of life-expectance and the introduction of new technologies to enhance production. Though, capital-owners duplicate their profits, the work-force played a passive role in the access to produced wealth. The state of welfare, Taylor Goody adds, declined its capacity to protect citizens because of two main reasons. On one hand, the technology given to expand the life-expectance prompted the aging population to the extent an ever-smaller active work-force was taxed to grant the well-functioning of state. On another, technology made that employer job vacancies were notably reduced; and of course, a limited workforce entails lower costs for producers.

As the previous argument given, postmodern economies are based on the exploitation of signs instead of the goods. Scott Lash and John Urry elaborated a constructive criticism that helps understanding how late-capitalism works. Economies now produce signs, not goods, which are circulated by a global market system in view of the decline of local resources. To what extent the concept of culture is conducive to this elusive process is one of the most pungent aspects of detractors of cultural tourism. A Colombian coffee or a scotch whisky only can be pondered as high-quality product, whether the paradigm of nationhood is not questioned (Lash & Urry, 1993). In this token, R. Tzanelli explains that capitalism homogenized the cultural divergence into more packaged products, which are fabricated to fulfill the demands of international global travellers. In this process, the local view or their expectations are not taken seriously into considerations (Tzanelli 2013; 2014), the concept of

cultural tourism decontextualize the identity of locals to be re-framed according to what tourists desire (Maccannell 1992; Virilio 2006). As it was studied by Jennifer Germann-Molz (2012), the concept of intimacy and instantaneity correspond with the needs of imaging others per my own whims. In the same way, machines can be switched off or on, social relations are designed not to cause serious problems to businesses. Any talk, through the virtual space, starts and ends when I want. This assumption begs some interesting questions: say, how can we explain the obsession of West for cultural differences? Is creative tourism paving the way for the understanding of others, or their exploitation?, among others.

Last but not least, capitalism has been imposed on the basis of two combined pillars, *distinction and social Darwinism*. Interested in discovering the ideal-types on how Americans live, Max Weber thought a model to understand the attachment developed by Anglo-Saxon protestant for work. This closed teodicity, as Korstanje (2015) noted, is a breeding ground to make a culture of achievement, where each person is co-manager of its own fate. In a world, where future is designed and remains irreversible, the needs of distinction have characterized the daily life of English speaking societies. This type of meritocracy has historically subsisted by what Schumpeter (1942) dubbed as "creative destruction" which means the disappearance of certain agents or structures to be replaced by more efficient forms. The second element in this discussion is competence which leads to perfection. Richard Hofstadter (1944) held the idea that capitalism rests on the social Darwinism, a theory stems from original Darwin's text, but adapted to racist proclaims. Social Darwinism as it was formulated by Francis Galton, claims that races are not equal. Each one develops adaptive skills to be success in the project of evolution. This reminds that only those races which are

strongest survive while the weaker ones die. This ideology upholds the axiom, superior races show better adaptive traits than others, and this is the reason why they adapt faster to environment.

In this context, creativity delineated the frontiers between those who are saved and doomed. The question whether creativity destroys social ties to situate medieval peasant in connection to their internal desires still seems to be an interesting point of discussion triggered by some historians as Robert Castel. Most certainly, readers would realize that values of social Darwinism are not limited to market but they are enrooted in the heart of Western thought. Realities shows as *Big Brother* or in films as *Hunger Games*, participants enter in the field to struggle in egalitarian conditions. Despite they valorize their own skills and opportunities to win, they ignore only one will be the winner. Participants not only use their creativity to defeat the other, but construct false expectations. Paradoxically, they never should realize about the lower probabilities to reach success because it implies the end of competence. With the passing of time, the dark side of truth imposes. The glory of few is based on the ruin of whole (Korstanje 2015). But things come worse to worst, as Z. Bauman (2012) explains, 90% of wealth is retained by the hands of 1% of world's population.

The collateral damages of capitalism range from pauperism, poverty, conflict and global pollution. The paradox lies in the fact that mobility is only ensured by global elite who can pay for moving, without restrictions and limits while the workforce is immobilized and exploited in certain ghettos.

Future Research

This paper aimed at discussing to what extent the concept of creative tourism corresponds with the decline of economy, the lack of resources, and the alternation of crises and the rise of different risks, which jeopardize the tourist system. With this in

mind, it is necessary to articulate plans of contingency that helps improving the conditions of life in local communities. As state, though creative tourism offers a fertile ground to conduct more sustainable ways of exploitation, the fact is that unless the mainstream cultural values of capitalism are not changed, the problem not only will persist but widely-aggravated by the pollution and contamination will place tourism in jeopardy. At this viewpoint, we have presented a radical reading of "creative tourism", which is being used as an ideological mechanism to hidden the underlying problems beyond the current economic crisis. Starting from the premise that innovation represents a positive value, this review calls the attention how cultures and peoples are commoditized for the show goes on. If the preexisting factors that accelerated the decomposition of modern economy are not corrected, the sense of creative tourism still remains as part of the problem. No less true is that further investigation is needed in this preliminary stage, where locals adopt creative tourism as a valid attempt for poverty relief.

Conclusion

Based on literature drawn from a wide range of disciplinary areas, polemically, we have theorized the social and economic roots of cultural and creative tourism. In sharp contrast with the limited specialized literature, we offer an alternative understanding of this important topic that is integrative and holistic. There is a curious way various other contemporary practices related to tourism embody elements of creative tourism. Actually, creative tourism is a methodological framework with which the value of these practices can be captured.

Tourists from the first world not only reinforce their own ethnocentrism respecting to the underdeveloped world but also assume that western values like income, money, work, and class are naturally positive while backwardness, wilderness, and poverty, are naturally bad.

What is valuable for the gaze of the first world tourists are the creative pursuits of the third world nationals: yet, these creative pursuits have no value outside of the touristic economy. The cultural products of the first world capitalism, on the other hand, have value within and outside of the tourism economy. Creative tourism based on the cultural ingenuity of the third world,

because of its impossibility to reduce conflict between the project of the modern state and the aboriginal life, because of its incentives to foster historically evolved master-slave relations, has ignited renewed critique. Is creative tourism truly creative in making a just and fair world? The answer is No, at least based on its current practice.

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Key Words

Tourism destination,
cross-culture comparison

A Safe or an Unsafe tourism destination: A Cross Cultural comparison study

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Abstract

Little effort has been devoted to measure how tourists perceive overseas traveling risks including terrorism, disaster, disease, weather, hygiene matters, etc. This paper defined that traveling risk and safety subject can be measured by seven major aspects that involved in Transportation, Law and Order, Hygiene, Accommodation, Weather, Sightseeing Spot and Medical Support, which would affect traveling industry and tourist behavior. The data were collected from July to October in 2013 in two locations, Taoyuan international airport of Taiwan and Nova Scotia, Canada. The study sample size consisted of 300 participants. This study investigated the safety awareness and traveling risk awareness from the perspectives of international tourists and identified any significant difference existing between tourists with Eastern and Western cultural backgrounds.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is often described as a 'fragile' industry in that demand for travel is highly susceptible to numerous shocks, such as wars, outbreaks of deadly contagious diseases, incidents of terrorism, economic fluctuations, currency instability, energy crises, and so on. These shocks impact how people perceive their desired destinations. For example, the massive destructive tsunami in the Indian Ocean in December, 2004, also called the deadliest tsunami, caused massive damage throughout the southern region of Thailand. Since this tsunami case, tourist destinations have elicited significant concern because most tourist destinations are located in areas that are especially susceptible to dangerous weather elements that may cause harm, particularly to beachside resorts. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, also known as 9/11, reverberated around the world; this not only increased the risk perception but also brought to attention the importance of security in tourism (Bonham, Edmonds & Mak, 2005). The "Perfect Storm" of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003 was a new and readily transmissible disease whose discovery and spread created a tourism crisis in parts of Asia in 2003 (Henderson, 2003). After that, international travel has been identified as one of the major factors associated with the global spread of infectious diseases (Ostroff & Kozarsky, 1998; Wilson, 2003). These various shocks and perceived risks appear to have exerted different impacts in the countries directly affected, in neighboring countries and regions, and in the global tourism market (Edmonds & Mak, 2005).

Tourism image is the way people feel about some place or the impact of its impression on others. Therefore, if people travel with positive impressions, then this will signify a high possibility for them to return to the destination. Several studies have illustrated that destination images influence tourist behavior (Hunt, 1975; Pearce, 1982). Travelling exposes people to varying degrees and types of risk and security issues (Bentley & Page, 2006; Page, Bentley & Meyer, 2003; Page & Meyer, 1996). Personal perceived travelling risk is an influential factor affecting how an individual perceives a destination image and the related traveling decision-making process.

Perceived risk plays an important role in a traveler's expectation and choice of destination in the international tourism market. The perceived risk of travelling has an intuitive appeal, and is persuasive in determining consumer behavior (Hales & Shams, 1991). A majority of tourists would avoid negative travelling experiences and prefer going to a destination with positive perceptions or tourism image; these tourists want to maximize their travelling satisfaction by minimizing the perceived travelling risk at the same time. To increase inbound tourists' traveling satisfaction, Taiwan's government has the obligation and responsibility to provide accurate and sufficient information about travelling risks. So understanding how international youth travelers perceive the risks of traveling in Taiwan can improve travel policies and the travel environment.

Several researchers tried to understand the connections between risk perception, safety concerns and tourists behaviours, namely, studies on the effects of terrorism in tourism decisions (Bonham, Edmonds, & Mak, 2006; Coshall, 2003, 2005; Floyd et al., 2004; Goodrich, 2002; Neumayer, 2004; Pizam & Fleischer, 2002; Ritchie, 2004), the impact of risk and safety on travel behaviours (Hunter-Jones, Jeffs, & Smith, 2008; Irvine & Anderson, 2006; Kozak,

Crotts, & Law, 2007; Lepp & Gibson, 2008; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005;) and the impact of various elements on risk and safety perception (Barker, Page, & Meyer, 2003; Lennon, Weber, & Henson, 2001; Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Reisinger & Crotts, 2009; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006). Little research focused on the cultural differences of traveling risk and safety awareness subjects.

This study has two research goals: 1) To investigate the safety and traveling risk awareness from the perspective of international tourists; and 2) To identify any significant differences between tourists with Eastern and Western cultural backgrounds. This study will examine how international tourists perceive Taiwan and whether or not Taiwan creates a positive image of a safe destination to travel to.

2. Literature Review

According to the purpose of the study, the review of literature focuses on risks, including general types of risk, perceived risks in tourism, and types of travelling risks.

2.1 Risk

Risk can be defined in different ways. According to Taylor (1974), risk can be defined in terms of possible loss, and in human life, all activities entail possible losses. Travel is no exception; its degree of risk depends on several factors, including the means of transportation used, the facilities and activities offered at the destination, the customs and environment of the sightseeing areas, and so on. Since it is impossible to eliminate risk, it may be hoped that perceived tourist risk could be reduced if advance warning can be obtained through proper risk evaluation.

There are three types of risk: *absolute*, *real* and *perceived risk*. The concepts of absolute risk, perceived risk and real risk are referred to frequently in the outdoor and experiential learning literature (Beedie, 1994; Dickson & Tugwell, 2000; Haddock, 1993; Priest & Gass, 1997). Haddock (1993) defines these three types of risk as follows.

Absolute risk: the uppermost limit of the risk inherent in a situation (no safety controls present). Real risk is the amount of risk which actually exists at a given moment in time (i.e., absolute risk adjusted by safety controls). Perceived risk is an individual's subjective assessment of the real risk present at any time (Haddock, 1993).

Perceived risk, in turn is surely not merely a function of the probability of harm but concerns many other factors, such as attitudes (Sjöberg, 1996, 2000), frequently held to be crucial in the understanding and management of risk in policy contexts (Sjöberg, 1987). The perception of travel risk affects a tourist's assessment of travel safety and also leads to travel anxiety (Manrai&Manrai, 2011). Two concepts should be considered with regard to risk minimizing activities: actual risk and perceived risk. Perceived risk has been conceptualized in two dimensions: *uncertainty and consequences* (Cox, 1967). Perceived risk is what really affects travelers' decision-making process (Royal Society, 1992).

Tourism is a part of the service sector; its unique characteristics (intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability) intensify the perceived risk compared to goods (Grönroos, 1990; Lovelock, 1996; Mitchell & Greatorex, 1993; Zeithaml&Bitner, 1996). In addition to the aforementioned attributes, the tourism product is exposed to particular factors, such as bad weather, unfriendly locals, airport personnel on strike, inedible local food, terror, crime, political unrest, disease and natural disasters. These factors raise the level of tourists' perceived risk (Mansfeld, 1992; Pizam&Mansfeld, 1996; Roehl &Fesenmaier, 1992; Sönmez, 1998; Sönmez&Graefe, 1998a; Tsaaur, Tzeng& Wang, 1997; Witt &Mountinho, 1995). Attempts to integrate perceived risk concepts into destination management are important because perceived risks that potential travelers associate with specific

destinations, rather than actual risks, often directly affect their purchasing intention. Tourists select their destinations primarily on the basis of perceived personal safety and security (Dolnicar, 2005; Pizam, 1996). In an attempt to investigate the relationship between the risk perceptions of tourist and pleasure travel, Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992) categorized tourist risk into seven categories: equipment risk, financial risk, physical risk, psychological risk, satisfaction risk, social risk and time risk.

"Tourist traveling risk" is defined as the possibility of various misfortunes befalling a group package tourist in the process of traveling or at its destination (Tsaaur, Tzeng& Wang, 1997). According to this definition, the tourist risk cited in this study intends to cover two main categories: physical risk, which refers to the possibility that an individual's health is likely to be exposed to the risk of injury or sickness because of conditions like law and order, and equipment risk, which refers to the dangers arising from the unavailability of equipment or its malfunctioning, such as insufficient telecommunication facilities, unsafe transportation, breakdown of vehicles, etc.

Tsaaur, Tzeng& Wang (1997) categorize traveling risks into seven aspects: Transportation, Law and Order, Hygiene, Accommodation, Weather/Natural Conditions, Sightseeing Spots and Medical Support. These seven traveling risks affect people's willingness while deciding whether or not to travel. Moreover, from different aspects, there are different risk perceptions which vary from person to person. The following are a few examples of how people generally think about the risks of these seven aspects. Transportation includes safe driving issues or how convenient it is; accommodation involves hotel fire control and security systems. Basically, these two are considered the most important ones. Hygiene concern arises when some infectious diseases occur, possibly in relation to improper catering conditions,

especially when travelling in developing countries. Weather changes or natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunami or volcano exposure are other concerns. Regarding sightseeing spots, tourists may worry if the facilities are safe or quality of the management staff. Other aspects include law and order and medical support.

2.2 Safety

The concept of safety is in itself under-theorized; in most research on safety, the meaning of the term is taken for granted (Möller, Hansson & Peterson, 2006). Möller, Hansson & Peterson (2006) defined safety comprehensively as including three factors: the severity of harm, the probability that harm will occur, and the uncertainty of one's knowledge about the possibility of harm. Safety is the condition of being protected from the unlikelihood of facing danger, risk or injury. In tourism industry, the international and also domestic travelers' safety is becoming a global concern and the lack of safety is one of the factors negatively affecting international tourism (Kozak et al., 2007; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). Most people considered relaxation is main reason for traveling abroad and majority of tourist do want to encounter the negative incidents (Kozak et al., 2007). Risk perception would be able to determine whether tourists feel safe or unsafe in tourism destination (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). So Sonmez & Graefe (1998) confirmed that the perception of risk is one of the main predictors of sense of safety and the concerns about feeling safe can increase the levels of perceived risks.

When risk concerns are introduced into travel decisions, they have a potential to become overriding factors that can cause travelers to amend or cancel their travel plans (Prideaux, 1996; Ryan, 1993; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998; Weifeng, 2005). This is the reason why hospitality and tourism operators have been trying hard to increase the safety and security of their products and services (Slevitch & Shara, 2008). A study on choice criteria of leisure travelers

concluded that security is a primary motivator in choosing hotels, airlines and other travel-related offerings (Standard & Poors, 2002). Therefore, safety awareness discusses how people feel when they are exposed to different threatening situations.

Sönmez and Graefe (1998b) examined types of risk associated with international travel, the overall degree of safety felt during international travel and how this affects the likelihood of travel to, or avoidance of, various geographic regions on the respondent's next international vacation. Moreover, it has been found that tourists are more likely to choose safe destinations (Jonas et al., 2011; Kozak et al., 2007; Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2009; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a, b). Assuring people of safety and security at destinations is an essential condition for tourism growth (Cavlek, 2002), otherwise, tourists' confidence in the destination will diminish even with attractive marketing campaigns. The increasing events threatening safety and security, such as terrorism attacks, crimes, natural disasters and accidents have prompted travellers to acquire more detailed information and knowledge about these issues (Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a).

Researchers discussing how different cultures or nationalities influenced tourist behavior in the past, provide solid suggestions regarding the effects of different marketing strategies on customers with different culture or nationality backgrounds. Pizam and Sussmann (1995) investigated how nationality affects tourist behavior and suggested that many more differences than similarities in the behavior of the four tourist nationalities examined were perceived by tour guides. Pizam and Jeong (1996) also confirmed that tourist behavior is perceived to differ according to nationality and suggested that using a cultural approach to design tours can enhance tourists' travelling satisfaction. Thus, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1. People with different cultural

background sexhibit significant differences in their perceived travel risk.

3. Methods and Material

The data were collected from July to October in 2013 in two locations, Taoyan International Airport of Taiwan and Nova Scotia, Canada. There are two versions of the questionnaire: one in Chinese and the other in English. The study sample size consisted of 300 participants; among whom, 149 people (49%) are from Asian countries such as Korea, Japan, China and Indonesia, and the other 151 people (51%) are from other countries in Africa, as well as France, German, Luxemburg and Canada. All of research respondents would be asked with one question regarding whether they had been traveled to Taiwan or not. If they had

traveled to Taiwan before, their data were excluded from the data analysis. For this paper, all study respondents had never visited Taiwan before; some had just arrived in Taiwan International Airport. Among them, 47% of the participants grew up with a Western cultural background, while 51% grew up with an Eastern cultural background. Some 2% had neither a Western nor Eastern cultural background, so they were excluded from this research. In the aspect of gender, there are 156 females (52%) and 144 males (48%) participants. Those aged 30 and under account for most (87%) of all the participants, which also influences their traveling behavior.

Table1. Demographic profile of the participants

| | Frequency | Percentage | | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | | | Age | | |
| Male | 144 | 48% | Under 20 | 66 | 22% |
| Female | 156 | 52% | 21-30 | 194 | 65% |
| Data collected | | | 31-40 | 20 | 7% |
| Taiwan | 149 | 49% | 41-50 | 14 | 5% |
| Canada | 151 | 51% | Above 50 | 4 | 1% |
| Language | | | Cultural background | | |
| Chinese | 151 | 50% | Western | 140 | 47% |
| English | 131 | 44% | Eastern | 152 | 51% |
| Others | 18 | 6% | Mixed | 6 | 2% |

A four-page questionnaire in this study consisted of seven parts: Basic Information, Trip Characteristics, Safety Awareness and Traveling Risks Awareness. There are explanations and instructions on how to respond to the questions before each part. This questionnaire was mainly constructed based on the seven major risk aspects, and the 62 questions were designed based on each risk aspect. The results from each aspect would show how these affect people's decision making. The following are some examples. Transportation aspectis tourists' consideration of taking public transportation and how safe they feel about it. Hygiene aspect is hygiene of food, environment or public utilities.

Weather/Natural Conditions is for example, earthquakes, volcanoes and tsunami.

A 5-point Likert scale is the most commonly used measure, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree", with "Neither Agree nor Disagree" in the middle. Other scales include GOS, The Global Overall Symptom scale, also known as the seven-point scale, ranging from 1 (no problem) to 7 (a very severe problem). A questionnaire was developed by analyzing similar previous research studies and the questions asked were descriptive of risks; 62 items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5) or "very unsafe" (1) to

“very safe” (5). Since the questionnaire needed to be in both Chinese and English, it was originally designed in Chinese and translated into English under the principle of back translation (Brislin, 1970; Heung *et al.*, 2001). This technique allows the researchers to examine the original and back-translated versions, thereby improving the quality of translation and ensuring that the contents were identical to the original Chinese version. Besides, the English version of the questionnaire was also reviewed by an English native speaker to avoid grammar mistakes or other problems. All of the questions in the questionnaire were reviewed by an academic advisor for content relevancy. Minor corrections were also made before finalization.

Basic Information contains nine questions: age, gender, nationality, mother language, cultural background, language ability of Chinese and English, traveling experience, traveling frequency and traveling purpose. Language ability is ascertained using a 5-point scale, from “very poor” (1) to “excellent” (5). The respondents answered questions on age, gender, nationality, mother language, cultural background and language ability objectively. The last question (traveling purpose) is a single choice question with the following options: holiday, business, visiting friends and relatives, and others (if none of the above suits the respondent's answer).

Trip Characteristics contains four items, and the respondents needed to select the best-described statement on how they planned or would plan their trips. Previous studies all show that the overseas tour products are categorized into three types: Package Tour, Independent Travel and Foreign Independent Travel (FIT). This question was initially generated from Chiang (2006). The first item of this part, “I have a travel agent to plan everything about my trip including a tour guide or a tour leader.” refers to package tours. The second item, “I have a travel agent only to plan the ticket, hotel and shuttle bus for my

trip; my friends and/or me handle other parts of the trip” and the third item, “I have a travel agent only to plan half-day or a full-day tours; my friends and/or me handle the rest of the trip” refers to independent travel. The last item “My friends and/or me plan the trip without a travel agent” refer to independent foreign travel.

Safety Awareness contains 10 questions according to seven major risk aspects. Part five was originally generated from Chao (2008) and then reworded into seven major risk aspects based on Tsaur, Tzeng and Wang (1997). This part examines how respondents generally felt in each overall situation. “Check-in/check-out at the airport,” “Transit at the airport,” “During the flight,” and “During the taking of local transportation,” are under the Transportation category. “During the time living in accommodations” is part of the Accommodation category. “During the time sightseeing” is under the Sightseeing Spot category. “During the time eating at the restaurant” is part of the Hygiene category. “The weather conditions that you are exposed to” is related to the Weather/Natural Conditions category. “The local medical support conditions” is under the Medical Support aspect. The last statement “The local law and order conditions” is part of the Law and Order category.

4. Results

In total, the data from the 300 study participants were used for analysis. The data were analyzed by frequencies, independent sample t tests and cross-tab analysis. Before conducting the data analysis, some information regarding the study participants' personal and travel backgrounds is also provided, including their basic socio-economic background, personal travel characteristics, trip characteristics and traveling motivations. Over 81% of the 243 participants have overseas traveling experience and the majority of participants' traveling purpose is taking a vacation (71%), while other

purposes (29%) include business, visiting friends and relatives, study, working holiday, and some are simply either to experience different lifestyles or to broaden their horizon. Over 75% of the participants had traveled overseas one time or more. Study participants with an Eastern cultural background (39%) have a higher percentage of traveling overseas every year than the participants with a Western cultural background (37%). However, there is no significant difference in traveling frequency regarding cultural background ($P > .05$).

Safety awareness was designed based on seven categories of traveling risk (Tsaur, Tzeng & Wang, 1997) mentioned earlier:

Transportation, Law and Order, Hygiene, Accommodation, Weather/Natural Conditions, Sightseeing Spot and Medical Support. Table 2 shows the results from using descriptive statistics. It contains the actual number of respondents who answered the questions on safety awareness and also shows the average level for each statement. Then ten items were added up to measure the construct of safety awareness. It is better to take the mean value of an individual item which is designed to measure the construct of safety awareness. The mean score which is a composite of ten items used to measure the safety awareness is equal to 39.82 in total and 3.98 as the

Table 2. Mean analysis of safety awareness

| | N | Min. | Max. | Mean |
|--|-----|------|------|-------|
| Check-in/Check-out at the airport. | 299 | 2 | 5 | 4.27 |
| Transit at the airport. | 299 | 2 | 5 | 4.18 |
| During the flight. | 299 | 1 | 5 | 3.69 |
| During the taking of local transportation. | 297 | 1 | 5 | 3.86 |
| During the time living in accommodations. | 299 | 2 | 5 | 3.93 |
| During the time sightseeing. | 299 | 2 | 5 | 4.03 |
| During the time eating at restaurants. | 297 | 2 | 5 | 4.07 |
| The weather/natural conditions you are exposed to. | 299 | 1 | 5 | 3.94 |
| The local medical support conditions. | 299 | 1 | 5 | 3.92 |
| The local law and order conditions. | 299 | 1 | 5 | 3.90 |
| Total | 299 | 24 | 50 | 39.82 |

Cultural background is another factor that affects people's safety awareness. From Table 3, Western cultures have generally high scores on the following statements: "During the taking of local transportation," "During the time living in accommodation," "During the time sightseeing," "The weather/natural conditions that you are exposed to," "The local medical support conditions," and "The local law and order conditions"; conversely, those from Eastern cultures feel unsafe in these situations.

Overall, there are six items out of total ten which show that cultural background is a significant element affecting tourists' perception of safety awareness. Then the total score of ten items from safety awareness was also conducted by using independent sample t test. The result showed that there is no significant on safety awareness construct between study participants with different cultural background.

Table 4.3. Safety awareness by cultural background

| | T Value | P |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| During the taking of local transportation. | 3.854 | 0.000 |
| During the time living in accommodation. | 3.095 | 0.000 |
| During the time sightseeing. | 2.307 | 0.027 |
| The weather/natural conditions that you are exposed to. | 2.638 | 0.003 |
| The local medical support conditions. | 2.386 | 0.000 |
| The local law and order conditions. | 2.833 | 0.000 |
| Total | 1.558 | 0.120 |

This paper aimed to examine any significant differences in the perceptions towards traveling risk among tourists with different cultural backgrounds. The study listed 22 items to measure their perceived travelling risk in Taiwan by using a five-point Likert scale, with 1 referring to strongly disagree with the statement, and 5 referring to strongly agree with the statement. Of 22 items, nine items have a mean score above four; 11 items have an average score between 3.5 and 4; and two items have a mean value less than 3.5. No item has a score higher than 4.2. Overall, the study participants perceived Taiwan's dining, food and beverage industry as having a high quality in hygiene and being very clean. Besides, the majority consider the local people to be very friendly, which matched the image Taiwan Tourism Bureau office would like to build up for Taiwan's tourism industry. There are four items related weather and natural disasters such as earthquake, tsunamis and volcanoes, which were considered as travelling risks in Taiwan. In fact, tsunamis and volcanoes never happen in Taiwan. Again, the perceived traveling risks are not real or absolute risks. Some risks are developed based on incorrect or insufficient information.

Then the independent sample t test was used to measure any difference on perceived traveling risk existing between Western and Eastern tourists. According to Table 1, seven items of 22 items show significant differences between the two parties. Tourists with Eastern cultural backgrounds scored higher on feeling safe about "Drivers

obey the traffic safety regulations," "General hygiene practices," "The dining environment is clean," "Food hygiene is good," "There are no contagious diseases," "When accidents happen, the government and residents are willing to provide assistance," "The interpreters in scenic spots are professional," "The weather is stable," and "There are rarely earthquakes and tsunami," compared to study participants with Western cultural backgrounds. Study participants with Eastern cultural backgrounds are the people from the Asian region and share similar geographical and weather conditions. Besides, Taiwan is also located in Asia, close to other Asian countries. This might help participants coming from other Asian countries to have a better understanding about Taiwan's travelling environment than participants coming from the USA, Europe and distances very far away from Asia.

Then 22 items of traveling risk perceptions were added up to one construct. In total, the mean of the sum of 22 items is equal to 87.78 (the minimum value is 9 and the maximum value is 110). The average value for its mean value is equal to 3.89. The mean score of traveling risk perceptions of study respondents with western cultural background is equal to 3.76, and the mean score for study respondents with Eastern cultural background is equal to 4.04. According to the mean score of two parties, the study participants with Eastern cultural background feel safer traveling in Taiwan compared to study participants with Western cultural background in many different items.

Table 4. Traveling risk perceptions by cultural background.

| <i>I feel safe becausein Taiwan</i> | Total | Cultural background | | |
|---|-------|---------------------|---------|-----------------|
| | | Western | Eastern | T value |
| Public transportation system is safe | 4.04 | 4.07 | 4.01 | 0.729 |
| Drivers obey the traffic safety regulations | 3.92 | 3.64 | 4.16 | -4.750* |
| Public telephones can be accessed easily | 3.76 | 3.70 | 3.83 | -1.223 |
| Fire escape gear is available in hotels | 4.09 | 4.18 | 4.03 | 1.839 |
| Rescue equipment is available in hotels | 4.11 | 4.19 | 4.05 | 1.637 |
| Hygiene practices are well developed | 4.14 | 4.07 | 4.22 | -1.589 |
| Dining environment is clean | 4.15 | 4.07 | 4.25 | -2.102* |
| Food hygiene in Taiwan is good. | 4.09 | 4.00 | 4.20 | -2.202* |
| No contagious diseases | 3.85 | 3.79 | 3.91 | -1.174 |
| Local government will provide assistance for any accidents | 3.94 | 3.93 | 3.97 | -0.362 |
| Local people are friendly | 4.12 | 4.14 | 4.08 | 0.591 |
| Crime rates are low | 3.78 | 3.68 | 3.86 | -1.856 |
| Quality of medical facilities is good | 3.95 | 3.88 | 4.01 | -1.234 |
| Medical facilities are easily accessible | 3.92 | 3.86 | 3.98 | -1.411 |
| Location of emergency medical treatment is convenient | 3.77 | 3.85 | 3.69 | 1.243 |
| Recreational facilities in scenic spots are well controlled | 4.08 | 4.09 | 4.07 | 0.247 |
| Interpreters in attractions are professional | 4.05 | 4.02 | 4.10 | -0.823 |
| Interpreters in scenic spots are enough | 3.99 | 4.03 | 3.97 | 0.630 |
| The weather is stable. | 3.53 | 3.17 | 3.91 | -6.688* |
| Earthquakes rarely happen | 3.32 | 2.61 | 3.97 | -10.580* |
| Tsunamis rarely happen | 3.44 | 2.73 | 4.07 | -10.927* |
| Volcanoes rarely happen | 3.52 | 2.94 | 4.03 | -9.136* |
| Total | 3.89 | 3.76 | 4.04 | -3.736* |

* It means the *p* value is less than 0.05.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this research study was to understand the difference of traveling risk perceptions and safety awareness between tourist with Eastern and Western cultural background. From a research perspective, participants were asked to respond to numerous questions, such as the perception concerning traveling characteristics, safety awareness and traveling risk perceptions. This brings out the influential factors behind tourists' traveling behavior. It should be noted that both questionnaires and measurements could be used in different situations like before visiting the destination, while visiting the destination, and after visiting the destination. This requires the adaptation of the questions to the specific situation.

By testing with different safety- and risk-related situations, this study offers two main contributions, and some points for further research or the consideration of the tourism industries. In the seven aspects of traveling risk, study participants with Eastern cultural background indicated feeling unsafe concerning Transportation, Accommodation, Medical Support and Law and Order. But when it comes to perceived traveling risks, Eastern cultures commonly feel safe on 'drivers obey the traffic safety regulations' (Transportation); when accidents happen; the government and residents are willing to provide assistance (Law and Order); and there are rarely tsunamis and volcanoes (Weather/Natural Conditions).

The seven risk aspects that were

investigated in this research are Transportation, Law and Order, Hygiene, Accommodation, Weather/Natural Conditions, Sightseeing Spot and Medical Support. The result of this study proves that culture is a factor that influences tourists' traveling risk perceptions. There is no obvious gap between Western culture and Eastern culture on safety awareness construct and there is significant difference on certain items of safety awareness.

This study concludes that culture is the significant factor influencing tourists' perception of safety and traveling risk. The study confirms previous study results (Weber & Hsee, 1998; Harris & Jenkins, 2006; Meng&Uysal; 2008). For study objective goal two, the study's result is that culture can impact how tourists see the traveling risk but not safety awareness. Five out of seven major risk aspects, Sightseeing Spot, Transportation, Weather/Natural Conditions, Hygiene and Law and Order (from high to low) are higher on risk perception among those from an Eastern culture. On the other hand, three risk aspects: Medical Support, Accommodation and Sightseeing Spot (from high to low) are higher on perceived risk among those from a Western culture. Moreover, this study also found that Western culture travelers

are more likely to engage in activities with higher risk.

In conclusion, the findings of the present study have shown that cultural differences in various traveling safety and risk aspects exist in overseas traveling. Based on the study results, some suggestions for tourism industry are provided. The industry should provide various choices or trip types based on the consideration of culture, and the industry can also strengthen the weaknesses of the seven major risk aspects which were investigated in this study. Moreover, the results from the study can be used as a focal point of the marketing strategies to be implemented to develop products/services for the specific traveling needs of the tourists. Understanding the constructs of tourist destination risk perception may help in developing marketing strategies to cope with risk perceptions. Future research could also seek to determine whether travel motivations vary between independent traveler and group traveler. Other potential antecedents which could be investigated include income status, occupation type, personality, and values. However, more work needs to be done in refining the construct for tourism marketing purposes. Hopefully this research will stimulate discussion and additional research on tourism.

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Key Words

Homestays, alternative accommodation, SWOT, host community, Bed & Breakfasts

Homestays in Himachal State, India: A SWOT Analysis

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Abstract

The hospitality landscape worldwide and specifically in India, is going through a transition with introduction of homestays. Homestays or Bed & Breakfasts (B&Bs) are growing rapidly and changing the old and established norms of hospitality trade. With changed dynamics of how hospitality is being offered in these alternative accommodations such as homestays, newer research questions emerge. There is a need to look at this new product from different angles and perspectives of various stakeholders such as tourists, policymakers, host community. A SWOT analysis was conducted to get an in-depth understanding of the homestay product of Himachal Pradesh, an Indian Himalayan state. The strengths of homestays lie in their unique offering of homeliness which is not offered in any other form of tourist accommodation. Their apparent weakness lies in the fact that unlike hotels, they might not be able to provide that level of privacy. Currently the product is fragmented and not organized and there is low awareness among tourists and homestay operators. Homestays in Himalayas have a unique opportunity to build a very unique alternative sustainable accommodation in Himalayas that uses existing structures and attract new kind of non-conventional tourists. Competition from hotels and homestays in similar Himalayan destinations is one of the major threats identified. Overall homestays have great prospects despite of some foreseeable threats and weaknesses, if they focus on their inherent strengths and build on their unique offerings. There are challenges which can be resolved by active participation and engagement of communities. Recommendations are offered for review of existing product and its future improvement in the light of the SWOT analysis.

INTRODUCTION

In the year 2008, the Government of Himachal Pradesh (a Himalayan state in India commonly known HP) launched a scheme called Himachal Pradesh Homestay Scheme to promote development of homestays in the state and spread benefits of tourism to rural areas. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India had launched a similar scheme at Centre level which was called Incredible India Bed & Breakfast Scheme (Gunasekaran & Anandkumar, 2012). Many states in India, followed suit and launched their own schemes which were more or less based on the Centre's B&B scheme. According to Census of India 2011, more than 90% of the population of Himachal Pradesh lives in rural areas (Himachal state ranks highest in India in terms of percentage of rural population). People of Himachal Pradesh are mainly dependent on subsistence agriculture as a source of livelihood. In spite of being one of the leading tourism destination in India in terms of tourist arrivals (15.9 million domestic and 0.39 million international tourists in 2014), rural communities of HP have not been able to accrue much economic benefits from popular tourism. As the state comes of age, it faces issues such as climate changes; lower agricultural output; unemployment and migration of youth to urban areas. Homestay tourism is being promoted by the Government as an ideal way to encourage a rural, economic and cultural renaissance in the state.

Although HP is more known for its world renowned tourist destinations like Shimla and Manali, there is more to HP besides its natural beauty. The timeless traditions and culture, the architectural style, the lifestyle of Himachali people can explain the increasing surge of interest in alternative accommodations here. The choice of HP as a focus for this study was considered suitable as it has seen rise of homestay as an accommodation in past couple of decades. Homestays have been operating in Himachal Pradesh as a family enterprise for last two of decades, much before the official introduction of the scheme. Many foreign tourists have been coming since last 15-20 years and staying with local families, for months together. According to Himachal Pradesh tourism website as of Dec, 2014, there were 662 homestays in Himachal Pradesh with 1799 rooms and a bed capacity of 3596. Majority of these are located in Kullu (206) (Figure 1). Besides this, there are many unregistered homestays for which statistics are not available. Considering many other Himalayan states are transitioning to this new form of accommodation, HP can be an excellent case to study this new phenomenon.

This article is an attempt to understand the homestay product Himachal Pradesh from perspectives of different stakeholders. The product is unique and has much inherent strength and with rise in demand for alternative accommodations- the product faces a lot of opportunities and at the same time lot of vulnerabilities. However, at the same time it has some weaknesses as it faces competition from other forms of accommodations. It was deemed crucial to get an in-depth understanding of the product for addressing its weaknesses and strengthening its virtues. Accordingly the product can be reviewed and refined and policymakers can also take suggestions for future evolution of the homestay programme.

Homestays- An Alternative Accommodation

The worldwide success of sharing economy

platforms like airbnb.com (which promotes Bed and Breakfasts (B&Bs)) is an indicator of rising interest among travelers and hosts in alternative accommodation. But homestays and B&Bs have been a part of tourist accommodation domain since a long time. B&Bs have are known by different names across the world like pensione, locanda (Italy); chambres d'hote (France); zimmerfrei, privatzimmer, gastauser (Germany, Austria); minskukus (Japan).

Lynch was the first one to coin the term 'Homestay' in 2003. Later he refined his definition to call such units as 'commercial home' in 2004 that included 'small hotels, bed and breakfasts, and host family accommodation'. A commercial home is a hybrid of a commercial hotel and a home Lynch (2005). Further he observed that "Commercial home embraces a range of accommodation types including some small hotels, farmstay accommodation, bed and breakfasts, and host family accommodation" (p.534). As against a hotel, where there are strict boundaries between staff and guest areas, in a commercial home, hosts generally live on the premises and there are no strict boundaries between host areas and visitor areas (Rhodri, 2004). Sometimes in self-catering cottages/second homes, visitors may share the premises of host but the family doesn't live there always. (Lynch and Mac Whannell, 2000)

Although terms like B&B and homestays are used interchangeably, few authors such as Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen & Duangsaeng (2015) opine that homestays are different from B&Bs and commercial homes because "even though all such accommodations feature more personal and frequent interaction than is commonly found in conventional settings, homestay guests often participate in the daily activities of hosts, making homestay experiences even more interactive (and intrusive to hosts) than overnight stays in a B&B"(p.32). Not only this, homestays in the developing countries are focused more

towards providing a cultural experience than the B&Bs of Europe.

Homestays are not merely tourist accommodations but they reflect the culture of the place they are located in and have implications on the society and economy. Homestays can be a great tool for promoting rural sustainable tourism in rural remote areas with unique indigenous cultures. In Europe many agritourismos, gites and farmstays are some popular forms of alternative accommodations in rural areas. In many developing countries such as Malaysia (Liu, 2006; Razzaq et al., 2011), South Africa (Nuntsu et al., 2004) and Thailand, (Kontogeorgopoulos et al., 2015), homestays primarily focus on culture and attract tourists who are looking for different accommodation experiences. Homestays help tourists to explore the traditions and cultures of the destination (Acharya & Halpenny, 2014) and engage closely with the local way of life (Bhuiyan, Siwar, Ismail, & Islam, 2011; Ibrahim & Razzaq, 2010). Few studies have focused on community participation in homestays (Kayat, 2002; Kwaramba, Lovett, Louw, & Chipumuro, 2012) and its impacts (Chen, 2004; Gu & Wong 2006; Ngah, Preston & Asman, 2010; Peaty, 2010) especially in empowering women (Acharya & Halpenny, 2014) and in empowering communities (Anand, Chandan, & Singh, 2012; Peaty, 2010). Previous studies have examined homestays from different lenses of: perspective of tourists (Jamal, Othman, & Muhammad 2011; Moscardo, 2009), perspective of homestay operators (Lynch, 1998, 2005; Liu, 2006; McIntosh & Harris, 2009; McIntosh, Lynch, & Sweeney, 2011), gender (Jamiliah & Hamzah, 2007; Kwaramba et al. 2012; Lynch, 1998; Mottiar & Laurincikova, 2009; Tucker, 2009), 'homestay setting' and 'experience' (Carmichael & Mc Clinchey, 2009; Hall, 2009; Lynch, 2004); guest expectations (Sood, 2015) and host-guest relationship (Tucker, 2003).

In Indian Himalayan regions, homestays

have been a popular choice for international tourists who live for longer durations (Bagri, Babu & Bhatt, 2013). Researchers have been advocating the development of homestays as a suitable strategy in remote areas which are facing accommodation deficit (Bagri, Babu & Bhatt, 2013). They have shown tangible benefits to communities of Ladakh in Jammu & Kashmir (Anand et al., 2012), Uttarakhand (Macek, 2012), Himachal Pradesh (Gangotia, 2013; Parsheera & Sood, 2011) and Sikkim (Peaty, 2010; Sarkar & Sinha, 2015). Homestays are being promoted in these Himalayan states to spread benefits of tourism to the lesser known destinations and also as a supplementary accommodation due to deficit of tourist accommodation in these areas.

In light of the above, since homestays are in a nascent stage in HP, it was deemed appropriate to look at this new product holistically through SWOT analysis. This study hence attempts to answer the following research questions (RQ)s: RQ1. Analyze the homestay product in Himachal Pradesh through lenses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

RQ2. Propose recommendations for future refinement of the product.

Research Methods

This study is conducted by analysis of homestays in Himachal Pradesh and the state Homestay scheme as part of researcher's doctoral work. As part of the doctoral study the author conducted a range of interviews: 50 interviews with homestay operators, 150 interviews with the local community and one focus group discussion with Mahila Mandals, 252 interviews with tourists who chose to stay in the homestay, 150 interviews with tourists who were willing to stay in the homestay but have not stayed so far. While the detailed analysis of all aforesaid interviews is beyond the purview of this study, nonetheless the views of the participants from those interviews have helped in conducting this SWOT analysis and getting an in depth

understanding of homestays. The views of all relevant stakeholders (not just perceptions of tourists but also of operators and community) are critical in developing an overall understanding of the product. Additionally, secondary data on homestays at other Himalayan destinations was used to assess and understand the external factors i.e. opportunities and threats to homestay product. This also included dynamic hospitality and tourism trends and Government homestay policy, state tourism policies of other Himalayan states, newspaper articles, magazine reports and blogs.

Due to growing importance of homestays it is important to create a strategy which helps in leveraging the advantages and resolving the constraints. Such strategy could be

devised by using tools like SWOT analysis. SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Although SWOT analysis is generally used in marketing by companies but Stephen & Connell (2006) observe that “SWOT analysis is not limited to marketing; it can be applied to the whole company, to destinations or tourism products” (p.314). It is a dynamic tool that can be used for making and testing strategy (Piercy, 1997) and help in making realistic assessments. In this paper SWOT analysis was used by laying out various identified factors in a grid. Later on, these factors were reviewed and some of them seemed to conflict or repeat. The ones most suitable to a particular category were retained and reflect in Table 1.

| S.No. | DISTRICT | NO. OF HOMESTAYS |
|-------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. | Bilaspur | 5 |
| 2. | Chamba | 38 |
| 3. | Hamirpur | 1 |
| 4. | Kangra | 80 |
| 5. | Kinnaur | 7 |
| 6. | Kullu | 206 |
| 7. | Lahaul & Spiti | 60 |
| 8. | Mandi | 52 |
| 9. | Shimla | 161 |
| 10. | Sirmaur | 12 |
| 11. | Solan | 34 |
| 12. | Una | 6 |



Figure 1 Spread of Homestays in Himachal Pradesh

Discussion

Strengths

The biggest strength of homestays lies in their homely nature and authenticity which is not available in any hotel or resort. Apparently homemade food is a very important component that many tourists miss while staying in a hotel. Staying in a homestay can take care of this problem.

Homestays use the existing built structures unlike hotels that build from scratch using non local building material which is not in sync with Himalayan ecology and topography which is more susceptible to earthquakes. This makes homestays a comparatively sustainable accommodation option in fragile Himalayas. Homestays aim to provide tourists accommodation options

in the mid-market segment where accommodation industry in India is currently facing a shortage. The state policymakers displayed a high interest in rural tourism and homestays by coming up with a clearly focused scheme on Homestays. The strength of the scheme lies in the fact that it provides a futuristic vision to development of homestay as a distinct product. They have the ability to re-distribute the benefits to rural remote areas by providing them employment and supplementary incomes. By leveraging the culture and rustic essence of rural Himachal and the fact that these areas have a tourist accommodation deficit, homestays are a suitable product. These remote areas have not been of any interest by private players for resort/hotel development and hence homestays can increase the inventory of tourist accommodation. The scheme also offers incentives to new entrepreneurs in the form of non-commercial tariff on electricity and water and luxury and sales tax exemption on income from homestays initially. Marketing support is provided with use of Himachal tourism website free of cost and HPTDC website for a commission. Additionally, another strength of homestays is that they are located in Himachal Pradesh which is endowed with natural beauty and unique culture. Tourists can immerse in Himachali culture and abundance of recreational activities in

Himachal. Himachal has a plethora of adventure activities, traditional temples, fairs and festivals in its remotest villages, where tourists can get value for their money by staying in these homestays.

Weaknesses

The primary weakness of homestay product is the issue of privacy. Many hosts as well as tourists are uncomfortable with the idea of staying with strangers. Currently, the homestays are fragmented and working in isolation. There are concerns about safety on both sides: while hosts are worried about safety of their family members especially women and children; tourists too are a little apprehensive in staying in some stranger's house due to safety concerns. The skepticism of tourists regarding hygiene and cleanliness of these homestays is also one of the weaknesses. The scheme was although well-intentioned but non-involvement of communities due to top-down approach while formulating the scheme has led to some issues. Since it is a new product- the hosts and the guests- both do not have clarity on expectations and standards. Hence the product currently lacks a standard definition. Institutional mechanism is not in place for awareness creation and proper implementation of the scheme at grass roots level. By offering incentive on electricity the scheme is increasing dependence on non renewable energy offering

Table 1 SWOT analysis of Homestays of Himachal Pradesh

| Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|---|--|--|---|
| Authentic experiences and 'home like' factor with the opportunity for more personalized service | Is an antithesis to hotels which offer more privacy | Opportunity to create future sustainable accommodations in Himalayas | Competition from hotels and similar Himalayan destinations |
| Use existing houses— hence no burden on fragile Himalayan ecology | Existing homestays are fragmented and work in isolation. | Homestays can offer a diversity of experiences— natural and cultural | Outsiders' control of homestay product is a threat |
| Increase in inventory in the areas that lack hotels and lodges and non interest of private players to invest in those areas | Safety is a big concern for both hosts and guests. Tourists skeptical of hygiene and cleanliness | Build upon their USP of homeliness and create a differentiator. | Rural communities moving away from Agriculture /horticulture in pursuit of tourists |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| Enable redistribution of tourism to rural areas from oversaturated urban areas | No focus on making homestays as different product from hotels/guest houses e.g. the hotel like service requirement like washing machine, WC toilets, parking facility, etc. which are not always available in rural houses. | New Markets: great opportunity for community based tourism, responsible tourism, ecotourism, volunteer tourism where homestay could be the preferred choice of accommodation in all these. | Commercial cottages, small hotels and villas exploit Govt. scheme incentives by camouflaging as homestays |
| Allows small households, low entry barrier anyone with as less as one room to spare, to participate | No motivation or incentive for the use of eco-friendly sources of energy for homestays. Instead electricity being offered at domestic rates. | Homestays as prospective summer vacation homes highlighting the safety. | Increased visitors could lead to waste disposal problems and become a threat to rural infrastructure |
| Provide comfortable accommodation options to tourists in the mid-market segment | Product currently not organized and no clarity among entrepreneurs. Institutional mechanisms at grass roots level not in place or not equipped | Create rural micro economies. Provide more employment opportunity esp. to women & youth | Unwarranted and unfavorable side effects such as drug trafficking, child sex abuse |
| Employment opportunities and augmented supplementary income for rural families | Specification of rooms and toilets are pre-defined and not in tune with traditional specifications of Himachali houses | Improvement in sanitation and sewage management for rural houses | Threaten the heritage and culture if unmanaged |
| Scheme offers relief and exemption from taxes & non-commercial tariff on electricity and water | Lack of information about homestays among tourists | Could help create micro tourist destinations. | Threaten the long term sustainability of resources |

no encouragement to operators for use of renewable sources of energy like solar power. Certain requirements in the scheme restrict entry of many rural householders as Himalayan houses are not able to meet some of those guidelines. There is no focus on finding ways to differentiate homestay product from hotels. Other than Govt. website, there are limited sources of information and promotion of homestays which leaves tourists unaware.

It is not right to assume that rural communities of remote villages will have the skills and experience of hospitality. According to the scheme, for registration, a

rural household is to be equipped with a number of facilities. The list of facilities in homestay registration form require a household to have (not all) the following: WC with lid and toilet paper; hot and cold running water, dining area serving continental or Indian breakfast, aquaguard/mineral water facility, washing machines/dryers, left luggage facilities etc. A rural villager would not have these kinds of facilities in his house, nor would have understanding of terms like 'left-luggage' facility. For rural householders reading about terms like 'provision of continental breakfast' in homestay registration form can

be quite discouraging and become a deterrent to participate.

Opportunities

Due to the cool climate, homestays in Himachal Pradesh have a great potential to become prospective summer vacation homes, where tourists could stay for a long term. At present, homestays as a product have the opportunity to tap into the niche tourist market segment of nature lovers, photographers, wildlife enthusiasts & culture lovers. With rise in volunteer tourism, homestays also can attract this market segment which can help in community development in villages. Not only volunteer tourism, pro-poor tourism and eco-tourism also see homestays as a sustainable accommodation option and this market offers immense opportunity. The fact that women from the community have a major stake in running homestays, provides a measure of safety & credibility sought by female solo travelers and families. These homestays have the opportunity to promote the safety aspect in Himachali homestays, which will help address the concern of some travelers. Homestays also present an opportunity for local people especially women and youth to earn supplementary income. Homestays are a very important component of rural tourism and by promoting homestays, other micro sectors like handicrafts, nature guiding and sale of local produce will see a positive change. This can also help in creating new micro tourist destinations as currently tourism is centered in few places in HP like Manali, Shimla and Dharamsala. Homestays can create an opportunity for better sanitation and hygiene management for these rural areas. Homestays may provide a platform for rejuvenation of lost art forms, folklores and handicrafts.

Threats

Homestays are competing with the gigantic hotel industry to woo tourists and are trying to add services like hotels. Hence the biggest foreseeable threat to homestays product due to this competition is that they

might lose their uniqueness in this process and just become like hotels. With outsiders contracting and leasing homestays, there is a threat to the basic ideology of homeliness behind homestays. Instead of competing with hotels on price homestays should compete on their unique offerings, then only they will succeed. Homestays in Himachal face competition not only from hotels but also homestay in similar mountain destinations like Nepal and in India (Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Ladakh). However each region has its own unique culture and HP should focus on its unique culture, architecture and cuisine to differentiate its homestay product. If homestays do not focus on sustainable use of resources it may threaten the fragile mountain ecosystem with rise in tourism. In the long run, there is a danger of communities becoming over dependent on homestays and giving up their traditional agriculture and farms. Homestays, if not managed properly endanger the culture of the area which has not changed in thousands of years. Earlier the culture was not much affected by tourism because tourists lived in enclaves of hotels, distant from communities and there was very less/no direct contact between them. However, in homestays contact of hosts with the tourists is more intense and hence the threat to cultural commodification can be greater. This is a double edged sword. Interaction between cultures can have both positive and negative impacts. It could lead to unwarranted impacts like child sex abuse and drug issues which has already been observed in Goa and Kerala (EQUATIONS, 2008). There is a proliferation of other tourist accommodations like hotels and guest houses which are camouflaging as homestays to benefit from incentives offered by the scheme. There is also a threat to put additional burden on women if the roles are not properly defined. There is a danger of these instances leading to tourists feeling cheated for not getting the experience they thought of.

Implications for future development

This study has following implications for future development of homestay product:

- 1) Homestays are a unique product in themselves and homestay operators should be encouraged to create their niche. Homestays should focus on promoting the authentic experiences they can provide such as: their rustic locations, experience of rural life up-close, local culture, local cuisine and homeliness. In HP homestays are generally located in locations where there are less or no hotels, for example in remote rural areas, near National Parks, on trekking routes etc.
- 2) Existing homestays are fragmented in their nature and are acting in isolation. There is a need of an agency which consolidates all these homestays under one umbrella and helps in their promotion, training and awareness at grass root level. Lessons can be drawn from organizations like Eurogites in Europe. Similar collective network in Indian Himalayas can help in financing, implementation, education, promotion, networking and marketing.
- 3) There should be more community involvement in the scheme. The current programme should be more cognizant of local realities and review homestay product in accordance with existing local structures and culture. This will encourage more community participation.
- 4) Homestays should encourage use of existing structures and showcase rural life as is.
- 5) Awareness issue of homestay scheme needs to be addressed through various channels like media and village level institutions. Also more information about these homestays be provided to tourists through internet and various media channels. Absence of information on homestays is a deterrent in the development of homestay product.
- 6) Currently many villagers lack the skills and experience about hospitality trade. This can be solved through capacity building programs.

7) Many existing operators face the issue of reaching to the right target market. An effort is needed to train them to use internet sharing platforms and social media to reach out to the target market. Currently most of the operators are heavily dependent on HP Government website as the most important source of promotion.

8) There is a vast untapped market in form of volunteer tourists, solo female travelers, and ecotourists who want enriching experiences but are not finding much information about these homestays. There is a need to help the operators reach this new market through various promotion channels.

9) There are certain issues that threaten the long term sustainability of homestays like their pursuit of amassing amenities like hotels. Homestays in HP should be careful about resource sustainability due to their location in fragile ecosystems. Homestay scheme should encourage use of renewable resources like solar power instead of encouraging dependence on non-renewable resources.

10) Homestay scheme could in future add classification of homestays on basis of not how many services they can provide but what experiences they can provide. For example one category could be 'rustic homestays' providing experience of life in a village like plucking fruits, working in farms etc. A second category could be 'cultural homestays' which provide special experiences on handicraft making, culinary classes or discourses on Himalayan spirituality.

12) Homestays have empowered many women across the world and also in India, mainly in Ladakh (Anand et al., 2012) and Kerala (2015). In Himachal Pradesh also, women are equal participants in workforce already and by addressing the challenges they face, they could be encouraged towards homestay entrepreneurship (Parsheera & Sood, 2011)

13) It is also recommended that locals should take ownership of homestay

development as their participation is critical to long term sustainability. Locals' involvement will help in promoting ideals of homestay product in truest sense which outsiders will never be able to achieve as they don't live in those homestays.

14) Homestays can help create new micro tourist destinations and economies and help diversify the economy through not only tourism but sale of farm produce and handicrafts. Lessons can be drawn from Kudumbasree programme of Kerala (Manoj, 2015).

Conclusion

The emerging concept of homestays and B&Bs has changed the landscape of hospitality worldwide. Previous research was mainly focused on formal accommodations like hotels and guest houses. With a change in how hospitality is being offered in the new alternative accommodations like homestays and B&Bs, newer research questions emerge. This study has attempted to look at few of these questions in a small Himalayan setting in the context of the state of Himachal Pradesh.

Since not much previous work has been done in the field of homestays in India, particularly in HP, this study makes an important contribution for future development of homestays. As evident from SWOT analysis, this study has helped to lay out the theoretical underpinnings of this new form of accommodation in HP and helped provide an in-depth understanding of this presently unexplored domain.

With insightful consultation with the stakeholders, the preceding analysis indicates that the existing homestay product in Himachal Pradesh has a lot of strengths if seen in terms of its unique experiences that it can provide. The weaknesses in the product are reflected in the existing homestay program in terms of guidelines and compliance issues, as also seen in Malaysian homestay program (Nor Ashikin and Kayat, 2010). Other weaknesses highlighted in our analysis such as lack of

skills and training, lack of finance and lack of awareness among homestay entrepreneurs; have also been observed in homestays in other parts of the world such as in studies of Nor Ashikin and Kayat (2010) in Malaysia and Kwaramba, Lovett, Louw, & Chipumuro (2012) in South Africa. There are immense opportunities for homestays in future as they have proven to create enriching and diverse experiences and therefore becoming a popular choice among tourists (Rasoolimanesh, Dahalan, & Jaafar, 2016). This study also has shown how these opportunities can be realized by homestay operators if they focus on its core strengths of provision of authentic experience. The foreseeable threats need to be taken into consideration, so they can be addressed and managed accordingly.

This analysis has added to our understanding of homestay product and has various practical implications. The main practical implication from the study is that homestays need to build on their inherent competency to become a unique product which adds value to tourists' satisfaction (Rasoolimanesh, Dahalan, & Jaafar, 2016). Authenticity is clearly what can create a differentiator for homestays which other form of accommodations may not be able to provide, as also observed by Mura in his (2015) study. Policymakers can use some of the recommendations in these study for refinement of homestay programme and help in marketing this product to the market segments discussed under the opportunities parameter. The weaknesses need to be addressed at the policy level as well as individual level. The threats reflected in this study are issues of safety already highlighted by EQUATIONS (2008); commercialization, outsider presence, loss of authenticity and long term sustainability, as also observed by Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen & Duangsaeng (2015).

For future studies, this study can provide a conceptual framework or base for understanding of homestays in a developing country context. Although this study has

been limited in scope to the state of Himachal Pradesh, more studies can be conducted in other Himalayan destinations and comparisons can be drawn between them. It would help to add to the literature

on this new kind of accommodation. Local communities should take ownership of the product to promote the local culture and lifestyle which tourists expect to see in a homestay.

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Key Words

Community participation, barriers, collaboration, tourism infrastructure creation, and Chilika lake

The Barriers of Community Participation in Tourism Development in Chilika Lake, Odisha India

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Abstract

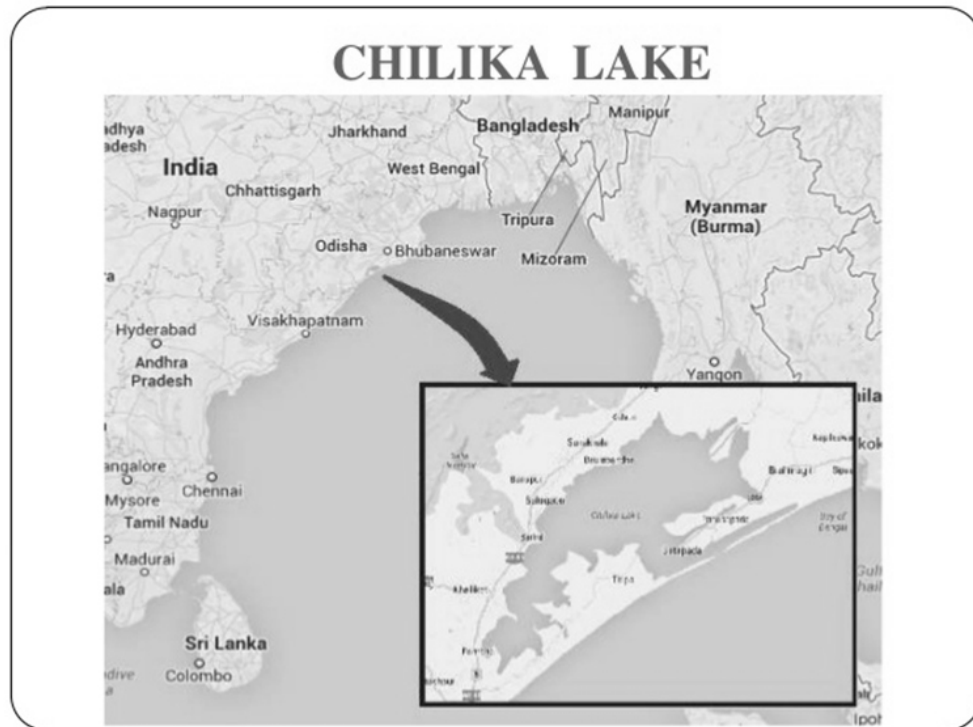
Despite of being the largest brackish water lagoon of Asia and winter home to millions of migratory birds, the lake Chilika has witnessed a sluggish growth in tourists' inflow. Moreover the tourists who come here hardly stay overnight thus restricting the scope for residents' participation in tourism ventures profitably. Having enormous tourism potentials, the destination seriously lags behind to plan effectively avenues for community to take part in tourism plant facilities and services. Earlier researches in community participation internationally give direction which needs to be examined in the context of Chilika in order to find out major obstacles of community participation in tourism development. The paper thus is a sincere attempt to conceptualise the obstacles of community participation in the Chilika wetland to be infrastructure, collaboration and financial funding. Such issues can further be assessed for their interrelationship and relationship with managerial issues of wetland, thus extending the scope for further studies. The study is based on the primary data, collected from the local residents who are directly involved in tourism activities. The statistical tools such as frequency, mean and factor analysis are used for the study. The mean analysis is used to identify and rank such obstacles where as the factor analysis is used to factorise the obstacles of community participation in Tourism development in the region.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is considered as an economic panacea for developing countries, which can ultimately help in economic development and poverty eradication. Tourism has become a significant industry in both poor and rich economics because of its contribution to economy, livelihood and socio cultural development (Shah, 2002). Sustainable tourism emerged from Brundtland Report 1987, laid down tourism strategies in line with Sustainable Development as the initiative that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs. Sustainable tourism emerged as one of the most comprehensive approach based on participation of local community and resources, equitable partnership and maintenance of cultural and environmental integrity. Of other measures sustainable tourism is desired to address poverty issues that cripple the Indian society.

Protected areas because of restricted resources consumption is considered economically backward region. Traditional rights of community over the wetland and its resources for instance at Chilika in Odisha were denied. State government though had planned tourism for the development of the region, the opportunity

is mostly exploited by outside agents and operators from outside the district. The benefit of tourism is far from the reach of impoverished residents in the locality. The proposed research is thus a sincere attempt to study the progress of tourism in the Chilika sanctuary and suggest measures for residents' participation in tourism activities.



Chilika is the largest brackish water lagoon of Asia and the biggest lake of the country situated in the eastern coast of India. The lake is spread over 1100 sqkms of area across three districts of the state of Odisha namely Puri, Khordha, and Ganjam on the east coast of India. The northern shore is part of Khordha district having the prominent tourist location as Barkul&Balugaon and South-western part is part of Ganjam district having major locations as Rambha and the eastern part is of Puri district having prominent tourist site of Satapada. These major tourist hubs Barkul and Balugaon are 145 kms from the state capital Bhubaneswar which is the

nearest airport. Satapada is close to 50 kms from Puri and 100 kms from Bhubaneswar. Rambha another tourist site is located at 130kms distance from Bhubaneswar. The state capital Bhubaneswar has an international airport and is very well connected by rail and air to all major Indian cities. Prominent islands in the lake are Mahisa, Berhampur, Nalaban, Kalijai, Somolo, Honeymoon, Breakfast and Birds Island. The wetland itself can be broadly divided into four ecological sectors based on salinity and depth, the southern sector, central sector, northern sector and the outer channel. Existing tourism attractions in the wetland include: landscape

viewing, visiting Goddess Kalijai, bird watching, dolphin cavorting, boating and picnicking etc. This wetland has gained the international importance as a wetland listed in Ramsar convention in 1982. Its size varies according to the monsoonal change. The water spread area of the Lake varies between 1165 and 906 sq.km during the monsoon and summer respectively (www.chilika.com). It is a wetland with estuarine character. It is the

largest wintering ground for migratory water-fowl found anywhere on the Indian sub-continent. The Lake is a highly productive ecosystem, the rich fishery resources sustains the livelihood of more than 2,00,000 fisher folk who live in and around the Lake. It is considered as one of the biodiversity hotspots of India. The brackish water of the lagoon is favourable particularly for the profitable tiger prawn (Nayak, p,k and Baker, F., 2010).

Photo 1: Famous Kalijai Temple on an atoll in Chilika

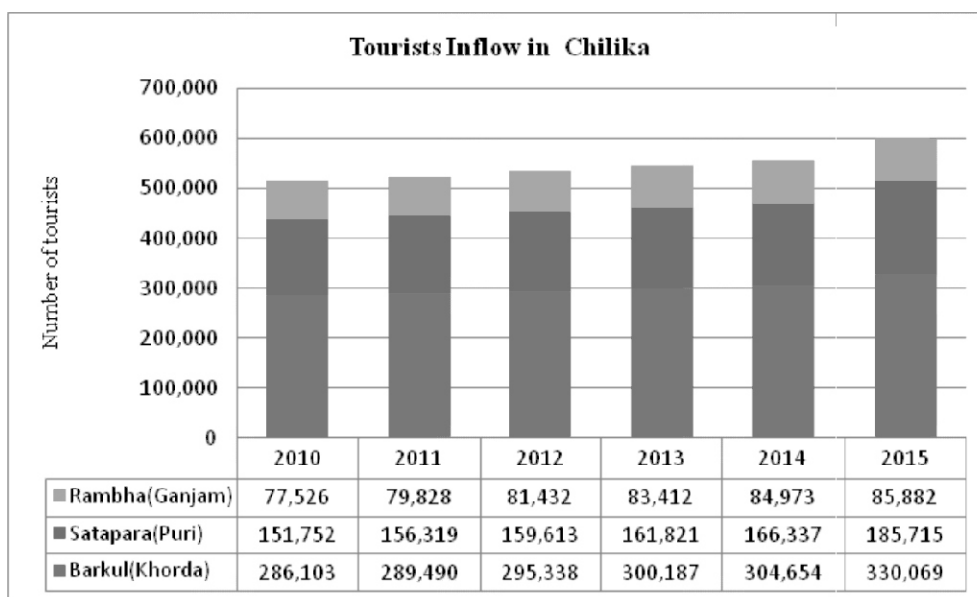


Photo 2: Idle boats besides the lakeside peers



According to Nayak and Baker (2010) there are 40,000 fisher families with the approximate fisher population of 200,000. Chilika is considered as the rice bowl(Bhatahandi) and as the local fisher folk depend largely on fishing in the lake which symbolises socio-cultural and economic importance of Chilika lake in the lives of the people who are staying in and around ofChilika lake(Ibid). The Lake itself can be broadly divided into four ecological sectors based on salinity and depth, the southern sector, central sector, northern sector and the outer channel. Numerous islands are dotted in the Lake, prominent among them are Mahisa, Berhampura, Nalabana, Kalijai, Somolo, Honeymoon, Breakfast and Birds Island.Chilika is one of the major tourism hubs of Odisha. Tourists

motivations to visit vary such as visiting Goddess Kalijai and Narayani, landscape viewing, Bird watching, Dolphin cavorting, Tasting delicious crab and tiger prawn of the lake, for picnicking, and spending idle time in natural eco-village in ManagalaJodi and boating etc. Despite of immense potential as is perceived by the earlier researchers there has been sluggish growth in tourists' inflow and such tourists are concentrated to few tourist zones limiting the growth to such pockets. Moreover these developments largely managed by the nonlocal capitalists, bulldoze the prospects of the residents to enjoy their fair share of benefits. Thus the developments happening in the region are debated for its failure to bring benefits to the residents.



Literature review

A sound tourism planning is invariably perceived as a means to maximise the tourism benefits and minimise negative effects that might arise due to unplanned development. Getz has argued that planning is a process which intends to contribute the maximum tourism benefits for the wellbeing of the human being and environment (1978:409). In order to obtain

the tourism development there are many attributes which should be focussed. Tourism development and planning is impossible without roads, airports, electric power, drinking water, sewage etc. Many scholars like(Chew, 1987; Gunn, 1988; Inskeep, 1991; Martin & Witt, 1988 among others) have emphasised on importance of infrastructure and told that infrastructure is the foundation of a country or a region

which determines the magnetism of a tourism destination. Gunn(1988) Tourism development includes a wide array of components such as attraction, promotion, tourism infrastructure, services and hospitality etc. According to Gunn(1998) and Inskeep (1991) the quality of infrastructure of the a nation is the determinant factor for the attractiveness of that particular destination of the region and which broadly includes road, seaport and airport facilities etc. The residents of a developed region are habituated with sophisticated and modern infrastructure that facilitates with high quality service and these kind of tourists always expect the similar comfort when they travel to a particular destination(Cohen,1979; Howard, Mo, & Havitz, 1993).

Sharma(2004) argued that the major obstacles of tourism development are the inadequate access to information, lack of awareness and inadequate fund. Due to the lack of financial fund in the small level of administration compels them to largely dependent on the Government which resulting the lack of participation of the local people in tourism decision making (Ibid, 2004).

Collaboration is illustrated as amalgamation of organisations and individuals who are from different public and private sectors who come collectively to attain certain aim which is impossible to accomplish those goals individually without partnership (Selin1999). According to (Gray 1989:5) collaboration is practice through different stakeholders who observe different aspect of a problem from different dimensions and find out the solution which is impossible to achieve within their limited vision. Collaboration is a growing process of association to work collectively in a problem area (Gray 1989; Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell 2002).

The studies above though are not conclusive as to what constitute as obstacles to community participation, these give important directions to summarise

aspects such as lack of awareness, collaboration, language issues, inadequate infrastructure for entrepreneurship, lack of funding in the region and so on. Such items together were part of the interview schedule that was used in the survey to find out impeding factors for community participation in the tourism development.

Methods of the study

To attain the aforesaid objectives, a survey was conducted amongst the target participants of residents. Residents being the permanent users of tourism development, were considered to be ideal target audience for the research. There are about 337 villages around the lagoon, and 150 of them being fishing villages. Of the villages only Balugaon and Barkul are two villages located in the tourism zone. The residents of these villages are involved in tourism related activities and are prima-facie understood to be having some knowledge of tourism. These two villages located in the tourism zone and represent the socio-economic picture of the Chilika lake region, of which Balugaon with the total population of 17645 (2011 census) has been selected for the purpose of the study. Primary data for the study were collected from the local residents who were directly involved in tourism activities with the help of a structured interview schedule. The questions pertaining to the obstacles of community participation were summarised from the earlier studies and were tested for their reliability and validity. Responses to the questions were obtained in the scale ranging 1 to 5, one signifying least important and 5 signifying most important in that continuum. The statistical tools such as frequency, mean score and factor analysis are used for the study. The mean score analysis is used to identify and rank such obstacles whereas; the factor analysis is used to factorise the obstacles of community participation in Tourism development in the region.

Discussion & Interpretation

The study is exploratory in nature. The

selected samples are based on convenient or judgemental sampling method, considered to be popular in tourism research. In total 150 respondents were interviewed with the help of a structured questionnaire out of which 106 were found to be complete in all respects. Of the total respondents, 88 were male respondents comprising of 83 percent and female respondents were 18 comprising 17 percent of the total respondents. Age category of the respondents shows that those who are working in tourism for less than 20 years constitute 3.8 percent. The age groups such as 21-30 years constitute 27.4 percent, 31-40 years constitute 35.8 percent, those under 41-50 years age group constitute 21.7 percent and those who are above 50 comprise 11.3 percent. Of the

respondents working in the tourism sector 86.8 percent were married and 13.2 were unmarried. The education qualification of the respondents shows that those whose education qualification is HSC are 35.8 percent, those who are Intermediary/ Diploma have comprised 22.6 percent, those who are graduate are 29.2 percent and those who are post graduate and professional are 12.4 percent of the total respondents.

Responses were obtained in the scale ranging 1 to 5, one signifying least important and 5 signifying most important in that continuum. The mean value of the item wise scores represents the central value of level of importance.

Mean analysis

| | N | Mean | Rank |
|---|-----|------|------|
| Awareness about tourism business opportunities | 106 | 3.63 | 6 |
| Collaboration on stake holders participation | 106 | 3.54 | 7 |
| Language barrier | 106 | 2.88 | 10 |
| Accessibilities (roads, airports, trains, and buses), water and power services, parking, signs, and recreation facilities | 106 | 3.54 | 7 |
| Travel information service within the area | 106 | 3.37 | 9 |
| Accommodation facilities | 106 | 3.42 | 8 |
| Safety and cleanliness provisions | 106 | 3.85 | 5 |
| Scarcity of finance or development fund | 106 | 4.23 | 3 |
| Awareness about tourism development | 106 | 4.00 | 4 |
| Absence of garbage treatment provisions | 106 | 4.24 | 2 |
| Absence of master plan for this area | 106 | 4.58 | 1 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 106 | | |

The mean score of 11 items of tourism development barriers are listed on the above table 1. The mean value is highest for the statement 'Absence of master plan for this area' which signifies as the most important obstacle of Tourism development in Chilika lake. In addition the mean value are more than three for the statements except language barrier which is perceived as least important obstacle for tourism development in Chilika lake. So it can be concluded that according to the view of residents all the above statements are major

obstacles of Tourism development in Chilika lake except the language barrier.

Factor Analysis

Generally factor analysis is used either to reduce the number of factors or to identify the theoretically meaningful dimensions. Here, the factor analysis is used to reduce the items of 'Barriers of tourism development of Chilika lake' into small number of meaningful factors because the respondents may have similar perceptions about such factors. So these similar opinions can be grouped into factors. For

this purpose, Principle Component analysis method is more appropriate for extraction and Varimax is used for rotation because it

gives the clearest separation of the factors as compared to the other rotation methods.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

| | | |
|--|--------------------|---------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .785 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 402.479 |
| | Df | 55 |
| | Sig. | .000 |

KMO measure of sampling adequacy explains whether variables can be grouped into a smaller set of underlying factors or not. If KMO value is higher than 0.60 which indicates that present data set is adequate for factor analysis (Kaiser, 1974). The above table explains KMO value is

0.785 which is higher than 0.60 indicating that data is adequate for the factor analysis. The significant value of Bartlett's test of Sphericity is less than 0.05 indicates that there is no correlation among the factors. Therefore, present data set may be used for factor analysis.

Barriers of tourism development-Total Variance Explained by Factors

| Component | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1 | 4.370 | 39.726 | 39.726 | 2.799 | 25.446 | 25.446 |
| 2 | 1.299 | 11.811 | 51.536 | 2.295 | 20.865 | 46.311 |
| 3 | 1.130 | 10.272 | 61.809 | 1.705 | 15.498 | 61.809 |
| 4 | .926 | 8.421 | 70.230 | | | |
| 5 | .738 | 6.713 | 76.943 | | | |
| 6 | .592 | 5.378 | 82.321 | | | |
| 7 | .516 | 4.692 | 87.013 | | | |
| 8 | .500 | 4.549 | 91.563 | | | |
| 9 | .397 | 3.606 | 95.169 | | | |
| 10 | .311 | 2.829 | 97.998 | | | |
| 11 | .220 | 2.002 | 100.000 | | | |
| Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. | | | | | | |

Generally the number of factors extracted is based on Eigen value criteria. If the Eigen values of the variables are greater than 1 it can be considered for further analysis. When the Eigen value is greater than 1 it indicates that more common variance is explained by that particular factor rather than unique variance. The above table shows that number of factors

extracted and percentage of variance explained by the factors. Total variance explained by three factors (whose Eigen values are greater than 1) is percent. First factor explains 25.446 percent of the total variance. Second factor explains 20.865 percent; third factor explains 15.498 of percentage of total variance.

Rotated component matrix

| Factor Title | Items | Component | | |
|--|---|-----------|------|------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Infrastructure creation | Awareness about tourism development | .822 | | |
| | Safety and cleanliness provisions | .719 | | |
| | Accommodation facilities | .653 | | |
| | Absence of garbage treatment provisions | .649 | | |
| | Language barrier | .634 | | |
| | Accessibilities (roads, airports, trains, and buses), water and power services, parking, signs, and recreation facilities | .552 | | |
| Funding | Scarcity of finance or development fund | | .636 | |
| | Absence of master plan for this area | | .635 | |
| Collaboration | Awareness about tourism business opportunities | | | .661 |
| | Travel information service within the area | | | .605 |
| | Collaboration on stake holders participation | | | .585 |
| Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. | | | | |

The rotated component matrix represents the correlation between the variables and the factors. The variables with high factor loading indicate that particular variable is highly represented by respective factor. The above table 1 reveals that number of variables come under each factor and its corresponding factor loading value after varimax rotation of eleven statements. First factor consists of 6 variables such as Lack of awareness about tourism development, Safety and cleanliness provisions, Accommodation facilities, Absence of garbage treatment provisions, Language barrier, Accessibilities (roads, airports, trains, and buses, water and power services, parking, signs, and recreation facilities). As most of the variables are related with infrastructure so it can be named as "Infrastructure creation". Second factor consists of two variables such as Scarcity of finance or development fund, Awareness about tourism business opportunities so this factor can be called as a 'Funding'. The third factor consists of three variables such as Awareness about tourism business opportunities, Travel information service within the area and Collaboration on stake holders participation, so it can be better named as 'collaboration'.

The results of the paper are worth comparison with findings of similar

researches in other settings. Where a survey by the Social Policy Unit of the Western Australian Government have highlighted barriers to what is called as Community Capacity Building in tourism (CCB) as lack of knowledge and skills, funding limits, lack of ability of individuals and groups to participate, and lack of development practitioners (Social Policy Unit, 2004). Cronin (2003), summarised barriers to CCB as: lack of recognition of local power in the community development, inadequate focus, and lack of effective governance as the main reasons. Kleiner, Raue, Silverstein, Bell and Wells (2004) were categorical in summarising the barriers as (i) limited community resources (e.g. funding, expertise and time); (ii) competition between residents due to regionalism, (iii) community organizations and conflicts; (iv) difficulties in attracting participants' interest.

Basically develop countries like in India, community participation in tourism development may face challenges of lack of language skills, lack of decision-making and planning concerning tourism entrepreneurship coupled with inconsistent political focus in tourism policies, and related uncertainty in long-term public expenditure. (Bushell& Eagles, 2007). The remedies as Kwan et al., (2003) quoted,

should be three fold initiatives on individual, organizational and community levels. Training at individual levels including skill development, entrepreneurship cells, incentives for successful tourism ventures; support at organisational level for resource mobilisation, promoting trade blocks to support young entrepreneurs, learning from ideal case studies elsewhere; at community level, promoting community initiated tourism, enhancing community role in governance and decision making. The case of Kerala for instance in boasting community participation is a model worth replicating. India's first planned ecotourism destination - Thenmala in the foothills of the Western Ghats, has successfully been managed by the community in real sense for over a decade. Existing ecotourism at Thenmala is being continuously managed on the basis of sound principles of ecological sustainability and community based tourism. The distinctive character of Thenmala has attracted the national attention of policy makers in the economic, environmental and tourism spheres.

Conclusion

Chilika is the largest brackish water lagoon of Asia and winter home to millions of migratory birds. These with many other attractions form enumerable tourism resources which are largely untapped. The lake Chilika has over the years witnessed a sluggish growth in tourists' inflow. Moreover the tourists who come here

hardly stay overnight thus restricting the scope for residents' participation in tourism ventures profitably. Having enormous tourism potentials, the destination seriously lags behind to plan effectively avenues for community to take part in tourism plant facilities and services. Earlier researches in community participation internationally give direction which needs to be examined in the context of Chilika in order to find out major obstacles of community participation in tourism development. The paper thus is a sincere attempt to conceptualise the obstacles of community participation in the Chilika wetland to be infrastructure, collaboration and financial funding. The findings of mean analysis indicate that all the items are significant as the barriers of community participation in tourism development in Chilika Lake except language barrier. The findings of the factor analysis indicates that all the eleven items of barriers of tourism development in Chilika lake have been factorised into three factors such as Infrastructure creation, collaboration and funding. These impeding issues if are addressed can lead to effective community participation. Further effective community participation can result in broad basing the tourist clientele to include niche markets such as long-haul ecotourists. Findings of the paper as summarised issues can further be assessed for their interrelationship and relationship with managerial issues of wetland, thus extending the scope for further studies.

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News And Views

Tourism likely to overtake IT sector by 2020

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Hyderabad/Tourism-likely-to-overtake-IT-sector-by-2020/article17030970.ece>

Tourism by 2020 will overtake the IT sector in the country in terms of economy and employment generation. For this, India has to promote more and more of conventions said Jagdish N Sheth, Charles H. Kelistadt Professor of Marketing, Goizueta Business School, Emory University, USA, in an International Conference on "Changing Paradigms in Marketing of Services with special focus on Tourism and Hospitality" was organised by the School of Management Studies, University of Hyderabad.

He said that marketing is all about presentation and packaging presence and tourism in India is 120 billion dollar industry and employs about 37 million people and will be larger than IT industry by 2020. "Medical tourism has huge potential in the country," he said. And each state of India should create special packages and sell it, as tourism is a huge money maker and an employment generator too.

There is a lot of trans-national migration of Indian students which are pursuing study courses abroad. And this is a biggest challenge the country is facing said Furqan Qamar, Secretary General, Association of Indian Universities (AIU). Adding to this, M. Gopala Krishna, Chairman, INTACH and IIPA, Telangana Branch; B. Raja Sekhar, Dean, School of Management Studies, and V. Venkata Ramana, conference director, said that India can also do the same and attract more and more of foreign students and tap the untapped potential of tourism in India.

Maharashtra now mining coal mines to add steam to tourism

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/state-now-mining-mines-for-](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/state-now-mining-mines-for-tourism/articleshow/56431083.cms)

[tourism/articleshow/56431083.cms](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/state-now-mining-mines-for-tourism/articleshow/56431083.cms)

Now people can experience the hard work put by the miners and also learn about the mining machines by descending into a coalmine which is about 500 metres below the surface near Nagpur.

Two mines and coal feeding power plants, named as the open cast Gondgaon and the underground Saoner, of Western Coalfields Limited have been opened for the public state tourism authority, MTDC. It is about one hour journey from Nagpur and the tour started there when the CM of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnavis, signed MOU with WCL in Nagpur in December 2016. "We are already taking tourists there. With growing popularity across the state, we expect a bigger crowd this season, which is between September and April," said director of tourism Satish Soni.

"Initially the response was average, but now it is picking up with the Nagpur MTDC witnessing growing online and offline bookings," said Tourism minister, Jaykumar Rawal. He also said that India has never given this type of product to its public and it's the first experiment of this kind since there was a huge demand for it from the youngsters side especially students.

Saoner's underground infotainment area is huge and is approximately 5 sq km. And Gondgaon can be seen from above as it is an open cast mine. "Here, a unique man-riding system takes you down deep," said an MTDC official from Nagpur.

The tour can be booked offline or from the MTDC website. "To operate this tour, there should be at least 10 passengers. If there are fewer than 10, they will be accommodated in the next tour date as per their convenience. If a passenger is not willing, the booking amount will be refunded without any deduction," said a senior MTDC official.

The inclusions of the tour are a trip to

mine, learning about the tough life of the miners and the machinery involved in it. "Buses or private cars take the visitors 35 km from Nagpur to the Saoner mine. Prior to entering the mines, an undertaking will have to be given assuring the miners of no major health issues," said the official.

A visit to the Adasa Ganesh temple which is a very famous temple is also included along with safety gear at the WCL guest house, and an eco-park nearby is open to visitors. "A jungle safari on a toy-train which passes through stations-cum-mining galleries give a first-hand idea of underground mining technology," he said.

This tour has been an eye-opener for many tourists, adding to this, a tourist from Kohlpur, Satish Mohite, said, "Miners who extract the black gold and other minerals have to conduct blasts, divert water and ensure state-of-the-art security measures while doing all that. Managing quakes, blast effects, floods and other threats is part of the routine here," For the safety and protection of the tourists, a protection force and safety officers have been assigned by the director-general of mine safety.

Department plans major tourism campaign

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jaipur/dept-plans-major-tourism-campaign/articleshow/56382757.cms>

As per the vision of chief minister Vasundhara Raje, of achieving the target of 50 million domestic and foreign tourists per annum, the state tourism department of Rajasthan is in the process of framing a new tourism policy.

Additional chief secretary (tourism), Nihal Chand Goel, said that the department with various stakeholders have started the consultation process on various elements which have to be incorporated in the new policy. He also said that the tourism department in the coming days will be planning a huge campaign in the new emerging mediums as well conventional mediums to attract tourists to the state. "Rajasthan tourism will kick-off a multi-modal and multi-crore global marketing

campaign, inspired by the Incredible India campaign, and the success of states like Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat in recent times," he said.

Apart from organizing folk festivals and music, events and new exhibitions will be organised for tourists due to which they will spend more time in the state as these things would attract them for long duration stays.

There will be upgradation in the tourist facilities as these are on the top of the agenda. There will be upgradation in infrastructure like cleanliness drives, tourist police, integrated plan for roads and government-to-government partnerships. It has recently launched a direct flight to Jaipur with engagement with Singapore and for hospitality in Udaipur it has opened a state-of-the-art skill development centre. In order to save time of the tourists it has launched intra-state aviation connectivity between Jaipur, Udaipur and Jodhpur which is also a part of this initiative.

Tourism sector readies for great leap forward

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jaipur/tourism-sector-readies-for-great-leap-forward/articleshow/56341662.cms>

As Rajasthan tourism has been on the increase and its tourism facilities have always on the steady increase as well. But the government and the industry need to do more and add on it to attract and retain more and more of tourists. For this, a meeting was held by the tourism steering committee involving the stakeholders in the industry. The experts in the sector came up with the 50 odd suggestions which should be incorporated in the tourism policy for the development of the tourism sector in the state.

The stakeholders during the interaction covered various segments to facilitate infrastructure development and tourism. These included cleanliness and upgrading infrastructure, simplifying land conversion, intra-state connectivity, excise and taxation. These will be submitted to the Rajasthan government for consideration and will be

integrated in the proposed Rajasthan Tourism Unit Policy.

"The government has taken the initiative to set up inter-city air travel facilities by connecting Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur and Bikaner. A connection to Jaisalmer is under consideration. Besides, we require more flights to Udaipur and Jodhpur with a higher capacity during the season from September to April. There is also a need to attract more international airlines to Jaipur airport so that tourists do not waste a day travelling from Delhi or Mumbai," said a source.

It was suggested to start the facility of online booking and install swipe machines at all monuments under the government for the tourists due to the demonetisation move by the Modi government. To help tourists plan trips to monuments more comfortably, a suggestion to increase the validity of e-tickets for monuments to two days or more for tourists was made. It was also recommended that tax exemption should be given to people to buy luxury vehicles as there is great demand for it as Rajasthan attracts most of the foreign tourists and for this more stakeholders shall be attracted to this segment too. And stakeholders also added that there should be a launch of massive media marketing campaign in international and domestic markets to boost the sector.

Lack of guidelines cripples adventure tourism sector

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kochi/lack-of-guidelines-cripples-adventure-tourism-sector/articleshow/56352717.cms>

The centre has not laid any proper guidelines for the illegal and unauthorized adventure tourism activities which flourish the state of Kochi, but has set up a National Task Force for the promotion and development of adventure tourism in the state.

"Private agencies are the ones which carry out adventure sport activities for tourists here. The adventure tourism department just plans the groundwork coordination for the agencies," said Asha Jose, chief executive

of Kerala Adventure Tourism Promotion Society (KATPS).

The main aim of forming the task force on adventure tourism was to resolve the issues related to the safety and security of adventure tourists. "As adventure tourism trips are gaining momentum, adventure sport guides and operators are mushrooming mostly in hill stations. Most of them have no license or safety gears to conduct such activities and thus can be disadvantageous to the tourists as well as to the development of the sector," said Harshik Gopal, an adventure sport guide.

According to the Adventure Travel Operators Association of India (ATOAI) the formation of the National Task Force on Adventure Tourism will address the issues of safety and security along with highlighting the natural beauty of the state to the tourism market globally. "Rules and regulations as per the central government's guiding principles are yet to be laid out here. An enormous range of adventure sports such as paragliding, river rafting, trekking, camping, kayaking et al, which are at its very nascent stage in the state can be made more popular if proper guidelines are formed. These activities are now conducted only as part of annual festivals and have the potential to be modified to all-year-round tourism sports," said a KATPS official.

Govt push to theme tourism

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/pune/govt-push-to-theme-tourism/articleshow/56232835.cms>

The Maharashtra government has come up with a new tourism policy, which includes theme tourism for developing its brand equity. Some themes which are identified include theme park tourism; heritage tourism; beach tourism along Maharashtra's coast line; religious tourism, courtesy Maharashtra's Buddha circuit, Jyotirlingas, the Ashtavinayaks and other famous temples at Shirdi, Kolhapur and Pandharpur; coastal and yacht tourism; nature tourism culinary tourism; and education tourism.

There are also plans by the department to revive the Medical Tourism to initiate various projects under medical tourism. According to officials, Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur have some of the best state-of-the-art hospitals in south Asia.

Secretary, Association of Hospitals, Pune, and manager, legal, at the Ruby Hall Clinic, Manjusha Kulkarni, said, "Medical tourism is definitely picking up in Maharashtra. Yet, most of the medical tourists coming to India go to Delhi and south India because of their governments' active support. "She added, "The medical tourism in Pune is still at nascent stages and is bound to grow in 2017, but the current achievements are no less."

Along with plans for medical tourism, wine tourism is also given attention as there has been 20% growth each year in the state and it has also been marketed aggressively by stakeholders in 2016. The president of All India Wine Producers' Association (AIWPA), Yatin Patil, said that the year 2016-2017 has seen an increase of 20% in wine tourism in comparison to the last year. "Almost 95% of wine tourism is concentrated in Nashik. This year saw an active government participation in promoting wine tourism. We have also approached the tourism department to ease regulations related to wine tourism, including a proposal to reduce the number of dry days and improve the infrastructure in and around Nashik," said Patil.

To promote wine tourism, AIWPA has also tied up with the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) this year. Jagdish Holkar, the chairman of Maharashtra Wine Tourism Advisory Committee formed under the state tourism department, said, "Close to one lakh tourists came to Maharashtra for wine tourism from other parts of India as well as abroad in 2016."

Heritage tourism and religious received a boost in 2016 said Rohit Phadnis, partner, RS Tourism -a firm specializing in theme-based tourism. "Close to 250 to 300 tourists -primarily from Mumbai and Pune -this

year opted for religious tours not only within the state and India but also to other countries like Nepal and Sri Lanka. Volunteering tourism, which we started in 2015, picked up exponentially in 2016. It picked up exponentially in 2016. It involves tourists who visit less developed states as volunteers to help the less-privileged," said Phadnis. Volunteering tourism involves voluntary work and a few days of sightseeing. He said "Those from the IT sector and doctors seem keen on such tours,"

Government tweaks policy to boost cruise tourism

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/government-tweaks-policy-to-boost-cruise-tourism/articleshow/56192478.cms>

To give a boost to the cruise tourism in India, the shipping ministry is identifying five cruise circuits for domestic, international, and river that can be developed as soon as possible. This is a part of the government's ambitious Rs 12 lakh crore Sagarmala project. A cruise ship of Europe was docked in Mumbai which marked the beginning of seven cruises from the maximum city. Now the public need not to fly to Dubai or Singapore for a trip in a luxury cruise.

According to the government sources, cruise circuits could be India-Sri Lanka-Maldives-Seychelles, India-Dubai, India-Singapore and India-Maldives. And Mumbai will see the arrival of 100 cruises, Cochin, Goa, and Mangaluru will have 60 each and 11 more will dock in Chennai.

"We brought several reforms and will take more to promote cruise tourism even in major rivers such as Ganga. Under Sagarmala, we will pump around Rs 8 lakh crore for developing industrial clusters and another Rs 4 lakh crore for port-rail and port-road connectivity, mechanisation and modernisation of ports," Gadkari said.

Every year More than 100 cruise ships usually reach five major Indian ports. "But they stop here to board and de-board passengers. Our target is to ensure they spend more time here and passengers visit

cities, which will push local economic activities," said a shipping ministry official. Due to Inadequate infrastructure and no clear cruise policy, some global cruises had few sailings in India in 2007 and 2009, and made Indian ports at their "home port", but none of them lasted longer. The government has made several changes in past two years such as providing certainty of berth, 40% discount in port charges, priority to cruise ships over cargo ships, and new standard operating procedures for ease of business for immigration, customs, health and security of port in Mumbai.

PM Modi directs ASI to develop fort tourism in the country

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/pm-modi-directs-asi-to-develop-fort-tourism-in-the-country/articleshow/56160611.cms>

The archeological survey of India (ASI) officials was directed by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to develop fort tourism in the country. He said that the rich history of the forts and its promotion would take country's tourism industry to new heights.

Adding to this he said that as tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors but it has limited to Taj Mahal, and he told the ASI to allow tourists to ride on horses and elephants to these forts for better experience and for recreating feelings that would inspire people over generations and recalling the experience as well. The great warriors like Shivaji who have great stories would inspire people more and the grand memorial of the maratha king to be built in the sea would attract more tourists.

Shiv Sena leader Uddhav Thackeray appealed to the prime minister to handover the historic sites that hold significance in the life of Maratha warrior to the state government. "We will take care of them properly," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said.

The department of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Archaeological Survey of India, Ministry of Culture, Government of India for the smooth execution of various projects for creation

and development of tourist facilities and amenities in and around centrally protected monuments in Maharashtra that included number of forts.

As per this MOU, Director, Tourism, would be allowed to arrange tourism festivals like "Diwali on Forts" or "Fort Festival" or on similar themes in and around centrally protected monument. The festivals should mainly include the historical importance of the monument and also keeping in view the responsibility of the monument in regard to cleanliness and keeping it environment friendly during and after the festival time. Sindhudurg Fort, Raigad Fort, Rajgad Fort, Shivneri Fort, Pratapgad Fort are some of the important Festivals that were proposed but nothing has moved in that direction till now. The infrastructure works for tourism in these areas shall be executed by the Director or any other agency appointed by him under the supervision of ASI. The funds for this were to be arranged by state government.

'Space tourism next big challenge'

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/thiruvananthapuram/Space-tourism-next-big-challenge/articleshow/55948455.cms>

There are various challenges that the Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) has to deal in space tourism and space adventure like the composite materials which play an important role said Isro chairman A S Kiran Kumar.

"The past five decades of composites in Isro space missions had been glorious and the future holds more challenges in space tourism, space adventures and creating space habitation. It involves lot of responsibilities which is hard to achieve," said the chairman.

It was Vikram Sarabhai who started the journey of composite technology for space applications. But later it flourished under the leadership of A P J Abdul Kalam, Satish Dhawan and others like Brahm Prakash and C R Sathya. VSSC director K Sivan said, "Today, as one looks at the range of composite products for Isro's launch vehicles PSLV, GSLV or GSLVmk-

III, starting with nozzle to payload fairing I believe that the journey towards 'all composite launch vehicle' is getting closer." The former employees of VSSC who have been part of composite technology were felicitated. A book with a collection of reminiscences of former employees was also released.

'Railways, tourism creating a world without borders'

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/lucknow/Rlys-tourism-creating-a-world-without-borders/articleshow/55504461.cms>

While addressing the students of Indian Institute of management, Lucknow, the railway minister Suresh Prabhu, who inaugurated Manifest-Varchasva, IIM-L's annual business, cultural and sports fest, via video-conferencing spoke on 'Towards a world without borders', said that Railways,

tourism, connectivity and international partnerships can lead to nations without borders. Adding to it, he also said that the Swachh Bharat campaign initiated by the centre is making its contribution to sanitation accessible to all.

A case study competition named Yajna: a Pan-India CSR Challenge, was held. The competition focussed on the conditions of diarrhoea in rural areas and the ways it can be checked through clean drinking water and sanitation. The participants of the competition were taken to a hospital and a village to understand the seriousness of this problem. And students were also provided with the opportunity to interact with the successful entrepreneurs. And many other events were also organised and the students were given the exposure of the present scenario of the tourism industry too.



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