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13 Kydonion str, 11144 Athens, Greece

Tel: + 30 210 3806877

Fax: + 30 210 3808302

URL: www.dratte.gr

Email: tri@dratte.gr

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INTRODUCTION



Science is the knowledge of the existing, which systematically totally covers a sector of issues. Science is one and its purpose is the understanding of all phenomena. Due to human's incapability of mental controlling the whole of universal rules, science is divided to partial "sciences" and each one covers its objective field.

The science of tourism can be divided in two parts. The sciences of understanding the tourism phenomenon and the sciences of the enterprises of hospitality and their management.

Dealing with sciences leads to complete studies whose purpose is the understanding of the reality. These studies are set to be published in refereed scientific journals. Their publication is judged for being original, complete and correct, by members of the academic community. Then, these publications are considered as valid and can be used by other researchers for the spread of knowledge.

Aim of the magazine is the spread of knowledge related to the scientific fields of tourism. In Tourism Issues there are being published original articles and obligatorily new researches. The writing language can be Greek , English , French or German. The scripts will be evaluated by three - membered scientific committee whose members have deep knowledge of the specific fields.

Laloumis Dimitris

WRITING GUIDELINES

In “Journal of Tourism Research” can be published original articles and research studies dealing with tourism topics. The articles and the studies should have never been published before.

Every scientific paper should not exceed a maximum of 8000 words and should be sent in electronic form at info@dratte.gr.

The paper can be written in Greek, English, French or German.

Papers should be typewritten in black, double-spaced on A4 or US letter sized white paper and printed on one side of the paper only, with 1 ½ inch margins on all four sides, using 10 pts Arial characters. Pages should be numbered consecutively.

The first page of the paper should include in the following order: paper title, author’s name and surname, affiliation, postal address, telephone and fax numbers, email address, acknowledgements. In the case of co-authors, their full details should also appear (all correspondence will be sent to the first named author). Also include an abstract of 200-250 words, and up to five keywords.

The second page should contain the title of the paper, an abstract of 200-250 words, and up to five keywords. Do *not* include the author(s) details in this page.

Subsequent pages: main body of text; list of references; appendices; endnotes (endnotes should be kept to a minimum).

Every paper should be accompanied by a 180-word abstract. The text of the abstract is not allowed to be part of the paper. Also, the author should propose 4 key words associated with the main fields dealt with in the paper. The aforementioned (name, title, abstract and key words) should be given in English and Greek, as well as in the language of composition in case this is French or German.

Tables, figures and illustrations should be referred to and included in the text, in gray tint. Each table, figure and illustration should be numbered consecutively (in Arabic numbers) and titled. Tables, figures and illustrations should not exceed one page and should be kept to a minimum.

The text should be organized under appropriate section headings. Section headings should be marked as follows: primary headings should be typed in upper case and bold (e.g. **INTRODUCTION**); subsection headings should be in upper and lower case and bold (e.g. **Tourism Planning**).

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Every paper will be examined by a three-member scientific committee. The committee's members cover cognitive fields relevant to the papers' topics and receive the papers with the author's/s' name undisclosed. The judging process will be completed with author's anonymity throughout. The judges will propose to the editorial committee the acceptance or the rejection of a paper to be published or the possibility of publishing an article after corrections suggested by the judging committee.

After the papers' judgement, the authors will be notified, either the judgement has been positive or not. The approved papers will be published according to priority of chronological order.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL VS ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH IN THE GREEK HOTEL MARKET: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY	12
Aikaterini Manthiou, MS & Thomas Schrier	
AN IMPROVED APPROACH OF TEACHING ISLAMIC ARCHEOLOGY IN THE FACULTIES OF TOURISM	38
Heba Mahmoud Saad Abdel-Naby	
DEVELOPMENT OF A STRUCTURAL MODEL FOR QUALITY CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM IN MACAO	55
Weng Hang, Kong	
GLOBAL HOSPITALITY MANAGERS: MYTH OR REALITY?	78
Charalampos Giousmpasoglou	
PLANNED TOURISM DESTINATIONS, A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT? THE CASE OF CANCUN, MEXICO.	114
Rafael Guerrero Rodríguez	
THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ENTREPRENEUR-MANAGER OF SMALL TOURISM ENTERPRISES TO THE SUCCESS OF INTERNET MARKETING ACTIVITIES – THE GREEK CASE	135
Stephanos Economides & Spyros Alexiou	

THE LEARNING STYLES OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT STUDENTS	163
Lia Marinakou	
WORK PLACEMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY PROSPECTS OF THE TOURISM BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENTS GRADUATES IN GREECE	179
Velissariou Efstathios	
THE SATISFACTION OF TOURISTS FROM THE PROVIDED HOTEL SERVICES: THE PELOPONNESE AS A CASE STUDY	201
Konstantinos Marinakos & Dimitrios Laloumis	

A COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL VS ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH IN THE GREEK HOTEL MARKET: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

Aikaterini Manthiou, MS

Dept. of Appeal, Ed. Studies, & Hosp. Mgt, Iowa State University

Thomas Schrier, PhD

Dept. of Appeal, Ed. Studies, & Hosp. Mgt, Iowa State University, USA

ABSTRACT

Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) communication has begun increasing in popularity as a marketing tool. However, research in the area of traditional written forms of WOM communication compared to online travel eWOM review websites is scant. The purpose of this study is to examine international tourists' perceptions of traditional written forms of travel review guidebooks compared to online travel review websites for Greek hotels. This exploratory study utilizes a model developed from previous research to examine the constructs that make up information quality, source credibility, information usefulness, and information adoption. The result indicated that there are different factors which are utilized by consumers in the adoption of information between printed travel guidebooks and online travel reviews.

Keywords: Adoption, Electronic Word of Mouth, Hotel Industry, Information Quality, Source Credibility, Usefulness

INTRODUCTION

Word of mouth (WOM) communication is a form of personal communication in which an individual receives information directly from another individual (Arndt, 1967). This type of communication has been recognized as an effective marketing tool with the potential for significant impact on customer behavior. As the world has become more connected through the use of technology and the internet there has been a shift from traditional verbal and written forms of communication to electronic forms of communication. In recent years, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) communication has begun increasing in popularity as a marketing tool (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004). Multiple researchers have examined eWOM from the perspective on the influences eWOM has on consumer loyalty and purchase decisions (Lin, Luarn, & Huang, 2005; Gruen, Osmonbekov, & Czaplewski, 2006). However, research in the area of traditional written forms of WOM communication compared to online travel eWOM review websites is scant. The purpose of this study is to examine international tourists' perceptions of traditional written forms of travel review guidebooks compared to online travel review websites for Greek hotels.

Literature review

E-commerce development in Greece

E-commerce in Greece is in its infancy compared to that of other regions such as the United States and Northern Europe (Buhalis & Kaldis, 2008; Buhalis & Deimezi, 2004). This is most likely due in part to the relatively low propensity to use the Internet in Greece (Buhalis & Deimezi, 2004). In the same vein, Sigala (2003) found that hotels in Greece use their Internet networks and interactive capabilities in a limited fashion and only a few are using the Internet for more enhanced and sophisticated activities. According to Vrana and Zafiroopoulos (2006) the main barriers to e-commerce and Internet adoption in Greece are the concerns that the Internet would not lead to more efficiency, would not lower

costs, would not bring more revenues as well as the fact that enterprises do not clearly anticipated benefits and in the end they do not feel social pressure to bring e-commerce into their firms. Nevertheless, a recent study showed that hotels in Greece have become increasingly aware of the importance of Internet distribution channels (Buhalis & Kaldis, 2008). This study also pointed out that only organizations that use information and communication technology strategically will be able to develop their electronic distribution channels in a manner which will allow for the achievement a competitive advantages in the future. The Greek hotel industry needs to adopt new technologies and trends for e-commerce as well as to alter hoteliers' attitudes about having an online presence (Zafiropoulos, & Vrana 2006). In 2009 Greece was ranked 24th among 133 countries in the world for competitiveness in travel and tourism markets (WEF, 2009). However, in order to move Greece forward in the global tourism community the country's e-commerce and electronic communication capabilities must be developed.

The emergence of new forms of e-commerce has altered the world economy (Chen & Chang, 2003). The Internet has allowed organizations to simplify business processes, reduce expenditures, create new relationships, and increase efficiencies (Yeh, Leong, Blecher, & Hu, 2005). The Internet has decreased the limitations of conducting business and retailers are able to market products without worrying about geography or time constraints (Chen & Chang, 2003). As such it is time for the Greek hotel industry to step up and embrace these changes before it is left behind.

Comparison of online review information and traditional marketing

Traditional WOM plays a major role in consumer buying decisions (Engel, Blackwell, & Kegerreis, 1969; Richins, 1983). In a study of marketing types Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) found that WOM ranks as the strongest among traditional marketing formats such as radio advertisements, print ads and personal selling. Likewise, it has been found that consumers consider information obtained through WOM communication to be twice as valuable as information obtained through traditional marketing (Villanueva, Yoo, & Hanssens 2008). Studies on electronic communication have found that, most Internet users evaluate blogs to be more credible than traditional media and that the Internet serves as a

supplement to traditional information (Johnson & Kaye, 2003; Johnson & Kaye, 2004). In addition, Chatterjee (2001) argues that eWOM is far more robust in quantity compared to information obtained from traditional contacts. As a result eWOM attracts more readers than traditional media. Parker (2005) reported that both giving and seeking eWOM is pervasive and growing as consumers are approximately 16% more likely to be influenced by eWOM than by traditional advertising media.

Information adoption and usefulness

Information adoption is defined as the extent to which people accept the content of a message and believe it as meaningful, after assessing its validity (Zhang, & Watts 2008). Sussman and Siegal (2003) investigated information adoption in an organizational context with argument quality and credibility source as key propositions. Along with information adoption, information usefulness is considered a key proposition in adoption theories. Cheung, Lee, and Rabjon (2008) found that the information usefulness is a significant factor between the influence processes and information adoption and is strongly related with information quality and accessibility (Kraemer, Danziger, Dunkle, & King, 1993; Saeed & Abdinnour-Helm, 2008). According to Zheng, Youn, and Kincaid (2009) 55% of online review readers find the writers' comments to be useful, and take them into consideration when making purchase decisions. In addition, Jin, Cheung, Lee, and Chen (2009) investigated how to keep members using the information in a computer-supported social network as well as explored the motivations behind information use by integrating the information adoption model with the information continuance. Similarly, Cheung, Lee, & Rabjohn (2008) examined the extent to which people were willing to accept and adopt online consumer reviews and the factors that encouraged information adoption and found that information adoption is highly affected by the significant role of information usefulness.

Based on the previous literature the following hypotheses were developed.

Hypothesis 1a: There is a positive relationship between information usefulness and adoptions for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 1b: There is a positive relationship between information usefulness and adoptions for hotel information in online travel reviews.

Information quality

Information quality is identified as the extent to which users think that information is relevant, timely, accurate, and complete (Lee, Strong, Kahn, & Wang, 2002). Olshavsky (1985) found that when information quality meets the customers' needs and requirements, costumers are willing to criticize the value of each product or service based on their purchase decision criteria. Several studies on information quality have underlined the information quality measures used in e-commerce studies such as accuracy, relevance, understandability, completeness, currency, dynamism, personalization, variety, content usefulness, validity, and adequacy (i.e. Auster and Choo, 1993; Ballou, & Pazer, 1985; Doll & Torkzadeh, 1988; DeLone & McLean 2003; Goodhue, 1995; Miller, 1996; Smith, 1997; Wang, & Strong, 1996; Yang, Cai, Zhou, & Zhou, 2005). Park, Lee, & Han (2007) found the quality of on-line consumer reviews have a positive effect on consumer purchasing intention. Nicolaou, Masoner, and Welker (1995) argued that improvements in information quality increases the usefulness of the decision systems.

In general, information quality refers to the level of the content of the information and the suitability of the information for the users' purposes. Lin and Lu (2000) have investigated how user's acceptance is affected by the feature of information quality. In this study information quality is viewed as having seven aspects 1) relevance, 2) understandability, 3) sufficiency, 4) objectivity, 5) timeliness, 6) accuracy and 7) persuasiveness.

Relevance

Information relevance indicates if the information is applicable and is an important element for the decision maker (Dunk, 2004). Past studies argued that relevance and credibility are two key variables for the attitude change (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1966; Hill, 1963; Choo, 1964). Other researchers suggest that relevance elevates the amount of judgmental confidence that individuals need to

have in their own attitudes and/or the confidence they need to have for the validity of the message. (Chen & Chaiken, 1999; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Kaakinen, Hyönä, and Keenan, (2003) discussed the time spent reading text and showed that low attention span readers slow down their processing of reading relevant information and they read faster when the information is irrelevant. The more relevant the information is, the higher the perceived information usefulness.

Based on the previous literature the following hypotheses were developed.

Hypothesis 2a: There is a positive relationship between information relevance and usefulness for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 2b: There is a positive relationship between information relevance and usefulness for hotel information in online travel reviews.

Understandability

Understandability of information is related to how much information is clear and conceivable. McKinney, Yoon, and Zahedi (2002) developed a web satisfaction model containing understandability as one of the key dimensions related to the information quality. According to Srinivasan (1985) the ability of a system to help the user, coupled with the accuracy and understandability of the outputs it generates, appear to be strong motivators for system use. The more understandable the information is, the higher the perceived information usefulness.

The following hypotheses have been developed from the previous literature

Hypothesis 3a: There is a positive relationship between the understandability of information and usefulness for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 3b: There is a positive relationship between the understandability of information and usefulness for hotel information in online travel reviews.

Sufficiency

Sufficiency of the information denotes if the information is complete and comprehensive and it is an important element of web information quality (Doll & Torkzadeh, 1988). Griffin, Neuwirth, Dunwoody, and Giese (2004) proposed information sufficiency to be an important component of people's information seeking behaviors, in an effort to better understand the use of information in risky situations. In general, sufficiency represents the degree to which the system provides all necessary information (Wixom & Todd, 2005). The more sufficient the information is, the higher the perceived information usefulness.

The follow hypotheses are proposed.

Hypothesis 4a: There is a positive relationship between information sufficiency and usefulness for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 4b: There is a positive relationship between information sufficiency and usefulness for hotel information in online travel reviews.

Objectivity

Information objectivity indicates the impartiality and fairness of the sender of a message. Petty, and Cacioppo (1984) argued that messages which are objective and understandable, are more effective than weak messages, which are emotional and subjective. West and Williamson (2009) investigated whether Wikipedia can be used and recommended as a credible reference or information tool in different academic disciplines and found that overall the articles were objective clearly presented, reasonably accurate, and complete. However, the objectivity scores were influenced by the presence of subjective language, opinions stated as facts, and the omission of alternative perspectives or mention of existing controversy. The more objective information is, the higher the perceived information usefulness.

Base on the previous literature the following hypotheses have been developed.

Hypothesis 5a: There is a positive relationship between information objectivity and usefulness for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 5a: There is a positive relationship between information objectivity and usefulness for hotel information in online travel reviews.

Timeliness

Timeliness of information indicates currency and continuously updated information. Timeliness is stressed as important factor of web information quality (Bailey & Pearson 1983). In other words, it refers to the degree to which the system offers quicky responses to requests for information or action (Wixom & Todd 2005). The more up-to-date the information is, the higher the perceived information usefulness.

Based on this literature the following is developed.

Hypothesis 6a: There is a positive relationship between timeliness and information usefulness for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 6b: There is a positive relationship between timeliness and information usefulness for hotel information in online travel reviews.

Accuracy

According to Wixom and Todd (2005) accuracy reflects recipients' perceptions that information is correct. Likewise, accuracy indicates that the information is error-free (Dunk, 2004). The more accurate the hotel information is, the higher the perceived information usefulness.

Hypothesis 7a: There is a positive relationship between information accuracy and usefulness for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 7b: There is a positive relationship between information accuracy and usefulness for hotel information in online travel reviews.

Persuasiveness

Persuasiveness is the level on how convincing the information content is perceived to be. Eagly and Chaiken (1993) found that the persuasiveness of a message depends on the positive attributes of the communicators. Additionally,

researchers have supported the idea that a highly credible source is more persuasive than a low credibility source when involvement of the reader is low (Johnson & Schilleppi 1969; Rhine & Severance 1970). Uskul, & Oyserman, (2010) examined the persuasive effects of tailored messages and found that European and Asian Americans who read a message that focused on the individual person were more likely to accept the message and find it more persuasive, as they believe they were more at risk and engaged in more message-congruent behavior. The more persuasive information is, the higher the perceived information usefulness.

Based on the previous literature the following hypotheses were developed.

Hypothesis 8a: There is a positive relationship between information persuasiveness and usefulness for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 8b: There is a positive relationship between information persuasiveness and usefulness for hotel information in online travel reviews.

Source Credibility

Credibility is determined as the extent to which an information source is perceived to be believable, competent, and trustworthy by the information recipients (Petty, & Cacioppo, 1986). Information provided by highly credible sources is considered to be useful and reliable (Ko, Kirsch, & King, 2005).

Extensive research in source credibility has been conducted (i.e. Heesacker, Petty, & Cacioppo, 1983; Petty, Cacioppo, & Goldman, 1981). Much of this research has been related to the extent that users can trust information that is provided by an expert (i.e. Awad & Ragowsky 2008; Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977; Grewal, Gotlieb, & Marmorstein, 1994; Kuan & Bock 2007). Trustworthiness is defined as a well-intentioned, truthful, unbiased concept which captures the perceived goodness or morality of the source (Tseng & Fogg, 1999). Trust has been conceptualized as an attitude, belief, intention, or behavior in the online context (McKnight & Chervany, 2001). Additionally, expertise is defined as a knowledgeable, experienced, and competent concept which captures the perceived knowledge and skill of the source (Tseng & Fogg, 1999).

In the literature it has been investigated that highly trustworthy and/or expert sources induce more immediate attitude change than do sources having less of these attributes. Additionally, recipients' opinions change in the when the material of information is attributed to a high credibility source than when it is attributed to a low credibility source (Hovland, 1951; Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953; Hovland and Weiss, 1951; Miller and Baseheart, 1969; Schulman and Worrall, 1970; Warren, 1969). Fogg et al. (2001) compared respondents from Finland and the US and found that the US respondents assign higher credibility to websites that convey expertise and trustworthiness and Finish respondents report lower credibility for websites that convey commercial implications.

Based on the previous literature the following hypotheses were developed.

Hypothesis 9a: There is a positive relationship between trustworthiness and usefulness for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 9b: There is a positive relationship between trustworthiness and usefulness for hotel information in online travel reviews.

Hypothesis 10a: There is a positive relationship between expertise and usefulness for hotel information in printed travel guidebooks.

Hypothesis 10b: There is a positive relationship between expertise and usefulness for hotel information in online travel reviews.

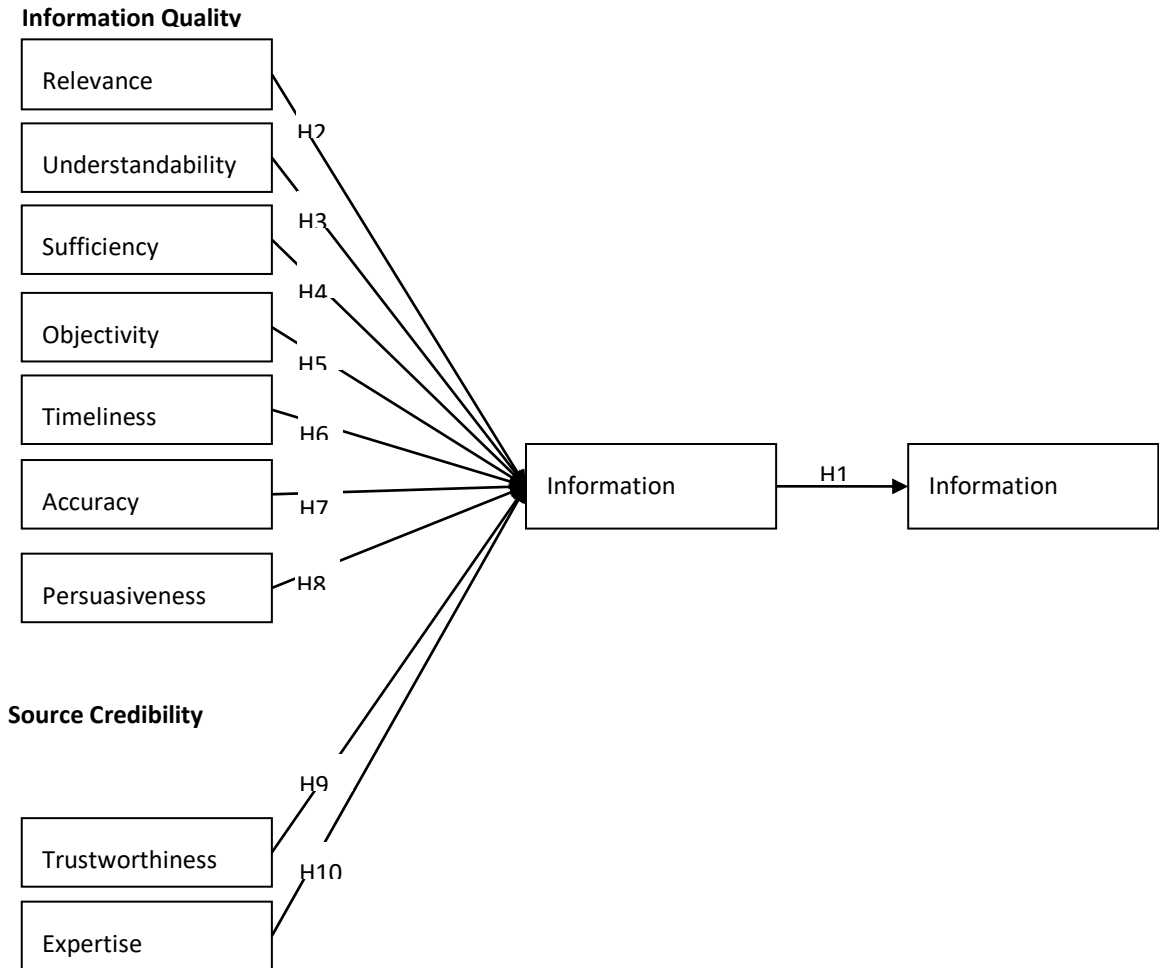
Research Model

The theoretical framework of the research model in this study is shown in Figure 1. This model represents the factors of information adoption in terms of information quality, source credibility, information usefulness and information adoption. The constructs of this model are adapted from research conducted by Cheung, et al. (2008) and modified to fit the context of printed travel guidebooks and online travel reviews.

Methodology

The focus of the study is international tourists who have traveled to Greece or are planning to travel to this destination in the future. Data was collected via an

online survey. The use of an internet survey was chosen since this method has the ability to provide faster data collection than other alternative methods and it offers more geographic flexibility with relatively low costs. **Figure 1. Theoretical Research Model**



Participants were randomly asked to read either a review for a Greek hotel from a travel guidebook or a review from a travel website. The questionnaire was designed to measure the elements of the research model used in this study which

are: Understandability, Sufficiency, Objectivity, Timeliness, Accuracy, Persuasiveness, Trustworthiness, Expertise, Usefulness, and Adoption.

Questions were adapted from previous literature in order to fit the Greek hotel market. The measurement are carried out by a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (7). In addition, demographic information was obtained including average yearly income, education, gender, ethnicity and residence.

RESULTS

Demographics

The results of the study indicate that the ratio of male to female respondents was evenly distributed as 45.5% of the respondents indicate their gender as males and 45.5% of the respondents indicate their gender as females while 9.1% of respondents did not indicate their gender. The age of the majority of the respondents ranged from 26 to 35 years old (54.5%). The respondents were relatively well educated with 90.9% having completed a college degree or higher. Average household yearly income levels ranged from under \$15,000 to \$75,000-\$89,999 with the largest income level being under \$15,000 (36.4%) followed by \$45,000-\$59,999 (27.3%). The primary residence of the respondents of the survey were from multiple location across the globe including the United States (54.5%), France (18.2%), Denmark (9.1%), and Sweden (9.1%). Of those that lived in the United States 50.0% lived in the Midwest, 33.3% resided in the Northeast, and 16.7% were from the West. The majority of the participants were familiar with Greece as 63.7% indicated that they had previously visited Greece with 36.4 indicating that they had visited 10 times or more. The results also indicated that the research participants were fairly well traveled as 54.6% indicated that on average they took at least three business trips per year. While 72.8% indicated that they took at least three leisure trips per year. Table 1 shows the full results of the demographic analysis.

When asked about printed travel guidebooks and online travel reviews a large difference in the amount of usage was observed. Over 90% of the respondents stated that they had previously used an online travel review website. This is in

contrast to only 55% of the respondents who stated that they had previously used a printed travel guidebook.

Linear Regression Analysis

Linear Regression was performed on each on the relationships of the proposed model. This technique was conducted individually for the measurements of the constructs for the online travel reviews and again for the constructs of the printed travel guidebooks. Tables 2 and 3 show the path coefficients and corresponding variances (R^2) for each on the theoretical models.

Table 1
Sample Demographics

Variable	%
Gender	
Male	45.5
Female	45.5
Age	
18-25	27.3
26-35	54.5
36-45	18.2
Education	
College Degree	9.1
Graduate Degree	81.9
Income	
Under \$15,000	36.4
\$15,000 - \$29,999	9.1
\$30,000 - \$44,999	9.1
\$45,000 - \$59,999	27.3
Over \$60,000	9.1
Primary Residence	

Denmark	9.1
France	18.2
Sweden	9.1
United States of America	54.5
<hr/>	
Business Trips per Year	
1 – 2	45.5
3 – 4	27.3
5 – 6	9.1
7 – 9	9.1
10 or more	9.1
<hr/>	
Leisure Trips per Year	
1 – 2	27.3
3 – 4	45.5
5 – 6	18.2
7 – 9	0.0
10 or more	9.1
<hr/>	

Table 2

Influences on Information Quality and Source Credibility of Printed Travel Guidebooks

Item	Path Coefficient (β)	R ²
<hr/>		
Usefulness		
Relevance	0.95*	0.89
Understandability	0.99*	0.99
Sufficiency	0.58*	0.32
Objectivity	0.99	0.99

Timeliness	-0.19	0.02
Accuracy	-0.66*	0.42
Persuasiveness	0.79*	0.61
Trustworthiness	-0.95	0.61
Expertise	0.76	0.56
<hr/>		
Adoption		
Usefulness	0.98*	0.96

Note. * $p < .05$.

The results of the data show that for the printed travel guidebooks there are positive relationships between usefulness and adoption (Hypothesis 1a accepted) as well as between relevance and usefulness (Hypothesis 2a accepted), understandability and usefulness (Hypothesis 3a accepted), sufficiency and usefulness (Hypothesis 4a accepted), persuasiveness and usefulness (Hypothesis 8a accepted), expertise and usefulness (Hypothesis 10a accepted). However, there are negative relationships between accuracy and usefulness (Hypothesis 6a not accepted), and trustworthiness and usefulness (Hypothesis 9a not accepted). In addition to this there are not statistically significant relationships between objectivity and usefulness (Hypothesis 4a not accepted), and timeliness and usefulness (Hypothesis 5a not accepted).

Table 3

Influences on Information Quality and Source Credibility of Online Travel Reviews

Item	Path Coefficient (β)	R ²
Usefulness		

Relevance	0.73*	0.53
Understandability	0.88*	0.78
Sufficiency	0.82*	0.66
Objectivity	0.24*	0.05
Timeliness	0.41*	0.16
Accuracy	0.92*	0.84
Persuasiveness	0.82*	0.66
Trustworthiness	0.96*	0.92
Expertise	0.75*	0.56
<hr/>		
Adoption		
Usefulness	0.52*	0.26

Note. * $p < .05$.

When examining the results for the online travel reviews the findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between all of the constructs of relevance, understandability, sufficiency, objectivity, timeliness, accuracy, persuasiveness, trustworthiness, expertise and usefulness as well as between usefulness and adoption (Hypotheses 1b – 10b accepted).

DISCUSSION

The analysis of online travel reviews show the results to be as expected. This indicates that information relevance, understandability, sufficiency, objectivity, timeliness, accuracy, persuasiveness, trustworthiness, expertise have a positive effect of information usefulness. In other words the great the quality of the

information and source credibility the more useful the online review will be. This leads to a great level of adoption of the information.

However, the analysis of the printed travel guidebooks shows some difference between the online travel reviews. While the constructs of information relevance, understandability, sufficiency, persuasiveness, and expertise have a positive influence on information usefulness the constructs of accuracy and trustworthiness are negatively related to information usefulness. This negative relationship is counterintuitive. As such it is difficult to draw any conclusion thus, necessitating the need for further research. In addition the constructs of objectivity and timeliness were found to be not significant.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study can be of benefit to hotel managers in Greece. By reading online reviews and understanding the important attributes of them managers can gain insight into what consumers believe to be important. Additionally, the results will assist managers in obtaining useful information that can be effectively transformed into marketing guidelines. By knowing how potential consumers perceive different forms of communication a manager can determine the most effect method to advertise his business for the hotel's specific target market. Furthermore, the findings of this study will be of benefit to travel review organizations as a guide for examining reviews posted online in order to determine effective methods to utilize eWOM as well as those organization that specialize in printed travel guidebook. Finally, this study is of value to academics as it provides a basis for future research into the changing role of written communication in the hotel industry.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Due to the unique economic timeframe that this study was conducted the results may be skewed due to travelers' current preferences. If this study were performed during more stability economic times the results may differ.

As with any survey the sample population has a great effect on the results. The majority of the participants of this study were from the United States and were relatively well educated. As such the study may not be generalizable. If this study was conducted with a larger sample size and broader demographics the results may greatly vary.

The theoretical model utilized in this study was found to be a good determinant of information adoption for online travel reviews. However, the same theoretical model failed to explain the relationship between all of the constructs when examining printed travel guides. As such further research should be conducted in the realm of printed travel guidebooks to investigate the attributes specific to this context of information adoption.

This study investigated the opinions of international travelers to Greece. Further research into other international markets may be of interest. In addition an examination from the perspective of the firm responsible for the publishing of printed travel guidebook as well as the maintenance of online travel review websites may be an area which deserves an extensive research.

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AN IMPROVED APPROACH OF TEACHING ISLAMIC ARCHEOLOGY IN THE FACULTIES OF TOURISM

Heba Mahmoud Saad Abdel-Naby (Ph.D.)

Associate Professor of Islamic Archeology

Faculty of Tourism and Hotels

Alexandria University, Egypt

ABSTRACT: As a developing country that depends greatly on tourism, Egypt needs to upgrade the knowledge and skills of its workforce in the field of Tourism. The tour guide is one of the main jobs in that field and thus; the preparation of a tour guide is increasingly important.

The study of archeology plays a central role in the preparation of a successful tour guide. Therefore, the study aims to present an improved approach of teaching archeology in the faculties of tourism. The adopted approach focuses on two main aspects; implementing technology as a tool for a better teaching and learning experience and developing students' skills not just to gain knowledge but to be engaged in the construction of knowledge. The adopted approach was implemented on one of the courses of Islamic archeology taught in the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Alex. University, Egypt and was evaluated to determine its advantages and disadvantages and its efficiency to be applied on other courses of archeology in the faculties of tourism.

Keywords: Islamic archeology, technology, Internet, teaching and learning tools.

INTRODUCTION

The study of archeology plays a central role in the preparation of a successful tour guide. He is expected to be knowledgeable with all the important archeological sites of Egypt throughout its history; which means during the Pharaonic period, the Greco-Roman period and the Islamic Period.

It has always been a challenge to teach the archeology of Egypt which owns an impressive number of monuments and sites. The Islamic monuments alone are 774 monuments distributed in 25 governorates and Cairo, the capital, owns 537 of them. Therefore, the study of these sites, even if throughout two or three courses, is not an easy mission. The difficulty arises from the impossibility of covering all the monuments and more of visiting them especially with the large numbers of students in classes nowadays. Moreover, requiring students to memorize information about each and every site seems impossible, but it's more practical to give them basic information and guide them to search for more whenever they need.

From that situation came the idea of the research which is to use an improved approach of teaching Islamic archeology that is focused on two main aspects; implementing technology as a tool for better teaching and learning and developing students' skills not just to gain knowledge but to be engaged in the construction of knowledge. The suggested use of technology can facilitate the study and create a better teaching and learning experience in which both the teacher and learner have a positive interactive role.

LITERATURE REVIEW

What is technology and why is it important in higher education?

Technology has been defined by the UNESCO as "...the know-how and creative processes that may assist people to utilize tools, resources and systems to solve

problems and to enhance control over the natural and made environment in an endeavour to improve the human condition." (UNESCO,1985). Thus, technology in this statement involves the purposeful application of knowledge, experience and resources to create processes and products that meet human needs. The needs and wants of people in particular communities determine the technology that is developed and how it is applied. However, most people think of technology in terms of its artifacts such as computers and software.

In nowadays world, globalization has had a strong impact on higher education in terms of quality, access and diversity of educational provision. Therefore, the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in higher education has proven to be a need to develop higher education. Many countries introduced ICTs in higher education and created a positive revolution by the innovative use of audio, video, computer and the Internet for both face-to-face and distance learning (UNESCO report, 2007).

The report of the Economist Intelligence Unit (2009) states that technology is changing today's classrooms and shaping a different learning environment. The report indicates that integrating technology in higher education will improve educational quality and expand access to educational and reference resources. Moreover, it will change the way courses are taught as teaching will become more outcome-based and student-centered.

The use of technology in higher education

Classrooms nowadays are equipped with the basic equipments necessary to display electronic presentations such as a computer, a projection device, dimmable lights and a screen. The computer should be capable of producing various effects needed such as sound, video or Internet access. Some classes are also equipped with white electronic boards or other equipments. These equipments vary according to the needs of the courses taught in class (Brinkley et al., 1999).

The present generation of students is convenient with using technology. They have never known a world without computers, the World Wide Web and cellular phones (Roberts, 2005). They were even called "the Net Generation", referring to

the crucial role of the Internet in their lives (Oblinger, 2005). Therefore, integrating technology in classrooms is suitable for the present generation of students.

The Internet in particular could be used as an effective teaching and learning tool in higher education. The Internet could be used as a tool for inquiry, communication and construction of knowledge (Kumar, 2004). It can also provide an efficient way to collaborate with others: teachers can collaborate with other teachers and students with other students (Brege, 1998). The use of the Internet in higher education is the core of e-learning and some researchers define e-learning as "Internet-enabled learning" (Gunasekaran et al., 2002). But the broad sense of e-learning is the use of ICT to support students in achieving their learning outcomes (Usoro and Abid, 2007). Therefore, ICT in general and Internet in particular are used by universities all over the world to enhance and develop higher education and ensure quality of education. These technologies were used separately in the form of Distance Education (online courses with no face-to-face interaction) or combined with the traditional approach of teaching.

Thus we conclude that the issue nowadays is not to use information and communication technologies in higher education. Rather, the issue is how to effectively employ such technologies and harness fully the new opportunities created by them to promote positive student learning experience.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the research is to present an improved approach of teaching archeology- Islamic archeology in particular- in which technology is effectively used to create a better educational environment for both the teacher and the learner. The adopted approach also employed various strategies to enhance students' positive role to acquire knowledge and improve practical.

The objectives of the research are:

- To present ideas about how technology could be used as a teaching tool in the field of Islamic archeology
- To present ideas about how technology could be used as a learning tool.

- To present strategies used to develop the students' skills required in the field of tour guiding.
- To assess the suggested approach and evaluate its effectiveness in the field of archeology study.

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The suggested improved approach was implemented on one of the Islamic archeology courses taught in the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Alexandria University, Egypt. The course's title is "Islamic Architecture during the Ottoman period and dynasty of Mohammad Ali". 162 students are registered in this course.

The methodology used by the researcher is based on two aspects: The first aims to develop the face-to-face interaction in lectures by using various types of technologies. The second aims to use the advantages of e-learning to create and enhance an additional environment parallel to lectures that could be used as an additional teaching and learning tool. The whole experience was evaluated by the researcher –also the teacher of the course-, the students and an exterior evaluator. The descriptive analytical approach was used in the research.

Implementing the suggested approach:

1- Preparing the course and curriculum design

The course focuses on the Ottoman architecture of Egypt in addition to the architecture of the Dynasty of Mohammad Ali. The studied era is relatively long (from 1517 to 1952) and the monuments attributed to that era are 228 in Cairo, 40 in Al-Behira governorate and 4 in Alexandria governorate. All the monuments were surveyed to determine their status, architectural and decorative importance, location and accessibility (Dictionary of Islamic monuments, 2000). A total of 48 monuments were chosen from Cairo in addition to the 4 monuments of Alexandria and 10 of al-Behira to be photographed by the researcher and 20 of the Cairene monuments were video recorded. Each of the selected monuments has a certain architectural, historical or decorative importance or has a unique feature that deserves to be highlighted.

Various studies about curricula designing and implementing technology in higher education were reviewed by the researcher before designing the course (Brinkley et al., 1999; Trow, 2000; Cayton-Pedersen and O'Neil, 2005; Usoro and Abid, 2007). The course itself was designed to cover the studied era by focusing on the major important monuments that could best represent the century or the district to which they belong, and to present the various types of monuments built during that era. The lectures were prepared to be delivered by using power point presentations, in which most of the digital photos of the monuments were used (512 photos) and also the videos. The presentations were designed to present the selected monuments by showing a plan of each monument, photos of the facades, exterior and interior parts.

The researcher also made sure that the adequate equipments were available in the classroom. Moreover, a survey was distributed among students to establish an initial baseline of students' prior use of technology and the context in which they have used technology. The survey revealed that 63% of the students use computers to finish their assignments and tasks and they use word software very frequent. They also use the Internet to search for information and communicate with others. And 29% of the students stated that they use the Internet at least once a week. Based on these results the researcher concluded that integrating technology as a learning tool will be generally accepted by the students.

2- The lectures in classroom

The first lecture was intended to give an overview of the studied era and its architectural characteristic features. A movie about the Ottoman Empire was played to give the students an introduction about the era, its architectural style and the great architects that shaped that style (Islam: Empire of Faith, part 3, 2001). The researcher also discussed the outline of the course and the students' participation required.

The following lectures used power point presentations as a teaching tool, not only to deliver data and give description of monuments but also to improve students' skills of guiding. Students were asked to simulate the guiding situation and give short presentations of the monuments. Moreover, Google

earth was used to indicate the area in which the monument is located, how it could be accessible, and what the neighboring monuments and buildings are.

In addition to technology, other strategies were used to improve the face-to-face interaction in classroom. A tour guide was invited to one of the lectures to share with the students his experience in the field and to guide them about the skills they need to improve to lead a successful career.

3- The online classroom

The researcher intended to benefit from the advantages of e-learning that has spread all over the world but not yet on a wide scale in Egypt. Various studies about e-learning were reviewed by the researcher to determine how it could be implemented (Berge, 1998, 2006; AFT, 2000; Singh et al, 2003; Mendenhall, 2005). Since the traditional way of teaching; lectures, can't be replaced for the time being in the faculties of Tourism in Egypt, the internet was used to create an additional classroom together with lectures. It isn't in the form of an online course but rather an additional learning environment for both the teacher and the student.

To achieve that; a group was established by the researcher on: www.facebook.com. It was a closed group only for the students registered for the above-mentioned course and the teacher (the researcher) was the admin of the group who confirms their joining it. This precaution was intended to protect the teacher's intellectual property of any material shared on the group only with the targeted students (Storm, 2002). The administration of the group was handled by the researcher. After each lecture, the photos of the discussed monuments were posted in addition to presentations and videos. Students were asked to participate by uploading more photos of the monuments, commenting on the photos and sharing any additional information they have with all the members of the group.

The group was used as a teaching tool by the researcher and a learning tool for the students; therefore, it was intended to fulfill three functions:

a- It was used for inquiry and search:

- Students were given simple tasks such as searching for photos of the studied monuments (before and after restorations, details of the decorations on the

monuments or the neighboring monuments in the site). They were also asked to search for websites that could be used in the field of study and they were given examples of good sites and authorized ones in the field of Islamic architecture.

- Students were encouraged to send their inquiries and questions to the teachers and all the students were encouraged to participate in the discussion or give answers to their colleagues.

b- It was used for communication

- The group was used as a communication tool between the teacher and the students and between the students. Moreover, it was used to communicate with other colleagues in the field of Islamic architecture. An associate professor was invited twice to participate in discussion with the teacher of the course and the students.

- All the important events and announcements that were mentioned during lectures were also posted on the wall of the group. Moreover, the students were informed weekly with the required reading by means of messages on the group.

c- It was used for constructing knowledge

The course was designed to guide students to lead a positive role in constructing their knowledge. The tasks given to them throughout the course were gradual in difficulty. Students were given guidance to select the useful resources and websites that they can rely on. Then they were asked to construct their own knowledge about the monuments that were not discussed during lectures. By the end of the course, students were able to write about a large number of monuments and sites, give presentations about them and also publish their knowledge on the internet.

4- The practical skills of the students

Since the course is one of the major courses that prepare the tour guide for work, the practical aspect of the course was paid attention. As mentioned before, the presentations were used to improve students' skills in guiding. A part of each lecture was devoted for that; students were trained to describe

the monument, control the group and contact with them. The students were also given the chance to describe the monuments in site as a trip was organized to visit 10 monuments in Cairo and the students themselves handled the guiding in turn. The same was made in Alexandria and its sites were visited and the students were tour guiding.

Also an experienced tour guide was invited to be a guest speaker during one of the lectures. His speech focused on the skills of the tour guide in general and how to improve them. He also focused on Islamic architecture in particular; explaining the frequently-visited sites, the interesting aspects of Islamic architecture that attracts tourists, the frequently asked questions of tourists related to Islamic architecture and the role of a tour guide to present the Islamic Civilization through his work.

Evaluation of the adopted approach

Evaluation is the means by which we try to identify which aspects of our teaching are good and which need to change (Fink, 1999). It was important, therefore, to evaluate the adopted approach to determine its efficiency in teaching Islamic archeology, students' acceptance to such approaches and possibility to apply it on similar courses. Four techniques of evaluations were adopted: the teacher's evaluation, outside observer's evaluation, students' evaluation and students' test results.

1- The teacher's (researcher's) evaluation: Part of the evaluation is self-monitoring of the teacher himself which is a mental activity that happens whenever we teach or communicate with the students. It's immediate and frequent and evaluates the interaction of the students. Self-monitoring and teacher's evaluation of the discussed course revealed the following:

- The adopted approach made the lectures more organized starting with an overall view of the site (using: www.googleearth.com) and distributing a map of the whole area and plans of the studied monuments, then a power point presentation was used to explain the monuments in the site. At the end of the lecture, an open discussion with the students was held and they gave simple presentations of similar monuments.

- The students were more engaged with lectures because their interaction with the content was closer through the photos and mini videos. Moreover, their interpersonal interaction during lectures was improved; they participated in discussions and presentation. But still, many of the students were shy to deliver presentations or probably preferred to watch others than being watched and criticized.

- To avoid that lectures being dull because they were planned in the same way, three events were organized to interrupt the ordinary sequence of lectures: a visit to Cairo in the beginning of the course, a meeting with a tour guide in the middle of the course and another visit to the sites of Alexandria near the end of the course. In addition to refreshing the students and taking them away from the ordinary course of lectures, the three events provided more practical interaction with the course content and enhanced students' practical skills. The visits helped the students to apply the theoretical study in the field.

- The students welcomed the idea of creating an online group to be used as an additional teaching and learning tool. In two weeks 139 students out of 162 participated and became members of the group. 101 of them were active members of the group who participated in most of the discussions and completed all the tasks.

- Students had access to a great quantity of information related to the course content; since they were provided with digital photos and resources of the studied monuments and important authorized websites about Islamic architecture in general and Ottoman architecture in particular. The teacher, whose role as the source of knowledge during the face-to-face lectures, had a different role in the online class. The teacher was more like a facilitator who helped the students to select useful resources and navigate different sites about Ottoman architecture. The teacher also organized discussions and led them to the correct path. Moreover, the social role of the teacher was equally important; by encouraging students to participate, praising the good work and correcting the negative participations, in addition to giving students individual care.

- The online class was a perfect environment for shy students who never participated in lectures; they were noticeably active members of the group and encouragement helped them to continue their positive role.
- On the other hand, the online class was very much time-consuming for the teacher. It required increased time commitment to prepare the course, post presentations and photos of each lecture online and to follow up students' participations and achievements.
- Some students were not ready to use technology as a learning tool and that hindered their full benefit of the course.

2- The outside observer's evaluation

A Colleague in the same field of specialization (Islamic archeology) was invited to be an outside observer of the course. The course content, syllabus and adapted teaching strategy were discussed with him. He agreed that the course was well-designed and the teaching techniques were adequate to achieve the intended learning outcomes especially in terms of the practical skills of the tour guide. But he expressed his concern about the online group and stated that he was not sure how the students would receive the idea. He himself depends mainly on the traditional way of teaching with the help of power point presentations.

Also the tour guide was invited to one of the lectures to be an outside observer. He expressed that the power point presentations, videos and Internet are teaching tools that were not available for his generation of students and they make the study of archeology way much easier and help maintain students' interest and motivation to learn.

3- Students' evaluation

A survey was designed to evaluate the teaching and learning methods adopted in the course. The survey consist of two parts; the first about the teaching methods used during lectures (in class) and the second part about the online class and the teaching and learning methods adopted in the group.

The survey was distributed among all the students registered in the course (162 students) and 158 complete surveys were used for analysis.

The analysis of the survey revealed that the power point presentations were evaluated by the students as the most useful teaching method. 82 % of the students considered the power point presentations “very useful” and 18% considered them “useful”. While the use of Google earth and distributing a map of the site together with a plan of the studied monument was considered the second most useful teaching method for the students. Students commented that those two teaching methods together helped them to form a complete image of the site and its monuments as if they were there.

The mini videos of the monuments were considered “very useful” by 55% of the students, “useful” by 41% and not useful” by 4% of them. It was ranked in the third place of the useful teaching methods. The simulation of guiding situations in class was ranked in the fourth place and considered “very useful” by 52% and “useful” by 42% of them. Moreover, the lecture of the guest speaker who was an experienced tour guide was considered important for the students’ practical skills and therefore, evaluated as “very useful” by 43% and “useful” by 41% of the students. At the end of the teaching methods’ list came the introductory video about the Ottoman Empire that was evaluated as “useful” by 64% of the students.

The second part of the survey contained questions concerning the online group . 139 students were members of the group and 80% of them indicated that this group was a successful teaching and learning method. 62% of the members of the group were active members who participated in discussions, submitted all required tasks, uploaded photos..etc. While 17% of the members checked the group only to see the presentations and photos and 8% of them were members but never used the group.

Students mentioned many advantages of the group and those advantages according to their importance for the students were:

- Providing lectures’ presentations and photos made studying easier (82% of the students)

- Encouraged students to be active learners; to search for data, photos and participate in discussions (80% of the students)
- Provided easy access to recourses (63% of the students)
- Easier to work with tasks at home and submit them online (56% of the students)
- Keeps students updated with the latest news and be connected with each others (44% of the students)
- Keep students connected with the teacher and post questions and inquiries at anytime (34% of the students)
- Benefit from the experience of other professors in the field of study (27% of the students)
- Benefit from each others experiences (25% of the students).

Students also mentioned some disadvantages of that learning tool; since 19% of the students stated that they were not used to use the Internet as a learning too and 3% of them said that it's time-consuming.

On the other hand, the students who did not join the group (14% of the students) or those who joined it but never used it (8% of the students) mentioned that their reasons were: the lack of computer, the lack of Internet access where they stay or the lack of time due to a part-time job. Only two students mentioned that they didn't know how to use it and were embarrassed to ask for help.

A concluding question at the end of the survey revealed that 94% students believe that the adopted approach of teaching in this course had a positive impact on their overall understanding of the course content.

5- Students' test results

Previous studies provide substantial evidence that technology can play a positive role in academic achievement (Foltos, 2002). This was partly proven in the present study; since the final test was not yet held and graded. Therefore, the researcher depended on the results of the mid-term exam. It

revealed that the grades of the students were generally higher than their grades of the mid-term exam of the previous course of Islamic archeology. The latter course was taught by the same teacher but using the traditional way of teaching.

Of course, the accumulating experience of the students in the field of Islamic archeology could have its impact on their achievement. Therefore, the relation between the adopted approach of teaching and students' achievement could be examined after grading the final test and comparing students' results to their results in a previous course of Islamic archeology taught by the traditional way.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Many results were concluded from the present study which are:

1-The study provided evidence of the importance of using technology in the field of Islamic archeology in particular and archeology in general. The power point presentations, mini videos of the monuments and the use of Google earth could all coordinate to help the teacher give a closer image of the monument in relation with the whole site. These technologies could facilitate the study of a large number of archeological sites, even inaccessible ones.

2-The study revealed that the present generation of students is using the Internet in their daily life but that doesn't mean they are all ready to use it as a learning tool. In fact this culture should be spread among both the teachers and the students and they should all know the potentials of using the Internet as a teaching and learning tool. They should also be trained to use it either to improve the traditional lectures or in distance learning.

3-The Internet could be successfully used as a teaching and learning tool. It could provide an additional environment to enhance the traditional lectures. It could be used to encourage students to be positive learners, to facilitate the students learning experience and to create an interactive educational process. It could also be used as a communication tool to keep students connected with the teacher and with each others and moreover, the Internet could facilitate team work.

4-The practical aspect of the study of archeology is essential for the preparation of a tour guide. Therefore, courses of archeology in the faculties of tourism should be designed to meet the needs of the tour guide. The courses should focus on developing the practical skills of the students and create strategies to enhance them. Site visits of the studied monuments are very important and surely useful. The power point presentations with photos or videos of monuments can also overcome the difficulty of regularity of visits and could be used to develop practical skills.

5- The extended access to information altered the role of the teacher as the only source of information. His role nowadays, in addition to provide knowledge, is to help the students to search for additional information and guide them to evaluate the resources and use the useful ones. He also has a social role to create a friendly environment in which learning is promoted.

6- Adopting an interactive approach of teaching, whether in the form of an online group or online course requires increased time commitment of the teacher. Therefore, it should be part of the teaching strategy of the institution and some sort of support, incentives or rewards should be offered to the teachers who adopt that approach. Moreover, equipments and technological support and training should be available for teachers and students. That means, faculties' understanding of the teaching and learning power of technology needs to be increased.

7- Students learn by doing, therefore, adopting an interactive approach of teaching where the learner is positive could develop students learning experience and have a positive impact on their understanding of the course content.

8- Using technology and innovating teaching can maintain students' interest and concentration, encourage them to be more open to change and creates a positive learning experience for them.

To sum up, it's clear that we need to prepare students to an era of change, information and knowledge explosion. Thus, we need to draw on a variety of technologies to deepen students' learning. Such technologies could be very useful and very efficient in the field of archeology.

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DEVELOPMENT OF A STRUCTURAL MODEL FOR QUALITY CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM IN MACAO

Weng Hang, Kong

PhD Student, Nottingham Trent University, U.K.

Lecturer, Institute For Tourism Studies, Macao

ABSTRACT

Macao is a city with fusion of Chinese and Portuguese colonial culture and heritage. The preservation and enhancement of this unique cultural heritage will enhance its attraction for visitors. At present, Macao is famous for its casinos and has been called the 'Monte Carlo of the Orient' with a vast amount of government revenue being collected from the casinos and gaming activities. Gaming has been an important part of Macao's tourism, with the 'gaming paradise' image of Macao being so dominant that a large proportion of visitors neglect its cultural heritage resources. Macao is the focus of this study because the government had submitted an application for Macao to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in 2002 for adding 12 of the historical architectures in the SAR to its World Heritage list, and applied successfully in 2005, to promote Macao as the 'City of Cultural Heritage in Asia'. Macao's culture, gaming and entertainments form its major attraction for visitors and must be combined in order to boost Macao's multi-dimensional image and positive effects on the community in the long run. The

development of quality cultural heritage tourism is needed in developing Macao as a cultural heritage tourism destination. Thus, the aim of this research is to develop and test a theoretical model of quality cultural heritage tourism. It offers an integrated approach to understanding cultural heritage development and management of tourist destinations, and attempts to extend the theoretical and empirical evidence regarding causal relationships including quality of experience, perceived quality, satisfaction and behaviour intentions. The previous literature has already presented the relationship among perceived quality, quality of experience, satisfaction and behaviour intentions in cultural heritage tourism. However, there is a relative lack of academic interest, particularly in Macao. This study tries to investigate the quality and related constructs in cultural heritage tourism. It seeks to understand the major constructs considered by local stakeholders and visitors in evaluating the quality in cultural heritage tourism, the importance of the availability of quality in the overall experience, visitors' behaviour toward quality cultural heritage tourism and also the constructs related to quality.

Keywords: Quality, cultural heritage tourism, Macao

INTRODUCTION

The holidays and travel sections of any weekend newspaper or magazine shows that cultural heritage tourism is an essential part of the tourism industry and planning cultural heritage tourism for destinations in which the importance of quality is highlighted is now increasingly common. It is necessary to create knowledge on quality cultural heritage tourism because it can be considered as the foundation of tourism planning, the author believes that developing a model of quality cultural heritage tourism can build up such knowledge. Although many models related to cultural heritage tourism have been developed in the past decades, they are successfully applied only in developed societies and in western cultures. However, Macao is part of China which is a non-western society and a developing country (Hsu, Cai & Wong, 2007). Those models may not be applicable and relevant in non-western society and a developing country such as Macao, China. More specifically, there are no previous studies investigating the quality of

cultural heritage tourism in Macao. Based on this concept, it is necessary to develop a model which is feasible for non-western society.

The tourism industry is prominent in Macao's economy, particularly in the gaming sector. With a population of 549,200 inhabitants (DSEC, 2009b), visitor arrivals for the whole year of 2009 were 21,752,800 (DSEC, 2010); visitors were mainly from Mainland China (55.7%), followed by Hong Kong (29.8%) and Taiwan (4.9%) in 2009. Mainland China remains Macao's largest source market. Each visitor stays for an average of 1.44 nights (DSEC, 2010). Since the liberalisation of the gaming industry in 2003, the development of Macao's economy has been propelled by gaming together with tourism. Macao is renowned for its casinos and is often called the 'Las Vegas of the Orient'. Its gaming revenues alone contributed more than US\$7.2 billion in 2006, exceeding the US\$6.6 billion made on the Las Vegas strip during the same year (CIA, 2008), and have thus become an important feature of Macao's economy which depends almost entirely upon the gaming industry. Also, the development for tourism in Macao is mainly attributed to the expansion of its gaming sector. Therefore, the impact of the global economic recession is more obvious on tourism and the gaming industry. The gross gaming revenue went down by 12.7% (equivalent to ¹MOP26.25 billion in the first quarter of 2009). Visitor arrivals totalled 5,454,170 in the first quarter of 2009, down by 9.6% year-on-year (Macao Economic Bulletin, 2009). Per capita spending of visitors (excluding gaming expenses) for the first quarter of 2009 contracted by 5.3% to MOP 1,638, much lower than the MOP1,788 in the previous quarter, while the per capita shopping spending decreased by 10.8% to MOP657 (Macao Economic Bulletin, 2009). All these result from an over-concentrated tourism development in Macao, relying too heavily on the gaming industry. Diversification becomes a timely issue for policy makers to address in order to have more stabilised tourism development.

Although Macao is renowned for its gaming industry, the importance of cultural heritage tourism should not be disregarded. Due to its geographical background and the early settlement of the Portuguese, Macao became the perfect crossroad

¹ MOP = Macao Patacas, US\$1 = MOP8

for the meeting of Eastern and Western cultures. With its rich culture and long history, 'The Historic Centre of Macao' was successfully inscribed on the World Heritage Site (WHS) List in 2005, making it the 31st designated World Heritage site in China. The importance of cultural heritage development in Macao is thus gaining greater importance. However, little research attention has been given to this aspect, especially the role of quality in Macao's cultural heritage tourism planning. To achieve Macao's strategic goal of 'Destination of Cultural Heritage in Asia', it is critical to develop a theoretical model for quality in cultural heritage tourism in order to sustain the future development of Macao's cultural heritage tourism and to ensure effective performance in the future. Through investigation the current situations in the perspective of the stakeholders and visitors, it is believed that tourism stakeholders and visitors exercise some influence and may lead to the continuous improvement on the development of cultural heritage tourism in Macao. It can therefore boost Macao's multi-dimensional image and positive effects on the community by incorporating its cultural heritage attractions and other sectors in tourism.

RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims to develop a theoretical model for quality in cultural heritage tourism in order to sustain the future development of Macao's cultural heritage tourism and ensure us effective performance. The intention is to develop an understanding the constructs in quality and also how they relate to quality of experience, satisfaction and subsequently drive behaviour intentions. By understanding the relationships between quality constructs and their determinants, destination tourism providers would know better how to build up the quality in cultural heritage tourism and improve their planning to maximise use of resources. The objectives of the research are therefore twofold. The first is to construct a more integrated model of quality in cultural heritage tourism by including the 'quality-satisfaction-behavioural intention' paradigm. The second is to determine the relationships between the quality constructs and affected attributes in their prediction of future behavioural intentions. In order to achieve the objectives, the research identifies constructs regarding quality in cultural heritage tourism for Macao. The constructs include perceived quality, satisfaction

and behaviour intentions. Specifically, it seeks to find out the major attributes considered by the visitors in evaluating those constructs in cultural heritage tourism for Macao context. The proposed model also identifies the relationships among the quality constructs that quality of experience are likely to influence the perceived quality, level of satisfaction and future behavioural intentions within cultural heritage tourism.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Perceived quality

Definitions of perceived quality and empirical evidence indicate that perceived quality is an appraisal construct (Zeithaml, 1988; Bolton & Drew, 1991). Perceived quality is the consumer's evaluation of a product's overall excellence or superiority (Olshavsky 1985; Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985; Zeithaml, 1988). In the service literature, service quality often refers to quality as perceived by customers (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Yuan & Jang, 2008). It is the comparison between expectation and actual performance (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Perceived quality is generally treated as a post-purchase construct (Roest & Pieters, 1997). Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1990) mention that people's perceptions of services or products are made at the end of their encounter. On the contrary, they believe that there is an endless potential for judgements to be made during the service delivery process and then once more at the post-consumption stage. People's perceptions of quality cultural heritage tourism are perceived differently by different of groups or destinations of people. Thus, the keys to sustaining the development of cultural heritage tourism and management are to identify the perceived quality in cultural heritage tourism. Brady and Cronin (2001) mention that the perception of quality is determined by three dimensions: outcome quality, interaction quality and physical environment quality. Outcome quality is what the customer obtains when the productive process ends, interaction quality refers to the interaction that takes place while the service is being delivered and environment quality refers to the ambient conditions where the service is delivered or the product is sold.

Satisfaction

Recent reviews of satisfaction literature document the dramatic increase in satisfaction/dissatisfaction research over the past decade, particularly in the marketing and management fields. The topic of satisfaction in cultural heritage tourism is becoming more and more crucial, such as the studies of museum visitors' satisfaction. Previous works have emphasised the effect of quality on satisfaction (Caldwell, 2002; de Ruyter, Wetzels, Lemmink & Mattsson, 1997; Harrison & Shaw, 2004). Therefore, there is a rich mixture of conceptual and theoretical discussions and empirical studies investigating antecedents and consequences in satisfaction (Woodruff, Cadotte & Jenkins, 1983). Satisfaction is simply a post-experience attitude and attitudes are not fixed or tangible parameters. An attitude is defined as customers' overall affective reaction to a product or a service (Cadotte, Woodruff & Jenkins, 1987; Oliver, 1980; 1981). Typically, satisfaction is viewed through well-defined questions, with respondents providing an assessment of their attitude on a Likert scale or a related rating scale format (Veal, 1997). Satisfaction is considered a judgement, attitude or psychological state arising from consumers' disconfirmation of expectations (Woodruff et al., 1983; Rust & Oliver, 1994; Oliver, 1996).

Quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions

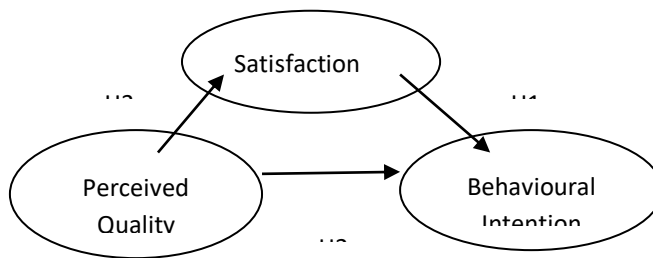
Cronin, Brady and Hult (2000) indicate that numerous studies have specified relationships among quality, satisfaction and such consequences as positive word of mouth, price premiums and repurchase intentions. They also identify several competing models of direct effects among service quality, satisfaction and behaviour intentions. One of the models is derived from the satisfaction literature that defines customer satisfaction as the primary and direct link to outcome measures (Anderson & Fornell, 1994; Clow & Beisel, 1995; Andreassen, 1996; Fornell et al., 1996; Hallowell, 1996; Mohr & Bitner, 1995; Spreng, Mackenzie & Olshavsky, 1996; Athanassopoulos, 1999; Bolton & Leomn, 1999; Ennew & Binks, 1999). Thus, studying satisfaction or dissatisfaction is crucial because it may affect expectations for the next purchase and future behaviour (Westbrook & Newman, 1978; Woodruff et al., 1983). Previous researches have confirmed that there is a direct and positive relationship between tourists' satisfaction and behavioural

intentions such as revisiting and recommending (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Kozadk & Rimmington, 2000; Oh, 1999; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). However, this relationship may be more complicated because a destination can be considered as a product. Different visitors can have various consumption objectives and behaviours after the visits. 'Intention to return' and 'willingness to recommend the destination' can be conceived as behaviour variables. The researchers also suggest that 'perceived quality' and 'satisfaction' are the evaluative variables related to the evaluation of the stay (Bigné, Sánchez & Sánchez, 2001). It is important to highlight that researchers should be interested in the tourists' view rather than the providers' (Bigné et al., 2001). On the other hand, there is also a model in previous studies which emanates from the literature and it investigates the relationships between service quality, satisfaction and behaviour intentions (Cronin et al., 2000). Those studies indicate that the majority of studies agree that service quality influences behaviour intentions only through perceived value and satisfaction (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Gotlieb, Grewal & Brown, 1994; Patterson & Spreng, 1997; Cronin et al., 2000). There has been a great body of studies focusing on the interrelationship between quality, satisfaction and behaviour intentions (Backman & Veldkamp, 1995; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Cronin et al., 2000). They suggest that there are relationships among the choice of a destination to visit, subsequent evaluations and future behaviour intentions. The subsequent evaluations include the travel experience or perceived trip quality during the stay, perceived value and overall satisfaction, while the future behaviour intentions include the intention to revisit and the willingness to recommend (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Although the researchers highlight the importance of perceived value, Hallowell (1996) indicates that perceived value equals perceived service quality. Some researchers argue for a direct effect between perceived quality and behaviour intentions (Parasuraman et al., 1991; Boulding et al., 1993; Taylor & Baker, 1994; Zeithaml et al., 1996). In fact, empirical research revealed the positive impact of perceived value on future behavioural intentions (Bojanic, 1996; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Cronin et al., 2000; Tam, 2000; Petrick, 2004). Thus, perceived quality, experience and satisfaction have been shown to be good predictors of future behaviour intentions.

Furthermore, based on the Baker and Crompton's (2000) model and the previous literature reviews, there are three key components in cultural heritage tourism

that are developed, including perceived quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions in the proposed model. The hypothesised model shown in Figure 1 and the hypotheses are shown below that is The attributes of perceived quality are significantly determine satisfaction or dissatisfaction, which greatly affect post-trip evaluations such as recommendations to others, the prospect of repeat visitations and the visiting of neighbouring destinations. This conceptual model is tested and is expected to show that the testing and refinement of the conceptual model presented in this study may be applied to other cultural heritage destinations. This study is generally focused on both theoretical and practical standpoints in order to enhance current levels of knowledge that exists in quality cultural heritage tourism, especially in Macao. In terms of its potential theoretical contribution, it validated the various attributes as key factors in quality cultural heritage tourism that perceived quality is likely to influence the level of tourist satisfaction and behaviour intentions. Each attribute examined with these three constructs also illustrated the interplay between perceived quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions within the cultural heritage tourism industry. In terms of its potential practical contribution, the findings from this study provided new insights regarding cultural heritage tourism from the viewpoint of the visitors. Also, it examines how tourism destinations can be assessed and improved by examining the affecting attributes. It could assist the management and development of cultural heritage tourism in the long run.

Figure 1: Conceptual model of study



Hypothesis 1: Satisfaction in cultural heritage tourism is strongly and positively associated with behavioural intentions to return to the same destination and to visit other similar destinations.

Hypothesis 2: Perceived quality in cultural heritage tourism has a strong effect on behavioural intentions.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived quality in cultural heritage tourism has a strong effect on tourist satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative method is adopted in this study. The survey method is one of the most frequently used designs in dissertations within the leisure and tourism fields (Smith, 1995; Finn, Elliott-White and Walton, 2000), which is also reinforced by the various academic journals on the subject. Furthermore, Smith (1995) mentioned that surveys are the most important source of information for tourism analysis, planning and decision-making. The normal survey tool is a series of printed questions in the form of a questionnaire or an interview schedule of some sort. The purpose of the questionnaire is to obtain reliable and valid data on the subject being researched (Finn et al., 2000). This study is used a free-response technique to study visitors' perceptions of quality in cultural heritage tourism. In particular, it investigates the attributes of perceived quality and the relationships among experience, satisfaction and behaviour intentions. It also investigates their relative importance for the quality mix within cultural heritage tourism. Furthermore, it is feasible to interview individuals on the street by using survey and obtain a generalised perception of quality in cultural heritage tourism and compare its specific operations.

In order to test the proposed hypotheses and model, the questionnaire survey based on information collected from travellers to Macao and a quantitative method is adopted. The survey is one of the most frequently utilised designs in dissertations in the leisure and tourism fields (Smith, 1995; Finn et al., 2000), also reinforced by the various academic journals on the subject. Furthermore, Smith (1995) mentions that surveys are the most important source of information for tourism analysis, planning and decision-making. The normal survey tool is a series of printed questions in the form of a questionnaire or an interview schedule of some sort. The purpose of the questionnaire is to obtain reliable and valid data on the topics being researched (Finn et al., 2000).

This study uses a face-to-face survey method. Once the final measurement scales and the survey questionnaire are developed, the survey is made. However, prior to collecting the main data, a pilot study is also conducted to test the measurement scales and survey questionnaire in order to improve clarity and readability. No follow-up is made in this survey due to situational difficulties arising from this on-site survey and the respondents' being visitors in Macao. The targeted respondents are visitors in Macao because little attention focuses on cultural heritage from a visitor perspective, in identifying individual visitor needs, motivations and, in particular, the value sought and gains from visiting heritage attractions.

The objective of the survey is to investigate the general opinions about quality constructs on cultural heritage tourism. The sampling error in the survey was expected to decrease as the size of the sample increased (Hurst 1994). The literature suggests that the ratio between the number of items and the sample size should exceed a certain minimum and be at least 1:5 (Hinkin, Tracey & Enz, 1997). Besides, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2001), if the population size reaches 5000 or more, a sample of 400 will be adequate. Since tourist arrivals in Macao have continued to grow to 27 millions in 2007, 500 respondents are more than adequate (DSEC, 2008). Furthermore, structural equation modelling (SEM) is to be used for the data analysis of Study 2. The sample size plays an important role in interpreting SEM results. The recommendations are for a size ranging between 100 to 200, with a sample of 200 being a 'critical sample size' (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2001). Therefore, the sample population is raised from 400 to a total minimum of 500. This study used a face to face survey method. However, before collecting the main data for this research, a pilot study was also made to test the measurement scales and survey questionnaire to improve clarity and readability.

The target respondents were the visitors travelling to Macao, with a total sample size of 500 selected through convenience sampling. Experienced interviewers (the author chose Institute for Tourism Studies undergraduate students with previous experience in data collection) were hired to administer the questionnaires. In order to ensure consistency in results, the interviewers were trained and briefed by the author. During the data collection dates, they were also monitored to ensure that everything went smoothly and that the data were relevant. The interviewers were sent to Senate Square, the place most visited by both cultural

and non-cultural travellers in Macao and the targeted respondents were approached randomly on weekdays, weekends and public holidays.

DATA ANALYSIS

Structural equation modelling (SEM), using the AMOS 5.0 programme, allows the relationships to be submitted for analysis symbolically, thus eliminating the need for the unwieldy creation of a detailed mathematically precise representation of the relationship. It tests the proposed relationships in the proposed model to see if it is accurate or if it needs modification (Reisinger & Turner, 2003). It has also been applied in several researches to test the causal relationships in the model and the important constructs that can be modelled (Swanson & Horridge, 2004; Lam & Hsu, 2005). In tourism research, structural modelling has recently been used to measure service quality and satisfaction in the hotel/motel industry and in studying travellers' and retailers' perceptions of service levels at a specific tourism destination (Reisinger & Turner, 2003). Thus, SEM is chosen for data analysis. Furthermore, the proposed model features multiple-indicator approach to measurement therefore confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is more suitable for this study. The results of CFA include estimates of covariances between the factors, loadings of the indicators on their respective factors, and the amount of measurement error for each indicator (Kline, 2005).

Table 1: Respondents' profile

	No of Respondents	Percentage		No of Respondents	Percentage
Gender			Occupation		
Mal	197	47.7	Senior	21	5.1
Female	216	52.3	Professionals	86	20.8
Age			White-collar	110	26.6
20 and < 20	37	9.0	Blue-collar	49	11.9
21 – 30	128	31.0	Students	55	13.3
31 – 40	115	27.8	Unemployed	41	9.9
41 – 50	82	19.9	Self-	40	9.7

51 and above	51	12.3	Others	11	2.7
Nationality			Monthly		
Hong Kong	161	39.0	1000 and	115	27.9
Mainland	177	42.9	1001 – 5000	108	26.2
Taiwan	36	8.7	5001 – 10000	64	15.5
Korea	1	0.2	10001 –	39	9.4
Others	38	9.2	15001 –	38	9.2
Educational			20001 –	22	5.3
Primary	14	3.4	30001 –	14	3.4
High school	143	34.6	50000		
or vocational			50001 and	13	3.1
Bachelor	256	62.0	above		
degree or					

As shown in Table 1, the sample is reasonably evenly distributed in both genders (male-47.7%/female-52.3%) in a total of 413 respondents. The median income of the respondents is MOP13, 596.25 and their average age is 35. As might be expected, the visitors who involve in cultural heritage tourism are relatively old since most respondents are above 30 years old (31 to 40- 27.8% / 40 to 50 -22.3% / >50 -9.9%), particularly 32.2% of respondents are above 40 years. On the other hand, most respondents have a high educational level (the bachelor degree or above – 62.9%) and those are mainly white-collar workers (26.6%) and professionals (20.8%). These results are consistent with the literature in cultural heritage tourism. Most respondents are from Mainland China (37%), followed by Hong Kong (32%) which corresponds to the visitor arrivals in Macao. Therefore, the data seems to be well representative of the target population.

The, to investigate the reliability of the scales in the study, the author calculates Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The reliability and normality analysis are used in order to check the internal consistency of the items measured. Based on the abovementioned literature, reliability tests are performed by examining Cronbach's alpha values. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) suggest that a Cronbach alpha greater than 0.70 is moderately reliable. Also, an alpha of 0.70 is deemed acceptable for scales with six or more items. The factor loading and reliability are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: Results from factor analysis

	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha values
Perceived Quality		.090
Treatment received from staff	.752	
Staff willing to look after visitors	.749	
Installations in cultural heritage attractions	.732	
Atmosphere in cultural heritage attractions	.743	
Education experience and instructive experience in cultural heritage attractions	.750	
Informative panels in cultural heritage	.758	
Cultural heritage resources excellent	.761	
Cultural heritage resources authentic	.747	
Cultural heritage resources presented through	.723	
Satisfaction		.713
This is one of the best destinations I could have	.702	
I am pleased with my decision to visit the	.739	
I have really had a good time; I have had fun in	.729	
Macao is a city of cultural heritage	.570	
Overall satisfaction	.607	
Behavioural intentions		.891
I will recommend someone to visit Macao	.811	
I will say positive things about the cultural	.808	
If there were a shop, I would buy a souvenir/ I have already bought a souvenir	.779	
I have bought a book or guide book or guide book for more information	.826	
I will visit Macao again because of cultural	.809	
I will visit Macao again because of other	.800	

Table 3: Reliability coefficients of scales used in the study

	Items	Items	Cronbach's alpha
Perceived Quality	9	NONE	.900
Satisfaction	5	NONE	.713
Behavioural	6	2	.891

As depicted Table 2, the values of Cronbach's alpha of all variables, exceeded 0.7, ranging from 0.713 to 0.900. The results indicate that adequate internal consistencies are established. Two attributes in behaviour intentions are deleted due to the low factor loading including 'I will visit neighbouring destinations of Macao' and 'I will stay longer in Macao'. Furthermore, a distribution is considered to be normal when the value of skewness divided by the standard error is not greater than 3.0 in absolute value (Chou and Bentler, 1995) and the value of kurtosis divided by the standard error is not greater than 10.0 in absolute value (Hoyle and Panter, 1995). The normality analysis shows the reasonable results in Table 4.

Table 4: Skewness and Kurtosis of the constructs

	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Perceived Quality	.180	.120	.422	.240
Satisfaction	-.055	.120	.456	.240
Behavioural Intentions	-.253	.120	.528	.240

As shown in Table 3, the skewness values of all other variables are below 3.0 in absolute value. On the other hand, the kurtosis values of all variables are below 10 in absolute value. Thus, it is concluded that there is no outstanding non-normality issue. In brief, the results of reliability and normality testing by examining skewness and kurtosis indicate that the scores of each composition of variables fulfill the requirements of the normal distribution. For the reliability test by assessing the values of Cronbach's alpha, all variables have established reasonable internal consistency for further analysis.

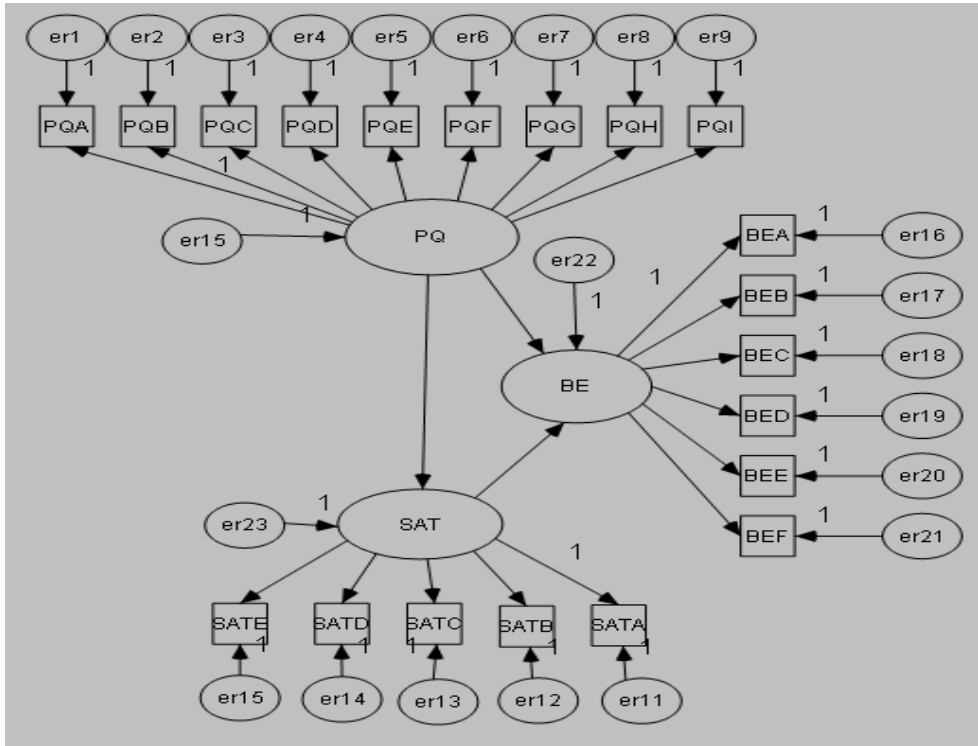
As shown in Table 5, all the relationships reported are related in the expected direction. Perceived quality is significantly related to the other constructs, while its correlations with other variables are in the expected direction without statistical significance. This is consistent with the proposed model that perceived quality is directly related to satisfaction and behavioural intentions.

Table 5: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Proposed Variables

Measure	Items	M	SD	PQ	SA	BE
Perceived Quality	10	3.55	.441		.387	.329
Satisfaction	5	3.48	.535	.387		.470
Behavioural Intentions	7	3.31	.490	.329	.470	

Although SEM analysis is more complex than simple correlation coefficients without other things held constant, the correlation results help the researcher to anticipate potential problems that could be encountered when conducting the SEM analysis. As all correlations were related in the expected direction, these results signal that there seems to be no difficulties with the SEM analysis. Maximum likelihood estimation techniques are employed to test the relationships among the constructs in the proposed model. The result of the model suggested a reasonable model fit. Normed chi-square was 4.474, which was between 1.0 and 5.0. RMSEA has 0.82 while GFI and TLI were 0.868 and 0.862 respectively, which were both greater than 0.80. Following these procedures, the modified main model was found to display a significant fit. Moreover, in keeping with the practices of other researchers this proposed model is an acceptable candidate as a model to explain all the experimental data.

Figure 2: Measurement model of proposed model



IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

As Kelloway (1998) mentions, finding the expected pattern of correlations in a model would not imply that the theory is right, only that it is plausible. There might be other theories that would result in the same pattern of correlations. The results indicate that the proposed model fits well and outperforms the proposed model. They also support the direct effects that perceived quality and satisfaction have on behaviour intentions. Also, the results can support and build on the extant literature in cultural heritage tourism. The first is the confirmation of the quality model because of its high validity. Although this model is developed by Baker and Crompton's (2000), it is still applicable in Asian destination. Visitors evaluate their satisfaction levels based on perceived quality from cultural heritage tourism and subsequent behaviour. Comparing two pathways (perceived quality → satisfaction and perceived quality → behavioural intentions), the author

affirms that the effect of perceived quality on quality model is crucial. However, the author has analysed the intensification of use by measuring the purchase of related products or materials, and the results showed that intensification does appear to be a behaviour correlated to visitor satisfaction. It is consistent with previous study (de Rojas & Camarero, 2008). For the managerial implications, tourism providers have to blend the significance of the cultural heritage attractions into the construction of a competitive tourism strategy. The strategy should integrate the quality and significance of cultural heritage attractions in generating a fulfilling visitor experience. Also, the research suggests the importance of perceived quality as a base of satisfaction. It seems that appropriate strategies adopted by tourism providers are essential at the time of planning and developing the destinations. The attributes in perceived quality can be divided into three categories including interpretation, authenticity and educational benefits. Since interpretation, authenticity and educational benefits are the attributes of perceived quality, the tourism providers should consider various strategies to create visitors' positive experience based on the former constructs. The presentation related to interpretation and educational benefits of cultural heritage resources contributes to stimulate interest and create a positive perceived quality for the visitor. It can also allow visitors to understand the cultural heritage resources. According to de Rojas and Camarero (2008), adequate interpretation can increase visitors' involvement and stimulate them to spend more time in the destinations. Furthermore, it can encourage visitors to revisit and even help in conservation of the resources. The author hopes that the current research can provide a direction for future policy making for cultural heritage resources in destinations. Thus, the tourism providers should have their attention to develop differentiated products by improving the quality of attractions and resources. In addition, the interpretation and education benefits not only provide knowledge to visitors but also enhance visitors' awareness about the destinations. The visitors can thus be placed as the focal point of future development and planning (Apostolakis & Jaffry, 2005). By construction of the quality model, policy makers can understand the needs of the visitors and the weaknesses of quality in cultural heritage tourism. The information provides the grounds for the destinations which focus on a tourist-oriented approach in cultural heritage tourism development.

Limitations

The limitations of this study should be considered as they are an issue in any research project. First, the proposed model is not designed to include all possible attributes which influence quality in cultural heritage tourism. The author limits the consideration to the identified attributes because the study focuses only on the relationships between perceived quality, satisfaction and behaviour intentions. Although the author gathers sufficient data, the data set from the survey might create a fragmented in the experience. The targeted respondents in this study are the tourists in Macao. According to Terwee (1990), a tourist is difficult to understand in the survey language. They might misunderstand the meaning of the questions in the survey. The researchers might seek for generalisability when they design the survey in order to let the respondents understand the questions. The changes might not show the original meanings of the studies. In addition, SEM methodology and AMOS analysis may be construed as a limitation because the model is not tested using an experimental design; strong evidence of causal effects cannot be inferred. Importantly, the results are intended to support the a priori causal model (Cronin, Brady & Hult, 2000). The use of additional attributes in the constructs might affect the inherent reliability and validity of the measures used. According to Cronin, Brady and Hult (2000), measures of actual purchase behaviour is better than investigation of behaviour intentions because it could enhance the validity of the study. However, such data are often difficult and costly to gather. It should be noted that this research is limited in scope. Therefore, tourism practitioners who look to the literature as a means of setting quality are being misled by the objective of the research.

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GLOBAL HOSPITALITY MANAGERS: MYTH OR REALITY?

Charalampos Giousmpasoglou

ASTER, MSc, MA, PgD, PhD candidate

Strathclyde Business School – Department of HRM

ABSTRACT

Over the past forty years, the international management studies have expressed considerable interest in what has come to be known as ‘best-practices’ (Boxall and Purcell, 2000, 2003). The concept of best-practices suggests standardisation and homogenisation of the organisation’s human resources through the employment of universally applicable managerial practices. This idea has been extremely appealing for MNCs during the 1980s and 1990s especially in industries like hospitality and tourism where pressures for standardisation due to the rapid global expansion were enormous. There are arguments however that it is difficult to imagine, that a single practice or set of practices would emerge as ‘best’ in any sense of the word, particularly in globalised organisations (Thomas, 2008). Moreover, a growing number of IHRM studies argue that ‘a best practice is not best unless it incorporates contextual elements in its application’ (Von Glinow et al., 2005, p.398). Thus, the dynamic and complex nature of the management function in global business today and the realisation that what works effectively in one country may not be as efficient in another, has led management scholars and practicing managers in continuous efforts to enhance their understanding of this

context and its effects on international (hotel) managers. This is sought through the systematic study and exploration of management across cultures (cross cultural management), and international human resource management.

Key Words: Hospitality Industry, Managerial Work, Cross-Cultural Management, ISHRM.

INTRODUCTION

“Until recently the dominance of American management theory led to the belief that ‘one size fits all’, that a good manager in the US will also be a good manager in other countries and that effective U.S. management practices will be effective anywhere. This view is now being supplanted with the knowledge that managerial attitudes, values, behaviours, and efficacy differ across national cultures. There is no one best way to manage a business. Differences in national cultures call for differences in management practices.” (Newman and Nollen, 1996, p.753)

The rise of globalization has triggered a considerable interest in what has come to be known as ‘best-practices’ (Boxall and Purcell, 2000, 2003) from an international management studies perspective. The concept of best-practices suggests standardisation and homogenisation of the organisation’s human resources through the employment of universally applicable managerial practices; this idea has been extremely appealing for hospitality multinational companies (MNCs) during the 1980s and 1990s. The high expatriate failure rates and the scarcity of managerial resources, alongside with the rise of awareness of the local context effects in managerial work, has resulted to a new direction in international managerial work research, largely affected by the ‘global-local’ question. This paper explores the wider implications of globalisation in hospitality managerial work and the level of convergence in managerial work practices that has been achieved so far.

The international hospitality manager

Hospitality as a modern phenomenon was shaped after World War Two and is closely linked with the development of mass tourism and the rapid growth of the airline industry. The hospitality and tourism industries together are the largest and fastest growing industry in the world (Clarke and Chen, 2007). The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2009) estimated that hospitality and tourism as a global economy are directly and indirectly responsible for 11% of gross domestic product, 200 million jobs, 8% of total employment and 5.5 million new jobs per year until 2010.

The early adoption of internationalisation in the hotel industry came initially from U.S. hotel companies, who took the lead and moved across borders for supply and demand reasons; that was to satisfy the needs of American travellers as other trades internationalised (Nickson, 1998; Thompson et al., 1998). Since the early 1980s a growing number of these original American operators were acquired by U.K. based companies, and simultaneously other European and Asian companies began to compete on more broadly international scales (Thompson et al., 1998; Segal-Horn, 2000). The transformation of the sector in a truly globalised industry occurred after a prolonged period of mergers and acquisitions during the 1990s. This brought changes in the adopted growth strategies of many hotel companies who were now competing on a global basis (Price, 1993). While the hotel industry was traditionally dominated by individually and/or family owned properties it can be argued that it is heavily influenced by international/multinational hotel companies defined by Peng and Litteljohn (1997) as:

“multi-unit service organizations in which units operate under a system of decision-making permitting coherent policies and a common strategy through one or more decision-making centres, and where hotel units and corporate functions are linked to add value to each other by ownership or contractual relationships.” (cited in Litteljohn, 2003, p.15)

In this globalised environment, the development of international hospitality managers is seen as being of critical importance for hospitality MNCs. Thus, since the early 1990s, the rapid growth of international hotel chains and its effects on managerial work, have drawn the attention of researchers (i.e. Gilatis and Guerrier, 1994; Nebel et al., 1995; Gilbert and Guerrier, 1997; Ladkin and

Juwaheer, 2000). The personality characteristics required of the international hotel managers include people and interpersonal skills, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance, cultural sensitivity and intercultural competence followed by emotional maturity, industry experience, and self-confidence (Gilatis and Guerrier, 1994; Shay and Tracey, 1997; Feng and Pearson, 1999; Kriegl, 2000). International etiquette, demonstrating an understanding of international business matters, the ability to work with limited resources and effectively manage stress were judged to be relatively important, while functional and technical skills were rated as the lowest priority for managers. Research also indicates that in an international hospitality organisation building managers' cross cultural skills may be far harder but more important than developing their functional and technical skills (Gilatis and Guerrier, 1994; Shay and Tracey, 1997; Kriegl, 2000). This is because of the high level of interpersonal and relational skills required where the host country culture and the needs of a diverse customer base must be understood and catered for. The knowledge and competences of GMs are wide-ranging and include not only the enabling capabilities (Leonard-Barton, 1995) essential for survival within the international hotel industry but also the supplemental and core capabilities specific to companies' market positions and strategies, and competitive advantage. International hospitality managers are seen as change agents who help corporations to cope with the fast changing environment. In addition, international hotel chains such as Starwood, Hilton, Intercontinental and Accor invest in the development of a cohort of international managers by using staff from both the host and parent countries they operate (Nickson, 1998; Jones et al., 1998). The recruitment and selection of this management 'cadre' is conducted in assessment centres and requires a variety of aspects such as a mix of competencies, technical skills, strong personality, cultural sensitivity and adaptability (D'Annunzio-Green, 1997). Teare (1995) provides a wide – ranging set of issues that arise from the internationalisation of the industry; the education training and development of managers, is one of the main six issues reviewed. In addition, Kriegl (2000, p.64) suggests that international hospitality operations' success 'depends largely on the availability of qualified managers who are able to export, translate and maintain their companies' operational standards and service consistency overseas'.

Despite the economic significance and global spread of the international hospitality industry, the majority of hospitality management literature reflects what has happened in the US and the UK since the early 1980s. Only recently have studies focused on what is happening in the rest of the Europe or the world. This was made possible through the contribution of a steadily growing number of overseas students in the U.S. and U.K. business schools who deliver hospitality programs. The most popular forms of research used to study the hospitality industry outside the Anglo-American context, is the use of country case studies (i.e. Kim, 1994; Christou, 1999; Agut et al, 2003) and studies within the context of the international hospitality business (D'Annunzio-Green, 1997). Despite the relatively slow progress, hospitality research persistently reflects the Anglo-American universalist approach to management. Thus, it can be argued that the changes currently taking place in international hospitality management can be better understood under a cross-cultural management perspective.

2. Managing in different Cultural contexts

The extremely high failure of U.S. expatriate managers in non-western countries assignment has driven the creation of research focused on national cultures and its effects in organisational context (i.e. Hofstede, 1980, 1991; Tayeb, 1988, 1994; Trompenaars, 1993). Several attempts have been made to conceptualise and measure differences in cultures among nations, and to relate cultural differences to differences in management practices. This is sought through the systematic study and exploration of management across cultures (cross cultural management); although cross-cultural management is often regarded as a discipline of international management, is not a clearly demarcated discipline of management (Soderberg and Holden, 2002). Yet for many management scholars the term is meaningful because it implies (a) procedures and policies relating to the management of workforces with different cultural backgrounds, and (b) moderating the impact of cultural differences in the execution of management tasks (ibid, p.103). Adler (1991) argues that cross cultural management studies the behaviour of people and organisations in different countries and cultures around the world; he also suggests that "cross cultural management expands the scope of domestic management and encompass the international and

multicultural spheres" (ibid., p.11). The most well known examples include the international survey results reported in Hofstede (1980, 1991), Laurent (1983) and Trompenaars (1993). This body of research clearly indicates that the national culture interpretation and adaptation are a prerequisite to the comparative understanding of national management practice. Triandis (1982) observed that specific management actions could be facilitated or inhibited by culturally determined orientations. He made a distinction between Dionysian cultures, where subordinates are motivated through close interpersonal affiliation and Apollonian cultures, where the relationship between manager and subordinate is characterised by tasks and formality. For Newman and Nollen (1996) national culture is seen as a central organising principle of employees' understanding of work, their approach to it, and the way in which they expect to be treated. National culture implies that one way of acting or one set of outcomes is preferable to another. Thus, when management practices are inconsistent with these deeply held values, employees are likely to feel dissatisfied, distracted uncomfortable and uncommitted. As a result, they may be less able or willing to perform well. House et al. (2002), in their GLOBE study, separated aspects of culture into its 'etic' and 'emic' qualities. The former are common for all cultures and the latter are culture-specific. The authors believe that these qualities can be used to explain similarities and differences in organisational practices and leadership behaviours. In particular, culture has been shown to shape the individual's perceptions and behaviours towards job design, supervision and rewards (Aycan et al., 2000; Smith et al., 2001). Furthermore, national cultures differ in the degree to which they enable managers to adopt non-homegrown practices (Tayeb, 1995), although recent research suggests that some contingency-type theories may be applicable (Ralston et al., 1999). Empirical evidence indicates that a variety of management practices differ by national culture, including decision making (Schneider and De Meyer, 1991), strategy (Ayoun and Moreo, 2008), leadership style (Dorfman and Howell, 1988; Puffer, 1993), and human resources management (Luthans et al., 1993).

The main obstacle in the effort to understand these management differences across different countries and cultural settings is that researchers and practitioners must often rely on theory originally developed in the United States. This has resulted to the fact that management theory development has been

synonymous largely with what happens in this country and its MNCs operating around the globe are responsible for the dissemination of this US-centric management knowledge. Arguably the most vocal proponent of this position, Guest has suggested that HRM is 'American, optimistic, apparently humanistic and also superficially simple' (Guest, 1990, p.379), and has argued that HRM can be seen as a contemporary manifestation of the American dream owing to its emphases on the potential for human growth, the desire to improve opportunities for people at work, and the role of strong leadership reinforced by strong organisational culture (Guest 1990). In that respect, many management scholars argue that international and cross-cultural management studies originate in the individualistic achievement-oriented management culture of the United States (i.e. Doktor et al, 1991; Jackson, 2002; Tayeb, 2005; Thomas, 2008). This body of US-centric literature also suggests (Ruigrok and van Tulder, 1995; Marschan, 1996; Mayrhofer and Brewster, 1996; Ralston et al., 1997; Ferner and Quintanilla, 1998) that where a nation has a strong and distinctive culture this carries over into the nation's organisations, the most cited examples being Japanese, German and United States' organisations. Although MNCs operating independent of national borders continue to have their assets, sales, work-force, ownership and control highly concentrated in the country where their corporate headquarters are located (Ferner and Quintanilla, 1998). Thus, universality in international (hospitality) management theory, research and practice is accepted without question (Kiessling and Harvey, 2005). It can be argued however that attempts to establish a common corporate culture in an international or multi-national firm can be undermined by the strength of national cultures, and research points to the fact that the cultures of individual countries are both more stable and more powerful than those of individual organisations (Newman and Nollen, 1996; Hirst and Thompson, 1996; Pauly and Reich, 1997). Furthermore, the concept that human beings are a resource to further the executive ends of an organisation is a concept that is contrary to the values of many non-Western cultures (Thomas, 2008). Perhaps in its most instrumental conceptualisation, this may also be contrary to the values of many 'Western' cultures. Little thought is given to the implications of the underlying concepts in people management theory, nor to its manifestations in the policies and practices that multinational corporations employ across different countries (Ferner and Quintanilla, 1998). Boyacigiller and

Alder (1991) argue that this bias in theory development is the result not of an inherent belief in the superiority of U.S. management but of parochialism – a lack of awareness of alternative contexts, models, research and values. As a result culture is often ignored in management research and universality is assumed (Thomas, 2008). Recently, a number of scholars have challenged the assumption that management theories formulated in one country are applicable universally, and have demonstrated in their research that management theories applicable in one country cannot be generalised directly to other countries (i.e. House et al., 2004; Javidan et al., 2005). Yet, progress in developing new context relevant theory in international management has been slow (Peterson, 2004; Tsui, 2004).

ISHRM and the global-local question in managerial work

The identification of the complexities associated with managing people from different cultural contexts when a company pursues business across national borders, has been a major aspect of IHRM research (Cullen, 1999; Evans et al, 2002; Schneider and Barsoux, 2003; Dowling and Welch, 2004). IHRM is an area of research and practice that is embedded in international management, which is in turn embedded in the broad field of international business (De Cieri et al., 2007). Peltonen (2006, p.523) defines IHRM as ‘a branch of management studies that investigates the design and effects of organizational human resource practices in cross-cultural contexts’, and Welch (1994, p.162) advocates that ‘IHRM involves moving people around the globe’. The core difference between HRM and IHRM is premised in the fact that HRM is relevant within a single country, while IHRM seeks to explore added complexity due to a diversity of national contexts of operation and to the inclusion of different national categories of workers (Dowling, 1999; Evans et al., 2002; Schuler et al., 2002).

Increasing attention has focused on the strategic nature of IHRM and the implications of strategy for organisational performance (De Cieri and Dowling, 2006). Schuler et al, (1993, p.422) define strategic IHRM as ‘human resource management issues, functions, and policies and practices that result from the strategic activities of multinational enterprises and that impact the international concerns and goals of those enterprises’. The present level in the evolutionary process of human resource management, which complicates the human resource

functions and systems that much more, is strategic global human resource management (SGHRM). Viewing the human resource functions in an SGHRM context exacerbates the international human resource issues due to the co-ordination efforts required to implement the strategy of the corporation (Kiessling and Harvey, 2005). Thus, from a SGHRM perspective, in today's global business environment, global organisations must utilise all possible sources of competitive advantage, and human assets are one of these sources (Barney, 1991; Schuler and Rogovsky, 1998). Many of the debates on the strategic nature of international and global HRM have covered similar territory to those in domestic SHRM that is whether organisations should primarily build upon their internal assets or upon assessments of the external environment to develop competitive advantage (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1989; Prahalad and Hamel, 1990). MNCs typically face the conundrum of 'the dual imperatives of local responsiveness and global integration' (Taylor et al., 1996, p.962). While the former strategy allows firms to customise goods and services to better suit local laws, customs and consumer tastes the latter achieves cost reductions through economies of scale and scope (Hill, 2006, pp.395-400). Such policies are tempered by the characteristics of the industrial sector within which the MNC operates and/or the type of product or service that it produces. Similarly, the implementation of new technologies and production practices within international subsidiaries often requires the export of new management and work practices from the parent firm to the host country subsidiary. Managing people consistently within and between subsidiaries across the world suggests that companies will evaluate whether to adopt local practices and simultaneously adopt global practices (Brewster, 2001, 2006; Edwards and Kuruvilla, 2005).

The above management dilemmas and challenges have not been new; since the early 1980s a critical question has been, whether differences among management practices and national cultures matter to managerial performance. The 'global-local' question originates from the wider cultural 'convergence-divergence' debate, which is premised on the assumption that in given enough time, cultures will converge to the point that no difference in values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour exist (Kerr et al, 1960; Perlmutter, 1969; Eisenhardt, 1973; Dunphy, 1987; Inglehart and Beker, 2000). As a result, societies and organisations will become similar due to the universal application of management practices

(Dowling et al, 1999; Schneider and Barsoux, 1997, 2003; Brewster, 2006). On the other hand, divergent theorists argue that in today's complex globalised business environment, international companies must manage, on a day-to-day basis, the national institutional and cultural differences presented in various localities, and this highlights another form of balance for enterprises where they have to achieve a judicious and effective equilibrium between some local HRM practices and elements of consistency across their subsidiaries (Brewster, 2006). While the adoption of global, 'culture-free' (convergence) or local 'culture-specific' (divergence) managerial practices may represent polar extremes, a third approach appears as a unifying model. In this respect, there are writers who argue that corporate culture can influence, but not eliminate, national culture values (Ricks et al., 1990; Adler, 1997), or who argue for 'crossvergence', which is defined as a combination of organisational culture and national culture values (Ralston et al., 1993). Basically, crossvergence theorists argue that as the global economy grows, countries will influence one another economically as well as culturally; in that respect crossvergence means that different management approaches are expected to converge in the middle (Vance and Paik, 2006). Regardless of whether management is converging, diverging or crossverging, culture can be seen as having an important influence on performance (Fisher and Hartel, 2003).

One problem, three different approaches

The solutions to the culture problem identified in international management literature are respectively to reflect, eliminate or adapt. In that respect, top management is a key factor in determining the overall international strategy and its implementation approach (Hax, 1989; Roth, 1995). Their belief in the generalisability or specificity of policies and practices is a driving force of MNC's choices (Heenan and Perlmutter, 1979; Hedlund, 1986). There are three distinctive practices within SIHRM in relation to this decision: the 'best-practice' approach; the 'best-fit' approach; and the 'resource-based view' (RBV).

The 'best-practice' argues for a universal paradigm, which promotes the idea of convergence across countries, and sees the main aim of SIHRM to improve organisational performance (Delaney and Huselid, 1996). Taylor et al. (1996) have labelled this as 'exportive' SIHRM orientation where the parent firms HRM system

is being transferred to its different affiliates. Its arguments are based primarily on surveys of 'leading edge' companies. It appears as the dominant managerial practice within the United States of America but is also widely used in the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Northern Europe (Brewster, 2001, 2006). The existing definitions extend from arguments that best practice approaches should ensure that minimum legislative requirements are met (Price, 1994) to those that proffer utopian views of people management approaches achieving increased levels of productivity, performance and profits (Pfeffer, 1998; Huselid, 1995). Boxall and Purcell (2003) argue that there is little overall agreement amongst the proponents of a single best practice vision; instead a range of practices are noted by researchers including participation, empowerment, job rotation, training and skill development, and teams (Osterman, 1994; Pfeffer, 1994). Furthermore, when trying to establish models of best practices it is increasingly difficult to find agreement amongst authors on which practices to deploy (Purcell, 1999; Marchington and Grugulis, 2000). The variety of models has often been classified together as 'bundles' of HR practices known as 'High Performance Work Practices' (HPWPs), which are particularly popular in the US literature (Harris et al., 2003). They are based upon the idea that to outperform their competitors firms must follow a high commitment management (HCM) 'recipe' for people management. The various 'best-practice' models have faced forceful critique by many authors on the grounds of the empirical research approach and techniques applied, the absence of consistency on what constitutes 'best-practice(s)' and the limits of diffusion of these supposed panaceas (Marchington and Grugulis, 2000; Purcell, 2001). Additional criticism is based on the proposition that there are widespread benefits from the adoption best practice; in reality not everyone gains from this universal approach (Marchington and Grugulis, 2000; Purcell, 2001). The claims made in the name of best practice tend to belie in the U.S. (Boxall and Purcell, 2000), when they take place at the same time as growing income inequalities and further efforts to weaken labour markets through the use of outsourcing, temps and sub-contracting. Where some of the working population no doubt benefit from these best practices, the rest (a majority) are exposed to some of the harsher realities of modern day capitalism (Marchington and Grugulis, 2000). Boxall and Purcell (2000) argue that there is overwhelming evidence against a set of universal HR practices, based on the existence of contextual factors such as

national and international variations in culture, market regulation and traditions of management. Thus, it can be argued that the ignorance of the managerial work context poses as one of the main weakness in the adoption of best practices in different cultural contexts.

On the other hand, Morden (1995) argues that international managers and multinational companies may need to take a 'best-fit' or 'contingency' approach to any issues related with the management function; he also suggests (ibid.) that the style of management must be appropriate to the prevailing local contingencies. Taylor et al. (1996) have labelled this as an adaptive orientation, in which each subsidiary or affiliate firm develops its own HRM system, reflecting the local environment. In short, this approach suggests that firms should be able to take advantage of cultural diversity to help them differentiate their products and services and satisfy customers and workforces, whilst at the same time minimising the effects of cultural diversity where standardisation is prioritised. In terms of the development of key human resources this balance is seen in the use of career structures for talented managers regardless of nationality and the use of host and third country managers in senior positions (Adler and Ghadar, 1990; Paauwe and Dewe, 1995; Scullion and Paauwe, 2004). It can be argued that the notion of 'fit' is fundamental to all contingent SHRM models, as Beer et al. (1984 p.13 in Bratton and Gold, 1999, p.48) suggest "there must be a 'fit' between competitive strategy and internal HRM strategy and a fit among the elements of the HRM strategy". Typically these are identified as 'external fit' between the organisation's competitive strategy or stage of development, and its HRM approaches, and 'internal fit' between the individual HRM practices and policies adopted (Schuler and Jackson, 1987; Baird and Meshoulam, 1988; Sanz-Valle et al., 1999). The idea that HR practices should be driven by the organisation's competitive strategy has raised major criticisms (Boxall and Purcell, 2000). Firstly, such a model fails to recognise the need to align employee interests with the organisation or comply with prevailing social norms and legal requirements in the course of this process (i.e. Boxall, 1996, Lees, 1997; Schein, 1997). Despite the employers' definite superior bargaining power, the managers' role in firms (among others) is to meet the baseline needs of employees whose skills are crucial for the organisation's survival (Coff, 1997; Boxall, 1998). This is especially so in highly competitive labour markets such as in hotels and retail, that are based on the economies of

replication or 'known organisational routines' (Purcell, 1995). Secondly there is an absence of an effective SHRM fit theory due to the tendency of authors to base their SHRM arguments on implicit assumptions. Wright and Sherman (1999) identify these implicit assumptions as the belief that a particular business strategy requires a particular set of responses from employees and that a specific set of HRM practices produces a specific set of responses from employees. Thirdly, there is the problem of an inconsistent use of 'fit' models (Wright and Sherman, 1999; Boxall and Purcell, 2000). Fourthly, Wright and Sherman (1999) refer to problems associated with inconsistent constructs of HRM that is HRM practices, HR skills and HR behaviours, when describing types of 'fit'. Finally it is apparent that there are methodological and empirical issues associated with investigating 'fit'. Research by Miller (1992) for example, suggests that competitive strategy is often multi-dimensional and subject to important variations across industries. It is suggested that these 'research driven' problems need to be addressed to aid theoretical development of SHRM (Wright and Sherman, 1999). In summary, best-fit or contingency models argue that HR strategy becomes more effective, when it is designed to fit certain critical contingencies in the organisation's specific context. While many criticisms have been levelled at the 'best-fit' SHRM approach it is not completely impotent (Boxall and Purcell, 2000). Instead it is more useful to suggest that the 'best-fit' approach require further embellishments, including the wider consideration of the internal factors and mechanisms, which influence strategy and HRM practices over time.

Finally, the 'resource-based view' (RBV) or 'integrative' SIHRM orientation, attempts to take the 'the best' HRM approaches and use them throughout the organisation in the creation of a worldwide system (Taylor et al., 1996). This suggests that certain groups of human resources (i.e. managers) achieve a privileged status within organisations due to their capacity to transfer tacit knowledge to new markets and provide sustainable competitive advantage (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990; Scullion and Starkey, 2000; Jacob, 2003). Thus, organisations must develop a cadre of managers who have a global mindset as a way of thinking within the global marketplace (Kedia and Mukherji, 1999; Paul, 2000; Begley and Boyd, 2003). These managers must develop a pluralistic management perspective that encourages and maintains multiple perspectives in order to solve complex global problems (Aguirre, 1997; Reynolds, 1997; Harvey et

al., 1999). Torrington et al. (2005) argue that this model sits very well with the increasing attention being given to the notion of 'human capital' (i.e. Boxall, 1996; Edvinsson and Malone, 1997) where it is the collective nature and quality of the people in the organisation, which provide the potential for future competitive advantage. The majority of RBV models suggest that a firm's resources should be 'valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable' (VRIN) to achieve a competitive leading edge (Barney, 1991; Chadwick and Cappelli, 1999; Boxall and Purcell, 2003; Morris et al., 2006). In the first instance value is where a resource allows a firm to improve its market position relative to its rivals so human resources can be valuable due to the range of competencies and skills individuals possess (Wright et al., 1994). The capacity of a resource to be rare is associated with the limited availability of a resource relative to demand (Barney, 1991; Hoopes et al., 2003). Consequently the scarcity of people with the requisite skills and behavioural capacities in the labour market, despite wider levels of unemployment, suggest that human resources potentially fulfill the criteria of being rare resources (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2002). The third principle of inimitability is particularly important to the RBV and emerges where resources are difficult or costly to reproduce so competitors will not be able to mimic the company's advantage (Barney, 1991; Boxall and Purcell, 2003; Hoopes, et al., 2003). The potential barriers to imitation are conceived via the combination of 'social complexity, causal ambiguity and unique historical circumstances' (Boxall and Purcell, 2000, p.194). Social complexity may exist where human resources are involved in interdependent relationships, inside and outside the organisation (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Causal ambiguity is argued to occur because it is often impossible to establish how successful a firm is and what has led to its success (Barney, 1991). The final inimitability barrier – 'unique historical circumstances' – is concerned with the difficulties of learning for new entrants and rivals in the market (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990; Wright et al., 1994; Boxall and Purcell, 2003). The fourth characteristic of non-substitutability identifies a resource cannot be obsolete or traded for another factor (Barney, 1991; Wright et al., 1994; Boxall and Purcell, 2000; Marchington and Wilkinson, 2002). Human resources satisfy this condition, as they cannot become outmoded, and are transferable across a range of markets, products and technologies. A fifth characteristic has also been identified for resources capable of achieving sustained competitive advantage

(Grant, 1991; Kamoche, 1996) through the use of the economic term 'rent' (an above average rate of return in competitive markets), where resources and capabilities should also retain the value they have fashioned for their own on-going advantage. The capacity of human resources to do this is easily seen in the importance many organisations attach to retaining particular groups of staff and the opportunities to create additional benefits for human resources where a firm has outperformed its rivals.

Despite the fact that the RBV is much less developed in the literature on SHRM compared with the debate between 'best-practice' and 'best-fit' (Torrington et al., 2005), its attractiveness to the SHRM literature has been widely discussed (Barney et al., 2001; Marchington and Wilkinson, 2002; Morris et al., 2006). For a theory which emphasises the value of people to the strategic success of the organisation it seems unlikely to claim many opponents from the SHRM discipline. However, there are arguments regarding the limitations of RBV, focused on this approach's overemphasis on organisational differentiation and competitive advantage (Oliver, 1997; Kamoche, 2001; Marchington and Wilkinson, 2002; Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Furthermore, Oliver (1997) argues that while forces for differentiation exist, the forces for similarity should not be discounted. Such forces include external coercion from legislation, normative traditions in reaching customers and dealing with suppliers and routes to achieving efficiencies. Probably most prominent are the arguments of the institutional perspective, which identify examples of isomorphism as part of the forces of similarity (Boxall and Purcell, 2003; Bjorkman, 2006; Rosenzweig, 2006). Isomorphism is a process, which constrains one actor (company) in a constituency to resemble the other actors when all are facing the same environmental circumstances (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Paauwe and Boselie, 2003). Isomorphism concepts suggest common factors for institutional assimilation should be recognised where the RBV and 'best fit' SHRM approaches (through the strategic models) promote companies' unlimited opportunities to distinguish themselves competitively. According to Warner and Joynt (2002), convergence of management structures and practices in organisations across cultures is likely to be driven by factors such as:

- The fast diffusion of management practices, for example, through international management education and activities by MNCs (Parker,

1998) which could be described with normative and mimetic isomorphism (Di Maggio and Powell, 1983).

- The 'universal language' of technology which determines organisational structures and work processes (Hickson and Pugh, 1995).

DISCUSSION

From the above discussion on the 'global-local' question and the different SIHRM orientations ('best-fit', 'best-practice', RBV), it can be argued that the existing models do not fully answer some of the criticisms that have been levelled against the fields of international (hospitality) management and SIHRM (Brewster et al., 2005, De Cieri et al., 2007). It can be argued that hospitality organisations operating in local, national or international level are too complex to be able to establish exactly that one aspect of resource management, however, valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable it might be, provides the definitive route to better financial performance. It is more valuable, from researchers' and practitioners' perspective, to understand how, why and under which conditions organisations develop what they perceive to be 'strategic managerial resources'.

It is also important to acknowledge that management is socially constructed and cannot be separated from context (Dierdorff et al., 2009). Of the various criticisms levelled at studies of managerial work (Mintzberg, 1973; Willmott, 1984; Martinko and Gardner, 1985; Hales and Nightingale, 1986; Stewart, 1989; Hales, 1999), one of the most insistent has been the reluctance to situate either models of managerial work or empirical evidence on managerial activity within a broader contextual (i.e. institutional and/or cultural) framework (Hofstede, 1980; Boyacigiller and Adler, 1991; Doktor et al., 1991; Hales and Tamangani, 1996; Lewis, 2000; Hofstede, 2001). Armstrong's (1986, p.19) observation that 'the orthodox management literature is neutered by its own studied ignorance of the context and purpose of management activity', is also echoed by other writers (i.e. Marples, 1967; Burgoyne and Hodgson, 1984; Hales, 1986; Willmott, 1987; Stewart, 1989; Tsoukas, 1994). Consequently, in much of the SIHRM literature, the political, social, economic, cultural and institutional contexts are treated as simple contingency factors - this despite the fact that it is known that at firm level globalisation is a country specific phenomenon (Ferner and Quintanilla, 1998).

Thus, SIHRM appears to be reproducing the flawed universalist assumptions of the broader fields of international management and international business (Westwood, 2006). The narrow focus of studies in this field is best expressed through the persistence of researchers to study expatriates; this fact leads to the question of 'who or what has remained ignored?' (De Cieri et al., 2007). To this extend, there are still more questions to be answered such as 'are expatriates performing better than local managers within the same sector/organisation?' or 'how similar or different managerial work is when comparing expatriates with local managers?'

Moreover, SIHRM models tend to confuse cross-national with cross-cultural differences, which risks confusing what will remain stable and is hard for firms to influence with what terms might be able to standardise with judicious management (Brewster et al., 2005). The issue of cultural relativity has tempted researchers and practitioners to focus on the 'hard' or 'core' HR functional processes (Easterby-Smith et al., 1995). The field tends to ignore the subtle ways in which cultural/national differences influence the experienced reality of HRM (Earley and Singh, 2000). In addition, the inadequate conceptualisation of national effects, results in culture being used as an unsatisfactory 'catch-all' for national differences (Edwards and Kuruvilla, 2005). The wider convergence-divergence debate also tends to assume that the HRM system as a whole has to converge or remain divergent, rather than considering whether some parts of the overall HR system might be converging, in some regions or geographies, while other parts might be diverging (Brewster et al., 2005). Moreover, even within a single HR function there might be convergence at one level but divergence at another. An HR function operates at multiple levels, including philosophy, policy, programme, practice and process (Schuler, 1992). However, by contrast, an over-emphasis on comparative factors risks freezing the discourse in terms of national differences. Any analysis of IHRM must consider the range of distinctive national and local solutions to HRM issues with which the firm has to deal, the strategic pressures that make these national models more receptive to change and development, and the firm-level processes through which such change and development in actual HRM practice is delivered (Sparrow and Hiltrop, 1997).

Finally, Kiessling and Harvey (2005) argue that research into IHRM is increasingly difficult to pursue, and complicated, as culture and its alignment with strategy

may be very difficult to research through strictly quantitative methods. Quantitative methods sometimes do not work well in the study of international management due to the complexity and unstructuredness of the problems, with multiple important interactive relationships that cannot be studied in a quick or easy fashion (Wright, 1996). Thus a growing number of researchers (i.e. Boyacigiller and Adler, 1991; Daniels, 1991; Brewer, 1992; Parkhe, 1993; Kiessling and Harvey, 2005) argue that a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches is needed in order to advance the field, and direct such study towards reconstructing the 'how' of IHRM (Pieper, 1990). Moreover, the growing influence of the interpretivist's approach to management studies have led a growing number of scholars to challenge the assumption that management theories formulated in one country are applicable universally, and have demonstrated in their research that management theories applicable in one country cannot be generalised directly to other countries (i.e. House et al., 2004; Javidan et al., 2005). Based on this argument, researchers indicate that managers working in a global context might experience disconnection between international management theory prescriptions and the imperatives of the local context unless international management theory is grounded in the realities of the local context (i.e. Horwitz et al., 2002; Ngambi, 2004). Qualitative methodologies provide researchers with a valuable tool in this regard because they assume a value-laden approach in terms of data that are collected and interpreted within the context in which it is generated (Kriek et al., 2009). Dennis and Garfield (2003, p.297) assert 'quantitative research is theory in search of data while qualitative research is data in search of theory'. Qualitative field studies provide rich data and a strong base on which to build theory; this view is supported by a number of authors (i.e. Eisenhardt, 1989; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Mendenhall et al., 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Cassel, et al., 2006) who have written extensively on the use of qualitative research methods in building theory. Others assert qualitative research precedes theoretical and empirical research in driving a field to maturity (Weick, 1989; Van de Ven, 1989). The use of qualitative methods, such as case studies (Eisenhardt, 1989), has long been noted to be especially important in the progression of theoretical knowledge in organisational behaviour studies (Gummesson, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Yin, 2003). Werner (2002) found that case studies and other qualitative methodologies have still limited application

in international (hospitality) management studies. It is not clear though, whether this is because of the inherent difficulties of qualitative research (Wright et al., 1988), because of the dominant philosophical position of the quantitative method superiority, or because of some other reason (Werner, 2002).

CONCLUSION

In summary, the above discussion has indicated a clear need for a change in the direction of international hospitality research on managerial work and the HRM interventions used for its managerial resources. Although the question 'is it possible to create a truly global hospitality management cadre?' seems to remain unanswered, there are signs both for convergence and divergence in international hospitality management practices. What needs to be done, is to see more national and cross national 'U.S. and U.K. independent' research that will help us develop a deeper understanding of the interaction between management and the local context. Moreover, integration between cross-cultural management, SIHRM and other international management sub-fields is also needed in order to create a common research language in international management studies.

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PLANNED TOURISM DESTINATIONS, A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT? THE CASE OF CANCUN, MEXICO.

Rafael Guerrero Rodríguez

School of International Development

University of East Anglia, Norwich, United Kingdom

School of International Development

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ABSTRACT

The development of tourism destinations worldwide has been portrayed as an effective vehicle to achieve development goals. The economic potential of tourism-related activities has captured the attention of several governments generating a special interest to obtain all its benefits for the local contexts in which tourists resorts are built. However, the experience has shown that tourism has failed -especially in developing countries- to contribute to development ends (Gamble, 1989; Richter, 1989; Sharpley and Telfer, 2002). This paper will examine the implementation of tourism policy in Mexico in the early 1970s. This policy

included the planning and construction of tourist resorts throughout the Mexican coasts with the aim to transform these places into development poles. Cancun, one of the planned resorts, has become the most important Mexican destination contributing with approximately 35% of the Mexico's total receipts by tourism-related activities (FONATUR, 2005). Its international fame derived from its explosive growth and massive marketing has historically eclipsed the social and political implications of the government's intervention in this place. The lack of attention to these processes has produced an information gap that this paper wishes to address. This work utilises Hall's (1994) model to examine tourism policy processes. Special consideration will be paid to some of the political and social consequences that this policy has produced over time. The main conclusion of this paper is that the design, implementation and subsequent changes of this policy in Cancun has had direct effects in the unequal distribution of benefits from tourism-related activities, privileging the interests of powerful groups -national and foreign- of the tourism industry over local interests on economic, social, environmental, political, or cultural development.

Key words: Tourism, Development, Cancun, Policy process, Politics.

INTRODUCTION

The mainstream of tourism research has either ignored or neglected the political dimension of the allocation of tourism resources, the generation of tourism policy and the politics of tourism development (Hall, 1994: 2). Promoting a further study of these dimensions in specific contexts can stimulate a better understanding of how tourism destinations appear and evolve historically but, perhaps more importantly, to provide some explanations about why tourism is chosen by governments as a primary development strategy. The expansion of tourism-related activities has been promoted, especially in developing countries, as a strategy to overcome the problems associated with the so-called underdevelopment; the discourse has been built upon tourism's potential to generate foreign exchange, jobs and above all, regional development. However, as Richter (1989) pointed out, it is unclear to what extent these tourism-related policies have contributed to the developmental goals for which they were created.

The aim of this article is to discuss the introduction of a public policy (Centros Integralmente Planeados, State Planned Tourism Destinations) for the creation of tourism resorts throughout the Mexican territory in the late 1960s. The design and implementation process of this policy became crucial to determine the orientation, form and scale that tourism development would follow in the subsequent years in Mexico. Hall's (1994: 50) model will be adopted to study the policy processes related to the implementation of this policy. The structure of this work is divided in four main sections. Section one will present the social, economic, and political context of Mexico in the 1960s. The aim is to provide a general panorama of the surrounding environment of the tourism policy paying special attention to institutional and political arrangements in which it was implemented. Section two will describe the particularities of the policy and the design and implementation processes. The attention in this section will be focused on the policy arena and related policy issues; that is, tourism institutions, significant individuals, interest groups, institutional leadership, decisions and outcomes. Section three will explore the creation of Cancun as one of the projects considered within the policy. The historical evolution of this destination will briefly be analysed in order to gain a better understanding of the outcomes derived from the implementation in a local context. The final section will explain some of the social and political implications of the introduction of the policy in Cancun. The major transformations of the local social dynamics as well as the appearance of power struggles to control the benefits from tourism will be discussed.

Finally, two considerations should be taken into account for the information that will be presented in this article: the sources and limitations of the information. Firstly, the information is derived from primary and secondary sources; the collection of data was done through a literature review and a fieldwork period carried out from 2007-2009. Primary sources include semi-structured interviews with key informants related to the policy processes. Secondary sources include archival research and a review of documents related to the subject. Secondly, the information presented in this article has inherent limitations due to its selective nature. The main criteria for selecting the information for this article were the implications –economic, social, and political- of the introduction of this policy in Mexico.

1. Mexican Context in the 1960s

The economic, social and political circumstances prevailing in Mexico during the 1960s had profound implications upon the adoption of tourism as a development strategy. The economic model -Import Substitution Industrialisation- followed until then by Mexican government since the 1940s, was presenting a favourable landscape reporting low inflation rates and a sustained macroeconomic growth (Cárdenas, 1996). However, the deepening of the urbanisation process, the abandonment of the investment of basic sectors such as agriculture and mining (Cárdenas, 2000) and an increasing social discontent in some sectors of the population derived from the unequal conditions in the distribution of wealth (Espinosa, 2004) were posing serious threats to the economic and political stability in the short term. During these years, tourism was considered by the Mexican government as a vehicle of peace, a means of understanding between nations, a promoter of a national identity and, above all, a complementary instrument for the national economy (Jiménez, 1992). It can be said that the political circumstances of tension in the international context largely determined this vision; for example, the ongoing situation of the Cold War and, the US-Cuban conflict generating the radicalisation of political postures within the region. Generally speaking, Latin America and especially Mexico obtained important benefits from the temporal closure of Cuba as a tourism destination; it reported a substantial increase in the numbers of tourists' arrivals mainly due to the prohibition for US citizens from its government to travel to Cuba after the Castro's revolution (see Merrill, 2009). The regional ideological campaign of the US clearly attempted to embed a political agenda with an anti-communist orientation building discourses of 'material progress' and 'freedom' as the main ingredients to overcome the underdevelopment issue affecting Latin American countries (Escobar, 1995). The alignment to this doctrine implied a wider commitment to the capital and market system as well as a willingness to engage in a pervasive scheme of financial external aid designed to give an impulse to key economic areas -including tourism- in the quest of development.

Under these circumstances, tourism was portrayed as a crucial mechanism for underdeveloped countries to achieve developmental ends (Clancy, 2001b; Gamble, 1989; Jiménez, 1992). This idea was supported by a discursive trend about its potential contribution to the national economies in terms of revenues, creation of jobs and a multiplier effect for other productive sectors. However, for the particular case of Mexico, the task to consolidate the tourism industry presented a complex landscape. Firstly, the organisation of this sector had

proceeded historically in a slow and non-systematic fashion (Collins, 1979). The role of the State, until then, was circumscribed to some efforts in the international promotion of Mexico as a tourism destination and, to some extent, as a co-financer of lodging ventures with the private sector (Berger, 2006). Secondly, the concentration of tourism-related activities in specific points of the country such as the renowned port of Acapulco, Mexico City, and in border towns such as Tijuana and Ciudad Juarez constrained its expansion in other parts of the country. Although the continuous government's investment on infrastructure and basic services -roads, energy, sewage, water supply, etc- in previous decades somehow helped to consider other areas for tourism development, the lack of interest of the private sector prevented the appearance of new projects. Lastly, the structural and social problems associated with the growth of the existent tourism destinations -uncontrolled migration, lack of infrastructure and basic services, housing problems, proliferation of illegal activities, slums creation, prices inflation, land speculation, pollution etc- created a negative perception of this activity making necessary a profound evaluation of the social, cultural, environmental, economic and political costs that tourism demanded. Consequently, the Mexican government carried out a reassessment of the role played by the State until then suggesting a further intervention over its growth and development under a more comprehensive public planning scheme. The main challenges, however, would rely in how to make a clear distinction of the public and private interests and, more importantly, how to distribute the economic benefits derived from tourism.

The decision of Mexico to pursue tourism development during the 1960s coincided with the expansion of the tourist industry internationally. Travelling activities were being transformed by the introduction of the jet travel, the specialisation of tour operators, the development of more affordable transportation systems, and a substantial increment in the disposable time and income for travelling (Keyser, 2002). Moreover, the government strategies for the expansion of tourism- related activities in coastal zones in countries like Spain (see Ivars, 2003), Thailand (see Elliot, 1983), Tunisia, Egypt and Kenya (see Gamble, 1989) led to the exponential growth of tourism worldwide initiating the phenomenon of 'mass' tourism that would have a profound effect in the form, function and scale of the tourism industry in the next decades. It was clear that the Mexican government desired to obtain a larger share in the growing world tourism market but, in order to achieve this, a profound transformation of the relations between the State and the tourism industry should take place; an expansion of the role of the State was under way and the main justification for

this political move relied on the imperious need to overcome this so-called underdevelopment.

2. The State Planned Tourism Destinations policy, a ticket to development?

The development of a policy to organise the tourism industry in the Mexican context did not take place until the first half of the decade of 1960s (Castillo, 2005). The elaboration of the first National Plan for Tourism Development (PNDT) in 1962 showed the State's desire to have more control over an economic sector that historically had been a more market-driven activity rather than a government planned strategy (Clancy, 1999). The objectives considered in the PNDT were "to establish the bases to develop basic infrastructure and build new tourist centres...to carry out specialised studies to evaluate potential tourist centres and, to condition the development of these areas supporting the production of handcrafts and any artistic and cultural manifestation" (SECTUR, Plan Nacional de Turismo, 2001: 25; my translation). The main strategies for the consecution of these objectives according to Jiménez (1992: 73-74) were the expansion of the national road network, the extension and improvement of basic services (energy, water, drainage, etc) in tourism destinations, the restoration of historical sites such as archaeological sites and colonial buildings and, a tax exemption scheme in combination with a plan to channel private loans for tourism-related businesses. In addition to this plan, the consolidation of an institutional framework for tourism was needed. The main institutions responsible to oversee the development of this industry at the time were the Tourism Guarantee and Promotion Fund (FOGATUR), the Department of Tourism -subsidiary of the Minister of the Interior-, and the National Tourism Council (CNT). The FOGATUR was responsible to promote the development of tourism enterprises through finance mechanisms (Castillo, 2005), the Department of Tourism was in charge to study and develop new tourism centres (Jiménez, 1992) whereas the CNT was created to promote Mexico as a tourism destination internationally. Despite the apparent specialisation of the government in tourism affairs, there was no evidence of the existence of a common agenda or coordinated actions among these institutions (Espinosa, 2004). Nonetheless, the work made by these institutions during this period helped substantially to identify the necessity to elaborate a more comprehensive long-term policy for the development of tourism in Mexico.

The long-term strategy devised by the Mexican government to develop the tourism industry nationally consisted in the creation of new tourist centres throughout the territory within a specific planning approach. This policy was named Centros Integralmente Planeados (State Planned Tourism Destinations, CIPs acronym in Spanish), and the main premise was to turn these resorts into development poles in order to improve the conditions of economically disadvantaged areas. The following section will provide a more detailed account about the surrounding processes of CIPs policy-making. The discussion will be focused in two broad areas of analysis: policy arena and policy issues. The information will be presented in a single narrative with the objective to provide a version that can stimulate the thinking about the complex nature of the CIPs policy processes and its surrounding issues.

CIPs Policy Process

‘Policy’ according to Keeley and Scoones (2003: 5) is “a set of decisions in...a given policy area...taking the form of statements...and...executed by the bureaucracy”. The formulation of a public policy, plan, or program supposes a certain degree of intervention from the State in a specific area with the aim to control its development. The study of the processes surrounding the policy-making activity necessarily implies the exploration of related decisions and the pattern of action of them over time. It involves a description of how the policy is brought to life, who dominates the decision-making table and, more importantly, the motivations and interests behind these decisions. It is important to note that tourism, unlike other sectors of the economy, has not been historically considered as a necessary area for policy appeal due to the apparent lack of demands or conflicts justifying the policy-making process (Richter, 1983). The development of a policy for tourism development in a particular country should be understood then as a policy area that is chosen by the bureaucracy defining its form, scale and orientation. That was the case of Mexico with the CIPs policy.

The basic premise of the CIPs policy was the creation of new tourist centres in coastal zones under a rigorous planning methodology. The main objectives of this policy were: the generation of foreign exchange, the creation of a source of employment and, the stimulation of an economic multiplier effect within the regions where the centres would be constructed (FONATUR, 1982). The task of designing and elaborating the CIPs policy was adopted by the Central Bank of Mexico in 1966 (Molina, 2007). In spite of the existent institutional framework for tourism based in three government bodies -FOGATUR, Department of Tourism,

and CNT-, the Bank of Mexico assumed the leadership excluding these institutions from this process. This decision should be interpreted as the weakness of the existent framework in tourism affairs, showing an institutional fragmentation that resulted in the incapability to undertake a project of this scale. Moreover, the Bank of Mexico had consolidated a reputation in the implementation of economic policies due to the macroeconomic success of the stabilisation program implemented in the decade of the 1950s (Cárdenas, 2000). The relative autonomy of the Bank of Mexico during this period permitted the expansion of its normal functions of currency regulation and interest rates toward the full involvement of this institution in developmental tasks. In line with the development objectives, the Bank of Mexico created a number of trusts to encourage the expansion of economic activities in the country such as agriculture, construction, exports, industrial equipment, commercial development and tourism (Jiménez, 1992). The implementation of these measures reflected the exhaustion of the economic model followed until then -Import Substitution Industrialisation- (Anglade & Fortin, 1985) leading the government, and the Bank of Mexico in particular, to search for alternative strategies and give an impulse to the economy. Tourism seemed to fit within this plan due to its economic potential to generate foreign exchange.

Under these circumstances, the first investigations for the selection of the areas where the new tourist resorts should be constructed started in 1966 (Martí, 1985). The selection of the places should have met the following criteria: the resorts should contemplate manageable implementation costs; the resorts should contain exceptional natural assets, and; the resorts should be built within economically disadvantaged areas with a low rate of economic development (Clancy, 1999; Torres & Momsen, 2005a). After a considerable number of travels throughout the coastal zones of the country, five places were selected in the end: Cancun (located in the Caribbean Coast), Ixtapa and Huatulco (both located in the Pacific Coast) and, Loreto and Los Cabos (both located on the Cortés Sea). The selection process implied an exhaustive exploration of the geographical, access and social conditions of the areas to be developed; in that sense, a substantial number of preliminary studies were carried out in order to evaluate the feasibility of constructing the resorts. The preliminary investigations were carried out by a reduced group of economists, lawyers, architects and engineers -12 in total-, all of them members the technical office of the Bank of Mexico projects (Interview with a former Bank of Mexico officer, November 2008). The direction of the CIPs project was assigned to Antonio Enríquez Savignac, a Mexican economist graduated in Harvard who previously had worked for the Inter American

Development Bank (IADB), by the influential figure of the sub-Director of the Bank of Mexico, Ernesto Fernández Hurtado.

In order to consolidate the CIPs proposal, the Bank of Mexico created a subsidiary office in 1968: the Tourism Infrastructure and Development Bank office (INFRATUR). This new body received the necessary budget and legal means for the elaboration of the Master Plans and execution of the preliminary works in the selected areas. Torres and Momsen (2005b) point out that the methodology to construct tourism resorts under a Master Plan was a popular trend in the 1960s in developing countries such as Egypt, Sri-Lanka, Indonesia, Turkey, Malaysia among many others. The Master Plan, in essence, consisted of defining of the physical characteristics of the resorts -urban, touristic, infrastructure areas- and the projections for their growth.

The first important decision that the INFRATUR office made was the selection of the first area to develop: the first tourism resort derived from the CIPs policy would be Cancun. This political move has allowed different interpretations by different authors; for example, Espinosa (2004) considers that the decision obeyed to a security rationale under the prevailing regional context of tension against communism. He argues that the proximity of Cancun to Cuba was perceived as a threat to the national security for the possibility of the proliferation of dissident groups against the Mexican regime in an unpopulated territory with a minor presence of the State at the time. In contrast, Brenner (2005), Clancy (1999, 2001a, 2001b), and Jiménez (1992) said that this decision was rather based on an evaluation of trends of the international tourism and the competence in the market within the Caribbean Region. They argued that the exceptional natural beauty of Cancun, weather and location were the main arguments to support the decision of developing this area in the first place. Lastly, a former member of the INFRATUR office (Interview, December 2008) commented, that the decision was mainly based in the fact that Cancun presented an unproblematic land-ownership panorama that would make easier the implementation process in the short term. Moreover, he pointed out the possibility that this resort could become an important touristic and commercial link between North Central, and South America.

Once the decision of developing Cancun was made, the next task of the INFRATUR office was to obtain the necessary funds to carry out the preliminary infrastructure works in the area. Ernesto Fernández Hurtado, representing the Bank of Mexico and Antonio Ortiz Mena representing the Secretary of the

Treasure (SHCP) presented the CIPs project to the president Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, who possessed the decision-making powers -granted by the structure of the Mexican political system- to support or dismiss the proposal. Lehoucq et al (2005: 3) point out in this regard that the policy-making processes in Mexico from 1950-1982 had proceeded in a highly secretive fashion and that decision-making powers were centralised around the presidency. In that sense, the approval from the president and close collaborators was crucial for the continuation of the CIPs policy in the short term. The outcome of this negotiation was the presidential and financial support to CIPs policy with the condition to search technical and financial assistance from international development institutions. The INFRATUR office sought the financial support of institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and the Inter American Development Bank (IADB) presenting the preliminary Master Plans of Cancun and Ixtapa. The main requirements from these institutions to provide the loans were a technical evaluation of the Master plans and a physical inspection of the areas where the projects should be developed. The IADB decided to support the initial phase of Cancun project granting a loan to the Mexican government for 47.1 million dollars whereas the WB opted to support the initial phase of the Ixtapa project granting a credit for 22 million dollars (Clancy, 2001b: 52). It has to be noted that the involvement of these actors during this process played a crucial role in the specialisation of the INFRATUR officials. The personnel involved in the elaboration of the Master Plans were not familiarised neither with the tourism industry nor with development of tourism resorts (Interview with a former Bank of Mexico officer, February 2009). For that reason the training process for the team formed by Antonio Enríquez Savignac consisted in studying and visiting consolidated tourism resorts -such as Hawai, Nassau, St. Thomas, Miami, Spanish Coasts, French Coasts, Acapulco, etc- in order to decipher the functioning of the tourism industry in real contexts. Moreover, the specialisation process was reinforced when Enriquez Savignac refused the intervention of international consultants for the elaboration of the Master plans. The INFRATUR team designed the tourism development model considered in the CIPs policy according to the Mexican context without any external assistance (Interview with a former FONATUR officer, December, 2008).

The formal announcement of the implementation of CIPs policy to the public was made at the end of the decade of 1960s by the president Díaz Ordaz declaring the following "we will create tourist centers in Quintana Roo [Cancun] and many other parts of the country. We have a special interest in fostering the development of tourism for two fundamental reasons. One...we can help...our fellow Mexicans to achieve a better standard of living and to obtain a job...and

two, because tourism...brings back...a rapid return...on the investments that we may make to promote it" (FONATUR, 1988: 12). This statement clearly reflected the decision to expand the tourism industry in the years to come: on the one hand, it was expected that tourism should bring an important number of jobs with a relatively minor investment of the State compared with other sectors whereas, on the other hand, the government conceived tourism as a potential activity to stimulate the economy in the short term. Tourism, in the end, was seen as a short term and financially viable solution to the problems of the exhaustion of the Mexican economic model; it was time for a reassessment of the economic orientation that implied the adoption of export-oriented measures such as tourism.

Due to the political process of the presidential succession (1969-1970) the works in Cancun did not start until 1970 and Ixtapa until 1972 (Brenner, 2005). The new presidential administration under Luis Echeverría Álvarez had doubts to support the CIPs policy (Martí, 1985), however after an exhaustive evaluation of the projects -especially in Cancun- he was decided to give his approval and the financial backing of the State. The works in Cancun were resumed and it was projected to open the resort to the tourists in four years. The next section will briefly describe the processes surrounding the creation and subsequent evolution of Cancun in order to get a better understanding of the CIPs policy implementation in a local context as well as its impact over the development of the tourism industry in Mexico.

3. Cancun, a brief history of a planned paradise

Cancun is located in the Yucatán Peninsula in the north part of the State of Quintana Roo. The first phase of construction took place between 1970-1976 including the provision of the necessary infrastructure and public services to operate as an international tourism destination. The original Master Plan established three areas to be developed: 1) the touristic area; 2) the urban area, and 3) the international airport (FONATUR, 1988: 29). The touristic area considered the construction of two golf courses, marinas, shopping centres, a residential area and the definition of the plots for hotel development. The urban area consisted in the construction of blocks, avenues and streets of the city as well as the definition of housing plots and an industrial area. Public services included the construction of drainage and sewage systems for both areas, touristic and urban, the provision of electricity and a communication system as well as the construction of an airport with international capacity. It has to be

noted that the original design of Cancun's Master Plan established a physical division between the urban and touristic zone. This strategy, according to the planners, would prevent the problems related with an uncontrolled growth and disorganisation reported in non-planned Mexican destinations such as Acapulco (Collins, 1979).

Two historical events were relevant during the construction phase of Cancun. First, The INFRATUR office was transformed into an independent government agency absorbing the FOGATUR functions in 1974. This new agency was called National Tourism Development Fund (FONATUR) and would be responsible to continue the execution of the CIPs policy and to become a financing channel for the creation of tourism-related business in the country. Second, in the same year the former Department of Tourism was upgraded to a cabinet level giving birth to the Tourism Secretariat (SECTUR). This Secretary would be responsible for the definition of the tourism policy at the national level having the assistance of FONATUR and the CNT. The reformulation of the institutional framework gave strength to CIPs policy revealing the importance that tourism was acquiring within the national agenda. The role of FONATUR in the formation of a business network in Cancun became crucial since this office had the attribution to invite and select potential investors to participate in the project as well as to take part in joint ventures with the private sector in tourism-related activities. In this way, FONATUR expanded its decision powers having absolute independence of action in the beginning of the projects considered within the CIPs policy (Interview with a former FONATUR officer, December, 2008).

After the inaugurations of the first three hotels -Playa Blanca, Bojorquez, and Cancun Caribe- in 1974 and the international airport in 1975 (Martí, 1985), Cancun started to experience an impressive growth in tourism activities. It received almost 100,000 visitors and more than 1000 flights by the year 1975 (FONATUR, 2007). These figures were remarkable at the time considering that Cancun was a city constructed from zero (Cordoba & García, 2003). The dimension of the growth can be better understood reviewing the numbers of the first census carried out by INFRATUR in the late 1960s: the report stated that only 117 inhabitants were living in the zone being fishing the main economic activity at the time (FONATUR, 1988: 24). By 1975, this number had dramatically increased up to 10, 000 inhabitants (INEGI, 2007). It was clear that the political and social organisation of Cancun was going to be largely determined by the pace of growth of the ongoing tourism development.

The 17th annual reunion of the IADB celebrated in 1976 had a profound promotional impact of Cancun internationally. The organisation of this reunion was a clear message to the markets and tourists that Cancun was ready to operate as a destination of international scale. During the second half of the 1970s, Cancun maintained a stable growth reaching almost 60 hotels operating in 1980s (FONATUR, 2007). The economic crisis that Mexico experienced in 1982 affected the CIPs policy forecasts in Cancun favouring the explosive expansion of tourism-related activities due to the currency devaluation effect and a massive privatisation scheme for the assets owned by the government in that area, especially hotels (Clancy, 2001b). During the 1980s the number of hotels was doubled -120 in total- and the foreign investment reported a substantial increase. However, the growth of Cancun was suddenly blocked by the destructive hurricane Gilbert in 1988. This event produced a reconfiguration of the development model in Cancun, relaxing the planning restrictions considered in the original Master Plan and leaving the future of its development in the hands of the private initiative. The new model adopted in Cancun during the 1990s is known as "All-inclusive". This model has produced large resort enclaves affecting the local economy. Moreover, the appearance of a non-planned destination within a relatively short distance -Playa del Carmen, 60 km to the South- constituted an unexpected competition in terms of tourists and revenue that considerably reduced the pace of growth of Cancun. Despite this, Cancun became the most successful tourism destination in Mexico (Brenner, 2005; Torres and Momsem, 2005a, 2005b) receiving 35% of the total international tourists in the country (FONATUR, 2005) contributing with 7.7% in the GDP and 80% in Quintana Roo's GDP (Palafox & Segrado, 2008: 162).

This destination, as many other in the world, has historically produced a number of impacts -positive and negative- that moulded the local dynamics of the host society. The following section will discuss some of the social and political implications of the implementation of the CIPs policy in Cancun having a direct effect over the distribution of the benefits derived from the tourism development.

4. Social and political implications of CIPs policy in Cancun

The implementation of the CIPs policy has had profound effects upon the social and political configuration of Cancun over time. Dachary and Arnaiz (1992: 109-112) examined the demographic impacts of the introduction of tourism in the zone. They argued that Cancun has historically attracted a great number of immigrants -Mayan population of Quintana Roo, meztizo peasants and people

from other urban settlements in the country- generating an explosive growth in the urban area. This immigration phenomenon, was indeed considered within the original Master Plan according to a former FONATUR officer (Interview, April 2009), however even the most extreme estimations were surpassed. The proliferation of irregular settlements in non-planned areas -slums and shantytowns- were the direct result of this massive uncontrolled immigration phenomenon. The configuration of the urban area suffered a process of social polarisation that evidenced the profound differences of social classes and income spatially (Torres & Momsen, 2005a). On the one hand, the economically disadvantaged people opted to settle in non-planned areas suffering the total absence of housing and public services whereas, on the other hand, the middle and upper classes opted to settle in the FONATUR's planned area taking advantage of the semi-urban context. The construction jobs available during the implementation phase attracted a considerable number people, especially from rural areas. The massive migration to Cancun transformed the livelihoods of the rural areas of Quintana Roo that traditionally were based on subsistence activities; the predominance of tourism activities helped to create a working class dependent on this activity. The progressive abandonment of primary activities towards tourism-related ones changed the productive and social dynamics of the rural contexts of Quintana Roo under the supposed promise of tourism to improve the living conditions of the migrants (Murray, 2007). Nonetheless, one of the main problems that the new incomers encountered was their integration to tourism labour force. The low education level and language skills of the immigrants were the main constraints to participate within the tourism industry (Interview with a former FONATUR officer, November, 2009). Therefore, most of the people coming from rural and poor contexts often obtained low paid jobs performing activities such as gardening, cleaning, maintenance and the like. Moreover, the seasonal nature of the tourism industry and the low profile in social security of the tourism jobs produced a further search for income alternatives due to the high cost of living in the area. In this sense, a proliferation of economic activities in the informal sector took place progressively in the urban area transforming both, the planned and non-planned urban landscapes.

Jiménez and Sosa (2005) and Torres and Momsen (2005b) pointed out the lack of a cultural identity as one of the main social impacts in the host society derived from the introduction of CIPs policy in the Cancun. They argue that the CIPs policy did not consider a mechanism for the integration of incoming people with different cultural backgrounds. The lack of a cohesive instrument in this multicultural encounter has historically prevented the formation of a participative

community; instead, this situation has promoted the apathy of the local society and the absence of a sense of belonging to the city. Moreover, the gradual transformation within the system of values and customs in the host society derived from a deep acculturation process has motivated the underestimation of the national culture and an overestimation of the transitory stage of hedonism that is experienced through tourism (Jiménez & Sosa, 2005: 21). Additionally, the consolidation of tourism as the main economic activity produced an economic polarisation of Quintana Roo geographically (Murray, 2007). The high dependency and concentration of tourism-related activities in the northern part of the State has marginalised the investment and the possibilities of economic development in the south. Although this phenomenon has encouraged the appearance of diverse tourism projects in the southern part of Quintana Roo attempting to reverse the unfavourable conditions, the expansion of tourism-related activities in this geographical area has been rather modest so far. Likewise, Cancun has presented a number social problems associated with tourism development similar to other destinations in the world, such as sexually transmitted diseases, drug trafficking, the drug abuse, alcoholism, in prostitution activities, white-slave trade, illegal immigration, high rates of criminality, more family violence and disassociation, high inflation rates, etc. (Brenner, 2005). The occurrence of these problems has been historically accentuated for the incapacity -or unwillingness- of the local government to prevent its incidence.

The political organisation of Cancun can be traced back to 1974, when the formation of a government body -a municipality- took place (Martí, 1985). The municipality of Benito Juárez was created with the aim to provide the nascent community with the administrative and legal powers to continue the tourism project contained in the CIPs policy. In the first years of Cancun, it was in FONATUR's interests to maintain the administrative and decision-making control over the planned zones. In that sense, FONATUR appointed a former FONATUR officer -Alfonso Alarcón, responsible for the social development of the community- to be the first mayor of the city in 1975. The political move apparently guaranteed FONATUR's free operation from any opposing manifestation to Cancun's touristic project. Nonetheless, the struggles to control the distribution of the economic benefits of tourism increased once Cancun obtained the international recognition as tourism destination and large investments were

made. The configuration of the local political class progressively advanced because there were growing interests to get more access to the economic benefits of tourism, to control the decision-making table as well as to diminish progressively the political and decision-making presence of FONATUR in local affairs. The formation of civil associations, NGOs, and a local entrepreneurial class also helped to open the local political arena incorporating more interests into the distributional agenda. Thus, in a relatively short period of time -less than six years- the municipality office was 'colonised' by external interests of the FONATUR's agenda, and its powers were relegated exclusively to the touristic zone. Not surprisingly several conflicts have arisen between these two institutions to maintain the control of access of the project and the revenues derived from permits, taxes, public services in both, the urban area and the tourist zone. Moreover, the millionaire investments in the touristic zone -public and private- became an important source of wealth for the personal enrichment projects of some members of the local and national political class. Corruption practices in the concession of tourism and real estate businesses have been constant in the history of Cancun (Interview with NGO representative, April 2009).

The control over the tourism development in Cancun after the 1990s was gradually handed over the private interests -national and foreign- reducing the participation of the federal and local government in decision-making for the expansion of tourism-related activities and affecting the public interests of the local economy. It was calculated by Simon (1997) for instance, that much of the profit earned by the Cancun's hotel industry -between seventy and ninety cents on each dollar- is sent out of the community (Simon, 1997; quoted by Murray, 2007: 346). In this context, the economic benefits from tourism development are increasingly being captured by the private sector marginalising the local opportunities of economic development and establishing a new order of decision-making for the expansion of tourism in the region.

CONCLUSION

This article has attempted to present a discussion on the introduction of a tourism policy as a development strategy in the context of Mexico. The focus of this paper was on the formulation and implementation processes of CIPs policy as well as the

social and political implications in the particular context of Cancun, Mexico. The chosen framework to describe the CIPs surrounding processes was the Hall's (1994) model which concentrates on analysis in the policy environment, the policy arena and the final policy decisions. The decision to use this model was due to its explicative potential in establishing the points of reference to discuss the processes related to policy-making activity. The elements suggested in the model, are useful to construct a comprehensive version of the tourism policy-related processes avoiding a misrepresentation of the necessary elements to understand its complexity. However, the wideness of the proposed concepts within the model can represent a serious limitation mainly because they can be subjected to multiple interpretations according to the interests of the analysts. In this sense, without a predefined conceptual base, the user of this model might overemphasise or underestimate the value of some concepts and the outcome derived from the analytical exercise can present important variations for the same case.

This document has discussed the apparent contradiction to consider the adoption of tourism policies in developing countries as developmental strategies. It can be said that the organisation and private-regarding nature of the international tourism industry has represented historically an important constraint for the achievement of development goals in developing countries. In this sense, the question that remains unanswered is to what extent the introduction of tourism as a dominant economic activity in Cancun has helped to achieve the developmental objectives considered within the CIPs policy. Although García (1979) established prematurely that the developmental objectives contained within the CIPs policy had not been achieved, such a question does not admit easy answers and the proof of the last is that this subject has produced an unfinished academic debate over time. The prevailing unequal socioeconomic conditions surrounding the development of this resort can shed some light about the possible answers to the proposed question. Despite the initial planning efforts of CIPs policy destinations, tourism resorts such as Cancun have developed those problems reported in non-planned destinations such as Acapulco. Therefore, the effectiveness of the CIPs policy has been questioned historically since its creation; nevertheless CIPs methodology has reported minor changes since its conception.

The evolution of the political organisation of Cancun has moulded the access to the decision-making table in tourism development in the local context. Decision-

making powers have been progressively lost by the government allowing the private sector to control the distribution of the economic benefits of tourism according to their interests and networks as well as to decide the future expansion of this economic activity within the region. This situation poses a dilemma for a new intervention of the State, making that the public interests can prevail over the private ones. Finally, there is no doubt that Cancun has been consolidated as one of the best tourism destinations in the world; its apparent success and impressive growth has inspired the design of other strategies to develop more tourism resorts nationally and internationally. The CIPs methodology has played a crucial role for the last and overall for the expansion of the tourism industry in Mexico. It is still unclear however, to what extent this policy has produced the developmental goals for which it was conceived.

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ENTREPRENEUR-MANAGER OF SMALL TOURISM ENTERPRISES TO THE SUCCESS OF INTERNET MARKETING ACTIVITIES - THE GREEK CASE

Stephanos Economides

MSc, DipM MCIM, Hellenic Management Association

Spyros Alexiou

MSc, PhD Candidate, TEI of Lamia

ABSTRACT

It is widely accepted that small enterprises constitute a catalyst for creating jobs and generally growing the economy. One industry that is characterized by the proliferation of small enterprises is the tourism industry. A critical factor for this industry reaching its full potential is, however, access to markets. The Internet is seen by many, as having the potential to facilitate small tourism businesses to access their markets, understand them better, expand their market, reach and serve their customers more effectively, regardless of their location.

The focus of this study is to identify those entrepreneur-manager factors that are present in a small tourism enterprise which influence the success with which the Internet can be used to market the business.

These factors are related to the entrepreneur-manager characteristics and not to the technology factors. The identification of those factors and the estimation of their impact on Internet marketing activities will allow small tourism businesses to access markets more readily.

The methodology of this study was based on a quantitative research that was conducted via the Internet. The measuring instrument was a questionnaire that was linked to a 7-point Likert scale. The sample was selected from a database of Greek tourism businesses.

The results of this study indicate that the level of involvement of entrepreneur-managers, their ability to select the suitable internet agency, their ability to brief satisfactory the latter one, their writing skills for communicating effectively their services, their understanding of the web 2.0 technologies as well as their marketing orientation are important to the successful use of the Internet for the marketing of small tourism businesses in Greece.

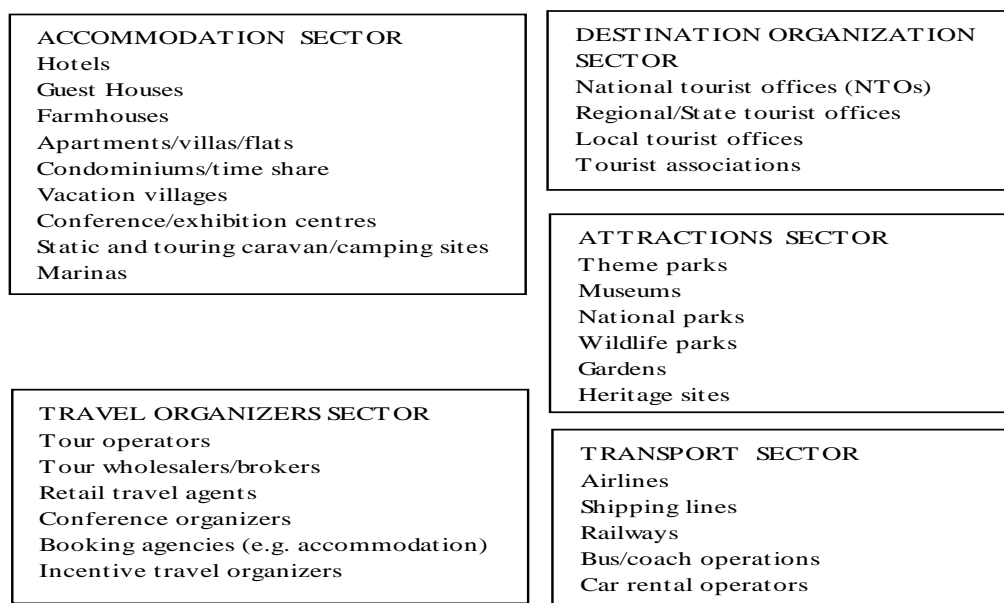
Keywords: entrepreneur-manager, small tourism enterprises, internet, marketing, Greece

INTRODUCTION

The importance of the SME for the Greek Economy is quite substantial. Voulgaris et al. (2004) write that SMEs create 50,000 new jobs in Greece annually, and represent 60% of the employment in the manufacturing and service sector. Also Zimmerer et al. (2002) point to the high labour absorption capacity of small businesses suggesting that small businesses generate wealth at a faster rate than larger firms would. Also they point out; the growth in numbers of people employed by small businesses is greater than the growth in the contribution of these enterprises to GDP.

An important factor that distinguishes large businesses and the small ones is the substantial impact of the entrepreneur-manager to the day-to-day activity of the latter ones and to their decision making (Gilmore et al., 2001). According to Marcati et al. (2008) “entrepreneurs’ innovativeness and personality play a key role in the adoption of innovations in small- and medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)”. Since the Greek tourism sector is particularly characterized by the proliferation of SMEs the study of the contribution of the entrepreneur-manager

Figure 1: The five main sectors of the travel and tourism industry



to the success of internet marketing activities is particularly relevant.

THE SME TOURIST BUSINESSES

The tourism and travel business is consisted of five sectors, which are the accommodation sector, the transport sector, the travel organizers sector, the attractions sectors and the destination organization sector (Middleton, 1993). More specifically each of the aforementioned sectors is analyzed as in Figure 1.

The tourism and travel sector is mainly considered as a service industry. As Cooper et al. (1998) have stated "An understanding of the complexity of the service product concept is an essential prerequisite for successful marketing". According to Lovelock et al. (2007) services have distinctive marketing challenges in relation to those of goods.

More specifically:

- Most services cannot be inventoried
- The intangible elements of the service product usually dominate value creation
- Services are usually difficult to visualize and understand
- Customers may be involved in co-production
- People may be part of the service experience
- Operational inputs and outputs tend to vary more widely
- The time factor often assumes great importance
- Distribution may take place through nonphysical channels

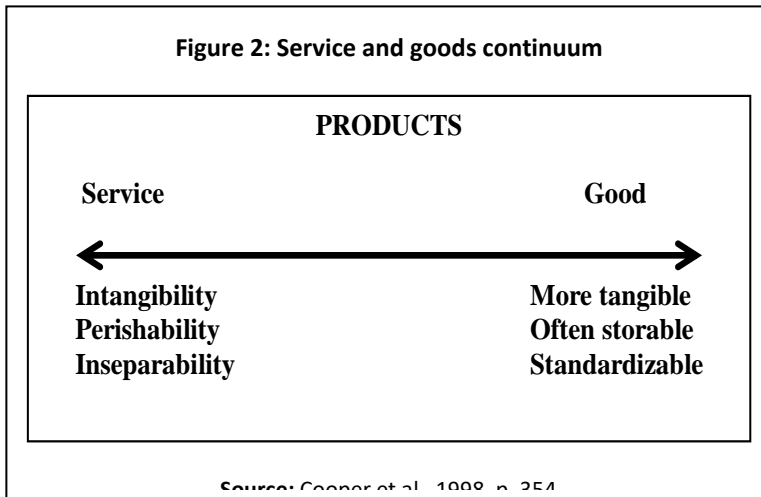
Particularly for the tourist services, Middleton (ibid) has identified some additional distinctions, namely:

- The seasonality of the tourist services
- The interdependence of the tourist services e.g. staying in a hotel, visiting museums, using transportations.
- The high fixed cost of the tourist services production.

The above elements influence the tourism business performance and viability and "explain why much of the travel and tourism is considered to be a high risk business" (Middleton, ibid, p. 32). In this high risk business, entrepreneurs are asked to react accordingly to the rapidly changing market trends, making difficult, if necessary, adjustments in order to become more competitive. To this direction, the finding of inexpensive production factors and the use of them, in such a way as to render the maximum result, is a very crucial task (Karagiannis, 2004).

The tourist sector is quite important for the Greek economy since in 2004 the tourist income represented the 6.2% of the Greek GDP in relation to 3.5% that was in 1995, according to a study of Sampaniotis & Vorlow (2006).

For the purpose of the present research there will be a focus in the accommodation sector and particularly in the hotels sub-sector, since the latter one is quite important taking into consideration that there are about 10.000 hotels in Greece, according to the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels.



INTERNET MARKETING ACTIVITIES

The Internet has been widely adopted globally. According to the Vorlow's study (2008: 9), the Internet penetration in 2004 was 83% in Holland, 79% in Sweden, 71% in Germany, and 67% in UK. The 57% of internet users conducts searches via search engines. Moreover 2 out of 5 internet users in UK, Finland and Luxemburg make use of online tourist services like reservations, payments, information.

Also the Internet has been proliferated considerably the last ten years and a lot of tools are at the disposal of the entrepreneurs-managers. Anderson (2009) cites that "There are many different ways to use the Internet as a marketing tool, including blogs, social and professional media, and search engine optimization (SEO). More specifically:

- **Blogs:** It is a kind of website maintained by an individual in order to place regular entries of commentary, or posting videos, photos. Entries are

displayed in reverse chronological orders. The creator of the blog has special privileges, for example he can delete comments or even ban the participation of specific individuals if they do not confront to the blog's rules. There are literally millions of blogs written by all kinds of different people. A typical blog combines text, images and links to other blogs. Web pages and other media related to its topic. For an agency, a blog represents a very interesting way to have an ongoing dialogue with both customers and prospects. A distinctive feature of a blog is the ability for the reader to leave comments in an interactive format. This is an important part of many blogs because it allows conversation between the bloggers and their readers. Providing focused information on a particular topic along with the ability to create a conversation with those who read the post is what has made blogs popular.

- Social media and professional media: that includes Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube. More specifically:
 - Facebook: It is the most popular social networking media with over of 300 million users who are networked with their friends and share comments, videos, photos, groups etc. From a marketing perspective there are two aspects of Facebook that a company should pay attention to. First is the social networking aspect. There are an increasing number of companies that have created a Facebook fan page. There are a few companies that are making their Facebook fan pages an integral part of their Web sites and online presence. The second aspect of Facebook marketing is Facebook advertising, one of the most targeted forms of advertising currently available on the Internet. This provides a new way for companies to communicate and connect to new audiences. Because of the information that is provided in a Facebook user's profile, a company can target its ads to a very specific type of person. For example, you can target an ad to display to only those people who have a particular city listed in their profile.
 - LinkedIn: It is the Facebook for professionals. At the last count it had more than 42 million skilled professional users from all over the world, comprising 150 different industries. When someone joins the site, he creates a personal profile that sums up their professional achievements. These profiles enhance his visibility to prospective clients, current and former colleagues and potential business partners. Members can add connections by inviting

business contacts to join LinkedIn, and to connect to other members as a trusted contact.

- Twitter: Twitter is a "micro-blog." In 140 characters or less you can describe what you are doing, reading, thinking, or whatever else you think others will find of value. For most people Twitter has moved beyond describing what you are having for lunch. And it doesn't really matter whatever you care or not. But it might matter to certain clients. Twitter can represent another communication channel for customers who are inclined to be on the leading edge of technology and communication.
- YouTube: YouTube is a video sharing site where users can upload view and share video clips. Google acquired the site in November 2006. Before the launch of YouTube in 2005, there were few simple methods available for ordinary computer users who wanted to post videos online. With its easy-to-use interface, YouTube made it possible for anyone who could use a computer to post a video that millions of people could watch within a few minutes. It's hard to find someone who hasn't viewed a video on YouTube. From funny to educational, there are a huge number of videos available for viewing on YouTube. A video represents a great opportunity to create a personal connection with prospects and clients.
- SEO: It is the science and art of getting your company listed on the first search results pages. According to Sharpe (2008) "the Internet community is looking for information relevant to what potential customers are looking for, well-established companies that will provide the products and services that meet their customers' requirements. Search engines are looking for several qualities within each company's Website and beyond, and one major factor is the length of time a company is recognized on the Internet."

The internet marketing includes on-line advertising, banner ads, pop-up ads, superstitials, interstitials, micro sites, email and rich media banner ads (Fill, 2002). Also recently mobile marketing has been considerably developed in the form of ads and applications (e.g. iPhone applications).

In the field of tourism, hotels see the Internet as an opportunity to cost-effectively, (1) reach out to new customers via cyberspace and (2) enhance business efficiency among business partners. Some of the most common reasons

for a hotel to go online may include taking reservations, promoting hotel operations, selling products and services, creating and establishing an identity or brand awareness, providing customer service and product support, generating repeat traffic, and advertising an event, product, or service (Sweeney, 2000).

As the Vorlow study (ibid: 29) notes, the Greek hotel enterprises that use the Internet for advertising their services have higher utilization of their room capacity at 4.8% and higher income at 3.7%. Consequently a study of the factors that influence the successful adoption of internet marketing activities would be particularly relevant.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE SUCCESSFUL ADOPTION OF INTERNET MARKETING ACTIVITIES

There is limited published quantitative research on the internet marketing that has mainly taken the form of the use of the internet by consumers. This study differs in the sense that an attempt is made to identify and empirically verify the determinants of successful Internet marketing for Greek small tourism businesses. The factors (independent variables) considered in this study are those that are associated with the 'entrepreneur-manager issues' of the use of the Internet as a business/marketing tools relating to the perceived performance of the latter one.

The entrepreneur-manager -related factors are identified and empirically evaluated in this study through fourteen in-depth interviews with entrepreneurs-managers of tourist enterprises and specifically of hotels. These are the:

- (a) personal involvement of the entrepreneur
- (b) entrepreneur's ability to select the suitable internet agency
- (c) entrepreneur's ability to brief satisfactory the internet agency
- (d) entrepreneur's understanding of web 2.0
- (e) entrepreneur's writing skills for the web
- (f) entrepreneur's marketing orientation.

Entrepreneur's involvement

Elliot & Boshoff (2007) states that the entrepreneur's involvement in the marketing activities of small tourist firms is directly, positively related to the perceived success of internet marketing. This study argues that delegating the day-to-day management of the small tourism businesses' Internet marketing to someone else, either inside or outside the business, is not considered satisfactory for the owner-manager, as this may compromise the success of Internet marketing. The explanation of that relates to the fact, that in small firms only the owner has usually the necessary knowledge to plan a successful internet marketing activity. By the term 'knowledge' the reference is made to the adequate understanding to their business, its products and services, the market, the competition, the pricing policies and the objectives that are to be achieved.

Usually, due to the small size of the firm, no written context exists about the aforementioned knowledge. The approach has a personal characteristic and includes everything that is in the entrepreneur's mind, and thus it is not easy for another person, either inside or outside the company, to have the 'whole picture'.

Blackburn & McClure (1998) argue that the entrepreneurs of the small firms do not possess the same abilities. Based on that, they have identified three types of them:

- (a) enthusiasts-high IT skills, positive attitude, IT management focus
- (b) pragmatists – low IT skills, pragmatic attitude, IT management focus
- (c) artisans – low IT skills, unconvinced attitude, IT operations / administration focus.

Having that in mind, it can be assumed that the impact of entrepreneurs-managers involvement in the perceived performance of the marketing activities in the small firms will not be the same and will differ according to their abilities. In any case, Blackburn & McClure (ibid) have identified that the role of the entrepreneur-manager is central to the small firm innovation, new technology adoption and use.

Selection of the internet agency

According to Barnett (1997), ‘while choosing an agency is rarely easy, it is often made more difficult than it needs because of the personalities of the people involved and their sometimes contradicting requirements’. Fill (2002) supports that the process for selecting an agency is relatively straightforward. To start with, a search is undertaken to develop a list of potential candidates. This step is accomplished by referring to the relevant publications resulting in a list where six or seven of them are expected to be included. Next, the client will visit each of the short listed agencies in what is referred to as a credential presentation. This is a

Figure 3: Steps when selecting the internet agency

(Fill, 2002)

1. Search to develop a list of potential candidates
2. Visits to each candidate-credential presentation

crucial stage as it is now that the agency is evaluated for its degree of fitting with the client’s expectations and requirements. The agency’s track record,

resources, areas of expertise and experience can all be made available on the Internet, from which it should be possible to short-list three or four agencies for the next stage in the process: “the pitch”. To be able to make a suitable bid the agencies are given a brief and then required to make a formal presentation (“the pitch”) to the client some 6-8 weeks later. By this presentation we can evaluate the way and the philosophy the agency approaches the strategic and creative issues of our interest. Finally, the project is awarded to the candidate who produces the most suitable proposal. The immediate selection process is finalized when terms and conditions are agreed and the winner is announced to the contestants and made public.

This formalized process is now being questioned as to its suitability. “Suitability” is a relative term, and a range of factors need to be considered. In fact, the selection process is a bringing together of two organizations who may have different expectations. However, their cooperative behavior is essential for these expectations to have any chance of materializing.

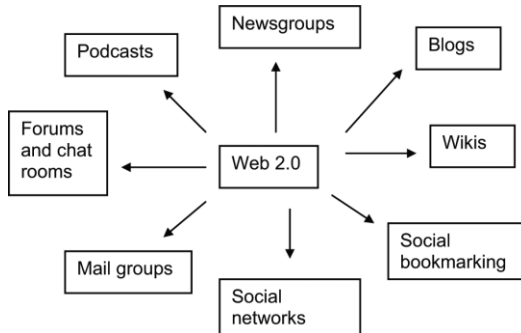
The first reason under question relates to the time of six to eight weeks. Today most companies need to find communication solutions in one than rather eight weeks. The second one relates to the internet agencies who feel that they have to invest a great deal into a pitch with little or no reward if the pitch failed. Their response has been to ask for payments to pitch which has not been received well by clients. The third reason refers to the tension that arises when each agency is required to generate creative ideas over which they have little control once a pitch has been lost. As a solution, companies could invite agencies to discuss mini-briefs (Jardine, 2000).

These discussion topics are considered to be essential and focused on related issues rather than being the traditional challenge about how to improve a brand's performance. By issuing a mini-brief on the day it saves the companies time and money (eliminates weeks of preparation and associated staff costs), while enables the client to see agency teams working together.

Briefing of the internet agency

Triki et al. (2007) point out that the qualitative briefing is an important role that a firm has to play in order to have a successful firm-agency relationship. The agency's work depends heavily on the quality and the quantity of the information provided by the firm's brief. Instead of following up the creation process, the agencies think that firms should concentrate on communication objectives so as to help the agency implement the advertising campaign. According to this research the clarity of briefing is the second most important factor for the successful outcome of the firm-agency relationship.

Fig. 4: Components of Web 2.0



Hill (2006) relates briefing with the satisfaction of the agency's customers. In order to have a sustainable relationship with an agency, it is important to incorporate multiple measures of what consist a success during the briefing process. Fill (2002: 387) supports that "once an account has been signed a client brief is prepared which provides information about the client organization. It sets out the nature of the industry it operates in together with data about trends, market shares, customers, competitors and the problem that the agency is required to address".

Briefing is used so that agency personnel to be well informed. In order the client problem is dealt with, the account planner will undertake research to determine a number of crucial fields such as: (i) market, (ii) media and audience characteristics. By determining that, proposals could be made to the rest of the account team as to how the client problem is to be resolved. Much of this information is translated into creative work for the development of copy and visuals by the appointed creative team. The briefing process provides the mechanism for the agency operation.

Understanding the Web 2.0

Web 2.0 refers to the second generation of web development and design. It is characterized as facilitating communication, information sharing, user-centered design and collaboration, and has fostered web based communities, hosted services, and web applications. "The essence of the social web is communication. The nature of the communication is continuously changed by technology as it becomes more interactive, democratic, participatory, immediate and responsive" (Jones & Iredale, 2009). Businesses have to recognize the need to work with their community of stakeholders as their image, brand, reputation and ultimately the bottom line can be negatively impacted or positively rewarded in the new online Web 2.0 world (Gelles, 2009).

According to Jones & Iredale (ibid) the Web 2.0 includes various tools such as: (i) social networks, (ii) media sharing and (iii) other interactive online tools. People who share similar interests can communicate or discuss, using those sites offered with similar orientation. ***As far as the entrepreneurship is concerned, education, teaching, learning and assessment can find scope and space with Web 2.0.*** Flexible online communities can be easily created, as well as an evolution which affects the range of the conventional media impacts.

Using the web, each person, at every level of the social hierarchy, has the opportunity to become the creator of a news story, than be a pathetic "consumer of news", challenging thus "the mainstream media's view of the world". In this sense, the web possesses all the characteristics of the most democratic tool of our times. Today, social networking has become the prevailing phenomenon and its growth has been tremendous as big numbers of the world population, business, state and private organizations, consumers and various interest groups "are increasingly engaging and involving themselves in new online communities of interest" (Jones & Iredale, ibid). YouTube is often mentioned as a market leader in this field.

One of the main differences that Web 2.0 has, in relation to Web 1.0, is that in the context of the former one branding and reputation are open to question, compliment and criticism. Shaping the brand image is "a joint process that requires the active involvement and willing consent of stakeholders, who now have a greater opportunity to make known their views" (Jones & Iredale,

ibid). Introducing image, brand and reputation is a process that cannot be imposed from above, from the management side, since the consumers, the citizens and the suppliers are those who have the 'final word'. As the building of a relationship is necessary among the two parts of the market, Web 2.0 can be a useful tool in that direction. As Jones & Iredale (ibid) state, "Shared ownership of brand, information, image and reputation are key features of the social web environment".

Another interesting aspect of Web 2.0 is learning by monitoring other enterprises. Using the social web, a number of skills, behaviors and attributes can be enhanced. Also, it helps the individual to be in touch with the flexible market economy and society, to find employment, to start a business, to participate in a social activity. As a new development, the implications of Web 2.0 "are that businesses, consumers and other stakeholders are more informed and through the acquisition of knowledge they are empowered in new ways" (Jones & Iredale, ibid).

However, no matter how democratic a tool is, some prerequisites are necessary in order for the Web to be operational by customers, citizens or business managers. These prerequisites have to do with the appropriate knowledge of rights, needs and obligations. As citizens and activists enter the field of being active parts of the Web reality, play a part in shaping the new Web 2.0 landscape and this is something businesses should be aware of, alert to and prepared for. The phrase social-casting, as opposed broadcasting, captures the essence of the move brought about by the social web (Jones & Iredale, ibid).

Writing skills

The Wall Street Journal notes that eighty percent of businesses surveyed believe that their employees' biggest problem is written communication (Price, 2007). According to Wise (2005), writing for the web is a different style than other types of writing such as standard press releases. It needs to be shorter, more concise, more conversational, more enticing.

The way of writing for the web needs to comply with the way people read information on the Web. And this way is different than the one people read

information in a newspaper or magazine. The visitor of a website has certain characteristics which are related to the specific of the information he is looking for. As a consequence, writing has to fulfill that prerequisite so that people can find information quickly. If the writing is not written for on-line, the reader will be probably lost. Moreover the on-line writing has to be tailored to the visuals on the page. A title and a few lines that will grab the reader's attention are necessary in order to attract the attention of the visitors; otherwise they will just keep browsing the internet. The website visitor's attention have to be captured immediately, it has to be an immediate connection.

Klipstine (2008) suggests five principles for improving online marketing writing: (1) Reading text from a computer screen is different from reading text from paper. People read 25 percent slower from a computer screen. (2) Be succinct. Write no more than 50 percent of the text you would write for a hardcopy publication. (3) Write for scanability. Users don't read word for word from a computer screen. And they don't like long blocks of text. (4) Use hypertext, headings, highlights and bulleted lists to break the material into chunks of information. (5) Writing for the Web should maintain the standards of solid journalism; writing should be mechanically excellent.

As far as the Greek internet agencies, they usually do not have adequate expertise in writing for websites. To deal with that, they either have to employ a skilled person or to address to a freelance. In fact, the Greek small tourist businesses do not usually have employees with writing skills. Thus, they have to use a freelance service. However, if the entrepreneur-manager would like to outsource this task to a freelance copywriter, he has to overcome two barriers for a successful collaboration. Firstly the cost of a freelance copywriter may be too high for a small firm. Secondly the entrepreneur-manager has to brief the copywriter so that the latter one undertakes the writing for the website or the online marketing activity in a suitable and satisfactory way. But, as has already been mentioned before, the adequate briefing is not always taken for granted.

Marketing orientation

Harding (1998: 35) states that the marketing orientation concept refers to “a set of organizational behaviours and techniques which develop value-added products derived from well-developed market research and consultation processes with loyal, long-term customers”. Working in a highly competitive environment, organizations need to be very careful about the way they handle the customer. A company that understands the needs of its customer, and tries hard to develop and provide high-valued products, and market them as a whole across all departments, is considered a market-oriented company. In doing so, it embraces the ‘marketing concept’ that brings the customer into the center of its attention. The slogan used in this case is “the customer is King”. The marketing concept is actually an attitude or a philosophy that characterises the whole management structure of a company.

Singh & Ranchhod (2004) state that there were four latent dimensions underlying this orientation and these are: customer orientation, competitor orientation, departmental responsiveness, and customer satisfaction orientation. From all four dimensions, customer orientation and customer satisfaction orientation have a stronger impact on performance.

Tzokas et al. (2001) mention Jaworski & Kohli’s (1993) empirical evidence which suggests that “the adoption of a marketing orientation has a positive effect on business performance and also impacts on employee commitment”. And also Deshpande et al. (1993, Tsokas et al., *ibid*) suggest that “as marketing is an organizational not a departmental function and requires a particular culture in order to adopt such an approach, issues of organizational culture are integral to discussions of marketing orientation”. Implementing the idea of ‘culture’ is not an easy task since “definitions of culture in the literature vary and include ideology, a coherent set of beliefs, shared core values, important understandings, or the ‘collective programming of the human mind’ (Hofstede, 1980, in Tzokas et al., *ibid*).

Osborne (1996), referring to the role of strategic values writes that these are the rationale for the viability of a business and link the firm to its environment. And all this “because strategic values describe what a business does to win in the marketplace and why, they enable an organization to focus on what

is important to success and determine what is irrelevant or counterproductive". Varey & Lewis (2000: 113) consider these values to be reflected in and be a reflection of "the prevailing culture within the organization".

Between the academics, there is a tendency "to adopt an interpretivist point of view, with culture being viewed as something an organization 'has', as compared with something an organization 'is', or as the 'glue' which holds an the organization together" (Tzokas et al., *ibid*).

Diamantopoulos & Hart (1993: 103) copy Kohli & Jaworski (1990) arguing that "a market-oriented organization is one whose actions are consistent with the marketing concept". Having that in mind, we can argue that there develops "a positive linkage between the perception of the marketing concept as a business philosophy and the company actions underlying a market orientation" (Diamantopoulos & Hart, *ibid*).

The very fact that the product is co-produced and co-marketed with the consumer is the main reason why the application to the service sector has been modified (Li & Greenberg, 1997, in Harding, 1998). Harding (*ibid*: 39) goes on stating "Businesses with a marketing orientation adopt it because they want to exploit the desires of as many of the target market as the law and the competitors will allow –consumers are safe because they can always walk away". Thus, there has been an emphasis, within the marketing literature, on the importance of a firm attaining a marketing orientation in order to compete in today's marketplace.

METHODOLOGY

The measuring instrument

In order to ensure validity and reliability, measuring instruments from previous studies were used, where possible, to measure both the independent variables and the dependent variable. All the items in the questionnaire were linked to a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1 was labeled strongly agree and 7 was labeled strongly disagree in order to measure the dependent variable of the Perceived success of Internet marketing activities.

The sample

The sample is drawn by the population of Greek SMEs tourist businesses and specifically from those of the hotel sub-sector. According to the European Commission (2005), the classification of the European medium, small and micro companies (SMEs) is as follows in Table 1:

Table 1: Classification of the SMEs (European Commission, 2005)			
Enterprise category	Annual work unit	Annual turnover	Annual balance sheet total
Medium sized	<250	<€ 50 million	<€ 43 million
Small	<50	<€ 10 million	<€ 10 million
Micro	<10	<€ 2 million	<€ 2 million

However, since companies in Greece that have not the Société Anonyme legal status, as it is usually the case with the small and micro enterprises, are not obliged to publish financial data, it is not possible to classify them according to the European Commission suggestions. For this reason, Papanikos (2000: 29) has developed a study which contains a combination of the SMEs classification according to the EC standards and the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels data. According to this study, the classification for the Greek hotels is as follows²:

² See also the study of Pavlopoulos P. (2007) Tourism establishment small and medium size: role, perspectives, measures, ΙΤΕΠ, Athens, (in Greek).

Table 2: Classification for the Greek hotels (Papanikos, 2000)					
Hotel size	Number of rooms	Number of hotels	% of hotels	Employment	
				Average number of employees	Highest number of employees
1. Family	1-20	3,548	43%	1,4	10
2. Small	21-50	3,011	37%	4,8	25
3. Medium	51-100	1.075	13%	15,0	60
4. Big	101 -	610	7%	64,0	210

It seems that the hotel size that corresponds to the SMEs definition is those of Family, Small and Medium ones. Consequently, for the purpose of the present research, the yardstick for selecting the SMEs hotels was that of the number of rooms, which, in the particular case, has been less than 101 rooms.

The sample was drawn from the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels database, where data for approximately 10.000 hotels in Greece can be found. A sample of 200 hotels that (i) have websites and (ii) have less than 101 rooms was randomly selected. These 200 hotels were surveyed the period October 2009 to December 2009 using a Web based questionnaire that allowed respondents to complete the questionnaire online. The usable 145 questionnaires received comfortably exceed the minimum guideline for the use of multivariate statistical procedures to analyze the data (Hair et al., 1998).

Statistical procedure

Validity assessment

The initial step in the data analysis was to assess the discriminant validity of the instrument used to measure the variables in the theoretical model. This was done by using the multivariate technique of exploratory factor analysis with the purpose of establishing which of the questionnaire items measure each construct in the theoretical model. The analysis was conducted by using the SPSS 13.0. In Table 3, it is displayed the factor structure that has been emerged by an iterative process, where items were deleted. Those deleted items either did not load higher than 0.45 on any factor or alternatively loaded higher than 0.45 or higher on two or more factors (cross-loading).

Reliability of the measuring instrument

Reliability is the consistency or stability of empirical indicators from measurement to measurement (Parasuraman, 1991). For measuring reliability the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is used, which is based on the average correlation of items within an instrument or scale and is regarded as an indication of internal consistency.

RESULTS

Discriminant validity results

The factor matrix of the exploratory factor analysis is shown in Table 1. It reveals that 27 items loaded on seven distinct factors and there were a total of 49.4 percent of the variance in the data. The seven factors were named Entrepreneur Involvement (items EI01-EI04), Internet Agency Selection (items IS01-IS03), Internet Agency Briefing (items IB01-IB03), Understanding of the Web 2.0 (items UW01-UW03), Writing Skills (items WS01-WS03), Marketing Orientation (items MO01-MO04), Perceived Success of Online Marketing (items PM01-PM07). The items that measure each factor are described in Appendix 1.

Table 3: Exploratory factor analysis

Item	Factor one Entrepreneur's involvement	Factor two Internet Agency Selection	Factor three Internet Agency Briefing	Factor four Understanding Web 2.0	Factor five Writing Skills	Factor six Marketing Orientation	Factor seven Perceived Success of Online Marketing
EI01	0,885						
EI02	0,823						
EI04	0,765						
EI03	0,654						
IS02		0,832					
IS02		0,689					
IS01		0,578					
IB01			0,743				
IB02			0,656				
IB03			0,576				
UW03				0,678			
UW02				0,574			
UW01				0,498			
WS01					0,862		
WS03					0,754		
WS02					0,672		
MO01						0,812	
MO03						0,796	
MO02						0,686	
MO04						0,578	
PM06							0,765
PM02							0,743
PM04							0,715
PM03							0,654
PM05							0,523
PM01							0,517
PM07							0,497

Reliability results

The internal reliability of the seven factors that emerged from the exploratory factor analysis is shown in Table 4. All seven factors returned a Cronbach alpha coefficient score in excess of 0.70 and are accordingly considered reliable.

Table 4: Cronbach alpha coefficients

Factor	Cronbach alpha
Factor one: Entrepreneur's involvement	0,876
Factor two: Internet Agency Selection	0,734
Factor three: Internet Agency Briefing	0,798
Factor four: Understanding Web 2.0	0,834
Factor five: Writing Skills	0,745
Factor six: Marketing Orientation	0,723
Factor seven: Perceived Success of Online Marketing	0,854

The hypotheses

The following hypotheses were empirically tested:

H1: There is a positive relationship between the entrepreneur's involvement in the internet marketing activities of their hotel and the perceived success of online marketing.

H2: There is a positive relationship between the entrepreneur's ability to select the suitable internet agency and the perceived success of online marketing.

H3: There is a positive relationship between the entrepreneur's ability to brief adequately the internet agency and the perceived success of online marketing.

H4: There is a positive relationship between the entrepreneur's understanding of the Web 2.0 and the perceived success of online marketing.

H5: There is a positive relationship between the entrepreneur's writing skills and the perceived success of online marketing.

H6: There is a positive relationship between the entrepreneur's marketing orientation and the perceived success of online marketing.

Multiple regression analysis results

A multiple regression analysis has been conducted to address the aforementioned six hypotheses. The results, with the five independent variables – entrepreneur's involvement, internet agency selection, internet agency briefing, understanding of web 2.0, writing skills, marketing orientation – and the perceived value on online marketing, as the dependent one, are shown in Table 5.

It is obvious from the Table 5 that the aforementioned independent variables exert a positive influence on the dependent variable; consequently the hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6 are accepted.

Table 5: Multiple regressions results

Source	df	SS	Mean Square	F	Pr > F
Model	6	196,912	32,81	60,231	0,0001
Error	311	200,563	0,645		
Corected total	317	397,475			
R² = 49,5%					
Parameter	Estimate	t-values	Exceedance	Std error	
PERSUCINTER	2,754	0,005	0,334		
E_M involvement	0,308	4,834	0,001	0,050	
I_A selection	0,153	2,943	0,005	0,054	
I_A briefing	0,191	2,832	0,005	0,052	
U_W 2.0	0,165	3,187	0,003	0,051	
W_Skills	0,145	2,814	0,005	0,054	
M_Orientation	0,121	2,341	0,030	0,056	

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

A hotel should use all modern means to promote itself and be known at the public (Karagiannis, 2001). It is widely accepted that the Internet is a medium that allows a targeted and cost-effective way to approach target groups either locally or internationally, especially the latter one. Since the SM Greek hotels can not afford the luxury of using the traditional media, due to budget restraints, the Internet seems to be the ideal media for achieving their objectives. The

entrepreneur-manager of a SM Greek hotel is the most suitable person to be involved in the online marketing of his enterprise due to his overall understanding of the business, his high motivation to achieve the corporate objectives and due to the lack of specialized employees.

In order to fully take advantage of the Internet potentialities, the entrepreneur-manager has to be personally involved in the planning and implementation of the online marketing activities. In doing so, he will obtain:

- (i) The appropriate know-how to select and brief the Internet agency to collaborate with,
- (ii) An adequate understanding of the Web 2.0,
- (iii) The adequate writing skills for the web, and
- (iv) A marketing orientation

Since it is difficult for all these qualities to be found in an SM Greek hotel's entrepreneur-manager, it is highly recommended the development of suitable courses that will address the aforementioned issues. These courses have to be quite practical and focused on "how to" rather on "why" so as to be immediately utilized. Also the SM Greek hotel's entrepreneur-managers are strongly advised to fully use the Internet for personal or professional purposes (e.g. social networking sites, professional sites, email, blogging and micro-blogging, chatting, cloud computing, publishing electronic material etc.) so as to have an experience at first hand about the potentialities of the latter one as well as to keep pace with its continuous developments.

In any case, since the matter presents specific interest, a deeper research would be more useful. More objective assessments of marketing success and the inclusion of a wider variety of variables that can drive Internet marketing success leave scope for future research.

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Appendix 1

EI01	The entrepreneur-manager is the main participant in the planning of their hotel's on-line marketing activities
EI02	The entrepreneur-manager is the main participant in the implementation of their hotel's on-line marketing activities
EI03	The entrepreneur-manager consistently monitors the results of their hotel's on-line marketing activities
EI04	The entrepreneur-manager takes corrective action in case the results of their hotel's on-line marketing activities are not the desired ones
IS01	The entrepreneur-manager is aware about the process for selecting the internet agency
IS02	The entrepreneur-manager knows what to look for in selecting the internet agency
IS03	The entrepreneur-manager is experienced in selecting an internet agency
IB01	The entrepreneur-manager knows how to brief the internet agency about their hotel
IB02	The entrepreneur-manager knows how to brief the internet agency about what they would like to achieve via the online marketing activities
IB03	The entrepreneur-manager knows how to set objectives for the online marketing activities
UW01	The entrepreneur-manager uses social media
UW02	The entrepreneur-manager participates to blogs
UW03	The entrepreneur-manager uses the Internet to communicate and share electronic material with customers, friends, employees
WS01	The entrepreneur-manager is able to be succinct in their writing
WS02	The entrepreneur-manager is able to break-down the information into understandable and attractive chunks of information
WS03	The entrepreneur-manager is able to motivate via their writing the prospect to ask for more information or book a room
MO01	The entrepreneur-manager is focused on their customer satisfaction
MO02	The entrepreneur-manager monitors and takes into consideration their competitors activities
MO03	The entrepreneur-manager is focused on profitability
MO04	The entrepreneur-manager integrates their marketing activities
PM01	The online marketing activities results in more rooms booking
PM02	The online marketing activities results in increased customer satisfaction
PM03	The online marketing activities results in enhancement of hotel's brand
PM04	The online marketing activities results in increased customer referrals
PM05	The online marketing activities results in increased customer service
PM06	The online marketing activities are a value-for-money promotional tool
PM07	The online marketing activities increase hotel's customer loyalty

THE LEARNING STYLES OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

Lia Marinakou

IST College

University of Hertfordshire, Athens, Greece

ABSTRACT

This paper aims at identifying the learning styles of tourism management programme students in Greece and the investigation of embedding problem-based learning (PBL) via online activities in the assessment. There is need for degrees in tourism management programmes that will enable students to think critically. Tourism education and training is required to adapt to patterns of change which seem certain to exert a profound influence on future roles and behaviours, since the vocational aspect of learning and teaching has been criticised. In order to understand the students' learning style and behaviour it is important to develop learning and teaching strategies that enhance the student experience. The author has used Honey and Mumford's Learning Style Questionnaire (LSQ); even though it has been used widely in management training, very few studies using the LSQ however, have focused on hospitality and tourism. The results suggest that the students have a preferred style that poses challenges to lectures in understanding the students' learning behaviour as well as at developing their teaching strategy. The findings show that students prefer concrete learning styles, active and occasionally reflective. The author suggests

that an appropriate teaching method is problem-based learning with the use of online techniques to trigger the students' interest and give them the opportunity to reflect and practice the knowledge gained at the course.

Keywords: learning style, PBL, online learning, online teaching, tourism

INTRODUCTION

Hospitality and tourism are an applied area of study that depends on and draws from a wide range of disciplines. Tourism education and training is required to adapt to patterns of change which seem certain to exert a profound influence on future roles and behaviours (Simpson, 2001; Cooper et al., 1992). The growth in the provision of tourism programmes of study has been extraordinary in the last ten years in the United Kingdom (Stuart, 2002) while the number of students in these programmes has risen by 42% in the period of four years (UCAS, 2005). This paper aims at exploring the learning style of tourism students and their response to the use of problem-based learning via online environments as a means of enhancing the teaching and learning experience.

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM EDUCATION

Busby & Fiedel (2001 in Inui et al., 2006) state that they have conducted a study on the coursework offered in tourism degrees and they have found that there is a strong vocational focus. This is explained by the fact that tourism education has had the vocational focus since its development in European schools and mainly in Swiss schools. These schools put more emphasis on hotel management skills (Butler, 1999 in Inui et al., 2006; Busby, 2001). Hospitality and tourism are an applied area of study that depends on and draws from a wide range of disciplines. Tourism education and training is required to adapt to patterns of change which seem certain to exert a profound influence on future roles and behaviours (Simpson, 2001; Cooper et al., 1992).

In their study, Silver & Brennan (1988 in Stuart, 2002:11) found that the majority of tourism lecturers appear to have been taking on a form of liberal vocationalism in their approach to delivering their courses. Baum & Nickson (1998) claim that a

practical education should develop to the students the skills to cope with employment. In contrast other studies emphasise the importance of balancing the vocational with the academic aspect of tourism studies (Inui et al., 2006) and they claim that this approach prepares students who not only have the operational skills but they also have the knowledge on their field of study.

In addition, lecturers in tourism combine academic and vocational aspects and this has been described as 'an aggregative approach to education, despite the tendency for stated aims to favour the employment preparation focus' (Raffe, 1994; Inui et al., 2006) in counterpoint to the view that tourism students do not learn to reflect upon their body of knowledge (Inui et al., 2006:28). Therefore, Morgan (2004) suggested that there is need for degrees in tourism management programmes that will enable students to think critically. In view to this, a degree in tourism is regarded as a significant qualification in the tourism industry (Moir et al., 2004), moreover, it is required 'in order to provide personnel of high calibre to support the development of the tourism sector in Greece' (Christou, 1999).

The tourism management programme specification in the study focuses mainly on the academic aspects of the subject. Moreover, due to the nature of tourism studies, attention is paid to the vocational aspect as well. Therefore, there is support on behalf of the programme tutor and the teaching staff to the vocational aspect of the content and the delivery of the modules, resulting in an effort to recognising tourism as a discipline of study in higher education. Interestingly the skills and experience the students acquire during their studies result in high employment rates of tourism graduates (Busby, 2001; Inui et al., 2006).

THE LEARNING STYLE OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM STUDENTS

According to Keefe (1979 in Huang & Busby, 2007:93) 'learning styles are characteristic cognitive, effective and psychological behaviours that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with and respond to the learning environment'. There are however, many different terms used when defining and discussing learning styles and approaches. For example, Tickle (2001:956 in Dale & McCarthy, 2006:49) sees learning style as 'an expression of personality within the academic context and as such it is said to include learning

strategy, motivation, attitudes and cognitive style'. According to Hsu (1999:18) 'cognitive styles are information processing habits representing the learner's typical mode of perceiving, thinking, problem solving, and remembering'.

Byrne et al. (2002) and Lashley (1999) and Hsu (1999) suggest that in order to understand the students' learning style and behaviour it is important to develop learning and teaching strategies that enhance the student experience. Therefore, the students' characteristics and learning styles are critical for lecturers to understand and reflect on, since students bring different expectations to learning. In addition, students in hospitality and tourism should be prepared for the changes that occur in the industry and more importantly they need to learn how to learn (Christou, 1999).

There are different approaches to learning one of which is the deep and the surface approach to learning. The deep approach 'arises from a felt need to engage the task appropriately and meaningfully, so the student tries to use the most appropriate cognitive activities for handling it' (Biggs, 2003:16). When using the deep approach in handling the task, students have positive feelings: interest, a sense of importance, challenge, even of exhilaration; they find the material easier to understand (Ramsden, 2005:57). The surface approach to learning is 'typified as an intention to complete the task, memorize information, make no distinction between new ideas and existing knowledge' (Fry et al., 2007:18). The approach to learning depends on the task and the student (Ramsden, 2005) and therefore each may be implemented at different situations. The two approaches have been considered in the design of the online task as it is discussed in the following.

Furthermore, several models and measurement instruments have been developed to classify individual learning preferences, nevertheless Honey and Mumford's Learning Style Questionnaire (LSQ) has been used widely in management training (Huang & Busby, 2007). Very few studies using the LSQ however, have focused on hospitality and tourism (Dale & McCarthy, 2006), despite that the learning preferences of tourism and hospitality management students have been the focus of many recent studies. Despite the suggestion by Berings & Poell (2002:57 in Lashley & Barron, 2006:555) that the 'LSQ has better reliability and better face validity than other instruments, but its construct validity has hardly been investigated' the author has used it to identify the learning styles

of the sample. She believes that this tool helps at identifying the students' views and alternative to learning styles. The aim has been to identify the students' learning style so as to stimulate reflection. The LSQ offers a four-fold classification that is presented in the following table.

Table 1: Learning styles

ACTIVISTS	Respond most positively to learning situations offering challenge, to include new experiences and problems, excitement and freedom in their learning.
Reflectors	Respond most positively to structured learning activities where they are provided with time to observe, reflect and think, and allowed to work in a detailed manner.
Theorists	Respond well to logical, rational structure and clear aims, where they are given time for methodical exploration and opportunities to question and stretch their intellect.
Pragmatists	Respond most positively to practically based, immediately relevant learning activities, which allow scope for practice using theory.

Source: Fry et al. (2007:20)

The above description shows a tendency towards the adoption of different styles based on the task, the time and the allocated effort (McGill & Beaty, 2001). Lashley (1999) and Barron & Arcodia (2002) claim that the hospitality and tourism students favour the vocational and practical aspect of their studies. They are diverse, from different cultures and they bring their own skills and experiences when entering the higher education (Dale & McCarthy, 2006). The existing differences in learning in higher education may be the result of the ability of the individual learner (Wickens et al., 2006). Lashley & Barron (2006:555) suggest that 'there is no one best way, but teaching strategies that are not sensitive to students' learning style preferences can present learners with difficulties'.

Lashley (1999) suggests that hospitality management students prefer to learn from action-based situations and according to Barron & Arcodia (2002) they have the tendency towards activist learning styles; they are challenged by new experiences (Lashley & Barron, 2006). In another study, in contrast, Wong et al. (2000 in Barron & Arcodia, 2002) have found that Asian students show reflector-learning preferences. In addition, research conducted in Greece suggests that the traditional form of teaching and learning should be revised (Christou, 1999) and he proposes that new methods proven successful in other countries should be implemented. Therefore, this research has used the LSQ to explore the learning styles of level 2 tourism management students at IST College-University of Hertfordshire in Greece.

THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING THE LSQ

The sample included the level 2 students (N=20) at the BA (Honours) Tourism Management programme. The students were given the questionnaire to study at home. Then they were required to assess their learning style bearing in mind both their studies at level 1 as well as at level 2. The LSQ comprises of 80 questions that the students should state whether they agree with (v) or not agree (x) and then they had to calculate their result following the instructions they were given.

The findings show that the majority of the students (80%) are activists. These students prefer to engage in practical experiences with hands-on activities (Dale & McCarthy, 2006). Additionally, they prefer the teaching style that is a reflection on their own learning approach. They work well in teams and they enjoy contexts with variety and situations difficult to predict (Lashley & Barron, 2006:564) that matches the hospitality and tourism environment. On the contrast, activists are thought to avoid planning, they rush into things and may leave things to the last minute and occasionally they have poor time management skills (Lashley & Morrison, 2000). Only four students are reflectors and therefore require more instructions in performing a task. The author bearing in mind the learning style of the group designed the assessment of the level 2 module - Tourism Geography Field Research.

PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

Lashley (1999) suggests that hospitality management students prefer to learn from action-based situations and according to Barron & Arcodia (2002) they have the tendency towards activist learning styles; they are challenged by new experiences (Lashley & Barron, 2006). Students in this case take responsibility of their own learning by exploring the available resources to solve the problem posed to them; they construct their knowledge and they make connections between prior knowledge, experiences and newly acquired knowledge (Martin et al., 2008). Sivan et al. (2000:382) propose that in active learning 'students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes while being actively involved in the process of inquiry', therefore the activists (the students in the sample) may reflect what they have experienced via PBL and active learning. According to Loughran (2002:37) 'effective reflective practice involves careful consideration of both "being" and "action" to enhance the possibilities of learning through experience'. He continues that reflection has been recognised as a valuable cognitive process and helps to conceptualise the practice setting. Reflection is recognised as a higher-order learning activity (Schon, 1983 in Biggs, 2003). Similarly, Kivela & Kivela (2005) advocate that PBL helps the students develop their critical and analytical thinking. Nevertheless, they claim that PBL requires prior knowledge, motivation and skills for self-directed learning.

Martin et al. (2008:19) state 'PBL has been used, with great success, in a range of vocational curricula'. Research in the field of PBL has shown that students develop an improved attitude towards learning and higher level thinking skills is used for example critical analysis, problem solving and reflection (Heliker, 1994). Duncan & Al-Nakeeb (2006) claim that students demonstrated higher motivation, wider reading and critical thinking with PBL approaches. Kivela & Kivela (2005:440) state that PBL makes that students curious and 'stimulates them to search for information'. The learner autonomy has been linked closely to motivation and self-esteem that allows the students to feel valued and urge them to contribute to their group's exploration of the problem presented (Martin et al., 2008). On the one hand, research has shown that PBL results in intrinsic motivation, nevertheless the 'degree of autonomy demonstrated by a student relies on the prior learning experience, attitude and knowledge of learning' (Dickinson, 1997 in

Martin et al., 2008:20; Kivela & Kivela, 2005). On the other hand, there is also evidence that extrinsic motivation is still high with PBL, students were outcome-oriented since there is emphasis on performance rather than learning in education (Luddy, 1998). He claims that the individual focuses on extrinsic motivation in order to cope with the time and the effort to perform tasks in PBL. On the contrast, Miller & Peterson (2003) claim that students may show frustration in managing and coping with group dynamics, as well as in managing the time and work required at PBL.

According to McGill & Beaty (2001:12) 'action learning is based on individuals learning from experience through reflection and action'. They support the view that PBL is not dissimilar from action learning, and reflective learning in higher education is similar to action learning. They continue that action learning may blend with new technology in making more effective use virtual learning environments.

ONLINE LEARNING AND TEACHING

Education is changing with the development of wider interest in the internet and the use of new technologies. The traditional teaching methods in higher education have been face-to-face delivery and paper-based distance learning (Dale & Lane, 2004), these methods have been criticised as poor learning methods (Keegan, 2007). Even though lectures are thought to be popular in higher education and the basic learning foundation for students they are also considered to have passive students participation and lack of feedback regarding the understanding of the lecture (Keegan, 2007). The development in technology has also penetrated higher education with the increasing use of virtual learning environments (VLES) (Dale & Lane, 2004; Dale & Lane, 2007; Biscomb et al., 2008). The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) defined VLE as 'the components in which learners and tutors participate in online interactions of various kinds, including online learning' (Weller et al., 2005:253 in Dale & Lane, 2007:101).

VLEs usually enhance student learning by encouraging discussion and online tasks (Dale & Lane, 2004) and they 'offer more stimulating learner experience' (Dale & Lane, 2007:101). This approach has benefited higher education institutions

especially since the increase in numbers and class sizes. This increased number of students, the work overload as well as other elements such as the inadequate resources and funding create high levels of work-related stress to lecturers in higher education. This stress may be addressed with the use of technology (Biscomb et al., 2008). Nevertheless, Dale & Lane (2007) claim that the use of technology and VLEs should be under rigorous evaluation.

The Internet has benefited a lot the teaching and learning (Zheng et al., 2008). The main benefit from the use of technology is a saving of marking time, since the system may assess each answer and provide the students with a score. The technology allows the lecturer to analyse student progression and achievement in relation to each question or task separately. It also allows the use of digital images that are a better way for the human brain to store and recall them as opposed to text (Keegan, 2007). According to Williams et al. (1996 in Keegan, 2007) they are triggering a wide range of associations and they enhance creative thinking. Besides that the cognitive theory proposes that learning occurs when the learner processes selected material and integrates that with knowledge (Keegan, 2007), therefore images that are relevant to the content of the module may promote or even enhance effective learning. In contrast, other authors suggest that surfing the net or uploading notes do not lead to learning (Zheng et al., 2008). They suggest that a systematic approach in the design of the tasks must be adopted. Additionally, students may feel isolated, frustrated, anxious and confused (Chou & Liu, 2005).

The level of students' knowledge and skills on the use of IT is an issue to be considered, even though most of the students are computer literate. The design and functionality of the VLE influences the engagement of the students (Dale & Lane, 2007). They continue that the students' engagement can be considered as a 'content plus support model'.

On the one hand, Biscomb et al. (2008) claim that the use of online learning helps with testing theories and knowledge rather than for deeper forms of learning. On the other hand Gibbs (1999) and Chou & Liu (2005) claim that they may encourage deep learning with the provision of feedback. Johnson (2005 in Dale & Lane, 2007:101) claims that reflective skills can be developed in VLEs as there is more time for the student to interact.

Lashley & Rowson (2005) claim that information technology is an important element in hospitality and tourism studies. Other studies (Sigala & Baum, 2003) suggest that a challenge posed to hospitality and tourism graduates highlights the need of information literacy, knowledge management and interaction at VLEs. This has led to a change in the use of pedagogical models that are now used to foster collaborative learning communities. They propose that virtual hospitality and tourism universities will be established in the near future.

For the purpose of this study the environment that is used at the IST College – University of Hertfordshire is StudyNet. There are a variety of functions of this system such as uploading lecture notes, podcasts or assessment such as multiple choice questions, and discussion forums. Students may also upload information themselves. Some students engage with the VLE but others decide to just download information and lecture notes. Williams (1996 in Chou & Liu, 2005) suggests that the students in VLEs should have the opportunity to self-monitor their progress that may be done through practice assignments and discussions. Additionally, they should show self-efficacy to judge their capabilities after they have evaluated the programme and the assessment.

Having identified the main students' learning style (Activist), the lecturer adopted the PBL concept and active learning through the use of the VLE. She has designed the assessment of the module following the results of her study. A set of teaching procedures and guidelines are provided to the students for the module in the module guide. The content has been consistent with the university's programme and the assessment has been both formative and summative. She acted as the facilitator (McGill & Beaty, 2001) and encouraged the students to take responsibility for action in overcoming a problem. In the formative assessment as part of their final coursework the students are given a set of statistics on their chosen tourism destination and are asked to perform some statistical analysis which then they had to compare with the other members of the group and upload a draft report on the findings. The deep approach to learning (Biggs, 2003) was encouraged by asking them to search and use the main concepts on the module and comment on them. Each group should also access the rest of the reports and they should put their comments online for discussion. The comments made by the teams and the lecturer, are used as constructive feedback towards their final assignment. The lecturer has been monitoring the procedure and the interactions

both in the VLE and in the classroom and has provided suggestions and directions when necessary. Additionally, the students could control the content, their pace of learning and towards the end a self-assessment marking framework was provided to give them the opportunity to evaluate their own work, knowledge and learning. The above agrees with Sigala & Baum (2003) who claim that online teaching should facilitate online learning and knowledge building. Therefore, students moved from being passive recipients of knowledge to participants in activities that encompass analysis, synthesis and evaluation. They have been encouraged to be active learners, that 'involves students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing' (Sivan et al., 2000:381).

FINDINGS - CONCLUSION

The findings of this practice paper suggest that hospitality and tourism students learn more effectively in VLEs even though it has been a novelty within the department. With appropriate guidelines the particular group developed the necessary learning strategies in order to perform well at the particular task, and they showed enthusiasm in the interaction and the discussion. Interestingly, those students expressed their satisfaction on the module evaluation and the positive affects this activity had on their learning. They also commented positively on the quality of the VLE, the easy access and use of the system. The above affirms the suggestion made by Hara & Kling (2000 in Chou & Liu, 2005:74) that 'technological proficiency and the ability to rely on the community of learners through learning tools have a positive effect on satisfaction'.

It is evident from this study that active learning with use of technology in hospitality and tourism programmes contributes to the development of critical thinking and problem solving and they give the opportunity to students to develop themselves as learners and it may be an effective path to help the students respond to the changes in the industry. Online collaborative learning has been widely used allows the instructor to use the tool in facilitating insight and understanding (Du et al., 2007:95) rather than as 'one way dispenser of knowledge'. Nonetheless, concluding it is suggested that a blending approach of

both online learning and teaching as well as with traditional practices may be the most effective approach in the hospitality and tourism education.

LIMITATIONS

The significant limitation of this study is that the sample is small and not representative of the population. The learning style of as many as possible students should be investigated in order to reach generalisations. There is great diversity among the students in hospitality and tourism programmes.

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WORK PLACEMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY PROSPECTS OF THE TOURISM BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENTS GRADUATES IN GREECE

Velissariou Efstathios

Assistant Professor

Technological Educational Institute (TEI) of Larissa

Department of Tourism Business Administration, Larissa, Greece

ABSTRACT

The link between the Labour market and education constitutes a basic condition not only for the professional career placement of graduates, but also for the competitiveness amongst enterprises and the growth of the economy in general. The tourism sector in Greece constitutes an important sector for employment and regional development.

Public Technological Educational Institutes have hitherto played a leading role in the education of tourism business administration in Greece, aiming to prepare proficient executives for the specific sector.

In the present article, the results of research that took place in 2009, in the departments of Tourism enterprises at the Technological Educational Institute in Larissa and in Heraklion, are presented. The location of these two Departments is

very different regarding the tourist development and tourism infrastructures in each region. The scope of the research was to record graduate employability prospects in the tourism market, and also to identify the work placement problems and opportunities of the respective graduates.

The parameters individually examined are the employability of graduates, the types of professions, career preferences, graduate mobility, problems during placement and other parameters concerning differences between the two departments.

Based on the results of the research, proposals will be suggested in regards to the study, the career placement of graduates and their future professional opportunities.

Keywords: Tourism education, Work placement, Employability prospects, Professional opportunities

INTRODUCTION

In the present paper, the results of research that took place in 2009 in Greece, in the departments of Tourism Business Administration at the Technological Educational Institutes of Larissa and Heraklion, are presented, concerning the employability prospects of the graduates in the tourism market, and also to identify the work placement problems and opportunities of the specific graduates.

In countries which have significant inbound tourism, the effects on employment are very important. In these countries, education and vocational training in tourism professions is essential to the quality of services in tourism. On the other hand, the link between the Labour market and education constitutes a basic condition not only for the professional career placement of graduates, but also for the competitiveness amongst enterprises and also the growth of the economy in general. The relationship between higher education and employment is among the most frequently discussed issues of higher education, but systematic knowledge of this connection is relatively poor (Teichler 2000).

According to the Manila Declaration on World Tourism of 1980, Part B for "Human Recourses" (WTO, 1980):

- Vocational training and the continual upgrading of technical expertise in the field of tourism are fundamental, not only for the recipient but also to society in general.
- Professional ability largely depends on the quality of basic, general and technical education.
- In the tourism development scheme, the education of specialised personnel must be interconnected with the creation of a tourist product.

Tourism education began as a development of technical/vocational schools in Europe. These schools emphasised training in core competencies such as hospitality, hotel management and related business skills (Butler, 1999; Morgan, 2004). However, the great interest and demand both from the public and private sectors acted as a motivating factor for the rapid growth of tourism studies. As a result, in addition to technical schools, there was a constant development and establishment of departments with tourism-oriented study programs at the higher level of education. (Butler, 1999). The aim of these programmes is to provide students with the actual needs in training and education. Tourism programmes have been the centre of discussions with debates focusing on the balance between the vocational and academic orientation of studies. Tourism curriculums at universities often have a vocational character (Busby, 2001) with educators focusing on producing skilled and knowledgeable managerial personnel for the industry.

Many studies have used income levels or employment status as employment outcome rates (Teichler 2002). Some studies have operationalised employability as the time that elapses between graduation and employment (Brown 1990). Some others, as dependent variables stipulate the number of years spent in a career or an occupational field (Knight and Yorke 2002; Purcell and Quinn 1996). Busby (2001), argues that as a result of tourism studies, the useful skills in addition to practical experience in the industry are the sources for the high employment rate of tourism graduates.

The international character of the tourism market place in addition to technological changes and the replacement of long-term job prospects with short-term based project positions (Le Heron & Hathaway, 1999) make imperative the need to provide students with the necessary skills and attributes to face these

challenges. In a competitive educational environment with a huge number of different tourism courses offered at various universities, it is possible for candidate students to compare graduate employability prospects in order to better decide on their tourism studies orientation (Nunan, 1999; Symes, 1999). This is the reason that higher education institutions have used graduate employment figures and examples of successful graduates, as a key marketing strategy to attract new students (Le Heron & Hathaway, 2000). Most universities, for example, have statements that identify graduate attributes and their link with workplace skills. The viability of tourism courses are strongly connected to market factor viability (Symes, 1999). Courses are based mainly on student demand which in turn is based on their perceptions of workplace requirements and career opportunities.

Tourism education is dominated by the above market forces given that high market demands was a major contributing factor to the rapid expansion of this sector during the late 1980s to early 1990s (McKercher, 2000). In recent decades, tertiary tourism education has progressed to a mature phase, anticipating a period of instability with a decline in demand and a consolidation of programs (McKercher, 2000). These factors make the need for innovative and progressive curriculum development essential in order for courses to remain commercially viable.

TOURISM AND EMPLOYMENT IN GREECE

According to the National Statistical Agency of Greece, in 2008, the number of employees in the hotel and restaurant–catering sectors in Greece was 315 100. Nonetheless, it should be noted that only a small portion of employees in the restaurant and catering sector can not be included in the tourism industry.

Table 1: Employment in the Hotel and Restaurant sectors in Greece.

Year	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Mean	% to the employment in Greece
2000	235,1	272,8	289	265	265,5	6,49%
2008	288,2	325,5	339,5	307,1	315,1	6,91%

Source: ESYE, (2009).

According to research conducted by the Aegean University for the Association of Greek Tourism Enterprises (SETE), in the year 2000, the number of people directly employed in tourism amounted 255 308, of which 37.9% or 96 759 were employed at hotels in Greece which accounted for 539 990 beds in the same year.

Table 2: Employment in the Tourism Industry in year 2000.

Tourism Industry	Employees	Percentage
Hotel enterprises	96.759	37,90%
Supplemental accommodations	24.895	9,75%
Entrepreneur	49.711	19,47%
Travel agencies/Tour operators	19.305	7,56%
Road transportation	7.462	2,92%
Airline transportation	12.136	4,75%
Sea transportation	9.600	3,76%
Other touristic enterprises	35.440	13,88%
Total	255.308	100,00%

Source : SETE 2002

According to the research results of Velissariou & Zagkotsi (2010), the number of hotel employees in 2008 was 145 000, while the bed capacity for the same year was 715 857. When taking into consideration the data from the SETE (2002) study that hotel employees represent 37.9% of the employees in the tourism industry in Greece, then the total number of people employed directly in tourism should amount to 380 000 employees or 8.3% of employment in Greece.

Table 3: Educational Level of Personnel in Hotels

Hotel category	Post-graduate degr	University degree	Technical school	Secondary School (Lyceum)	Basic compulsory education	Basic + Lyceum
5*	2,33%	28,49%	26,37%	24,95%	17,86%	42,81%
4*	1,76%	18,86%	21,76%	33,76%	23,87%	57,63%
3*	1,58%	17,54%	16,08%	42,02%	22,78%	64,80%
2*	1,17%	17,25%	12,87%	46,49%	22,22%	68,7%
5*-2*	1,55%	18,80%	17,40%	39,84%	22,42%	62,26%
Seasonal hotels	1,52%	14,19%	16,88%	37,97%	29,44%	67,41%

Source: (Velissariou & Krikeli 2008).

Although the number of people employed in the tourism industry in Greece is quite high, the education level of these employees is low. This is due to the seasonal nature of employment in tourism. It should be noted that Greece is a tourist destination mainly for summer holidays. The fundamental problem among seasonal employees is their lack of education/training in tourism. This is 'covered' by the support of well-trained personnel which makes up the core staff and is that which defines the overall quality of services provided in tourism.

Table 3 shows those employees with only a Secondary School (Lyceum) diploma or only the minimum compulsory education in 2 to 5-star hotels, amount to a total of 64.12% of the overall personnel. It is also interesting to note that seasonal employees in hotels have a lower level of education in comparison with employees in hotels in general. On the contrary, the education level of personnel in 5-star hotels is higher than in the remaining categories. In particular, employees with a university or post-graduate degree represent 30.82% of all personnel, compared to 20.33% in 2-5 star hotels or 15.71% in seasonal hotels (Velissariou & Krikeli 2008).

TOURISM EDUCATION IN GREECE

Tourism studies at the tertiary level are provided in Greece by public Technological Educational Institutes. There are a total of seven departments. Admission to these departments takes place upon the completion of secondary school (lyceum) and on the basis of one's performance on entrance examinations which also assess competency in one foreign language. The length of studies is 8 semesters, the last of which is a work placement. The main areas of education are tourism, tourism administration in general as well as hotel management, travel agency administration and Restaurant – catering sector.

In addition to the Technological Educational Institutes, education in Tourism Profession studies is offered at 2 Tourism High Schools (on the island of Rhodes and at Agios Nikolaos in Crete). Admission to these programs also takes place upon the completion of secondary school (lyceum) and based on the performance of entrance examinations. The length of studies is seven semesters. Each academic year consists of two components of study: A) the theoretical component, beginning in October of each academic year and ending in June of the following year and B) the practical component, a continuation of the theoretical component and an inextricable part of education beginning in the month of July and ending in September.

EMPLOYABILITY RESEARCH

Research scope

The scope of the research was to record the graduates' employability prospects in the tourism market, and also to identify the work placement problems and the professional opportunities for the specific graduates. The parameters examined are the Employability of graduates, the types of professions, career preferences, graduate mobility, the problems during placement and other parameters concerning the differences between the two departments.

Research field and methodology

The TEI of Larissa is located in the city of Larissa, in the Region of Thessaly in the central of Greece. The Department of Tourism Business Administration belongs to the School of Business Administration and Economics and was established in 1984. The Department of Tourism Business Administration in Crete is located in the city of Heraklion, Crete and belongs to the School of Business Administration and Economics at the TEI of Crete. The programs of studies in both departments are quite similar and provide education in tourism theory as well as in the management of tourism enterprises, such as hotel establishments, restaurants and travel agencies.

The primary research was conducted in the Tourism Enterprises Departments of Larissa and Crete, by using a close-ended type questionnaire. The research took place at the TEI of Larissa at the time of convocation or the three graduation days in 2009 (in February, July and October). Candidates filled in standardized questionnaires prior to their graduation ceremony. A total of 100 questionnaires were completed which examined almost all of the graduates. The same process was followed at the TEI of Crete, however only on the single graduation day that took place in May of 2009 where 85 questionnaires were completed, which represents 49.4% of the graduates). It should be noted that the length of time between the completion of one's studies and graduation day differs between the two departments. More specifically, the average length of time between the completion of one's studies and graduation day (convocation) at the TEI of Larissa

is four months; while at the TEI of Crete it is one year and four months (the last convocation took place in June of 2007).

As a result of this difference, graduates from the TEI of Crete had one year longer until their graduation day to find employment than the TEI of Larissa graduates did, thus influencing the research results concerning employment in the labour market.

RESEARCH RESULTS OF EMPLOYABILITY

The most significant research results are presented in this chapter. Table 4 indicates the sex of the graduates in the 2 departments. It is evident that the percentage of female graduates at a rate of 72.3% is much higher than that of male graduates. This number is even higher at the TEI of Crete reaching a rate of 86.2%.

Table 4: Graduates in 2009 by sex

Graduates	Male	Female
TEI of Larissa	38,0%	62,0%
TEI of Crete	17,8%	86,2%
Total	27,7%	72,3%

a) Employment during the studies

Employment during the course of one's studies is common among tourism enterprise students. At the TEI of Larissa, 58.8% of students were employed during the course of their studies while the corresponding number for TEI of Crete students was 66.6%. The higher rate of employment among TEI of Crete students is due to the greater availability of employment. There is a significant difference in the main areas of employment between Larissa and Crete as well,. While in Crete, employment was mainly found in hotels at a rate of 52.8%, the corresponding number in Larissa was only 27.3%. This difference is largely due to the limited number of hotels in the area. On the other hand, most tourism enterprises

students in Larissa find employment in restaurants, cafes or bars at a rate of 54.5% while in Crete the corresponding number is only 26.4%.

Table 5: Employment during studies

Graduates Working during the studies	TEI of Larissa	TEI of Crete	In total
Yes	58,8%	66.7%	62,4%
No	41,2%	33.3%	37,6%
Full Time work	18,6%	30.6%	25,0%
Seasonal work	48,8%	44.9%	46,7%
Temporary work	32,6%	24.5%	28,3%
In Hotels	27,3%	52.8%	45,3%
In Restaurant, Cafés or Bars	54,5%	26.4%	34,7%
In Travel agencies	0,0%	9.4%	6,7%
In Other work positions	18,2%	11.3%	13,3%

b) Employability of the Graduates

The most fundamental question in the study examined the employment status of graduates at the time of their convocation or graduation day. According to the research results, 61% of TEI of Larissa graduates were employed by their graduation day while the corresponding number for TEI of Crete graduates was 89.3%.

Table 6: Employment status of Graduates in 2009 at the time of convocation

Graduates Employment Situation	TEI of Larisa	TEI of Crete	Male	Female	Totally
Employed	61.0%	89.3%	73.6	74.0%	73.9%
Full time employment	82.0%	54.7%	69.2%	66.0%	66.9%
Seasonal employment	18.0%	37.3%	28.2%	28.9%	28.7%
Not specified the duration of employment	0.0%	8.0%	2.6%	5.2%	4.4%
Not working	39.0%	10.7%	7.6%	26.0%	26.1%
Not seeking work	6.0%	2.4%	1.6%	3.8%	4.4%
Unemployed at time of convocation	33.0%	8.3%	6.0%	22.1%	21.7%

A significant difference, which is largely a result of the length of time between the completion of one's studies and the convocation ceremony (graduation day), is noted between the two departments. Whereas this length of time is relatively small (a mere four months) at the TEI of Larissa, it is 16 months at the TEI of Crete. Convocation ceremonies take place only once a year at the TEI of Crete, therefore the length of time between the completion of studies and convocation provides more opportunity to find employment.

The above results may be interpreted as follows, that 61% of the departments' graduates were already working by the time of their graduation, while after one year this number rose to 89.3%. In both cases these rates are quite high when

taking into consideration that 4.4% of graduates do not actively seek employment after the completion of their studies.

On the other hand, a significant difference was noted in the permanency of employment. While 82% of TEI of Larissa graduates stated that they had full time employment, only 54.7% of TEI of Crete graduates did. This may be due to the fact that a large number of tourism-related businesses in Crete are seasonal in nature.

Apart from the state of employment, it is interesting to examine the types of businesses where graduates are employed. Table 7 indicates that the majority of graduates (44.9%) work in hotels, while graduates working in travel agencies come in second place at a rate of 16.9%.

Table 7: Work Position of Tourism enterprise graduates

Enterprise \ Graduates	TEI of Larissa	TEI of Crete	Totally
Hotel	47.5%	42.7%	44.9%
Travel agency / Tour Operator	19.7%	14.7%	16.9%
Airline / Airport	0.0%	9.3%	5.1%
Restaurant / Café/Bar	11.5%	1.3%	5.9%
Self-employed	0.0%	2.7%	1.5%
Other company	13.1%	22.7%	18.4%
Public or Local authority (in tourism)	3.3%	2.7%	2.9%
Not specified	4.9%	4.0%	4.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

About 18.4% of graduates are not employed in the tourism industry. Merely 13.1% of these graduates are from the TEI of Larissa, while 22.7% are TEI of Crete graduates. Other significant differences between the graduates of the two departments are evident in employment in airports or airlines and at restaurants or café/bars. More specifically, 9.3% of TEI of Crete graduates work at airports or airlines, while the corresponding percentage of TEI Larissa graduates is 0%. On the other hand, 11.5% of graduates from the TEI of Larissa work in restaurants or café/bars while only 1.3% of TEI of Crete graduates do.

Table 8: Employability of Graduates by Gender

Enterprise \ Graduates	Male	Female	Total
Hotels	59.0%	39.2%	44.9%
Travel agencies / Tour Operators	15.4%	17.5%	16.9%
Airlines / Airports	0.0%	7.2%	5.1%
Restaurants / Café/ Bars	7.7%	5.2%	5.9%
Self-employed	5.1%	0.0%	1.5%
Other company (not in tourism)	10.3%	21.6%	18.4%
Public or Local authorities	0.0%	4.1%	2.9%
Not specified	2.6%	5.2%	4.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Differences are also noted with regard to employment and sex of the graduates. It is reported that 59% of male graduates are employed at hotels while the

corresponding percentage for female graduates is 39.2%. However, employment at airlines and airports is almost exclusive to female graduates (7.2%). Placement rates are the same for both sexes at travel agencies and tour operators. Mainly female graduates are employed at non-tourism related business at a rate of 21.65% while the corresponding percentage for male graduates is 10.3%.

Table 9: Employment preferences in the Tourism Industry

Enterprise \ Graduates	Male	Female	TEI of Larissa
Hotel enterprise	52,94%	35,7%	42,22%
Travel agency / Tour Operator	23,53%	25,0%	24,44%
Public sector in tourism	5,88%	16,1%	12,22%
In Tourism (general not specified)	2,94%	8,9%	6,67%
Airlines	2,94%	5,4%	4,44%
Not in tourism	5,88%	1,8%	3,33%
Restaurant / Catering	5,88%	0,00%	2,22%
Airport	0,00%	3,6%	2,22%
Entrepreneurship in Tourism	0,00%	1,8%	1,11%
Shipping (tourism)	0,00%	1,8%	1,11%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

c) Employability preferences by the graduates

Table 8 depicts the preferences of TEI of Larissa graduates as to where they would like to be employed. It is interesting to note the differences between male and female graduates. Hotels are the most desired place for graduates to find employment at a rate of 52.9% for male graduates and 35.7% for female graduates. Travel agencies come in second place at a rate of 24.4% without a significant difference noted between genders. Employment in the Public Sector comes third in the female graduates' preference at a rate of 16.1%. However, only 5.9% of male graduates showed this preference. Approximately 6.7% of all graduates stated tourism in general as their choice of employment without specifying a particular area. Female graduates preferred employment in Airlines and in Airport services, while men preferred restaurant and catering work. Only a small percentage of graduates (3.3%) which were mainly male expressed a desire not to work in tourism. Finally, it should be noted that a very small percentage of graduates (1.1%) expressed an interest in starting their own business in the tourism industry.

d) Employability Problems

The problems faced by graduates during the employment seeking process are not so much related to finding employment (19.5%) as in finding a job to their liking (26.8%). This is more prevalent in male graduates at a rate of 29.4%. On the other hand, the work schedule posed a bigger problem for female (16.9%) than male (10.3%) graduates. Salary issues came third and were of concern to both genders equally at a rate of 18.3%. Work location was the least significant problem, and was mentioned by only 6.1% of those surveyed.

e) Preferences for a career in Tourism

The last questions in the study investigated whether graduates were satisfied with their choice of studies in general and if they were interested in pursuing a career in tourism. The results showed that 87% of the graduates wanted to pursue a career in tourism. This ratio was higher in male graduates (90.6%) and slightly lower for female graduates (85.5%).

Table 10: Problems in the Employment Seeking Process

Problems \ Graduates	TEI of Larisa	TEI of Crete	Male	Female	Total
Finding employment in general	24,3%	15,8%	20,6%	19,1%	19,5%
Find desirable employment	29,9%	24,5%	29,4%	25,8%	26,8%
Work Location	6,5%	5,8%	5,9%	6,2%	6,1%
Work Schedule	12,2%	17,3%	10,3%	16,9%	15,0%
Seasonality	8,4%	18,0%	14,7%	13,5%	13,8%
Salary	17,8%	18,7%	17,6%	18,5%	18,3%
Other	0,9%	0,0%	1,5%	0,0%	0,4%

The last question examines graduate mobility relative to one's career in tourism. In particular, it looks at whether graduates prefer work, without much potential for advancement but close to their residence as opposed to a career in tourism with potential but far from their permanent residence.

Table 11: Graduate Preferences for a Career in the Tourism Industry

Graduates Career in Tourism industry	TEI of Larisa	TEI of Crete	Male %	Female %	Total
YES	91,0%	82,1%	90,6%	85,5%	87,0%
NO	9,0%	11,9%	9,4%	10,7%	10,3%
No answer	0,0%	6,0%	0,0%	3,8%	2,7%
Sum	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

The results showed that the majority of graduates, at a rate of 58.7% would prefer a promising career regardless of location. 35.9% would prefer employment close to their home even with less potential. This percentage was slightly higher in female graduates (37.4%) than in male graduates (32.1%).

CONCLUSIONS AND DOCUMENTATION

Tourism accounts for a significant employment sector in Greece. Employee education level is definitely a factor determining the quality of the services provided. (Parasuraman, et al 1985). Nevertheless, based on the research results, the educational level of employees in the hotel sector in Greece is particularly low since 62.3% of all hotel employees and 67.4% of seasonal hotel employees have only a Secondary School (Lyceum) diploma or the minimum compulsory education.

Table 12: Preferences for a Career in the tourism industry dependant on residence

Graduates Preference for	TEI of Larissa	TEI of Crete	Male	Female	Total
a work place near one's residence (without potential)	38,0%	33,3%	32,1%	37,4%	35,9%
a Career in tourism independent of one's residence	62,0%	54,8%	58,5%	58,8%	58,7%
No answer	0,0%	11,9%	9,4%	3,8%	5,4%
Sum	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Research investigating graduates from the two tourism business administration departments showed that on average 73.9% of graduates were working by the time of their convocation ceremony, while 4.4% was not looking for employment and only 21.7% were unemployed. It should be noted that the percentage of graduates from the TEI of Crete who were employed by the time of their convocation was 89.3%. This number is high when compared to that of the TEI of Larissa graduates. This is due to the lengthy period of time between the completion of studies and the convocation ceremony, which amounts to 16 months. The above rates of employment immediately after the completion of studies may be considered quite high, especially at a time when unemployment among young people in Greece is particularly high. In January of 2010, unemployment in Greece reached a rate of 11.3%. However, in the 15-24 year-old age group it was 30.4% and amongst 25-34 year-olds the rate was 14.6% with women at 14.9% and men at 8.7% (ESA, 2010).

It is important to note that the vast majority of graduates, at a rate of 80% are employed in the tourism sector especially when considering the fact that it is very

common in Greece for graduates to be employed in positions that are unrelated to their studies. (Karamesini Maria, 2008).

The employability prospects are favourable for both male and female graduates since the employment rates are much the same for both sexes. Nonetheless, the main differences between male and female graduates are related to their preferences as to the type of enterprise they would like to work at in their future career. Although hotels rank first for both genders, the percentage is smaller for women than for men. Moreover, the preference for employment in Travel Agencies, the Public Sector, Local Authorities and Airlines is stronger in female than in male graduates. On the other hand, males show a stronger preference for employment in hotels and restaurants than females do.

It should be noted that graduates are for the most part employed by hotels at a rate of 44.9% and Travel Agencies at a rate of 16.9%. The main differences that were recorded in graduate employment between TEI of Larissa and TEI of Crete graduates was that a large percentage of TEI of Crete graduates worked for Airlines and at the airport (9.3%), while a significant rate (11.5) of TEI of Larissa graduates worked in restaurants and café/bars.

A special characteristic of the students in the departments of Tourism Business Administration which was recorded in the study was the fact that many were employed at the time of their studies. More specifically, 62.4% stated that they had worked during the course of their studies with 25% having worked on a regular basis. Employment was mainly found in hotels, restaurants and café/bars. Significant differences were noted among TEI of Larissa and TEI of Crete graduates in this area both in terms of the rate of employment during the course of their studies which was higher for TEI of Crete students but also mainly in the type of business that the students were employed at. TEI of Crete students were primarily employed at hotels whereas by and large, TEI of Larissa students found employment in restaurants and café/bars.

The main disadvantage in tourism-related employment is its seasonal nature. Of the total number of working graduates, only 66.9% had permanent jobs. TEI of Crete graduates are more readily absorbed by the labour market (89.3%) yet also show a higher rate of seasonality in their employment (37.3%). Graduates stated that the main problem in seeking employment was to find a position to their liking

(26.8%). Finding employment in general came in second place at a rate of 19.5%, the rate of pay came in third place at a rate of 18.3% and the work schedule came in fourth place at a rate of 15.0%.

In conclusion, it can be argued that Tourism Enterprise graduates in Greece have favourable employability prospects in the tourist labour market, even in a period of high unemployment. These prospects are favourable for both male and female graduates. The fact that 87% of graduates are interested in being employed in the tourism industry indicates that it is a field that is especially attractive to young people and justifies their choice of studies.

The research results indicate that the Departments of Tourism Business Administration at the above-mentioned institutions should give emphasis to studies dealing with Hotel Administration, the operation of Travel Agencies and Airline Services. Moreover, attention should be given to new trends and developments in the field of tourism, particularly with regard to preferences and demand as well as new technological applications and management techniques. In this way, in addition to the graduates being better prepared for the job market, there will be an improvement in the quality of services provided.

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THE SATISFACTION OF TOURISTS FROM THE PROVIDED HOTEL SERVICES: THE PELOPONNESE AS A CASE STUDY

Konstantinos Marinakos

Tourism Business Management, TEI of Athens, Greece

Dimitrios Laloumis

Tourism Business Management, TEI of Athens, Greece

ABSTRACT

A number of studies have explored the satisfaction of tourists with mass tourism destinations, especially during the peak season (summer). However, there has been a limited survey of satisfying tourists with off-season destinations (Kozak and Rimmington, 2000). Quality of service is one of the critical success factors influencing the competitiveness of a business organization (Siddiqi, 2011).

The aim of this article is to study the hotels in the Peloponnese area in Greece by investigating the degree of customer satisfaction from the hotel business and the development of proposals for its support. The quality of service and therefore customer satisfaction have increasingly been recognized as key factors in the battle for competitive differentiation and retention of hotel business customers. The aim is therefore to determine the extent to which the quality of their services responds to customer needs and preferences in order to implement these results in order to improve the quality of services

Keywords: customer satisfaction, hotel business, quality of services

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the heavy industry for Greece with a significant contribution to income and employment and, at the same time, the hotel industry is the dominant tourist activity on which the tourist market is based (Giese and Cote, 2002). The dominant position of tourism in the national and regional economy is associated with the significant tourist resources it has, its very good geographic location, the rich natural and cultural environment, the excellent climate and the enormous contribution to the employment of the population mainly during the summer period.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the degree and satisfaction of hotel customers as they are significantly related to their sustainability and consequently to their competitive advantage (Abdallat & Emam, 2014). In order for a business to be able to offer its services to its customers as well as to have satisfied customers and therefore to be profitable, the difference in Marketing of Services in relation to Product Marketing should be understood in the business (Tse & Wilton, 1988). Services are immaterial and there is interaction with the customer. The provision of services "obliges" all the employees of the company to try more, to emphasize their communication with the customer and to focus on the objectives of the company, having a good knowledge of the product-service provided (Kothari, 2004).

2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Confidence and customer satisfaction are important factors for customer loyalty (Akbar & Parvez, 2009; Ranaweera & Prabhu, 2003; Parasuraman, 1985). There is a significant number of typologies regarding the quality of services and the factors that depend on them (McDougall & Levesque, 2000; Tarn, 1999).

At the same time, customer satisfaction and business productivity can go hand in hand, as improvements in customer satisfaction reduce the cost of future transactions (Anderson et al., 1997; Galbreath & Rogers, 1999). Modern businesses should be able to maintain satisfied and therefore dedicated customers by introducing innovative products and services, but also to provide

diversified added value to these products and services, and to be able to deliver long-term credit from their customers (Lewis & Mitchell , 1990; Szymanski & Henard, 2001). On the other hand, the value of a product is subjective, since different consumers receive a different value from the consumption of the same product (Eggert & Ulaga, 2002).

Based on international literature (Mont & Plepys, 2003; Xu & Chan,2010; Hom, 2000; Evanschitzky et.al.,2011) there are many customer satisfaction models (SERVQUAL model, Kano & Seraku satisfaction model, microeconomic and macroeconomic customer satisfaction model) used to measure service quality. It is widely accepted that the tourism market presents a huge heterogeneity (Yuksel and Yuksel, 2002) and therefore one of the biggest modern challenges of management in service companies is the high degree of customer satisfaction. Increased customer demand for quality services in recent years is becoming increasingly noticeable in hotel businesses and the tourism industry as a whole (Namkung & Jang, 2007).

Among all the requirements of the clients, the quality of services is increasingly recognized as a critical factor for the success of each business. On the one hand, customer satisfaction is a key factor that can lead the hospitality industry to success but also gain competitive advantages, on the other hand (Forozia et al., 2002), on the other hand, the high quality of employees causes an increasing flow of business customers, one of the key success factors (Evanschitzky et al., 2011). Quality is generally considered to be the attribute of product or service performance (Namkung & Jang, 2007).

The hospitality industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world that plays an important role in tourism, as tourists travel to distant destinations at a rising pace (Martinez & Bosque, 2013). The hotel industry is one of the most important factors in the tourism industry. It could provide the necessary infrastructure for tourism. As a result, the development of the tourism industry depends on the development of the hotel industry (Pizam & Ellis, 1999).

Research on quality of service has progressed considerably in recent years. However, little has been done to measure the quality of tourism experiences and how different quality factors have an impact on the global satisfaction of tourists

(Chadee & Mattsson, 1996). Customer satisfaction assessment is a prime target for any service provider that would like to survive in the increasingly competitive market (Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2007).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Purpose of the survey, sampling method and data collection

The purpose of this research is to investigate the perceptions of high class hotel business customers, with reference to high-end hotel services, in terms of both service and service satisfaction, with the ultimate goal of drawing useful conclusions about models and methods that should be developed to enhance customer satisfaction.

This research is empirical and attempts to respond to exploratory queries based on primary data collected for research purposes.

As a survey population, high-service hotel customers were selected in the Peloponnese, Greece, while in the chosen sample, 300 customers from 5 different hotels participated in the July -September 2011 summer season. The questions are composed of closed-type questions of various forms and categories.

For the analysis of the data, the statistical package for social sciences SPSS was used, while the data processing used both descriptive and inductive statistics. In terms of the part of the survey applied descriptive statistics we have taken into account Frequency Distribution, Mean Time, Standard Deviation and Typical Data Error.

The nature of the subject of the survey was the basis for determining its nature. Therefore, this research is described as descriptive with quantitative and categorical variables, sampling in terms of the number of subjects examined and related, because it seeks to discover and interpret the correlations between the "independent and dependent" variables as these are set in exploratory questions.

The survey questionnaire is structured in three parts. The first part uses a set of questions related to customer satisfaction from staying in the hotel, the second group of questions concerns their satisfaction by the staff and the third category concerns customer satisfaction with the quality of its facilities and general services hotel.

3.2 Analysis of research results

Initially, the demographic characteristics of the sample were recorded, with 35.8% of the sample being male and 64.2% female. In terms of nationality, 14.7% of the sample was of English nationality, 12.3% were of Norwegian origin, 11.7% were of Swedish origin, 18.3% of the sample was of German / Austrian origin, 14% were of Italian / Spanish origin, 16.3% of Greek origin, 5.30% of Turkish origin, 7.4% of Russian, Slovak and Lithuanian.

Regarding the age of interviewed tourists, 28% of the sample was 31-40, 31.70% of the sample was 41-50, 20.30% were 20-30, 15.70% of the sample were 51 and above and 4.30% of the sample were under 20. Also, 36.30% of the sample hold a university degree, 22.30% are secondary school graduates, 16.70% of the sample graduates vocational school, 14.70% of the sample were at postgraduate / doctoral level and 10.0 of the sample was in another level of education. Regarding the profession, 30,30% of the sample selected another, 33,70% of the sample said they were self-employed, 8,70% of the sample said they were entrepreneurs, 12% of the sample said they were executives, 8.30% were professionals and 7% said they were state officials. Finally, 46,30% of the sample stated that their vacation was less than 7 days, 44% said their vacation lasted from 7 to 14 days and 9,70% of the sample stated that the duration of the holidays they were over 14 days, and finally 100% of the sample said that the hotels they chose were of a high class of service.

Respondents are also asked to prioritize the factors for hotel choice. 42.26% of respondents said that the cleanliness of the hotel is the main factor, followed by the accessibility of the hotel with 18.46%, the luxury / stars of the hotel with 16, 13%, the quality of the hotel services by 16.09%, the additional benefits of 3.70% and the last of the environment with 3.36% of the service category.

At the same time, *factor analysis* was used which is usually used to draw conclusions from several variables. Its main purpose is to have common factors between a set of variables. In factorial analysis, it is important to have large correlations matrix (> 0.4 in absolute value). Also, the KMO value (Kaiser - Meyer - Olkin), which is a data reliability index, should be large (> 0.5) so that the data is suitable for factor analysis (Field, 2009).

In the present study, three factorial analyzes, one for each concept, were conducted to identify those factors that are most conducive to the satisfaction of tourists.

The first factor analysis was carried out for the concept of hotel satisfaction. As shown in Table 1, the data reliability was quite large (CMO = 0.922), while the first factor and the second factor account for 79.65% of the variance. Continuing, as shown (Table 1), the first factor has high prices in the joy of choosing the hotel, with the suggestion that the respondents did right to stay at that hotel that they are satisfied with their decision to stay at this hotel, that this hotel provides better quality of service and the best services than any other, that they feel better by staying at that hotel, that they would suggest the hotel to others and that they likes this hotel compared to other hotels in its category. Therefore, this particular factor can be called SURE and declares their pleasure from their stay at the hotel.

The second factor has high prices for the continuation of stay in that hotel, that this hotel is the first choice in comparison to others and that they choose this particular hotel even if it has a higher price. Therefore, this factor can be called PRIORITY which means whether the customer has been satisfied or not and intends to re-use the service or not. Finally, it is important to stress that Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.968$ factor for first factor questions and 0.826 for second factor questions.

Table 1: Factor analysis - the concept of hotel satisfaction (general data)

Component	Eigen values		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8,858	68,135	68,135
2	1,498	11,524	79,659
3		4,260	83,919
4		3,758	87,678
5		2,571	90,249
6		2,255	92,504
7		1,748	94,252
8		1,628	95,881
9		1,265	97,146
10		1,027	98,172
11		,826	98,998
12		,577	99,575
13		,425	100,000
KMO= 0,922			

Table 2: Factor analysis - hotel satisfaction (factors)

	Components	
	1	2
I'm happy with my choice to stay at this hotel	,912	
I think I did the right thing with my choice to stay at this hotel	,900	
Overall, I am satisfied with the decision to stay at this hotel	,887	
This particular hotel provides better quality of service compared to other hotels	,865	
No other hotel performs better than that	,843	

I like to stay at this hotel	,812	
I feel better when I stay at this hotel	,800	
I believe that this hotel offers more benefits than others in its class	,795	
I would recommend this hotel to others	,789	
I like this particular hotel in relation to others in its category	,703	
I intend to continue my stay at this hotel		,888
Usually this hotel is my first choice compared to others		,828
Even if another hotel brand offers me a lower room rate I will still stay at this hotel		,760
Cronbach's a	0,968	,0826

The second factor analysis was about the concept of staff satisfaction. As can be seen, the first three factors interpret 77.36% of the total variance and the data reliability factor is $KMO = 0.850$ (Table 3). In addition (Table 4) it seems that the first factor has high prices on questions about the proposal that the hotel provides personalized attention to their customers, that the hotel is paying special attention to its customers, that it is trying to solve the customer problems, being multilingual, taking care of the needs and taking care of their clients and constantly dealing with their customers. This particular factor could be called CAUTION and indicates the attention of staff to their customers in services but also knowledge of issues that may concern them. On the other hand, the second

factor, has high prices in the proposals that staff are always willing to serve their customers, gives immediate service to their customers and inspires confidence in their customers. Therefore, this factor could be called SERVICE which means whether staff are willing to serve their clients. Finally, the latter factor has high prices on the suggestions that the staff are very polite and friendly to hotel guests. Therefore, this factor could be called FRIENDSHIP, ie the communication of staff with the customer. Finally, it is important to stress that the credibility ratios of these factors were 0.901, 0.912 and 0.92 respectively.

Table 3: Factor analysis – the concept of staff satisfaction (general data)

Component	Eigen values		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6,680	55,663	55,663
2	1,599	13,327	68,990
3	1,005	8,376	77,366
4		5,828	83,194
5		4,065	87,259
6		3,054	90,314
7		2,652	92,965
8		2,229	95,195
9		1,617	96,811
10		1,410	98,221
11		1,072	99,294
12		,706	100,000
KMO=0,850			

Table 4: Factor analysis – satisfaction with staff (factors)

	Components		
	1	2	3
It provides personalized attention to its	,817		

customers			
It has the knowledge to answer customers about issues that may concern them	,813		
It is multilingual	,811		
It provides "first class" care to its customers	,703		
Understands the specific needs of customers	,686		
He never refuses to answer his clients	,684		
It provides immediate service to its customers		,907	
He is always willing to help his clients		,863	
It looks neat		,860	
Personnel behavior inspires confidence in its customers		,682	
He is very kind with their clients			,892
He is very friendly with his clients			,836
Cronbach's a	0.901	0.912	0.92

The latest factor analysis that was carried out was about the factors influencing hotel satisfaction. As shown (Table 5), the first two factors interpret 69.41% of the total variance, while the credibility coefficient of the KMO data is 0.873. In

particular, the first factor was high in the suggestions that the hotel has modern equipment and attractive natural facilities, that the hotel made its promises that the hotel is interested in customer problems and is clean, comfortable and attractive. This factor could be called IMAGE which is the equipment, its natural facilities but also its luxury. On the other hand, the second factor has high prices in the hotel's accessibility, the hotel's flexible working hours, the hotel's differentiated image and its high class, while the factors of credibility of the agents were 0.917 and 0.846 respectively (Table 6) and could be called ACCESS indicating the location of the hotel and its access to various parts of the island but also the hours of operations of the various departments and their access to them.

Table 5 Factor analysis - Hotel quality satisfaction (general data)

Component	Eigen values		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6,405	58,225	58,225
2	1,231	11,188	69,413
3		8,068	77,482
4		7,253	84,735
5		3,733	88,468
6		3,061	91,530
7		2,280	93,810
8		1,832	95,642
9		1,696	97,338
10		1,527	98,866
11		1,134	100,000
KMO=0,873			

Table 6: Factor analysis - hotel quality satisfaction (factors)

	Component	
	1	2
The hotel has modern equipment	,873	
The hotel's natural facilities are aesthetically appealing	,841	
It responds promptly to customer requests	,827	
When a customer has a problem the hotel is really interested in solving it	,748	
It's comfortable	,712	
It's very clean	,649	
It's luxurious	,567	
The hotel has a convenient location and easy access		,869
The hotel has hours of operation convenient for all its customers		,827
It has a differentiated picture from other hotels		,735
It has high-quality services		,639
Cronbach's a	0,917	0,846

4. CONCLUSION

The effort to achieve a high degree of customer satisfaction is one of the biggest challenges facing businesses today. Customer satisfaction is a key success factor for an enterprise and should be taken seriously during the production and marketing

of a product or service. When their satisfaction exceeds their expectations, each company has more chances of success and profitability and therefore sustainability and gaining a larger market share. Most successful businesses raise the level of customer expectations and provide similar services that meet and exceed these expectations.

The very satisfied customers can benefit the business very much since they are less price sensitive, remain loyal for a longer period of time but still advertise for the products or services of the business to third parties.

The resulting conclusion is that hotel managers need to distinguish the features of the product or service that satisfy customers in order to maintain and exploit them but also those that dislike them so as to improve their satisfaction customers and, consequently, the successful business development.

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