Research Papers

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Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines

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Book Review

New York: Simon & Schuster
by Jentik Kumar & Kashif Hussain, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Asia-Pacific Journal of Innovation in Hospitality and Tourism
APJIHT

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The aim of the journal is to promote and enhance research development and innovation in the field of hospitality and tourism. The journal seeks to provide an international platform for hospitality and tourism educators, postgraduate students and researchers, to debate and disseminate research findings, facilitate the discussion of new research areas and techniques, and highlight best practices for industry practitioners. The articles published in the journal take a multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approach to study the marketing, finance, economics and social aspects of hospitality and tourism. Papers dealing with theoretical, conceptual and empirical aspects of the subject matter will be considered for publication.

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- Short research notes
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Research Paper

Island Tourism in a UNESCO-MAB Reserve (Philippines): Impacts, Risks, and Challenges

Corazon Catibog-Sinha
Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines

Abstract: The paper examines the issues and challenges of promoting sustainable island tourism in Puerto Galera, the first site in the Philippines declared a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Biosphere Reserve within the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) program. It discusses the main issues associated with coastal tourism on an island setting including the indigenous heritage found therein. The environment and community issues in Sabang and White Beach, the two most popular destinations in Puerto Galera, are presented. While tourism has improved the economic status of some members of the community, concerns have been raised with regard to the protection and appropriate management of the natural and cultural heritage of the study area as well as the general welfare of the local community. The outcome of the study serves as a challenge to the tourism industry, local government, and relevant stakeholders. Management and policy recommendations are presented in support of sustainable tourism principles and the goals of the UNESCO-MAB program. These recommendations may be adopted by other tourist destinations confronted with similar issues and concerns.

Keywords: Biosphere reserve, coastal tourism, community, governance, natural and cultural heritage


Introduction

The popularity of islands as holiday destinations has been increasing since the 1970s as tourists shift their holiday preference to slow-paced and nature-driven activities.

Correspondence: Corazon Catibog-Sinha, Ateneo School of Government, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines, International Program in Architectural Heritage Management & Tourism Silpakorn University, Thailand. Email: corazonsinha@gmail.com
Visiting far-fetched islands, where tourists can experience exciting adventure and gain new knowledge about culture and nature, is a strong tourist motivation. However, island tourism is extremely unpredictable and subject to seasonal and political uncertainties. The fragility and vulnerability of islands to massive and rapid development including tourism has been the main agenda item of various national and international fora and debates (Clave, Salamanca & Rebollo, 2011; UNESCO, 2009).

Island tourism can easily damage the local environment, if not properly managed (Baum, 1995; Catibog-Sinha, 2011). This is because small islands are more vulnerable, compared with large islands, to the threats of sea-level rise, typhoons, and hurricanes. Small islands tend to support only small populations of native and endemic flora and fauna because of the limited physical and biological resources present thereat. The type, extent, and degree of tourism impacts on small islands are not only correlated with the volume of tourists using a particular area at a particular time but also with the nature, intensity, and frequency of recreational activities as well as the condition and resilience of the environment.

Sustainable tourism (sometimes referred to as ecotourism) on islands provide mechanisms to conserve biodiversity especially in developing countries like the Philippines where many coastal communities depend on marine resources for their livelihood (Catibog-Sinha, 2011). Ecotourism ventures, whether big or small, have to be environmentally responsible as well as socially responsive to the needs and aspirations of the local community. However, island-based tourism ventures including those located within the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) biosphere reserves are not always sustainably managed (Giavelli & Rossi, 1999). Likewise, not all up-market tourism enterprises, even those that are established on private islands, can claim to be sustainable unless best management practice is in place.

The UNESCO-Man and the Biosphere (UNESCO-MAB) program, which was launched in the early 1970s under the auspices of the United Nations, is one of the global tools used in addressing sustainable development, including tourism. The Philippines is a member of the Southeast Asian Biosphere Reserve Network, which specifically aims to “foster cooperation on various scientific, ecosystem and biosphere reserve management related issues… such as ecotones, mangroves, coastal areas, quality economies, and rehabilitation of degraded environments” (UNESCO, 2012: p.1; UNESCO-MAB, 2012).

As in many developing countries, the ecological and social issues of island tourism are not well documented, leading to fragmented tourism management policies and weak governance (Catibog-Sinha, 2012). This seminal study focuses on the issues and challenges in fostering sustainable tourism development in Puerto Galera, the first
designated UNESCO Biosphere Reserve within the MAB program in the Philippines. This paper provides management and policy recommendations aimed at balancing tourism with environmental protection, community welfare, and heritage conservation within a biosphere reserve.

**Literature Review**

The UNESCO's study of islands (D'Ayala, 1992) reports that the environmental and socio-economic attributes of islands are vulnerable to external risk. Perpetuating the myth of 'island paradise' by the tourism industry and the media can be misleading because many tropical islands have a narrow economic base; they often rely on external sources for aids, grants or loans to remain economically sustainable (Burns, 1995; Catibog-Sinha & Bushell, 2002). Island tourist destinations that depend on imported products and resources have high economic leakage because a large percentage of the tourism income leaves the local economy.

Given that the resource base on islands such as freshwater, soil, vegetation, and minerals is generally restricted, severe resource-use competition could occur between the tourism industry and the local people (Deyà Tortella & Tirado, 2011). For example, the water shortage on the island of Bali (Indonesia), which has led to low agricultural productivity, was blamed by the local farmers on tourism amenities such as swimming pools, golf courses, and hotel landscapes (Straub, 2011).

The risks and benefits of tourism development on destinations including those in coastal areas and island ecosystem have been discussed in the literature (e.g. Catibog-Sinha, 2011; UNEP, 2012; Woodside & Martin, 2008; Zacarias, Williams & Newton, 2011). Improper tourism infrastructure development is a major cause of siltation and erosion of coastal areas as well as reef damages. Mangrove forests, seagrass beds, and rocky shorelines in many parts of the Philippines are under threat from reclamation, dredging, and construction of marina, lodges, and boating facilities (Catibog-Sinha & Heaney, 2006).

The level of vulnerability or uncertainty of tourism products and services can be 'inherently risky' from the consumer perspective (Bettman, 1973). The perceived risks associated with the consumption of tourism products and services are linked not only to their uncertainty (Bauer, 1960) that tends to be magnified on islands because of their vulnerability to externally-generated social and economic impacts but also to the inability of many tour operators and tourists to handle and manage such risks. For example, the divers' motivation and level of expectation can be compromised because of the presence of fragmented coral reefs, high mortality of marine organisms, and massive algal growth over reef formations that are associated with unregulated recreational activities (e.g. scuba diving and snorkelling)(Worachananant et al., 2004).
Tourists then would feel that they have wasted not only their time and money but also the opportunity to interact with nature. Such damage, apart from reducing the marketability of the tourism products, can also cause social conflicts between tourists and the local community. Informing tourists of the potential damage of water-based recreational activities on islands will help minimise ecological and social risks. Other risk-reduction strategies, such as the judicious implementation of regulations on proper tourist conduct and behaviour, are also essential.

The genuine involvement of local communities is vital in tourism planning and management to ensure that major issues and concerns are understood and addressed. A healthy governance system at the local and national levels can readily respond to the changing social, economic, and political circumstances of a tourist destination. The participation of the host community and relevant stakeholders in tourism management is a key ingredient for more effective and sustainable governance (Bramwell, 2011). Wesley and Pforr (2010) report that the success of sustainable tourism is characterised by governance that has a transparent political environment that facilitates public representation and participation and one in which partnerships between state, private interests, and civil society are encouraged. With community support, tourism tends to be more successful and equitable (Blackstock, 2005). Because local concerns are collectively addressed, community satisfaction and ‘sense of community’ are established, which eventually results in greater motivation to cooperate with the industry.

Study Area

The Philippines is an archipelagic country consisting of more than 7,000 islands. One of these islands is Mindoro at the western edge of the country where Puerto Galera is located. The main ‘pull factors’ of Puerto Galera as a tourist destination are marine-based attractions and water-based recreational activities. The coral reefs and the interesting underwater topography provide excellent sites for snorkelling and scuba diving. Table 1 summarises the attributes of the study area.

Puerto Galera was officially designated a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve in 1977 (UNESCO-MAB, 2000), after it was nominated/proclaimed as such by the Philippine government (Presidential Decree No. 345) in 1973. Puerto Galera is rich in biodiversity. It is one of the Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in the Philippines (Mallari, Tabaranza & Crosby, 2001). It borders the Verde Island Passage Marine Corridor, considered the world’s ‘centre of the centre’ of marine shore fish diversity (Carpenter & Springern, 2005; PAWB-DENR, 2009). Unfortunately, Puerto Galera is one of the 80% biosphere reserves worldwide that is yet to be legally protected (Ishwaran, Persic & Tri, 2008).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bio-physical Features</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total land area</td>
<td>25,247 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>130 km south of Manila; 14 nautical miles from Batangas City; 13°23' to 13°32'N; 120°50' to 121°00'E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>By land from Manila via Batangas Pier from where travelers can choose to take a sea vessel directly to PG or to Calapan City; connected to Calapan City by a meandering, 50-km, all-weather road on moderate-to-steep terrain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastline</td>
<td>42-51 km long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine waters</td>
<td>12,000 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain peaks</td>
<td>Mt. Balatic (1,430 meters) – highest peak, Mt. Baco, Mt. Malasimbo, Mt. Talipanan, Mt. Alinyaban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine life</td>
<td>World’s ‘center of the center’ of shore fish diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coral reef cover</td>
<td>31.4% of the coastal area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea grass</td>
<td>Distribution data unknown, adjacent to mangroves and coral reefs with sandy-muddy substrates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangrove forest</td>
<td>Approximately 0.53 km² in area, at least 35 species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upland forest</td>
<td>Small patches of primary forest; extensive secondary forests and grassland/shrubland. Grasslands, upland farms, and several agroforestry projects have replaced the original lowland dipterocarp forest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-metallic deposit (marble)</td>
<td>68 M tons, 25% of which are found in San Isidro; the rest are found in several areas in the villages of Dulangan and Tabinan and in Mt. Talipanan. Extraction of marble deposits in areas covered by ancestral domain is prohibited by law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land uses (% of total land area)</td>
<td>Residential (0.9%), commercial (0.2%), industrial (0.06%), institutional (0.4%), agricultural (32%), others (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-demographic features</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (as of 2007/2008)</td>
<td>28,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of households (as of 2007/2008)</td>
<td>4,424</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued next page
Table 1. Continued from previous page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political subdivisions</th>
<th>1 upland barangay, 12 coastal barangays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Types of occupation/ employment</td>
<td>Service sector: tourism, construction, transportation, etc. (43 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agricultural sector: farming, fishing, agroforestry (23 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manufacturing sector: mining, processing and related industries (15 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others: government jobs, doctors, nurses, engineers, and others who do not fit into the above occupational sectors (19 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land ownership</td>
<td>Private and taxable lands comprise ~75% of the total land area; the rest are public lands; portions or whole of some islands are privately owned. Some residential lots are leased out for tourism development for up to 25 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods

The study was conducted using a combination of field observation, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, and literature review. The study was limited to the analysis of natural and cultural heritage risks rather than the market risks in tourism management. The study area was visited on several occasions in 2008-2011. The official tourism data on visitation were obtained from the Statistics Division of the Philippine Department of Tourism. A comprehensive review of relevant literature was also conducted. Key government officials and park managers at the local and national levels were interviewed. The researcher is a native of the province and is quite familiar with the general environmental situation and political state of the study area.

The data collected from field observation/visits and the broad issues discussed during interviews include the following:

- Tourism trends in the study area
- Perceived environmental (natural and cultural) impacts of tourism especially in the two key sites - Sabang and White Beach
- Potential benefits of tourism in enhancing biodiversity and cultural heritage
- Actual and potential risks and benefits associated with tourism practice, polices, and management
- Local management strategies and governance
- Suggested recommendations on how to manage tourism sustainably.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% Foreign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>27,101</td>
<td>706,449</td>
<td>733,550</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>30,932</td>
<td>914,811</td>
<td>945,743</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>42,832</td>
<td>3,636,974</td>
<td>3,679,806</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>74,195</td>
<td>3,625,338</td>
<td>3,699,533</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>32,579</td>
<td>3,709,100</td>
<td>3,741,679</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>207,639</td>
<td>12,592,672</td>
<td>12,800,311</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>41,528</td>
<td>2,518,534</td>
<td>2,560,062</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Results and Discussion

Tourism Trends

Puerto Galera is one of the country’s most visited destinations, with an average of 2.7 million visitors per year or a total of 12.8 million visitors (Table 2). Only 1.6% of the total visitors were from overseas; the rest were domestic visitors from various parts of the country. Of the foreign tourists recorded in 2007, 17.3% were from Korea, 13% from Denmark, and 3.3% from Germany. The study of Seo, Park & Yu (2009) revealed that South Koreans prefer to visit the Philippines, in particular Puerto Galera, because of the favourable foreign exchange rate.

The tourism trend during the 2003-2007 period remains more or less the same up to the writing of this paper. The months of March and April recorded the highest visitation with an average of more than 1 million visitors per month (36 visitors: 1 resident). Visitation is generally low from July to October, slowly rising in November through the cool, dry months of January and February.

Natural Heritage at Risk

Field assessments reveal that the condition of the coral reefs has deteriorated from ‘excellent’ to ‘poor-fair’ condition. The decline in coral cover and seagrass beds is principally the consequence of over-exploitation, water pollution, and sedimentation. One survey reveals that there was a decline in total hard coral cover in two popular diving sites (i.e. Escarceo Point and Third Plateau) (Licuanana et al., 2004). Overfishing in coral reefs has also resulted in the population decline of key carnivorous fish, all of which are key animal groups in the ecological food chain. A hard coral, *Anacropora puertogalerae*, which was first discovered in Puerto Galera in 1964, is listed Vulnerable
in the World Conservation Union Red Data Book (IUCN, 2012) because of reef
destruction, bleaching, diseases, and pollution.

The mangrove forest, about 0.53 km² in area, consists of at least 35 species
(PAWB/DENR, 2009). Large portions of the forest have been transformed for
tourism and aquaculture. In spite of the national regulation requiring both private and
public establishments to maintain a 20-meter easement on the shoreline, compliance
has been slow, resulting in ecological and aesthetic damage to the marine environment.

Environment and Community at Risk: Sabang and White Beach
Tourism in Puerto Galera is mostly concentrated along the coastal barangays (villages)
of Sabang and White Beach, which have become important growth centres in the
Municipality. During the peak months of March-May, about 5,000-6,000 tourists
crowd these sites every day. The rapid growth of tourism in these two sites could
create significant social changes that are stressful and disquieting for many residents,
local community institutions, and religious groups.

Sabang, the first village to develop mass tourism in the Municipality, is crowded
and haphazardly planned. A combination of residential-commercial-tourism
establishments had been built close to the shore. The Partnerships in Environmental
Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA, 2006: p. 3) confirms the researcher’s
observation in its report stating that “Sabang shows very little evidence of proper
planning. The streets and alleys are narrow. Open drains are visible in many pedestrian
paths … property limits are marked by narrow alleys … houses and establishments
are very close to each other.” As a tourist destination, Sabang has already reached the
advanced saturation stage in the tourism life cycle (Butler, 1980; 1993). This stage is
characterised by high incidence of social and environmental ills, presence of many
run-down facilities, and relatively low economic return.

At the western fringe of the Puerto Galera coastline lies White Beach. It is less
disturbed than Sabang, but the development trend is approaching that of Sabang.
Tourism development in White Beach lies between the development and consolidation
stages (Butler, 1980; 1993). The tourist experience at this stage is highly structured and
contrived, and the local community is becoming highly dependent on the tourism
industry for their livelihood. In addition, the coastal areas are crowded and over-
exploited, and tourism facilities and services are highly commercialised and obtrusive.
During the peak season, the physical and social carrying capacities of the destination
are very close to the tolerance limit.

Environmental pollution of the shoreline and beach waters is apparent especially
in these two sites. The influx of untreated sewage from coastal establishments
(residential/tourism) has contributed to high concentrations of coliform bacteria
leading to a decline in recreational water quality and the recurrence of algal bloom
during summer. The combination of organic pollution from land-based sources and low flushing rates of water current has resulted in a high nutrient pool affecting the distribution of phytoplankton in the inner reaches of Puerto Galera Bay (San Diego-McGlone, Villanoy, & Aliño, 1995). A numerical simulation study of the tidal currents in this area reveals the existence of an asymmetrical tidal flow producing strong tidal residual currents resulting in low and uneven flushing rates of the water current (Iizuka et al., 2009). Unfortunately, waste management facilities are inadequate.

While tourism is generally a welcome industry in Puerto Galera because of the income it generates for the community, not everyone interviewed in this study was pleased with the manner and speed at which tourism development has grown. The response of one key informant/interviewee summarises the general concerns expressed by the other respondents; he states that tourism boom has overwhelmed both the local residents and the local government because of the rapid and haphazard development of Sabang. This may be attributed to the “short-sightedness of politicians and city planners eager to attain quick economic wealth, and as a result, there has been a dramatic increase in crime, environmental degradation, and traffic congestion.” The interviewee continued to say that “White Beach used to be clean and beautiful, but it is now very crowded … that there is a general fear that it might become a ghetto for sex and crime.” Cruz, Marasigan & Buenviaje (2002: p. 1) report that certain areas in Puerto Galera, such as Sabang and the White Beach, have become “sexual networking venues” for some tourists. According to Park & Stokowski (2009: p. 906), the high incidence of “crime and the public perception of crime and criminal behaviour influence actual and perceived visitor safety and resident quality of life, and also affect a community’s reputation as a successful tourist destination.” Furthermore, tourism has triggered an increase in the prices of properties and commodities, affecting the local residents’ ability to purchase even some basic commodities (e.g. food and services).

**Indigenous Cultural Heritage at Risk: Mangyans**

The tribe of Iraya-Mangyans is one of the 60 ethnic minority groups in the Philippines. They are indigenous to Puerto Galera and had established traditional settlements along the coast before they were pushed back into the mountains by early colonists. The majority of the Irayans today practise subsistence livelihoods: upland farming, forest resource gathering, gleaning in tidal flats, and fishing. Others are hired by lowland people as labourers, farm and construction help, and domestic help.

The Irayans have many interesting oral and written stories which are valuable intangible cultural heritage. They have a unique culture expressed in their language and works of art as portrayed in their beautifully designed and hand-crafted souvenir products. These unique handicrafts made of native forest products (e.g. nito vine, buri palm leaves, and bamboo strips) are popular souvenir items. Their role in the tourism
industry is limited because of their inherent shyness and lack of person-to-person communication skills (Cola, 2005). Consequently, they gain very little economic benefits from tourism. Their involvement in tourism can be enhanced by giving them a better and fairer economic share of the profits from their handicrafts as well as training them to be local tour guides within the ethnic villages where many cultural tourists prefer to visit.

Whilst cultural/indigenous tourism can play a key role in enhancing cultural pride, the Iraya-Mangyan culture should be respected and protected. Unfortunately, it is at risk because of increasing tourist demand and unregulated mass tourism, which could lead ultimately to the erosion of the culture’s authenticity and integrity.

Recommendations and Challenges

Some recommendations have been drawn up based on field observation and interviews, for consideration of the tourism industry, local communities and the local government. These recommendations are also applicable to other tourist destinations in a similar situation, and having the same issues, and concerns.

1. Enhancing Conservation Programs and Policies through Integrated/ Collaborative Management and Governance

Collaborative management efforts between marine scientists, policy-makers, and the tourism industry can be strengthened through the Integrated Coastal Management Program, which aims to balance conservation imperatives and the basic needs of the coastal communities (Meniado, A. pers. Comm., 2012). The Program is helping to develop a deeper understanding of the sustainable use of coastal resources including the rehabilitation of mangrove forests and other marine ecosystems. Political leadership and resource support are also necessary in enhancing the role of the Coastal Resources Conservation and Management Board (created by Puerto Galera Municipal Ordinance No. 04-14) in integrating coastal management with tourism development.

Some respondents also expressed the need to develop and implement an integrated ecotourism management plan. The creation of the Upland Tourism Council within the proposed Coastal Resource Management Plan (Cantos, Marcelo & Dolor, 2009) should also be explored for implementation. The plan should incorporate ways to address the welfare of the indigenous Irayas and provide mechanisms for their involvement in upland tourism within their ancestral domain.

These emerging tourist destinations in the upland should be managed appropriately to ensure their long-term sustainability. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations and other relevant legislations and ordinances should be implemented to mitigate or prevent the irreparable damage of tourism on the natural environment and local culture.
Tourism management can also be facilitated through better implementation of the Environmental User Fee (EUF) system. The user fee concept is based on the tenet that users, such as tourists, have to pay for the recreation services provided by the ecological system within destination areas. The user fee system is meant to raise funds to offset the environmental damage caused by tourism and to increase public awareness about environmental protection and biodiversity conservation (IUCN, 2000). During the period November 2007- November 2008, the local government collected more than PHP 10 million (USD 228,000) from the EUF scheme. However, a democratic and transparent process in the utilisation and distribution of these fees should be in place and closely monitored.

2. Re-imaging and Rejuvenation

Reviving the Philippine commitments to the UNESCO-MAB Program in Puerto Galera will be a significant step towards better governance for sustainability. These commitments pertain to pragmatic research in natural resource management, environmental education, and public awareness about sustainable development. Combining research and education as a mechanism to revive these commitments should be given high management and funding priority by the government at the local, national, and global levels (Fortes, M. pers. Comm., 2009). The role of tourism in reviving these commitments cannot be ignored.

Rejuvenation of coastal areas as sustainable ecotourism destinations helps ensure that the natural attractions that tourists come to see and enjoy are managed and protected. The re-development and/or re-imaging of Sabang and White Beach, for example, should be given high priority. Visitor impacts on the natural and cultural environments should be assessed and managed not only in these two sites but also in other emerging tourism spots within the Municipality.

Re-branding Puerto Galera as an ecotourism destination can benefit from using flagship species, which symbolise its rich marine biodiversity and ecosystem health. For example, the native hard coral *Acropora puertogaleria* as a tourism brand can enhance public awareness and appreciation of the ecological values of endemic species and their habitats (Catibog-Sinha & Heaney, 2006; Shackley, 2001).

3. Community Participation and Respect for Ethnic Culture

Sustainable tourism initiatives can only succeed if developed in consultation with the local community and other relevant stakeholders, who should be empowered as active participants in planning and development (Currie, Seaton & Wesley, 2009). The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN, 2000) states that informed communities can play an important role in decision-making especially on issues that affect them; hence, they can assist in creating a secure and sustainable society.
The participation of the local stakeholders in Puerto Galera can be facilitated not only by government agencies but also by non-government organisations. For example, the World Wild Fund for Nature-Philippines has developed a community-driven coastal resource management plan by involving the private sector and civil society. The Plan focuses on sustainable fisheries and tourism at four general settings: upland management; destination management; law enforcement; and support services (Cantos et al., 2009). Capacity building and skills development are also crucial for any meaningful participation. The establishment of a Biosphere Reserve Centre, for example, can serve as a learning venue which can help foster sustainable development including sustainable tourism.

Tourism should provide supplementary and alternative livelihoods by ensuring that people meet their basic human needs (e.g. food, shelter, security, and dignity) while at the same time reducing the adverse consequences of livelihoods to the environment and society. Traditional livelihoods should be encouraged to complement rather than be replaced by tourism. In this way tourism can promote local food production, enhance indigenous culture, diversify economic base, and so becomes a real tool for sustainable livelihood. The tourism industry should be sensitive to the needs of local fishers and farmers who are dependent on the same natural capital that tourism relies upon.

Community participation in tourism planning should take into account the views of ethnic communities especially those that are directly affected by tourism. Local culture and traditions should be recognised and respected. The implementation of the Philippine Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997, which recognises the rights of indigenous peoples over their ancestral land, should be enhanced. The tourism industry should not sanitise or simplify heritage expressions as this could eventually lead to the loss of cultural authenticity (Timothy & Prideaux, 2004; Urry, 1995).

A strict code of conduct regarding the proper behaviour of tourists visiting ethnic villages should be strictly implemented. With enhanced environmental ethos, tourists can increase their support for the local community and preservation of the cultural heritage (Liu & Wall, 2006).

**Conclusion**

Given that many islands are remote and inherently vulnerable to environmental and political uncertainties, tourism development should be closely regulated and monitored. This includes tourism ventures that are located within the UNESCO biosphere reserves. Tourism, if sustainably managed, can serve as a powerful tool in reviving, enhancing, and nurturing cultural and natural heritage. Hence, it becomes consistent with the goals of UNESCO-MAB program.
The main challenge of the host community and the tourism industry is to ensure that the negative impacts of tourism are avoided or minimised. As a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve and a key habitat of threatened and endemic species, Puerto Galera is faced with the challenge of addressing these issues in order to strike a balance between tourism, protection of the environment, and maintenance of cultural integrity and social well being.

The general welfare and cultural pride of the indigenous people can be enhanced through ethnic tourism for as long as it is managed with strong cultural sensitivity and respect. The genuine involvement of the community and stakeholders is vital in tourism planning and management to ensure that their major concerns are understood and addressed.

Local participation in tourism management is a key ingredient in effective governance for sustainability. The following management recommendations are presented to help ensure that island tourism is not only economically sustainable but also ecologically responsible and socially/culturally responsive. These are: revival of the country’s commitments to the UNESCO-MAB program and other conservation initiatives; rejuvenation and improvement of the destination image; judicious use of the Environmental User Fees through a democratic and transparent process; development and implementation of an integrated ecotourism management plan; practising social equity and cultural respect for the indigenous people; training and capacity building to enhance tourism practice; and compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment regulations for proposed tourist projects in critical habitats. These recommendations may also be adopted by other tourist destinations that have similar situation, issues, and concerns as the study area.

In summary, the study shows that commitment of countries to the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves Program is valuable in promoting the principles of sustainable tourism. Likewise, sustainable tourism can be a powerful tool in supporting UNESCO’s goal to foster research, education, conservation, and community welfare.

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Research Paper

Using the Delphi Technique in the Classification of Attributes of Destination Competitiveness

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Abstract: A number of previous studies suggest that an increase in customer-based brand equity (CBBE) can lead to greater competitiveness of the brand by influencing consumer behaviour through the greater possibility of brand selection, increased brand loyalty, reduced price sensitivity, and a willingness to pay more for the brand (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993, Pitta & Katsani, 1995; Wood, 2000). However, in other recent studies on destination competitiveness, there is growing support for the view that certain destination competitiveness attributes can be the antecedents for the development of destination brand equity (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Pike, 2009). Therefore, it is logical to assume that the construct of destination competitiveness can be classified into two possible components of (1) 'functional attributes' being the antecedent of CBBE while the other component of (2) 'abstract attributes' is actually influenced by CBBE. Due to the scarcity of research in the classification of destination competitiveness' attributes into the components of either the functional or abstract attributes, a Delphi study was conducted to assist in the categorisation of those attributes into the relevant components of destination competitiveness. Based on the results of the Delphi-survey, the competitiveness attributes were classified into either the component of Destination competitiveness I (Functional attributes) or Destination competitiveness II (Abstract attributes). The majority of the attributes of the core resources and attractors were grouped into the functional attributes component and only a few remaining attractors were considered abstract attributes. Certain attributes of Supporting Factors & Resources were classified as functional attributes, while other supporting factors were categorised as abstract attributes. Both the Destination management attributes of local managerial skills and Staff skills were considered to be abstract attributes while the attributes under Qualifying and Amplifying Determinants were separated into either one of the two components of functional or abstract attributes.

Key words: Customer-based brand equity, Delphi-method, destination branding, destination competitiveness, destination marketing

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Introduction

The competitiveness of a destination depends on its ability to increase tourist expenditure and increase visitor arrivals by providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences and doing it in a profitable and sustainable manner which will enhance the well-being of the destination residents and preserve the natural capital for future generations (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003).

Even though the competition for a bigger share of the tourists market has been growing in intensity in recent years, there has been a dearth of research in the area of destination competitiveness at either the regional, national or even city level (Kozak, 1999). Among the compelling reasons for identifying and evaluating the competitiveness of tourism destinations include (1) the emergence of new destinations, (2) the growing influence of travel intermediaries and the media in shaping travelers opinion, (3) the attitude of repeat travelers, and (4) the increasing concern of tourists about the environment in tourism destinations (Keller & Smeral, 1997).

According to Woodside & Lysonski (1989), destinations constantly compete among themselves to obtain a place in the consideration set of potential visitors as that will increase the probability of them being selected as a holiday destination. It is crucial for tourism destinations to evaluate their competitiveness attributes to enable them to discover their strengths and weaknesses, as the potential visitor’s destination selection process is greatly influenced by the destination’s overall competitiveness (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Dwyer, Cvelbar, Edwards & Mihalic, 2012).

A substantial number of studies support the position that effective destination branding leads to greater destination competitiveness. However, there are also other studies that make the argument for the reverse causation effect, that is, higher competitiveness can lead to an increase in customer-based brand equity for the destination. This points to the likelihood of the mediating role of a destination’s CBBE in the relationship between the two possible destination’s competitiveness components ‘functional attributes’ (which are more tangible and measurable) and ‘abstract attributes’ (which are more psychological and less tangible).

Branding is regarded by many researchers as an important tool to increase the competitiveness of a tourist destination (Pike & Mason, 2011). For tourist destinations to provide satisfying and memorable experiences to tourists in a profitable and sustainable manner, it is important to understand the role of branding on destination competitiveness. Even though branding has generally been recognised as an important
tool to improve competitiveness, there has been a paucity of research on the impact of branding on a destination's competitiveness and travel behaviour, especially with regard to destinations in developing nations.

Research on the topic of destination branding is a relatively recent phenomenon, and the first studies only appeared in the late 1990s (Pritchard & Morgan, 1998; Dosen, Vranesevic & Prebezac, 1998). According to Pike, Bianchi, Kerr & Patti, (2010), there is a scarcity of research specifically in the performance evaluation of branding campaign effectiveness in tourism destinations. Pike et al. (2010), believe that the conceptual models of CBBE developed by Aaker (1991; 1996), and Keller (2003), can provide Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) with a performance measuring tool of the effectiveness of their branding activities.

A strong brand improves perceptions of a product's performance, reduces risks in purchase decisions, instills greater loyalty, reduces vulnerability to competitors' actions, increases profitability, reduces consumers' sensitivity to price increases, and increases the effectiveness of marketing promotional strategies (Keller, 2003, Hsu, Oh & Assaf, 2012). According to Reichheld (1996) increased customer loyalty will lead to greater competitive advantage because the company can maintain a price premium over its competitors' products because of customers' perception of some unique value associated with that brand.

According to Kotler & Gertner (2002), brands help to differentiate products and can increase customers' perception of their value and they argue that a country can be branded and country names actually amount to brands which influence consumers' purchasing decisions. Even though a country might not be actively pursuing a branding strategy, the mere mention of its name can invoke certain images related to the country. These images are likely to influence the future travel decisions of potential travelers to that nation.

Destination branding has been recognised as an essential marketing tool by destination marketing organisations to attract new tourists as well as encourage repeat visitors (Gartner & Ruzzier, 2011). A good example of successful destination branding would be the inception of the Malaysia: Truly Asia campaign in 1999, when Malaysia was positioned as a multi-racial one-stop destination offering the best of Asia's three main cultures of the Malays, Chinese, and Indians (Tourism Malaysia, 2012).

Although there are a substantial number of studies to support the view that an effective branding strategy will inevitably lead to increased competitiveness of a tourist destination, there are also studies that indicate an improvement in destination competitiveness can result in a stronger brand equity for the destination (Pike & Mason, 2011). A major theoretical contribution of this study is to provide an explanation for the relationships between the constructs of CBBE and destination competitiveness, and to posit that destination competitiveness is made up of two components; one
component being the *functional attributes* which is the precursor of CBBE, while the other component consists of the *abstract attributes* which is influenced by CBBE. A study of this nature can be considered timely as there has been very little research on the classification of destination competitiveness attributes into their relevant components of functional and abstract attributes to date.

The main objectives of this paper are:

- To categorise the destination competitiveness attributes into the relevant components of functional or abstract attributes using the Delphi technique
- To provide the theoretical underpinnings for the separation of the components of destination competitiveness
- To highlight the limitations of using the Delphi technique for this study

**Literature Review**

**Competitiveness of Tourism Destinations (Comparative and Competitive Advantage)**

Several factors explain why the measurement and determination of competitiveness is so important to tourism destinations. Competition has become more intensive between destinations for a bigger share of international tourist arrivals. New destinations appear on the market while existing ones are trying to expand and introduce new attractions and facilities. At the same time, some of the more mature destinations are starting to go into decline (Kozak & Rimmington, 1999; Croes, 2011; Dwyer, Cvelbar, Edwards & Mihalic, 2012)

To explain the concept of competitiveness in the tourism industry context, Crouch & Ritchie (1999), developed a framework based on Porter’s (1980) models of ‘five forces’ of competition and his ‘diamond’ of national competitive advantage (Porter, 1990). According to Porter’s (1990) diamond of competitive advantage, factor conditions such as historical and natural attractions are important determining factors for a tourist to visit a destination, but they are not the only factors. Expanding on Porter’s theory, Crouch & Ritchie (1999) argued that in evaluating a tourism destination’s competitiveness, it is essential to look at both the elements of comparative advantage as well as elements of competitive advantage of the destination.

A destination’s comparative advantage consists of its naturally endowed or man-made resources such as its historical and cultural attractions, and tourism infrastructure. The condition of such resources generally do fluctuate over time, which can reduce the competitiveness of the destination. Many of the naturally occurring resources such as corals that have been destroyed and hills that have been leveled may not be renewable, while man-made facilities such as entertainment or shopping outlets are normally more renewable than natural resources. Proper management of these
resources is therefore paramount to maintaining the attractiveness and competitiveness of a destination. Effective management strategies need to be created so as to train a destination's human resources to maintain the condition of its natural assets, and to develop and expand its tourism infrastructure.

Having comparative advantage means that a destination possesses those natural or man-made attributes or factors which attract visitors to that destination. Competitive advantage, on the other hand, refers to how effectively the destination manages those resources in the long-run. A destination which is not endowed with a lot of resources may be more competitive then a well-endowed destination if the former manages to use its limited resources more effectively (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Such a destination is aware of its limitations, but it is able to market itself more successfully than its competing destinations, and normally it is clear objectives for its tourism development strategy.

**Attributes of Destination Competitiveness**

The elements of comparative and competitive advantage are generally regarded as the theoretical underpinning for the development of a conceptual framework for destination competitiveness (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Dwyer & Kim (2003), Dwyer et al. (2004), and Heath (2003) also came out with their models on destination competitiveness, all of which, were adapted from the model developed by Crouch & Ritchie (1999). It is generally agreed that the conceptual model developed by Crouch and Ritchie (1999), highlighted in Figure 1, remains the most widely cited

**Figure 1. General conceptual model of destination competitiveness**

*Source: Adapted from Ritchie & Crouch (2003).*
research on competitiveness of tourism destinations (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000; 2003).

The two main determinants of competitiveness, that is, comparative advantage and competitive advantage are featured on the left and right, and sides of the model. The rest of the model highlights the many attributes of these two main determinants of competitiveness. The macro-environment has a significant global influence on tourist destinations as events that happened in one region can affect travel to another destination. The 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York, and the outbreak of SARS disease in Asia affected travel patterns of international tourists. Any destination must overcome or adjust to the forces of the macro-environment in order to maintain its competitiveness.

A destination's micro-environment on the other hand consists of competing firms such as travel agencies, tour operators, event management companies, and other stakeholders such as the local residents, hospitality organisations, and local government bodies involved in the destination's tourism activities and these micro environment forces tend to have a more direct and immediate effect on the destination. Managers are generally more occupied with the micro environment due to their desire to provide better service to their customers in relation to their competitors and thereby remain in a more competitive position. It is critical for destination management organisations to be aware that both the macro-environment and micro-environment are constantly changing and therefore requires continuous monitoring in order to maintain and sustain the destination's competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999).

The core resources and attractors listed in Figure 1 such as the destination's physiography and the culture and history are the destination's naturally endowed or man-made factors that provide the key reasons for travelers to select and visit the destination. Another dimension of the core resources and attractors is the market ties dimension which refers to the linkages between the visitors from the tourism originating countries and the destination they travel to. These sort of linkages could be historical, cultural, or business ties between the visitor countries and the destination (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Examples would be visitors from the United Kingdom traveling to Malaysia due to their colonial ties, or Chinese Malaysian tourists visiting China because of the cultural linkages.

Supporting factors and resources, as the term implies, include elements such as infrastructure, accessibility, and political will that are required to build a strong base for the development of a successful tourism industry. Without the necessary supporting factors and resources, a destination which is well-endowed with core resources and attractors may face a serious hindrance in developing its tourism industry when compared with a less well-endowed destination (Crouch, 2006). Singapore is a good example of a destination which is relatively less well endowed with core resources.
and attractors but has consistently outperformed some of its regional competitors in the development of its tourism industry because of its strong supporting factors and resources.

The destination management component of the model includes activities which can improve the quality of the core resources and attractors as well as reinforcing the efficacy of the supporting factors and resources. Examples of these activities would be the marketing activities conducted by the relevant tourism authorities, such as organising and implementing promotional campaigns, product development, and market targeting strategies. Another dimension of destination management is the service dimension and Otto & Ritchie (1995) have argued that to improve the quality of service (QOS), it is necessary to provide a total quality of experience, which requires the bearing of responsibility by the destination managers for the maintenance of the core resources of the destination.

The component of destination policy, planning and development sets up the framework for the policies and strategies required to guide the destination in achieving its tourism development goals and objectives. The ultimate goal for a destination would be to achieve a level of competitiveness that is sustainable while at the same time enabling it to provide a quality of life (QOL) that is compatible with the hopes and aspirations of the local residents (Crouch, 2006; Dwyer et al., 2012).

The last component in the model, qualifying and amplifying determinants, “moderates, modifies, or mitigates destination competitiveness by filtering the influence of the other three groups of factors” (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999: p. 149). This component consists of factors that can be very important to the extent that they may limit or control tourists’ demand for the destination but are largely outside the span of control of the destination managers. One such qualifying determinant is the location of the destination as geographic proximity is a major influencing factor in tourists’ destination selection, and yet there is nothing much a destination can do to change its location. Safety and security in a destination is another important qualifying determinant as most tourists will avoid a destination which is not able to provide them with safe drinking water, adequate hygiene standards, and the level of health care required should they fall ill. The cost factor can also be considered a qualifying determinant and the cost of a destination such as transportation costs, exchange rates, and costs of living are also largely influenced by socio-economic forces outside the control of destination managers.

In their study to generate a more comprehensive model of destination competitiveness, Enright & Newton (2004) expanded on the conceptualisation of destination competitiveness of Crouch & Ritchie (1999) by introducing a wide range of business-related factors within the components of supporting factors and resources, destination management and qualifying and amplifying determinants; and a number
of tourism-specific factors (tourism attractors) within the component of core resources and attractors. Using Hong Kong as the selected destination for their study, Enright & Newton (2004) evaluated the relative importance and relative competitiveness of both the tourism attractors and business factors of the destination. Findings from the study indicate that tourism attractors such as safety, cuisine, and dedicated tourism attractions were ranked the highest in relative importance, while the most important business-related factors were political stability, international access, and internal transportation facilities. Results from this study strongly support the model on destination competitiveness developed by Crouch & Ritchie (1999).

In a follow-up study, Enright & Newton (2008), added two other Asia-Pacific destinations, Singapore and Bangkok, to try to replicate the initial study in Hong Kong to determine if competitiveness attributes have the same relative importance in different locations, and whether the findings from a single destination can be used to evaluate competitiveness of other places. The results of this follow-up study indicated that all the attractors listed in the survey were regarded to possess a certain level of importance, thereby giving further support to the conceptual model of destination competitiveness developed by Crouch & Ritchie (1999).

Destination Branding

Branding a tourism destination creates a set of challenges which is not present in the branding of tangible products. A key difference between a destination brand and a product or service brand is that the name of the destination brand is actually the geographical name of the place and will rarely be changed (Cai, 2002). The challenges in branding a tourism destination are mainly due to the “complexity of the decision making process” of tourists because the tourist destination product is often considered to be intangible and risky (Cai, 2002: p. 721). A service product such as a tour package is considered intangible and risky because, unlike tangible goods, the customer is not able to sample the product before purchasing it, and the purchase decision is mainly dependant on the image possessed of the destination.

In line with the symbolic significance of the brand, Ritchie & Ritchie (1998) have defined a destination brand as “a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates the destination; furthermore, it conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; it also serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience.” (p. 103)

A subsequent more comprehensive definition for destination branding provided by Blain, Levy & Ritchie (2005) is as follows:

"Destination branding is the set of marketing activities that (1) support the creation of a name, logo, word, mark or other graphics that readily identifies
and differentiates a destination; that (2) consistently convey the expectation of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; that (3) serve to consolidate and reinforce the emotional connection between the visitor and the destination; and that (4) reduce the consumer search costs and perceived risk. Collectively, these activities serve to create a destination image that positively influence consumer destination choice.” (p. 331-332)

Customer-Based Brand Equity for Destinations

Konecnić & Gartner (2007) conceptualised a model for the creation of brand equity for a destination which is shown in Figure 2. The model supports Cai’s (2002) argument that destination image is the focal point in destination branding. According to Gartner (1994), there are three components of an image which are known as the cognitive, affective, and conative components. The cognitive image is related to the awareness level of a destination; what a person knows of the place. The affective image refers to the image that triggers certain emotions felt by a person about the destination. The conative image is the component that makes a person acts on the knowledge and feelings he has on the destination, for example, to make a decision to visit the place.

In addition to the above model developed by Konecnić & Gartner (2007), another model to conceptualise consumer-based brand equity for destinations was developed by Pike (2007), when he conducted a study to measure the success levels of destination branding campaigns. Pike (2007) adapted the work of Aaker (1991; 1996), and

![Figure 2. Creation of brand equity for a destination](source: Adapted from Konecnić & Gartner (2007).)
Keller (1993; 2003), to conceptualise consumer-based brand equity for destinations as a series of effects such as brand salience, brand associations, brand resonance, and brand loyalty.

*Brand salience* is considered the first step in building brand equity and it reflects the presence of the destination in the mind of the potential visitor. Salience is normally measured using top of the mind unaided recall. Previous research indicates the number of destinations that a visitor will include in his consideration set is normally restricted to four destinations, give or take two destinations (Woodside & Sherrell, 1977). These set of destinations under consideration is part of brand salience.

*Brand associations* are the images related to destinations stored in the memory of would-be visitors. It is therefore very important for destination management organisations to ensure the images of the destinations are positive ones (Qua, Kim & Im, 2011; Im, Kim, Elliot & Han, 2012). As can be seen from the model developed by Konecnik & Gartner (2007), the image is a core component of a destination's brand and is normally quantified by measuring the cognitive and affective components.

*Brand resonance* in the context of destination brand equity refers to the level of intensity a traveler has in his bonding relationship with a destination. One way to evaluate the intensity is to look at past visitations or intention to visit. The highest step in the customer based brand equity for a destination is *brand loyalty* which can be reflected in word-of-mouth recommendations and repeat visitations (Pike, 2007). Figure 3 shows the model developed by Pike (2007) that was used to measure customer based brand equity for a destination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy of effects</th>
<th>CBBE components</th>
<th>Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Purchase</td>
<td>Brand loyalty</td>
<td>Repeat visitation and word of mouth referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Preference</td>
<td>Brand resonance</td>
<td>Previous visitation and intent to visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Brand Associations</td>
<td>Cognitive and affective perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>Brand salience</td>
<td>TOMA and decision set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.** Customer-based brand equity for a destination

*Sources: Adapted from Pike (2007).*
Pike (2007) concluded that his findings support Keller’s (1993) arguments that the CBBE hierarchy can be used to evaluate past performance as well as to predict the probability of future successful outcomes. As branding supports marketing communications, Keller (1993) believes that communication strategies should stress on creating positive brand salience and brand associations. To increase brand resonance, it is important to link the destination’s attributes to the needs of the traveler, while a destination’s ability to deliver the brand promise will lead to greater brand loyalty (Pike, 2007; Nam, Ekinci & Whyatt, 2011; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

**Mediating Effect of CBBE of a Destination**

Although previous studies suggest that destination competitiveness plays a mediating role in the relationship between the destination’s CBBE and travel behaviour, other studies seem to support the argument that destination brand equity can also mediate the relationship between certain destination competitiveness attributes and travel behaviour.

A study by Echtner & Ritchie (1993) found that destination image can be measured using attributes along the ‘functional/psychological’ characteristics continuum. Functional characteristics include the more tangible or measurable characteristics of the destination such as the scenery, cost/price levels, and tourist attractions, while psychological characteristics are the more intangible or abstract attributes such as atmosphere, quality of service, fame and reputation. Examination of the summary of the destination image attributes compiled by Echtner & Ritchie (2003), as presented in Table 1, revealed that a number of the functional image attributes such as tourist sites/activities, national parks/wilderness activities, beaches, scenery/natural attractions, and nightlife are also used to measure destination competitiveness under the attribute of core resources and attractors.

As destination image is influenced by those attributes which are also used to measure destination competitiveness, and since destination image can be considered a pre-existing concept from which a destination brand is derived (Pike, 2009), it can be argued that destination brand equity is a mediator in the relationship between the two possible destination competitiveness components of ‘functional’ attributes (more tangible and measurable) and ‘abstract’ attributes (more psychological and less tangible).

**Components of Destination Competitiveness**

Review of the literature seems to indicate that the construct of destination competitiveness is most likely to be composed of two components; the first component of destination competitiveness consisting of the more ‘functional’ attributes is actually the antecedent of CBBE, while the second component of destination competitiveness
Table 1. Attributes used by researchers to measure destination image

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNCTIONAL (physical, measurable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourist sites/activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National parks/wilderness activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairs, exhibits, festivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenery/natural attractions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightlife and entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities for information and tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local infrastructure/transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation/restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture/buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs/price levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation/restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture/buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs/price levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of urbanisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic development/affluence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of commercialisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs/culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different cuisine/food and drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality/friendliness/receptiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restful/relaxing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere (familiar vs. exotic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity for adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to increase knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family or adult oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fame/reputation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| PSYCHOLOGICAL (abstract)         |

consisting of more 'abstract' attributes plays a mediating role between a destination's CBBE and travel behaviour. However, the literature also reveals a paucity of research to determine which attributes of destination competitiveness should be classified under the component of destination competitiveness I (functional attributes) and those that should be categorised under destination competitiveness II (abstract attributes).

**Methods**

**Classification of Destination Competitiveness Attributes Using Delphi Technique**

Since there has been little research in the classification of the attributes of destination competitiveness into the components of either functional attributes or abstract attributes, a Delphi study was conducted to assist in the classification of those attributes into the relevant components of destination competitiveness. According to Kaynak & Macauley (1984), the Delphi technique is a suitable method to elicit and refine group opinion when there is a lack of exact knowledge.

The Delphi method can be used as a means to build consensus by collecting data through a string of questionnaires distributed to a selected panel of experts (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963; Dalkey, 1969; Young & Jamieson, 2001; Paraskevas & Saunders, 2012). Even though the Delphi method was originally developed as a forecasting tool, it can be adapted to generate consensus on a complex topic that requires the opinion of a panel of experts (Miller, 2001; Donohoe, 2011). Kaynak & Macauley (1984) emphasised that the Delphi technique is more of an analysis tool than a decision making tool, and therefore it is not supposed to provide a definitive result, but rather, it should be used to provide possible explanations, based on Delphi survey findings.

Advantages of the Delphi technique include the anonymity aspect for respondents which reduces pressure for group conformity, the reduction of influence of dominant respondents in a group discussion which can potentially distort the data, and a controlled feedback process which permits the participants to review their initial response which can be revised or modified if necessary (Dalkey, 1972).

The first-round questionnaire was sent to a panel of 12 experts comprising of associate professors, senior lecturers and lecturers in the fields of tourism marketing and also tourism industry practitioners. Since the aim of the study was to obtain a collective expert opinion, the panel was selected based on their knowledge and expertise on the research topic, and their ability to understand and answer the research questions (Fink & Kosecoff, 1985). According to Delbecq, Van de Ven & Gustafson (1975), a panel size of ten to fifteen experts should be adequate for a Delphi study if the experts come from a similar background. A total of eight responses were received within the time period allowed, resulting in a response rate of slightly over 66%.
The questionnaire provided a list of attributes used to measure destination competitiveness created by Enright & Newton (2004) and these attributes are grouped under the headings of: (1) Core Resources and Attractors, (2) Supporting Factors & Resources, (3) Destination Management, and (4) Qualifying & Amplifying Determinants.

Using their expert opinion, the panel was required to identify which of those destination competitiveness attributes (DC I) influence CBBE, and those destination competitiveness attributes (DC II) that are actually affected by CBBE. Figures 4 and 5 illustrates the possible relationships between DC I (Functional attributes), DC II (Abstract attributes), and destination’s CBBE.

They were requested to mark those competitive attributes with a ‘X’ in the appropriate column under DC I or DC II to indicate whether they believe that those attributes influence CBBE or they are actually influenced by CBBE. For example, if they think that the destination competitiveness attribute ‘cuisine’ influences CBBE, they should mark ‘cuisine’ with an ‘X’ in the column under DC I, or if they feel that the destination competitiveness attribute ‘international access’ is being influenced by CBBE, then ‘international access’ should be marked with an ‘X’ in the column under DC II as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Resources and Attractors</th>
<th>DC I</th>
<th>DC II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuisine</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Factors &amp; Resources</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International access</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
measured through frequency distributions (McKenna, 1994), and consensus is considered to be achieved when a minimum of 51% of the participants give the same response (McKenna, 1989). However, Green (1982), believed that a minimum of 70% of Delphi participants need to rate an item three or higher on a four-point Likert-type scale to indicate agreement. For this study, a 60% same response rate to a question was used as the criterion for consensus.

For those attributes which did not achieve a 60% consensus during the first round, a revised second-round or iteration questionnaire listing, only those 'undecided' attributes was sent out to the same respondents asking them to reconsider their opinion so as to achieve consensus among the panel.

Discussion

Based on the results of the Delphi-survey, the following competitiveness attributes were classified into either one of the two components of destination competitiveness consisting of either the functional attributes or abstract attributes as highlighted in Table 2.

Findings from the Delphi study indicate that all of that the attributes of the core resources and attractors such as Cuisine, Dedicated tourism attractions, Well-known landmarks, Different culture, Local way of life, Interesting architecture, Climate, Museums and galleries, Visual appeal, Nightlife, Interesting festivals, special events, Notable history, Music and performance belong to the functional attributes component.

Nearly all attributes of Supporting Factors & Resources such as Communication facilities, Good retail sector, Access to information, High quality accommodation international access and Internal transportation facilities were classified into the functional attributes component, except for one supporting factor, that is Government policy, which was put into the abstract attributes component.

Both the Destination Management attributes of Local managerial skills and Staff skills were categorised under the abstract attributes component while the attributes of Qualifying and Amplifying Determinants were separated into two components; Geographic location, Overall economic conditions, Costs of holiday, and Safety and Local currency rates were classified as functional attributes but the attribute of Political stability was categorised as an abstract attribute.

From the literature review, it can be seen that brand equity can significantly influence consumer behaviour in the form of greater possibility of brand selection, increased brand loyalty, reduced price sensitivity, and a willingness to pay more for the brand (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Pitta & Katsanis, 1995; Wood, 2000; Nam et al., 2011;
### Table 2. Classification of destination competitiveness attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes of destination</th>
<th>Attributes of destination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competitiveness I (Functional attributes)</td>
<td>Competitiveness II (Abstract attributes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core resources and attractors</strong></td>
<td><strong>Core resources and attractors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated tourism attractions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well-known landmarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Different culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local way of life</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting architecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums and galleries</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual appeal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightlife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting festivals</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Special events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notable history</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music and performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supporting factors &amp; resources</strong></td>
<td><strong>Supporting factors &amp; resources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication facilities</td>
<td>Government policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good retail sector</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High quality accommodation</td>
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<tr>
<td>International access</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal transportation facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Destination management</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Local managerial skills</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualifying and amplifying determinants</strong></td>
<td><strong>Qualifying and amplifying determinants</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic location</td>
<td>Political stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall economic conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs of holiday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local currency exchange rate</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Ferns & Walls, 2012), and these actions inevitably lead to an increased competitiveness for the brand. However, there is also increasing evidence to support the view that certain destination competitiveness attributes can be the precursors for the development of a destination brand (Etchner & Ritchie, 2003; Pike, 2009).
Conclusion

Hence, it is reasonable to assume that the construct of destination competitiveness is most likely to consist of two components; one component of destination competitiveness (functional attributes) being the antecedent of CBBE while the other component (abstract attributes) is actually influenced by CBBE. Since there has been a paucity of research on the classification of destination competitive attributes into the components of functional or abstract attributes, a study using the Delphi method was conducted to help achieve consensus in this complex issue.

Further research on this topic in the future can be extended to a quantitative study to determine the mediating effect of CBBE between the functional attributes and abstract attributes of destination competitiveness. Such a study will help to validate that there are indeed two components of destination competitiveness and also to ascertain the role of CBBE in the relationship between the functional and abstract attributes. Another area for suggested future research could be on the possible mediating influence of the abstract attributes of destination competitiveness in the relationship between CBBE and destination loyalty.

Limitations

The Delphi method used in this study was quite tedious and took up a substantial amount of time of the participants because it involved two rounds of survey which meant that the respondents had to fill in the questionnaires twice (some Delphi studies can take more than two rounds). This substantially increased the data collection time and it also discouraged more people from taking part in the study. There is also the possibility of some of the participants “giving in” to majority opinion after receiving feedback on the responses from the first iteration of the survey. Therefore, when conducting a study using the Delphi technique, it is important that issues such as the extended duration for data collection, adequate knowledge of research topic by the expert panel, unintentional influencing of the participants’ responses by researcher, and low response rate be carefully considered and factored into the research design.

References


Research Paper

A Structural Model of Stakeholders’ Attitude Towards Rural Tourism Development

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Kalasalingam University, India

Abstract: Identification of stakeholders’ involvement in destination tourism planning and development, as well as the factors that might influence their level of involvement, is not only important for tourism destination planners, but also helps gauge the host community’s support for destination tourism development and competitive strategies. This study tests the structural equation model between stakeholders’ perceptions and opinions on the impacts of tourism development and further determines their willingness to support the competitive development and marketing strategies. The implications of social exchange theory and stakeholders’ theory provide the theoretical underpinning for this study. The study is descriptive in nature, and uses both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to investigate the relationships between different constructs. The study area is a rural tourism spot, Karasikudi, Sivaganga District in Tamilnadu, India. Convenience and quota sampling methods were adopted to collect quantitative data from different tourism stakeholders. Convenience sampling was used because of difficulty in approaching households for interviews due to the conventional nature of the society. Quota sampling was used to ensure different subgroups of the population were included in the sample of 300. The data were analysed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the statistical package Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS). The study shows some statistical significance between tourism development impacts that people may experience and their desire for more participation in the decision-making process. As the study was done in a small geographical location, the findings cannot be generalised to other rural locations. Further research has to be done to extend the reach of the study. However, the results should help rural tourism planners, governments and support organisations in other areas to better evaluate and understand stakeholders’ attitude and perceptions before implementing a project.

Key words: Community satisfaction, rural tourism, stakeholders’ attitude, tourism development impacts, tourism support

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Introduction

The second highest revenue-generating industry in the world is the tourism industry, coming just below the oil industry. Tourism contributes 11% of global Gross domestic Product (GDP). The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) estimates that there will be 1.6 billion tourists in the world, representing 21% of the world population (Mmasny, 2001). The tourism industry contributes towards the high priority goals of a developing country which are increased income, employment and foreign exchange earnings. Tourism is one of the major export sectors of poor countries and the leading source of foreign exchange in 46 of 49 developing countries (Bolwell & Weinz, 2008). Tourism also supports the preservation of monuments and heritage properties and helps the survival of art forms, crafts and culture. Currently, tourism is one of the largest service industries in India. Tourism in India contributes 6.23% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 8.78% to total employment in India (ACNielsen ORG-MARG, 2007). In the tenth five-year plan (2003-2007), the government of India planned to develop 39 rural tourism sites in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under the Innovative Endogenous Tourism Project. The focus will be on rural tourism experience, rural art and craft skills, and cultural and natural heritage.

Rural tourism is a vital means of increasing employment and income as it can assist social and economic development of rural communities (Sharpley, 2002). The development of a strong platform around the concept of rural tourism is definitely useful for a country like India, where almost 74% of the population resides in its 7 million villages (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India Year: http://tourism.gov.in/TourismDivision). Each village has its own distinctive performing arts and handicrafts, customs and traditions, colourful festivals, cuisine as well as its own historical heritage. In 2004, the government of India identified 31 villages across the country as rural tourist spots. Among these were Karaikudi in Sivaganga district and Kazhugumalai in Thoothugudi district. Both these sites are two rural villages located in Tamilnadu. Tamilnadu is one of the top states which attracts a maximum number of foreign tourists in India. During the year 2008, 6,465,800 tourists arrived in in Tamilnadu. This figure rose to 8,040,700 in 2009 giving an increase of 1,574,900 in 2009, compared to the previous year (Tamilnadu Tourism, Policy Note 2010-2011). Against the background of economic development and the potential of international tourism, UN WTO(2008) recommends the participation of local communities and other
stakeholders in tourism development. The fundamental concept of rural tourism is to benefit the local community by creating entrepreneurial opportunities, generating income and employment opportunities, preserving and developing rural arts and crafts, investing in infrastructure development and preserving the environment and heritage.

Identification of stakeholders' involvement in destination tourism planning and development, as well as the factors that might influence their level of involvement, is not only important for tourism destination public sector planners and private sector managers, but also for the host community's support for destination tourism development and competitive strategies. Tourism destinations need to plan their development strategies and actions to succeed internationally and gain a competitive advantage (Dowling, 1993; Riege & Perry, 2000; Ritchie, 1993; Yuksel Bramwell & Yuksel, 1999). Places that do not develop strategic planning for their destinations can suffer from economic, social, and environmental problems, as well as a decline in their competitiveness as a tourism destination (Dowling, 1993).

The scope of this research is to identify the factors that may affect Karaikudi stakeholders' (Local community, Government authorities - tourism related and non-tourism related, businesses - tourism related and non-tourism related and tourists) attitudes and perceptions, and in turn examine the effect of these factors on stakeholder support for tourism development. Therefore the objectives of this study are twofold:

1. To identify the dimensions of tourism development impacts of rural tourism.
2. To examine the dimension of tourism development impacts on stakeholder tourism support.

**Literature Review**

**Rural Tourism**

Tourism has many potential benefits for rural areas (Frederick, 1992). According to the Organisation of Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), rural tourism is defined as tourism taking place in the countryside (Reichel, Lowengart & Milman, 2000). Rural tourism provides employment for local residents and prevents their immigration to cities (Sarjit Gill, 2009). A model of integrated rural tourism, taking into account the various resources (cultural, social, environmental, economic), their use, and the role of pertinent stakeholders, has been developed to explore effective methods of promoting tourism as part of a rural development strategy (Cawley & Gilmor 2008). A set of community-based rural tourism development indicators can serve as a starting point for devising a set of indicators at the local and regional level in order to be useful for rural tourism sector managers and administrators (Duk & Yoon, 2011)
Tourism Development Impact

Many researchers have observed the total development impacts of tourism on stakeholders. Stakeholders’ perceptions of total impact may be influenced by the level of tourism development. The results of various studies suggest that stakeholders’ perception of the total impact of tourism is affected by the perceived impact of costs and benefit factors on the stakeholders’ such as economic, social and cultural, and environmental (Yoon, 2001; McIntosh & Goeldner, 1990; Murphy, 1983). Several researchers have also found that residents do perceive the positive and negative environmental impacts of tourism (Liu & Var, 1986; Liu, Sheldon & Var, 1987).

Juroski (1994) suggests that community support for tourism development is essential for the successful operation and sustainability of tourism. This is mainly because rural tourism relies heavily upon the goodwill of the local community and residents, and an understanding of local communities’ reactions toward tourism development is essential in achieving the goal of favourable host-community support for tourism development (Yoon, 2001). Positive impacts include preservation of historic and cultural resources, recreation opportunities for visitors and residents, and better roads and public facilities. Negative environmental impacts include deterioration and destruction of environment, pollution, and deterioration of cultural or historical resources (Chen, 2000).

Stakeholders perceive economic benefits as the most important factor in support of tourism development (Akis, Peristianis & Warner, 1996; Husband, 1989; Liu & Var, 1986; Ritchie, 1988; Sheldon & Var, 1984). Economic impact studies have mainly focused on job opportunities (Belisle & Hoy, 1980; Davis, Allan & Cosenza, 1988) and the benefits derived from tourism activities (Davis et al., 1988; Murphy, 1983). Tourism is an economic activity that has often been cited in relation to rural economics as a key strategy for regional development (Cawley & Gillmor, 2007; Saxena, Clark, Oliver & Ilberry, 2007; Fleisher & Falenstein, 2000).

Many studies conclude that host communities view tourism as providing socio-cultural benefits to the community such as opportunities for cultural exchange (McCool & Martin, 1994; Mathieson & Wall, 1982). Cardoso & Falletto (1979) and Friedman (1984) also recognise that political, social and cultural processes are interdependent with economic processes but not reducible to the host communities and are themselves able to bring about change. The extensive growth of tourism in the late 1960s raises the need for planning (Saarinen & Kask, 2008).

Hall & Brown (1998) has observed that “tourism has emerged as one of the central means by which rural areas can adjust themselves economically, socially and politically to the new global environment”. Tourism and its impacts are a multidimensional phenomenon that encompass economic, social, cultural, ecological, environmental, and political forces (Singh, Timothy & Dowling, 2003). According to
Cook, Yale & Marqua (2007), tourism should be blended with, or assimilated into the environment and the local culture of an area. Tourism should evolve from the area’s natural and historical/cultural attractions (Cook et al., 2007).

Tourism Support

The host community relationship with tourists is vital to the visitor experience and research proposes that it is impossible to sustain tourism destination that is not supported by local people (Ahn, Lee & Shafer 2002; Twinning-Ward & Butler 2002; McCool, Moisey & Nickerson 2001). The most favourable perceptions toward tourism impacts are found to be associated with economic and social and cultural aspects of tourism (Tatoglu, Erdal, Osgur & Azakli, 2000). Several researchers and professionals suggest that stakeholders be included in the planning process (Hardy & Beeton, 2001) as sustainable tourism development cannot be achieved without considering stakeholders’ interests (Ioannidis, 1995). The relationship between the community leaders’ perceptions towards tourism impacts their efforts towards building support for tourism in local communities (Fariborz & Ma’ rof 2009). Much of the existing tourism literature is based on comments from local indigenous residents about their favourable or unfavourable attitudes toward tourism planning and development (Doxey, 1975; Dogan, 1989; Perdue, Long & Allen, 1990; Yoon, 1998). It can be argued that within a community, there may be various levels of tourism support. Tourism stakeholders’ opinions and attitudes about the factors that influence the tourism planning decision-making process, including perceived tourism development impacts, environmental attitudes, and place attachment, have not been thoroughly explored, and have become a challenging research issue.

Methods

Measurement Instrument

The questionnaire for the study was constructed based on variables adapted from existing literature. Initially the questionnaire was constructed with 30 items. After the pilot study, 2 items were deleted and it was reframed with 28 items. The final questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section contained 28 items to measure tourism development impacts and 6 items to measure tourism support (Table1). The 28 items of tourism development impacts were broken down into 10 items for Economic impacts (10 items), 12 for Socio-cultural impacts, 4 for Environmental impacts and 2 for Political impacts. The second section dealt with the socio-demographic profile of the stakeholders. The statements in the questionnaire were refined based on the rural tourism context chosen for this study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Part-I Tourism Development Impacts</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Tourism increases job opportunities for the local people</td>
<td>Belisle &amp; Hoy, (1980); Davis et al. (1988); Ko &amp; Stewart (2002); Liu &amp; Var (1986); Williams &amp; Lawson (2001); Yoon et al. (1999; 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Increase in income generation for local people, artisans and small businesses</td>
<td>(Davis et al., 1988; Murphy, 1983). Ko &amp; Stewart (2002); Yoon et al.(1999; 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Development of a common platform for crafts persons to display and sell their local arts and crafts</td>
<td>Jurowski (1994); Yoon (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Local labour, technology and resources optimally utilized</td>
<td>Yoon (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Tourism has created high investment, development, and infrastructure</td>
<td>Akis et al. (1996); Ko &amp; Stewart (2002); Liu &amp; Var (1986).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Tourism creates more jobs for outsiders than for local people.</td>
<td>Akis et al. (1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Host community getting trained in different types of hospitality management, cuisine preparation, tourist handling</td>
<td>Yoon (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Products are sold in the national and international markets</td>
<td>Yoon (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Tourism causes changes to the traditional culture of the community</td>
<td>Akis et al. (1996); Liu &amp; Var(1986); Yoon et al. (1999, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Tourism has encouraged a variety of cultural exchange between tourists and residents</td>
<td>Liu &amp; Var (1986); Liu et al. (1987); Teye, Sirakaya &amp; Sobmez (2002); Yoon et al. (1999, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Increase in awareness on the importance of the site</td>
<td>Developed by researcher based on various literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Mobilisation of women artisans in the active participation in the tourism programme</td>
<td>Developed by researcher based on various literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Formation of activity based groups and self help groups, benefiting women community</td>
<td>Developed by researcher based on various literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Effective skill building of the women community</td>
<td>Developed by researcher based on various literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Development of institution like Gurukul platform for learners and teachers</td>
<td>Developed by researcher based on various literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Documentation of the crafts, arts and folklore</td>
<td>Yoon (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Improved solid waste management facilities like the garbage disposal system</td>
<td>Developed by researcher based on various literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Tourism encourages a variety of cultural activities by the local population (e.g., crafts, arts, music)</td>
<td>Liu et al. (1987); Williams &amp; Lawson (2001); Yoon et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Tourism increases the availability of entertainment (e.g., festivals, exhibitions, and events)</td>
<td>Akis et al. (1996); Liu &amp; Var (1986)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Tourism provides an incentive for the conservation of historical buildings</td>
<td>McCool &amp; Martin, (1994); Mathieson &amp; Wall, (1982); Akis et al. (1996); Johnson et al. (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Tourism has resulted in more crime rates</td>
<td>Akis et al. (1996); Johnson et al. (1994); Liu &amp; Var (1986); Perdue et al. (1987); Yoon et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Construction of hotels and other tourist facilities destroys the natural environment</td>
<td>Akis et al. (1996); Yoon et al. (1999, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Tourism improves public utilities (e.g., roads, telecommunication) in the community.</td>
<td>Akis et al. (1996); Teye et al. (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Tourism brings political benefits to society (e.g., democratic values, tolerance)</td>
<td>Developed by researcher based on various literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>The community should have authority to suggest control and restrictions of tourism development in the country.</td>
<td>Perdue et al. (1987)</td>
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Table 1. Continued from previous page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism Support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Development of cultural or historic-based attractions (e.g. museums, folk</td>
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<td>villages, local historic sites, traditional markets).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Development of supporting visitor services (hotels, restaurants,</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertainment, banks etc).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Development of small independent businesses (e.g. gift shops, guide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>services, camping grounds).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Development of cultural and folk events (e.g. concerts, art and crafts,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dances, festivals).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Development of infrastructure (roads, transportation, and access</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facilities) for tourists.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sampling and Data Collection

Questionnaires were sent to stakeholders such as government authorities, businesses, residents, tourism faculty and students to the study area of Karaikudi, Sivaganga district in Tamilnadu, India. Convenience and quota sampling methods were adapted to collect quantitative data from the respondents. Of the 325 responses, 300 were usable, resulting in a response rate of 92.3%, which is more than reasonable for a survey of this nature. Respondents were asked to state their level of agreement for tourism development impacts with a series of statements shown in Table 1 using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The tourism support factors were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly oppose” to “strongly support”.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory has been utilised by most researchers in studies related to relationships between different stakeholders in destination development and residents’ attitudes and perceptions. This theory has been considered the appropriate framework to develop an understanding of residents’ perceptions and attitudes (Ap, 1990; Perdue et al., 1990). Ap (1990) in his social exchange theory suggested that when an exchange
of resources between residents and tourism is high and balanced, tourism impacts are viewed positively by residents and vice versa. Perdue et al. (1990) briefly mentioned that social exchange theory is a basis for investigating residents’ attitudes about tourism. They concluded that support for additional development is positively related in the case of people who perceive positive impacts from tourism, and negatively correlated in the case of people who perceive negative impacts from tourism. According to Yoon, Gursoy & Chen (2000) who studied residents’ attitudes and support for tourism development by using a structural model, local residents are likely to participate in exchange (support tourism development) as long as the perceived benefits of tourism exceed the perceived costs of tourism. Since tourism stakeholders have been considered as important key players or components that influence the success or failure of tourism in a region, their participation and involvement should be considered in tourism planning and development. Thus, social exchange theory provides a theoretical foundation for identifying tourism stakeholders’ perceptions of the benefits and costs of tourism. The implications of the social exchange theory provide guiding assumptions for this study, in that it is assumed that people (tourism stakeholders) may receive more benefits (rewards) than costs from tourism.

From the literature we propose the model (Figure 1) and the following hypothesis.

H1. Tourism development impacts have a direct positive effect on stakeholders’ tourism support.

In this structural model, the support of tourism destination competitiveness is considered as the dependent or endogenous construct. It is affected by tourism development impacts (Economic, Social and Cultural, Environmental and Political

![Figure 1. The proposed hypothesised model](image_url)

Source: Developed for this study from an adaptation of Jurowski et al. (1997) and Yoon (2002).
impacts) which are exogenous constructs. The total effect on support for destination development comprises both direct and indirect effects. Specifically, the structural model empirically examined the impacts of the exogenous constructs of tourism development on tourism stakeholders’ support for tourism development.

Results

The demographic profile analysis is presented in Table 2. Multivariate analysis of data was carried out in two steps. 1. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to explore the underlying dimensions of tourism development impacts. For this, the sample was split into two sub-samples: Sample 1 (n = 100) and Sample 2 (n =200). Based on MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang & Hong (1999) who recommended a sample of at least 100 for running the EFA, an EFA was performed on the 30 items of the measurement scale using the principal component analysis with varimax rotation. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to confirm the factor structure of total development impacts by using Sample 2 (n=200). The descriptive statistics of the items for the 30 tourism development impacts as well as 4 tourism support measurement items are shown in Table 3.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

An EFA was performed on sample 1(n=100) using the 30 variables related to the tourism development impacts. The criteria used for factor extraction is that the eigenvalue should be greater than one and the factor structure should be meaningful, useful and conceptually sound (Pett, Lackey & Sullivan, 2003). The factor loadings of the 30 items are shown in Table 3. From EFA, four factors were extracted (Table 3), accounting for 63.8 % of the total variance explained. A total of 28 items loaded properly on the factors. Two items, namely “Increase in awareness on the importance of the site” and “Improved solid waste management facilities like the garbage disposal system” were removed because they did not load good (Factor loading less than 0.4) on any of the factors. Reliability of the factors was calculated using the Cronbach’s alpha. A Cronbach’s alpha value of greater than or equal to 0.7 is considered acceptable for the factor to be reliable (Hair et al., 2006). The Cronbach’s alpha values of all the factors of tourism development impacts viz. Economic impact EC (0.91), Socio-cultural impacts SC (0.84), Environmental impacts EN(0.89) and Political impacts P(0.86) were satisfactory. The Cronbach’s alpha value of Tourism Support (TS) was 0.84 which was also acceptable. Therefore the factors were found to be reliable. The 28 items of tourism development impacts were organised into four factors (Table 4).
Table 2. Demographic profile of respondents (N = 300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24 years</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-44 years</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44-65 years</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;65 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher qualifications</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneducated</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed in government</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Help group</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed in private sector</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reired</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House wife</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;Rs 5000</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs 5001-10000</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs 10001-15000</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs15001-25000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;Rs25001</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>60.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Separated/Divorced</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widows</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 &amp; above</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5 years</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;20 years</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism related</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-tourism related</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance of residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very close</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far Away</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>51.7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Table 3. Descriptive statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism Development Impacts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in job opportunities</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>1.390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in income generation</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of handicraft items</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>1.254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common platform to sell</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimal utilisation of technology</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of high investment</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>1.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of more jobs for outsiders</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for host community on hospitality management</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration for market tie-ups.</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>1.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National and international markets</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in traditional culture</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>1.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural exchange between tourists and residents</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>1.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in awareness on importance of site</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilisation of women artisans</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formation of activity based groups</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>1.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills building of women</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>1.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurukul(teacher-student) platform for learners</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation of crafts &amp; arts</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits outweigh negative impacts</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved solid waste management facilities like the garbage disposal system</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages a variety of cultural activities</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of entertainment</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive for the conservation of historical buildings</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased crime rates</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in natural beauty</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>1.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in hygienic conditions</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destruction of natural environment</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved public utilities</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political benefits to society</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>1.138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority to control and restrict</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>1.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism Support(TS)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage-based tourism</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural or historic-based attractions</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>1.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting visitor services</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small independent businesses</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and folk events</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure for tourists</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>1.218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4. Rotated factor matrix for Tourism Development impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Measurement items</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Impact (EC)</td>
<td>EC1</td>
<td>Increase in job opportunities</td>
<td>.784</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EC2</td>
<td>Increase in income generation</td>
<td>.762</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EC3</td>
<td>Promotion of handicraft items</td>
<td>.684</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EC4</td>
<td>Common platform to sell</td>
<td>.665</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EC5</td>
<td>Optimal utilisation of tech</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EC6</td>
<td>Creation of high investment</td>
<td>.604</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EC7</td>
<td>Creation of more jobs for outsiders</td>
<td>.590</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EC8</td>
<td>Training of host community in hospitality management</td>
<td>.565</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EC9</td>
<td>Collaboration for market tie-ups</td>
<td>.542</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EC10</td>
<td>National and international markets</td>
<td>.532</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Cultural Impact (SC)</td>
<td>SC11</td>
<td>Changes to traditional culture</td>
<td>.852</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC12</td>
<td>Cultural exchange between tourists and residents</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>SC13</td>
<td>Mobilisation of women artisans</td>
<td>.813</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>SC14</td>
<td>Formation of activity based groups</td>
<td>.790</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC15</td>
<td>Skills building in women</td>
<td>.775</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC16</td>
<td><em>Gaurikul</em> platform to learners</td>
<td>.774</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC17</td>
<td>Documentation of crafts, arts</td>
<td>.773</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC18</td>
<td>Benefits outweigh negative impacts</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC19</td>
<td>Encourages a variety of cultural activities</td>
<td>.605</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC20</td>
<td>Availability of entertainment</td>
<td>.576</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC21</td>
<td>Incentive for conservation of historical buildings</td>
<td>.536</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC22</td>
<td>Increased crime rates</td>
<td>.510</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued next page
Continued from previous page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Impact (EN)</th>
<th>EN23</th>
<th>Improvement in natural beauty</th>
<th>.690</th>
<th>.89</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EN24</td>
<td>Improved hygienic conditions</td>
<td>.659</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN25</td>
<td>Destruction of natural environment</td>
<td>.641</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN26</td>
<td>Improved public utilities</td>
<td>.621</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Impact (P)</td>
<td>P27</td>
<td>Political benefits to society</td>
<td>.765</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P28</td>
<td>Authority to control and restrict</td>
<td>.595</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* teacher-student

**Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)**

The four factors identified through exploratory factor analysis were confirmed through CFA on Sample 2 (n=200). The confirmatory factor analysis was performed using AMOS 18.0.

**Model Fit**

*First order CFA*

A first order CFA was run on the measurement model consisting of the four dimensions of Tourism Development Impacts and Tourism Support. The values of the fit indices indicated a reasonable mediocre fit of the measurement model with data (Table 5). The results indicate that the measurement model confirms to the four-factor structure of the dimensions of tourism development impacts of rural tourism.

*Second order CFA*

Next, a second order confirmatory factor analysis was run on the measurement model consisting of the Tourism Development impacts (TDI) as a latent construct. The measurement model revealed an adequate mediocre model fit to the data (Table 6). The items that loaded significantly on the latent constructs are shown in the Table 7.

**Reliability and Validity of the Instrument**

The second order construct was measured for reliability. Cronbach’s alpha for the tourism development impacts instrument (TDI) was 0.84, an indication of the reliability of the instrument and which is acceptable. The composite reliability (CR) of the TDI instrument was 0.936 which is greater than the acceptable limit of 0.70
**Table 5. I order model-fit statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Fit Measures</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square of estimate model/d.f</td>
<td>2.967, p &lt; 0.001</td>
<td>p &lt; 5 (Joreskog &amp; Sorbom, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0-1. Value close to 1 is good fit (Byrne, 1994; Hu &amp; Bentler, 1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root mean square residual (RMR)</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>&lt; 1 (Hu &amp; Bentler, 1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.08 (mediocre fit) (MacCallum, Browne &amp; Sugawara, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incremental Fit Measures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0-1. Value close to 1 is good fit (Byrne, 1994; Hu &amp; Bentler, 1995)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parsimonious Fit Measures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative fit index (CFI)</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0-1. Value close to 1 is good fit (Byrne, 1994; Hu &amp; Bentler, 1995)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6. II order model-fit statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Fit Measures</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square of estimated model/d.f</td>
<td>2.911, p &lt; 0.001</td>
<td>p &lt; 5 (Joreskog &amp; Sorbom, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0-1. Value close to 1 is good fit (Byrne, 1994; Hu &amp; Bentler, 1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root mean square residual (RMR)</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>&lt; 1 (Hu &amp; Bentler, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.08 (mediocre fit) (MacCallum, Browne &amp; Sugawara, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incremental Fit Measures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0-1. Value close to 1 is good fit (Byrne, 1994; Hu &amp; Bentler, 1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parsimonious Fit Measures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative fit index (CFI)</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0-1. Value close to 1 is good fit (Byrne, 1994; Hu &amp; Bentler, 1995)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table 7. Measurement model results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>TDI</td>
<td>.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>TDI</td>
<td>.989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>TDI</td>
<td>.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>TDI</td>
<td>.828</td>
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<tr>
<td>EC1</td>
<td>EC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC3</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>.789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC5</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>.833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC7</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>.767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC8</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC9</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC20</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC19</td>
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<td>.605</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC15</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>.710</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC14</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>.656</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC13</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>.698</td>
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<td>P28</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>.819</td>
</tr>
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<td>P27</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>.681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ET26</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>.647</td>
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<tr>
<td>ET24</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>.694</td>
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<td>TS</td>
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<td>TS3</td>
<td>TS</td>
<td>.730</td>
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<td>TS4</td>
<td>TS</td>
<td>.688</td>
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<td>TS5</td>
<td>TS</td>
<td>.775</td>
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<tr>
<td>TS6</td>
<td>TS</td>
<td>.752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC12</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>.646</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *** denotes factor loadings that are significant at p<0.001

(Carmines & Zeller, 1979). The indicator reliability (IR) is defined as the squared multiple correlation (SMC) between a latent factor and that indicator. The indicator reliability for each indicator was greater than 0.5 which is acceptable (Bollen, 1989). Construct validity is a measure of how well a set of measured variables actually reveal the latent construct they are designed to measure (Hair et al., 2006) and is measured by establishing convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was assessed by examining the factor loadings and average variance extracted of the constructs as suggested by Fornell & Larcker (1981). The convergent validity (average variance extracted (AVE)) of the tourism development impacts instrument was 0.79 which is greater than or equal to 0.5 and is acceptable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)
Impact of Tourism Development Dimensions on Tourism Support

H1 was examined by using the structural equation model (AMOS 18.0). The structural model on Tourism Development impacts and Tourism Support is shown in Figure 2. The results of the structural equation modeling indicate an adequate model fit to the data ($\chi^2$ /df=2.826, $p<0.001$ (<5); GFI = 0.87; AGFI=0.82, CFI=0.91, RMR=0.08, and RMSEA = 0.08). Results also indicate that Tourism support is influenced positively and significantly by Tourism Development impacts (Beta coefficient ($\beta$) =0.584, at $p<0.001$).

Interpretations

The results of the descriptive statistics analysis for the tourism development impacts scale are presented in Table 2. This measurement scale consisted of 28 items reflecting the perceived economic, socio-cultural, environmental and political impacts of tourism development. Respondents were asked to provide answers to each item based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5=strongly agree to 1=strongly disagree.

Based on descriptive analysis of the statistics, the mean score of each item shows that from an Economic perspective, respondents disagreed that tourism increases job opportunities for the people of Karalkudi ($M=2.79$, $SD=1.39$), but they agreed
that the host community is being trained on hospitality management (M= 3.43, SD=1.106). Additionally, they disagreed that handicraft items were being promoted (M=2.65, SD=1.25) and that there was an increase in income generation for local people and small businesses (M=2.54, SD=1.10).

From a Socio-cultural perspective, respondents tended to strongly agree that tourism encourages formation of activity based groups (M=4.38, SD=1.10), and further strongly agreed that tourism increases skills building of the women (M=4.30, SD=1.17). Additionally, respondents agree that tourism results in changes to the traditional culture of the community (M=3.70, SD=1.116), for example, lifestyle and language. Further, they strongly disagreed that tourism improved solid waste management facilities such as the garbage disposal system (M=1.20, SD=1.12).

From an Environmental perspective, respondents disagreed about receiving incentives for the conservation of historical buildings (M=2.93, SD=1.20); they also disagreed that when people interfere with nature, disastrous consequences may result such as environmental degradation and the disappearance of certain species (M=2.75, SD=1.19). However, respondents disagreed that the development of tourism improves public utilities (M=2.62, SD=1.27).

From a Political perspective, respondents disagreed that those in authority in society receive political benefits (M=2.36, SD=1.13); they further disagreed that they have power to control and restrict tourism development (M=2.28, SD=1.12).

Structural equation modeling was utilized to test the hypothesis proposed in this study in an attempt to identify the structural relationships between dependent (tourism support) and independent constructs (tourism development impacts). The proposed hypothesis H1 is strongly supported and is significant, based on the outcome of the final structural model. Amongst construct factors of Tourism Development impacts, the strongest positive effect was for the ‘Socio-cultural impact’ factor (estimated value: 0.989) (see Table 4) on the support for tourism developmental strategies. The Economic impact (estimated value: 0.906), Political impact (estimated value: 0.828) and the Environmental impact (estimated value: 0.806) had a positive effect on stakeholder’s support for tourism. These strong relationships support the outcomes of other previous studies (e.g. Besculides, Lee & McCormick, 2002; Upchurch & Teivane, 2000), which indicate that communities, in the early stages of tourism development are not greatly vulnerable to negative socio-cultural impacts. However, our finding contradict research studies that approve the negative socio-cultural and environmental community’s perception towards tourism development (Yoon et al., 2001). Despite the strength of Karaikudi society’s culture and its characteristic of being conservative, this positive perception expressed by the tourism stakeholders towards tourism development could be attributed to the fact that tourism development in Karaikudi is still in its infant stage. Further, as the type of tourism that Karaikudi
experiences is at a higher-level, the distance between tourists and the local communities has been maintained at a manageable level, preventing an immediate effect on the community.

**Discussion**

First, this research contributes to the identification of stakeholders' perceptions and attitude towards the dimension of tourism development impacts in relation to rural tourism. The dimensions identified in this study are Economic impacts, Socio-Cultural impacts, Environmental impacts and Political impacts. These dimensions should serve as guidelines for rural tourism planners, governments and support organisations as it will help them to understand the particular dimensions that stakeholders' look into for extending their support to tourism development in their area. Second, the study contributes to the understanding of the differential impact of these dimensions on tourism development and the support (or otherwise) for tourism in their area. This is in line with tourism impact literature linking perceived tourism support to economic, socio-cultural, environmental and political impacts (Yoon et al., 2001; McIntosh & Goeldner, 1990; Murphy, 1983). The first dimension of Economic impacts of rural tourism development consists of items related to job opportunities (Belisle & Hoy, 1980; Davis et al., 1988) and the benefits derived from tourism activities (Davis et al., 1988; Murphy, 1983). This dimension highlights the importance placed by stakeholders on the positive impacts of tourism. The second dimension of Socio-cultural impacts projects socio-cultural benefits to the community such as opportunities for cultural exchange (McCool & Martin, 1994; Mathieson & Wall, 1982). The third dimension of Environmental impacts relates to the preservation of historic and cultural resources, recreation opportunities for visitors and residents, and better roads and public facilities, destruction of the environment, pollution, and crime (Liu & Var, 1986; Liu et al., 1987; Chen, 2000). The last dimension of Political impacts relates to authority and control, and empowerment of local officials. Amongst the constructs of tourism development impacts, the strongest positive effect was from the ‘Socio-cultural impact’ factor (estimated value: 0.989) (see table 4) for the support of tourism developmental strategies. Next in order of importance for positive effect on stakeholder's support for tourism were Economic impacts (estimated value: 0.906), Political impacts (estimated value: 0.828) and finally Environmental impacts (estimated value: 0.806).

The different dimensions obtained in this study highlight that perceived impacts have some universal aspects. Moreover the Economic, Socio-cultural, Environmental and Political impacts are important factors in determining support for tourism. All these dimensions are applicable to all rural destinations and are termed as generic in nature. Since these dimensions are generic in nature, they may be applied to future studies aimed at identifying attitudes of stakeholders in the rural areas. The study has
also identified the dimensions of the impact of tourism development that stakeholders support. By applying first order CFA, the revised four constructs were measured by sixteen items related to Economic impacts (EC1, EC3, EC5, EC7, EC8, EC9), Socio-cultural impacts (SC12, SC13, SC14, SC15, SC19, SC20), Environmental impacts (EN24, EN26) and Political impacts (P27, P28), as shown in Figure 1. The modified Tourism Support construct was measured by five items (TS2, TS3, TS4, TS5, TS6). The first order measurement model revealed an adequate model fit to the data. Next, the revised construct TDI following II order CFA was projected by four factors, EC, SC, EN and P, as shown in Figure 2. II order CFA strongly fit the data.

The proposed relationship between constructs was tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). A linear relationship was constructed between TDI and Tourism support and the structural model was tested. The final model has been found to fit the data very strongly and is the best possible model for this study. Hence the hypothesis is accepted (coefficient (c) =0.449, at p <0.001). The researcher found that Tourism Development impact affects support for tourism positively and significantly.

**Conclusion**

The Socio-cultural impacts factor had the strongest positive effect on support for tourism developmental strategies. Next in order of importance for positive effect on stakeholder’s support for tourism were Economic impact, Political impact and finally Environmental impact. These strong relationships support the outcomes of other previous studies which indicate that communities in the early stages of tourism development are not very vulnerable to negative socio-cultural impacts.

However, the findings of this study contradict research studies that approve the negative socio-cultural and environmental community’s perception towards tourism development (Yoon et al., 2001). Despite the strength of Karaikudi society’s culture and its characteristic of being conservative, this positive perception expressed by the tourism stakeholders towards tourism development could be attributed to the fact that tourism development in Karaikudi is still in its infant stage. Further, as most of the tourists to Karaikudi are of a high level, the distance between the tourists and the local communities is maintained at a manageable level, with no observable immediate effect on the communities.

The findings of this study make a modest attempt to enhance empirical knowledge on stakeholders' perception towards tourism development impacts and their support of rural tourism development in India. The findings of this study are limited by the nature of the sample. Non-Governmental organisations and members of the international business community need to be included in the sample. These findings cannot be generalised to all rural spots in India, since residents differ with respect to perceptions toward sustainable tourism development. Thus, before any tourism
development project is initiated, an analysis of the perceived impact of tourism development on the community should be studied from a longitudinal perspective. This entails an appropriate methodology to monitor and examine long-term development so as to cope with the changing requirements of the tourism industry.

References


Websites: [http://tourism.gov.in/](http://tourism.gov.in/)
Research Paper

An Investigation into Official Tourism Websites for Promoting Food Tourism in ASEAN Countries

Tan Siew Tze & Noor Hazarina Hashim
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia

Abstract: This study evaluated all ten ASEAN countries’ official website related to food tourism information. Four dimensions - food culture, featured foods and recipes, culinary tourism marketing strategies, and restaurant guides - and 23 websites features were investigated in a web content analysis session. This study found that the ASEAN National Tourism Organisations had minimal information about food tourism on their websites. This study concludes by providing insights on how national tourism organisations could use their websites to promote food tourism in their respective countries.

Key words: ASEAN, culinary tourism, cuisine, food tourism, web content analysis


Introduction

For human beings, food is a critical contributor to physical well-being. It is not only a major source of pleasure, worry, and stress, but also a major occupant of time. For tourists, food plays many roles. It is partaken of in celebrations and social and entertainment events; food is both sensuous and sensual. Consuming different foods is also a way of experiencing new cultures and countries. Although food seldom becomes the main reason for visiting a destination, local food adds to the range of attractions and represents a culture that contributes to the overall travel experience.

Interestingly, despite being an important element in travel activities, research on food tourism began to receive academic attention only in the early 1980s. After 30

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years, food tourism as a form of tourism made its appearance as gastronomic tourism (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Zelinsky, 1985), culinary tourism (Long, 2004), and food tourism (Hall et al., 2003). Despite the extensive and diverse definitions, concepts and dimensions proposed, these terms, used interchangeably (Beer, Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2012) connote almost the same notion - the quest for a memorable and unique food and drink experience, both near and far.

In an increasingly competitive world of destination marketing, countries are constantly seeking a unique selling proposition. Undoubtedly, local food with distinct and unique features may be used as a marketing tool to attract visitors (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Au & Law, 2002). The attractiveness of local cuisine to tourists is demonstrated in a survey of visitors to Yucatan Peninsula, where 46% of the meals consumed were local cuisine (Torres, 2002). From an economic perspective, any tourist would spend money on food during their travel, and studies suggest that among all traveling expenditure, tourists are least likely to cut their food budget (Kim, Eves & Scarles, 2013). Countries like Australia, New Zealand, and France had begun to target food tourism as one of the segments of tourism in their marketing strategy. Tourism Victoria, for instance, proposed a year-round integrated marketing plan to promote the state wine and food experiences, events, and activities - all aiming to increase visitors’ length of stay and spending (Tourism Victoria, 2011-2012).

Even with the assortment of conceptual and theoretical frameworks, there is a loud call for empirical studies with respect to the marketing of food tourism (Beer, Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2012; Kim et al., 2013). Research seems to focus on developed countries or countries with a strong food tourism milieu, and very little has been published related to the potential of food tourism in developing countries (Du Rand & Heath, 2006; Kim, Yuan, Goh & Antun, 2009). Most noticeably, there are very limited studies that investigate the promotion of food tourism in online environments (see Horng & Tsai, 2010; Kim et al., 2009; Surenkok, Baggio & Corigliano, 2010).

As tourists shift in their information-search behaviour from off-line to online media (Jordan, Norman & Vogt, 2013), investigating online information quality and marketing strategies becomes an imperative. A search on leading research databases - including EBSCOhost, Emerald, Google Scholar, Proquest, and ScienceDirect - found research related to the online promotion of food tourism to be a relatively new domain. As mentioned earlier, research tends to focus on countries with a strong food tourism background (Horng & Tsai, 2010) or on a specific industry, such as the restaurant industry (Gregory, Youcheng & DiPietro, 2010).

The recent ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy 2012-2015 meeting acknowledged that food tourism has emerged as one of the key contributors to the development of tourism in ASEAN countries (Bernama, 11 July 2013). The governments of
ASEAN countries also acknowledge the potential of marketing food tourism as one of their tourism products. Compared with other ASEAN countries, Singapore and Thailand are already extending serious efforts into the promotion of food tourism. For instance, in 2012, Singapore launched its year-long integrated culinary campaign called the Singapore International Culinary Exchange (SPICE) programme to promote Singaporean food products via two initiatives: Singapore Takeout and Global Chef Exchange (Timo, 2011).

Besides off-line campaigns, the ASEAN National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) are adding on information related to food tourism on their tourism websites. This section of the website provides information on food tourism, such as local food specialties and restaurant information. Nonetheless, this study argues that online presence is not the only factor of importance - tourism NTOs should also ensure that the information provided is useful such that it becomes a worthy investment. This study attempts to address the limited research on food tourism in the online environment. More specifically, this study will investigate website dimensions and features used to promote food tourism among the official ASEAN tourism websites.

A review of the role of IT in travel activities and marketing food tourism is found in Section 2. Section 3 describes the methodology while Section 4 discusses the findings. Section 5 provides the conclusion and implications of the study to the academe and tourism industry.

**Literature Review**

**Tourism and Information Technology**

With growing interest in Web marketing, the effective usage of a business’s website is becoming an important part of its success (Kim et al., 2009). This applies to the tourism industry as well. Travelers can obtain information, compare costs, and make reservations easily if online access is available. Tourists use the Web as a tool to search for potential tourist destinations, activities, and services (Hudson & Thal, 2013; Xiang & Pan, 2011). The design of a tourism website must be both adequate and eye-catching to attract consumers to visit or surf their websites. More importantly, the content of a website is one of the main factors contributing to repeated visits (Rosen & Purinton, 2004).

Besides offering information, interactive designs allow tourism organisations to identify consumers’ interests and encourage their participation. The way a website presents information, graphics, and photos influences how these messages are received by the viewer (Rosen & Purinton, 2004). Thus, the content of government tourism websites is very important in promoting the country as it directly influences the perceived image of the destination and creates a virtual experience of the country.
Marketing Food Tourism

Food consumption is one of the important factors in destination marketing, and there are many ways to instill food as part of the travel experience. Food is promoted to advertise the identity and culture of the destination. It is also a great opportunity for local food producers to add value to their products by creating a special experience for tourists (Hjalager & Richards, 2002).

One of the factors that contribute to the growth of the food tourism is the changing pattern in the twenty-first century society leisure lifestyle (Douglas, Douglas & Derrett, 2001). Moving away from the traditional 4S of ‘Tourism’ (sun, sand, sex, and surf), people choose to pursue their interest in food as a part of a leisure experience such as watching cooking shows and dining out.

Hall & Sharples (2003) divided food tourism into three major categories: gourmet (gastronomic/ cuisine tourism), cuisine tourism and rural/urban tourism, based on the interest and number of tourists. In gourmet tourism, tourists visit expensive and luxury restaurants to experience special, unique and personalised service related to food, service and atmosphere. In culinary tourism, tourists eat out in local and reasonable priced restaurants that offer good quality and quantity of food. Finally, rural/urban tourism is the most common. For these tourists, food is part of the travel experience rather than a focus.

When looking for ways to develop food tourism, a destination should make sure that it possesses the key elements to support food tourism, which means it must establish what unique food assets it has and identify what its strengths and weaknesses are in terms of food tourism development (Kivela & Crotts, 2006). Hjalager & Richards (2002) suggest that destinations developing food tourism need to have short-term, intermediate, and long-term strategic plans based on their resources, the status quo, and the special needs and expectations of the target market in order to make food tourism sustainable.

Most of Asia’s National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) have developed their own marketing strategies for food tourism in their national tourism policy plans (Horng & Tsai, 2010). Nonetheless, policies and strategies must work together to allow a destination’s organisations to develop food tourism more actively. For instance, to encourage tourists to purchase local food, specific marketing strategies are needed to attract potential and targeted tourists, such as forming strategic alliances with food producers, handlers, sellers, hotels, restaurants, wine sellers, and cooks. This will also improve the image of local cuisine (Du Rand & Heath, 2006). A successful marketing strategy for food tourism needs to maintain good public relations and media control as well as create authentic experiences and gain support from the government and international marketing organisations. Marketing campaigns should integrate food and cuisine heritages to attract more tourists. Finally, local governments should
encourage the development of tourism, including the development of food and beverage industries, to boost the economy, create job opportunities, and enhance the sustainability of tourism (Du Rand, Heath & Alberts, 2003).

**Methods**

This study used web content analysis as the data-collection method to identify the presence of texts and photos related to food tourism on government tourism websites. Content analysis is a research tool that focuses on the actual content and internal features of media. It is used to determine the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within texts or sets of texts and to quantify this presence in an objective manner (Krippendorf, 1980). This study has adopted the framework from the study of Horng & Tsai (2010) on government websites promoting East Asian culinary tourism to evaluate all 10 official ASEAN countries’ tourism websites. The evaluation investigated four dimensions—food culture, featured foods and recipes, culinary tourism marketing strategies, restaurant guides—and over 23 features. The 23 features include text descriptions and photo related to the dimension (see Table 1 for a detailed description).

A pretest conducted on a Taiwanese tourism website helped to ensure the suitability of the dimensions. The pretest led to minor changes in the dimensions and their elements. Following the pretest, a pilot study was conducted on three ASEAN countries’ food tourism websites—Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei—to test the reliability and validity of the coding scheme and to finalise the features for content analysis. The pilot study also led to minor changes in the dimensions and features of the coding scheme.

In order to ensure the reliability of the content analysis procedure, this study used the intra-coder reliability, which coded the data by visiting the official ASEAN tourism websites in two periods: one in the morning and one at night. Face validity and content validity sought expert opinion from lecturers in the tourism industry to check the dimensions and features used in this study.

Data collection took place for a week, from February 20–27, 2012. Since some websites allocate information after their home page, the web content analysis was conducted until the fourth layer of the 10 official tourism websites.

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1 The 10 ASEAN countries are Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

2 There are 3 ASEAN countries food tourism websites involved in the pilot study, which are Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei.
Discussion

The websites were examined twice in a day but no differences were found in the websites’ design and content. Table 1 shows data collected from the official ASEAN tourism websites’ frameworks for promoting food tourism.

Food Culture

In the food culture dimension, the feature with the highest presence rate is the *Introduction to food culture*, with nine out of 10 (90%) ASEAN countries having this feature in their official tourism websites. Most websites provide a description of the local foods and signature dishes of the country. However, only 4 out of the 10 countries highlighted their respective countries’ local cuisine despite 50% of the websites being furnished with *photos of the local cuisine*. Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, and Cambodia have both information and photos of local cuisine. On the other hand, Malaysia only has photos, while Brunei also shares recipes of its local cuisine. Only two countries, Singapore and Indonesia, provide a *map guide* to the cities offering local cuisine. Figures 1 and 2 show an example of an *Introduction to food culture* page and a *Map of local cuisine spots* on the Tourism Singapore site.

Featured Foods and Recipes

The featured foods and recipes dimension describe a country’s signature dishes. These signature dishes are unique and considered as ‘must-try’ dishes for tourists. Four out of 10 (40%) countries include information about *country signature dishes*, but only two countries provide *recipes*. Half of the countries have *photos of the dishes* but only two countries, Brunei and Thailand, offer detailed recipes for representative cuisine. Finally, only two countries offer information on signature *snacks and desserts* on their website, and none share *recipes*.

Culinary Tourism Marketing Strategies

Almost 50% of the sites provide information on *restaurants and spots* where local dishes can be enjoyed. Only two countries, Singapore and Laos, provide *links to the restaurants’ websites*. Three countries offer information on *vegetarian restaurants*. Four countries—Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Cambodia—promote their *country’s cooking classes/schools* as one of the attractions for tourists. Further, six countries suggest a gastronomy tour as one of their activities. Nonetheless, despite the suggestion, none of the countries includes *gastronomy tours in their itinerary*. Three countries mention *food festivals*. Finally, only Indonesia recommends food as a *travel souvenir*.
Table 1. Data collected from ASEAN official tourism websites’ frameworks for promoting food tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Official Tourism Organisations</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction to food culture</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Introduction to local cuisines</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Photos of local cuisines</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Show recipes of local cuisines</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Map guide to the cities offering local cuisines</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature Foods and Recipes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction to signature foods</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Detailed recipes for signature cuisines</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Photos of signature cuisines</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Introduction for signature snacks and desserts</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Detailed recipes for signature snacks and desserts</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culinary Tourism Marketing Strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction to selected restaurants</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Introduction to cuisines in major cities and tourist spots</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Links to local cuisines restaurant websites</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mention about vegetarian food restaurant</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Introduction to cooking school/class</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Recommend gastronomy tours</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Introduction to gastronomy tour itinerary</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Introduction to food festivals</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Recommend foods for souvenirs</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Guide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Search function – by cuisine category</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Search function – by area</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Search function – by restaurant</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Search function – by specific dish</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Restaurant Guides

The restaurant guides dimension investigates the search facilities provided by restaurant. Half of the countries use the search function by area to search the restaurant. Three out of 10 (30%) countries provide the search function by specific dish and by cuisine category. Finally, only four (40%) countries provide the search function by restaurant.
Conclusion

This study has shed some light on food tourism with major emphasis on two major contributions: theoretical and managerial implications. This study evaluated food tourism information on the ten official tourism website of the ASEAN countries. The websites were evaluated based on four dimensions: food culture, featured foods and recipes, culinary tourism marketing strategies, and restaurant guides. The Introduction to food culture feature in the food culture dimension is important in introducing a country's cuisine and food culture to current and potential tourists. Compared to other Asian countries such as Hong Kong and Taiwan (Horng & Tsai, 2010), this study found that ASEAN NTOs failed to maximise their websites to promote food tourism.

In terms of the theoretical contributions, this study has enriched the body of literature on food tourism particularly on marketing food tourism online. As Internet becomes an increasingly important travel information source, having complete and useful information is an advantage to any service provider. The results of this study could provide a foundation for future research in this topic. In addition, this study is perhaps the first to investigate the marketing of food tourism in ASEAN countries.
From the managerial perspectives, this study provides information that should assist NTOs managers in planning and utilising tourism resources more efficiently. In planning an online marketing plan, NTO managers need to focus on targeting the food tourism market. The results suggest ample room for improvement in each ASEAN country's food tourism section on its official website. NTOs should include food culture and local cuisine information on their websites, as food is essential to tourists' needs and experience. Features like search functions, ingredients, and photos help tourists make decisions on whether they should patronise a particular restaurant or to try the food. In addition, NTOs should highlight their gastronomy tour's itinerary by including unique and 'must-try; eating-places during the travels.

Similarly, the NTOs should give attention to the website design. A website must be user-friendly, and content must always be updated (Tan & Wei, 2006). A large number of photos and written descriptions can enhance marketing. English and local-language versions of the websites also need to be identical and updated synchronously.

The scope of this research is limited to the ten official ASEAN tourism websites. Therefore, future research could extend this study to other Asian countries (e.g., India), the former Russian Federation states, Scandinavia, and the Middle East, which possess a diverse food culture (Thiele & Weiss, 2003). In addition, these 10 websites were analysed using their English versions only. Ideally, the presentations, interfaces, and marketing strategies used in other language versions should be similar with those in the English versions. In addition, the main limitation of this study is the application of the binary scale (yes/no) in content analysis. Future research could use a Likert scale to show information quality or presence. Finally, future research could add to the existing dimensions, for example, the restaurant certification dimension.

In conclusion, food tourism involving the cuisine and food culture of the locale, region, or country can be a powerful tool for a country's tourism strategy. Official ASEAN tourism websites need to combine the local culinary culture with the key aspects of culture and society in general. A holistic, humane, and interactive design will reinforce a country's image.

References


Research Paper

Moderating Impact of Perceived Tourist Effectiveness and Green Image of Green Dining-Behavioural Manifestation Link: Empirical Evidence from Sikkim

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Abstract: Global consumerism is gradually undergoing a paradigmatic shift as global climatic turbulence has compelled the customers to rethink their consumption practices. Responsible tourism has emerged as an offshoot to this change as the hospitality and tourism industry considers redesigning its products/services while acknowledging its responsibilities to ensure minimum environmental hazard. This study attempts to empirically investigate the possible moderating impact of the perceived tourist effectiveness (independent variables) and perceived image of restaurant service providers on green dining practices with the dependent variable being the behavioural manifestation link. For the data analysis, a number of multivariate statistical procedures and structural equation modeling were applied. The results revealed a significant correlation between the variables under study. The study has future scopes where demographical effects and price-sensitivity of green consumption habits may be tested.

Key words: Behavioural manifestation, green dining, image, hospitality, restaurant, tourist effectiveness.


Introduction

Sweeping global climatic changes and environmental uncertainty have begun to make an impact on our attitude to consume and endorse. The traditional marketing mix elements are giving way to a new set of 4Ps: planet, people, profits and progress

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compelling the firms to re-prioritise their objectives. Awareness campaigns across all the cross-sections of social hierarchy have been instrumental in changing the perception of product and service quality amongst the consumers. Contemporary consumers have started to prefer products/services which are environmentally sustainable. The consumers’ perspective for green products/services includes the basic characteristics, which are functional performance and non-essential characteristics that convey secondary benefits namely environmental performance (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007). Green marketing initiatives which started as a trend has been converted to a way of doing business, so much so, that green marketing initiatives are highlighted in corporate communications and in many occasions this has been used as a unique selling proposition or a differentiator. The hospitality and tourism industry adopted green marketing as a potential tool to detangibilise their offers when it comes to perception of service quality. However, Driessen (2005), in a study, found that an optimum level of green-adopton must be found to avoid being perceived as a niche-green marketer and loosing competitive advantage in the long run. Therefore while designing their green offers, particularly the service sector, namely the hospitality and tourism firms, must evaluate the inclination of their consumers towards greenness by analysing their values and beliefs as they lead to pro-environmental behaviours (Reser & Bentrupperbaumer, 2005; Stern, 2000). Pooley & O’Connor (2000) observed that mere advertisements, highlighting green initiatives by a firm, do not foster pro-environmental behaviours. Therefore, for sustainable image development based on green marketing initiatives, a profound environmental education programme needs to be disseminated.

Sikkim has an ideal set-up to promulgate green-tourism and the tourism industry of the state has indulged in green tourism and has literally positioned its tourism on eco-centricity. Contoured against the Himalayan range, the Singalila range, the Chola range, Teesta & Rangeet rivers, dense jungle, deep valleys, lakes and waterfalls, Sikkim is truly a representative of mother nature. Sikkim has a high influx of foreign tourists from all across the globe not only to cheer and cherish the bounty of scenic diversity but also to be a part of a number of aborigine festivals namely flower festival (Gangtok), heritage & tourism festival (Hee Bermiock), Kanchendzonga festival (Pelling), Lampokhari tourism festival, Namchi mahotsav, Ravangla festival etc. The tourism of Sikkim has promoted organic food production as a highlighted feature to propagate green-tourism. The restaurants of Sikkim are involved in green-practices, not only in production, but also in designing servicescape, delivery and disposal.

Green dining practice involves a number of front-end and back-end integration with assorted service providers. The emergence of green dining practices has been phenomenal and apprehended to be influential in shaping a differentiated image of the service providers. The present study was undertaken to identify the possible moderating impact of tourist effectiveness and green image of the dining service
providers on the green dining-behavioural manifestation link of the international tourists visiting Sikkim. With the depletion of the natural environment, green dining practice can be an effective measure to satisfy the culinary demand of tourists. This study can therefore contribute to the future model design of green dining *vis-à-vis* image build-up and behavioural intent amongst tourists.

The objectives of the study were to:

(a) Examine possible cause and effect linkages between perceived green practices adopted by the restaurants, perceived green image of these practices by the foreign tourists and behavioural manifestation of the foreign tourists;

(b) Identify the moderating effects of perceived tourist effectiveness and perceived green image on perceived green dining-behavioural manifestation link; and

(c) Justify the research model framework.

Following the introduction, the rest of the paper is structured with Section 2 containing a review of literature, Section 3 discussing hypotheses formulation and the research model framework, followed by methodology in Section 4. Data analysis and interpretation come in Section 5 and conclusion follows in Section 6.

**Literature Review**

**Emergence of Ecological Marketing**

In the latter half of the 1980s, the concept of environmental marketing or green marketing surfaced for the first time (Peattie & Crane, 2005; D’Souza, Taghian & Peretiatiskos, 2006). With the deterioration in global ecological balance and an increase in awareness to restore the same, the consumption pattern of the consumers gradually started to favour products and services which promised to cause less damage on the environment. Researchers explored the hospitality industry, which covers a broad spectrum of services namely hotel and restaurant, tourism, logistic support providers and others to understand the changing decision making pattern of the consumers with regard to consumption of green products and services (Choi & Parsa, 2006; Han, Hsu & Sheu, 2009). In the study conducted by Han *et al.* (2009), it was revealed that the intention of customers to visit a green hotel is stimulated by predictors’ attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control. Dutta, Umashankar, Choi & Parsa (2008) in a comparative study on restaurants in India and USA found different reasons for customers willing to pay a higher price for green practices. As green marketing practices became compulsive strategic initiatives of the hospitality industry, researchers pondered over the impact of green practices on consumer behaviour.

The Sikkim Organic Mission was conceptualised by the Mr. Pawan Chamling, Hon’ble Chief Minister, in the year 2003 as an ingenious flagship project of the
government of Sikkim. The mission wants to convert Sikkim into a totally organic state by 2015 whereby all agricultural produce from the State is grown using organic fertilisers in a move towards healthy consumption. The process for bringing the total cultivatable land of 58,168 hectares under organic farming commenced at ground level from 2010. Agencies accredited by Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority are certifying the organic process in Sikkim in three phases.

The organic products of Sikkim, mostly vegetables, would not only fetch more value for the Sikkimese farmers but also offer multiple benefits to the State. Tourism stakeholders of Sikkim are convinced that the Organic Mission when connected with ecotourism would be a double attraction for tourists particularly at homestays. Visitors would not only be able to enjoy the natural beauty of Sikkim but also gain health benefits from this green practice by consuming organic food products in the restaurants.

**Green Dining Practices**

Jeong & Jang (2010) observed that customers’ perceived ecological image of a restaurant positively affects customers’ ecological behavioural intention. Hoteliers have started deploying a environmental management system (EMS) with the objective of ensuring greener services to further suit the behavioural pattern of the consumers. Specific measures have been taken to address the issues regarding energy consumption by the hoteliers and restaurant operators following analysis of their green consumption pattern (Kasim, 2007; Deng, 2003; Dascalaki & Balaras, 2004; Becken, Frampton & Simmons, 2001), nature and water consumption patterns (Bohdanowicz, 2005; Alexander, 2002), waste management (Kasim, 2007) and overall sustainable environmental management (Bohdanowicz & Martinac, 2003; Revilla, Dodd & Hoover, 2001). Tinsley & Pillai (2006) pointed out that growing environmental concern has resulted in increased concern of the firm towards minimising environmental risk. Sandalidou, George, Grigoroudis & Siskos (2000) in their study point to consumer inclination towards foodstuffs produced and processed by natural methods. In addition, Gavruchenku, Baltas, Chatzitheodoridis & Hadjidakis, (2003) state that consumers are nowadays interested in ecologically clean products due to health and environmental reasons as well as the increasing concern of safe and quality food. Shubert (2008) was also of the opinion that consumption of healthy food is a growing demand in the face of a degrading environment owing to pollution. As health promotion has evolved from a major focus on individual change toward a greater focus on the environments in which people live, work and recreate, restaurants are now being targeted as appropriate organisations for change (Seball, 2011). Potter & Williams (1996) studied Australian consumer attitudes towards green and healthy restaurants which are known to provide healthy food choices, smoke-free dining
areas and good standards of food hygiene in order to estimate consumer views about using restaurants as a setting for health promotion and, specifically, for providing low-fat healthy food choices. The results of the study indicated that consumers showed interest in green restaurants, specifically female consumers, people concerned with fitness, overweight people, people on dietary constraints for health reasons, and finally the image-conscious consumers. Moreover, Shubert (2008) found that with increasing awareness of global climate change and natural disasters, environmental protection is an issue of high topicality and relevance and this is also true for the hospitality and tourism industry where businesses often rely on the integrity of the environment. Employing and marketing green practices could help restaurants to establish a new niche for environmentally concerned customers, and therefore increase sales and long-term profits. In fact, restaurants which exhibit strong interest in environmental issues and actively participate in eco-friendly practices could distinct themselves from other businesses, hence creating a significant competitive advantage.

The consumer decision related to selection of restaurants has been influenced by the novel domain of ecological marketing practices and the image build-up thereof. Gustin & Weaver (1996) observed in their study that consumer interest to stay in a hotel and avail its allied services, namely restaurant and dining facilities were influenced by the pro-environmental policies adopted and executed by the hoteliers. A study conducted by Hines, Hungerford & Tomera (1987) in the hospitality industry revealed that consumer intent to purchase the services offered by hotels was predominantly influenced by the factors of environmental behavioural model namely consumer awareness level about environmental issues, consumer attitudes towards environmental strategy and their perceived self-efficacy. Vieregge, Scanlon & Huss (2007) explored consumer image perception of a green restaurant chain in Switzerland and found that consumers appreciate the initiatives taken up by the chain to promote green marketing. Being green and offering green has emerged as an image-building tool for the hospitality industry.

**Perceived Green Image of Restaurant Service Providers**

A firm's image is critical as it reflects the manner in which it has been perceived on the basis of its performance and socio-economic contribution and its point of differentiation from other firms. Studies by researchers indicate that a good corporate image helps companies establish and maintain a loyal relationship with customers (Andreassen & Lindestad, 1998; Nguyen & Leblanc, 2001; Robertson, 1993). Perception of a green image by the tourists about their restaurant service providers determines their behavioural intents (Ryu, Han & Kim, 2008). However, past studies on green product consumption are mainly focused on demographical and psychological characteristics of green consumers or investigated the relationship between
consumer behavioral intentions and other antecedents of green purchasing in the decision-making process (Chan & Lau, 2000; D'Souza, Taghian, & Khosla, 2007; Straughan & Roberts, 1999). Perceived image of a restaurant and its impact on consumers is considered to be of utmost significance as the services of a restaurant cannot be evaluated before dining experience (Jeong & Jang, 2010) due to its inherent intangibility and heterogeneity. Therefore in alignment with the gradual shift of consumers towards greenness, perceived green image can act as a significant differentiator of services. In a study conducted by Smith & Perks (2010), a significant relationship was observed between perception regarding the impact of green practice implementation and image perception of dining service providers. The perceived green image of a restaurant can be influenced by the green practices of the restaurant and can serve as an evaluative criterion for environmental friendliness or greenness of the restaurant (Bloemer & de Ruyter, 1998; Ryu et al., 2008).

**Behavioural Intention of Tourists as an Output Expression to Green Dining**

A number of researchers in the hospitality industry explored the eco-friendly decision-making processes of hotel customers (Choi & Parsa, 2006; Han et al., 2009). Theoretical support was provided by a number of models and theories to justify behavioural intention of tourists as an output to ecofriendly restaurant practice (ERP) namely theory of reasoned action (TRA), value-attitude-behaviour model (VAB), Schwartz's norm activation model (NAM), value-belief-norm theory of environmentalism (VBN) etc. A number of studies found that the behavioural pattern of the consumers inclined towards green purchases is mostly influenced by perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE) towards solving environmental problems and that higher the PCE, the greater will be the probability of the consumers investing in green products and services (Chan & Lau, 2000; do Paco, Arminda, Raposo & Lino, 2009; Gilg, Barr & Ford, 2005; Gustin & Weaver, 1996; Straughan & Robberts, 1999). Researchers also tried to correlate consumer desire to adopt green products and services with the cost of adoption. In their study on Indian hotels, Manaktola & Jauhari (2007) found that although consumers' are behaviourally inclined towards green products/services, only 15% are willing to bear the hike in cost due to integration of environmental initiatives by the firms while the rest of the consumers feel that it should be either borne by the hotel or be shared. In a study conducted by Jang, Kim & Bonn (2011) amongst generation Y students in the United States, it was revealed that distinct clustering or segmentation is possible on the basis of students' approach to green restaurant practices. Shubert (2008) and Szuchnicki (2009) explored consumer attitudes towards various areas of green practices in restaurants such as reducing the energy and waste and serving locally or organically grown food and reported on the correlationship that
exists between perception of green image on the basis of green practices on the attitude and willingness to pay for green dining practices.

Research Gap Identified

A review of literature revealed a dearth in studies concerning green initiatives by the restaurants and their subsequent impact on tourist perception of firm image and behavioural manifestation. Literature has also remained inconclusive with respect to studies conducted on restaurants in Sikkim. This study empirically attempts to explore the link between green initiatives adopted and communicated by the restaurants, the perceived image by the foreign tourists and the possible impact of firm-image (restaurant) based on green marketing, on tourists' behavioural manifestation. Additionally, the researchers aim to test a conceptual framework exploring the causal relationship between the major variables, namely perceived green practices by the restaurants, perceived green image and behavioural manifestation of foreign tourists (attitudinal loyalty, propensity to switch, willing to pay more, external response and internal response). As a concluding effort, the researchers seek to identify the difference, if any, between the high PTE and low PTE tourists in perceiving restaurant image on the basis of green offers and their subsequent behavioural intention.

Formulation of Hypothesis and Research Model Framework

From the literature reviewed, the following hypotheses were formulated:

\( H_1: \) Perception of green practices adopted by the restaurants will have an impact on perceived green image of the foreign tourists.

\( H_2: \) Perceived image of the foreign tourists will have an effect on the manifestation of their behavioural manifestations of tourists.

\( H_3: \) Perception of green practices by the restaurants will influence the determination of behavioural manifestation of tourists.

The researchers apprehend that perceived tourist effectiveness and perceived green image of the foreign tourists availing green dining/restaurant services in different tourist destinations in Sikkim may mediate the relationship between perceived green dining practices adopted by the restaurants under study and behavioural reciprocation of the foreign tourists. Therefore it was hypothesised that:

\( H_4: \) Foreign tourists with higher perceived green image of their restaurant/dining service (PGI) will have greater impact on perceived green practices-behavioural pattern link.

\( H_5: \) Foreign tourists with higher perceived tourist effectiveness (PTE) will have greater impact on perceived green practices-behavioural pattern link.
\( H_g \): Foreign tourists with higher perceived tourist effectiveness (PTE) and better perceived green image about their restaurants will have a stronger impact on perceived green practices-behavioural pattern link.

Based on the literature reviewed and hypotheses framed, the model framework proposed is shown in Figure 1.

**Methods**

To conduct the study, eight restaurants were identified in Sikkim namely Kyi Tsel (Gangtok), Fyafulo Jojo (Rangpo), Tangerine (Gangtok), Taatopani Bar & Restaurant (Pelling), Gangtalk (Gangtok), Melting Point (Pelling), Arthur’s Multicuisine (Gangtok) and Baker’s Café (Gangtok). The basis for identifying these restaurants was based upon their claim towards adherence to green practices. The study comprised of two phases. Phase I involved a pilot study to refine the test instrument with rectification of question ambiguity and refinement of research protocol with confirmation of scale reliability being given special emphasis (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). FGI was administered. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (\( >0.7 \)) established scale reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The structured questionnaire after refinement contained four sections. In Section I, respondents were required to rate the importance of green practices adopted by the restaurants; in Section II, respondents (customers) were asked about their perception of green practices adopted by the restaurants where they dine frequently. Section III was designed to generate responses from the respondents with regard to their level of perceived green-image about the restaurants where they dine frequently. Section IV sought to understand their behavioural intention...
as an output to perceived green image of the restaurant while Section V was designed to assess the respondents' attitudes and beliefs that may positively influence the outcome of ecological problems (perceived tourist effectiveness). Section VI focused on demographic data of the respondents. The second phase of the cross-sectional study was conducted by using the structured questionnaire. Convenience sampling technique was administered following the mall-intercept procedure, that is, foreign tourists visiting the restaurant were requested to fill-up the questionnaire. Of the 1000 questionnaires filled out, 589 usable responses were obtained, giving a response rate of 58.90%.

Factor Constructs Measurement
To develop a measure for perception of significance of green practice, 12 items were identified following the literature reviewed and adopted by Jeong & Jang (2010). This study used four ‘perceived green image’ items based on the studies conducted by Jeong & Jang (2010), Schwaiger (2004) and LeBlanc & Nguyen (1996). To identify responses with regard to behavioural intentions of customers, the Behavioural Intention Battery (BIB) developed by Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman (1996) was used consisting of 13 items. Perceived tourist effectiveness (PTE) was conceptualised on the basis of responses generated from the tourists about their attitudes, approaches and beliefs which has been apprehended to positively influence the outcome on environmental issues. To develop the constructs for PTE, 3 items were used (Jeong & Jang, 2010, Straughan & Roberts, 1999). A 7-point Likert scale (Alkibisi & Lind, 2011) was used to generate responses, with ‘1’ indicating extremely unimportant/strongly disagree and ‘7’ indicating extremely important/strongly agree.

Reliability and Validity Test
Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was deployed using principal axis factoring procedure with orthogonal rotation through VARIMAX process with the objective of assessing the reliability and validity of all factor constructs. Secondly confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to understand the convergence, discriminant validity and dimensionality for each construct to determine whether all the items measure the construct adequately as assigned. Finally, LISREL 8.80 programme was used to conduct the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) was applied to estimate the CFA models.

Data Analysis and Interpretations
The demographic data collected from the respondents are presented in Table 1. The results of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) (Table 2) revealed that the Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was adequate for the measure justifying the internal consistency of
Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic variables</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>68.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>31.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>≤ 21 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22-32 years</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>52.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33-43 years</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>29.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44-54 years</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>11.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>≥ 55 years</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>≤ Rs. 14999.00</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rs. 15000-Rs. 24999.00</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>35.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rs. 25000-Rs. 44999.00</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>42.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>≥ Rs. 45000.00</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>20.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Service [govt./ prv]</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>64.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self employed</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>22.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housewives</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>7.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational qualification</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>69.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>25.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doctorate &amp; others (CA, fellow etc)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the constructs. Each construct displayed acceptable construct reliability with estimates well over .6 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & William, 1998). Further to this, the average variance extracted (AVE) surpassed a minimum requirement of .5 (Hair et al., 1998). The KMO measure of sample adequacy (0.927) indicated a high-shared variance and a relatively low uniqueness in variance (Kaiser & Cerny, 1979). Bartlett’s sphericity test (Chi-square=1092.612, p<0.001) indicated that the distribution was ellipsoid and amenable to data reduction (Cooper & Schindler, 1998).

Items with very low factor loadings/cross loadings (<0.500) and poor reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) were discarded. Thus the perceived green practices were reduced to 8 items and the BIB items were reduced to 7. Bivariate correlations were obtained to assess the relationship between the variables and the results are displayed in Table 3.

Correlation results revealed a positive and significant relationship between perceived green practice and perceived green image (r= .206**, p<0.01), perceived green practice shared positive and significant relationship between attitudinal loyalty (r= .143**, p<0.01), customer advocacy (r= .213**, p<0.01) and perceived consumer effectiveness.
Table 2. Measurement of reliability and validity of the variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>FL</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived green practices (PGP)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant offers recycling bins for disposing used items (PGP1)</td>
<td>0.852</td>
<td>34.262</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant has take-out containers which are recyclable (PGP2)</td>
<td>0.801</td>
<td>24.875</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant uses energy-efficient lights in the seating areas (PGP3)</td>
<td>0.789</td>
<td>25.356</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant uses eco-friendly cleaners for the furniture and floors (PGP4)</td>
<td>0.822</td>
<td>28.187</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant uses eco-friendly cleaners for the utensils (PGP5)</td>
<td>0.771</td>
<td>21.019</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant maintains greenery in its premises, both indoor &amp; outdoor (PGP6)</td>
<td>0.779</td>
<td>29.709</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant uses an energy-saving and eco-friendly cooling &amp; ventilation system (PGP7)</td>
<td>0.823</td>
<td>30.321</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant serves organic food on demand (PGP8)</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td>22.298</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived green image (PGI)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant indulges in corporate social responsibility (PGI1)</td>
<td>0.812</td>
<td>31.214</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>0.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant address the environmental issues seriously (PGI2)</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>29.216</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>0.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My restaurant is concerned about environmental preservation (PGI3)</td>
<td>0.799</td>
<td>23.081</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>0.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I perceive my restaurant to be a socially and environmentally responsible organisation rather than solely profit-oriented. (PGI4)</td>
<td>0.824</td>
<td>26.117</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>0.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioural manifestations (BM)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shall talk positive things about my restaurant (BM1)</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td>24.091</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>0.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shall advice to avail the dining service of my restaurant (BM2)</td>
<td>0.805</td>
<td>23.327</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>0.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shall increase the frequency of availing dining services from my restaurant (BM3)</td>
<td>0.788</td>
<td>22.091</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>0.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shall do less business with my restaurant in next few years (BM4)</td>
<td>0.801</td>
<td>27.265</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>0.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shall pay more to avail enhanced services offered by my restaurant (BM5)</td>
<td>0.773</td>
<td>28.106</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>0.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shall complain to the service provider in case of any problem (BM6)</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td>25.327</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>0.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shall complain to an external agency in case of any problem (BM7)</td>
<td>0.776</td>
<td>21.189</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>0.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived tourist effectiveness (PTE)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green initiatives by restaurants will address environmental issues (PTE1)</td>
<td>0.851</td>
<td>30.002</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>0.801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe in investing and consuming green products/services to arrest ecological degradation (PTE2)</td>
<td>0.833</td>
<td>29.401</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>0.801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I recommend others to invest and consume green products/services as I believe that it will arrest ecological problems (PTE3)</td>
<td>0.854</td>
<td>31.009</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>0.801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KMO**  
0.927

**Chi-square**  
1092.612

FL: Factor loadings, α: Cronbach’s α, AVE: Average variance extracted
Table 3. Bivariate correlation between the variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Perceived green practice (PGP)</th>
<th>Perceived green image (PGI)</th>
<th>Attitudinal loyalty (AL)</th>
<th>Propensity to switch (P2S)</th>
<th>Tourist advocacy (TA)</th>
<th>Perceived tourist effectiveness (PTE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived green practice (PGP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived green image (PGI)</td>
<td>0.206**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudinal loyalty (AL)</td>
<td>0.143**</td>
<td>0.117**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propensity to switch (P2S)</td>
<td>-0.089*</td>
<td>-0.101*</td>
<td>-0.176**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist advocacy (TA)</td>
<td>0.213**</td>
<td>0.227**</td>
<td>0.314**</td>
<td>-0.309**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived tourist effectiveness (PTE)</td>
<td>0.426**</td>
<td>0.329**</td>
<td>0.243**</td>
<td>-0.076*</td>
<td>0.321**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed), *Correlation significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed),

(r= .426**, p<0.01), and exhibited a negative and significant relationship with propensity to switch (r= -.089*, p<0.05). Perceived green image demonstrated a strong and positive relationship with attitudinal loyalty (r= .117**, p<0.01), customer advocacy (r= .227**, p<0.01), perceived consumer effectiveness (r= .329**, p<0.01), while it revealed a negative and significant relationship with propensity to switch (r= -.101*, p<0.05). Based on the results of bivariate correlation $H_1$, $H_2$ and $H_3$ were accepted.

A multiple group analysis (Jeong & Jang, 2010) was conducted to understand and estimate the moderating effects of perceived tourist effectiveness (PTE) on perceived green image-behavioural manifestation link. The median value of PTE (4.97) was used to segment the respondents into three groups with $>4.97$ (n=377) (termed as pro-greens), with $=4.97$ (n=129) (termed as neutra-greens) and $<4.97$ (n=83) (termed as anti-greens). Three structural results were obtained. Figure 2 represents the structural model for pro-greens with PTE median value $>4.97$. All the three paths representing the relationship between perceived green practices and perceived green image, between perceived green image and behavioural intention and between perceived green practices and behavioural manifestation were found to be significant at $p<0.01$. Figure 3 is the structural model for anti-greens with PTE median value $<4.97$. Although the path relationship between perceived green practices and perceived green image was found to be significant at $p<0.001$, the path relationships between perceived green image and behavioural manifestation and perceived green practices and behavioural intention were found to be insignificant. Figure 4 is the structural manifestation for neutra-greens where all the three paths were found to be significant at $p<0.01$. 

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Figure 2. Structural model for pro-greens with PTE median value >4.97

Figure 3. Structural model for anti-greens with PTE median value <4.97
The total effect of perceived green practices (PGP) on behavioural intention was calculated for all the three segments of foreign tourists. The total effect of PGP on BM for the pro-greens was calculated to be 0.698 (0.742 x 0.549 + 0.291). The total effect of PGP on BM for the anti-greens was the same as the relation coefficient between PGP and PG1 (0.212***) as the other two paths namely between PG1 and BM and between PGP and BM were found to be insignificant. The total effect of PGP on BM for the neutra-greens was calculated to be 0.257 (0.195 x 0.202 + 0.218). The comparative study between the three groups indicated that the foreign tourists with high PTE are better correlated with behavioural intention via direct and indirect routes through perceived green practices and perceived green image.

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to contrast high (pro-greens) with low (anti-greens) foreign tourists group (according to PTE) to understand the probable difference in strength of association between perceived green practices (PGP) (as an independent variable) with perceived green image (PGI) and behavioural manifestation (BM) (dependent variables) between the same. The results of the multiple regression analysis are shown in Tables 4a & 4b and Table-5. To determine the degree of multicollinearity, the variance inflation factor (VIF) was computed for each independent variable in regression equation. The results suggest that the Structural Model for Path Analysis was worth pursuing as the 'tolerance' value is over 0.200 for each of the independent variable suggesting absence of correlation. The VIF values also did not
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>ANOVA</th>
<th>Independent variable: PGP, dependent variable: PG1</th>
<th>Unstd. coeff.</th>
<th>Std. coeff.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>Tolerance</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>.198</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>6.387</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>0.414</td>
<td>58.488</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>12.161</td>
<td>.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>2.607</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>26.075</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Const.)</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>.214</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>14.056</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4a: Regression coefficients and collinearity statistics for pro-greens (PTE>4.97)
Table 4b. Regression coefficients and collinearity statistics for pro-greens (PTE > 4.97)

Independent variable: PGP, dependent variable: BM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>ANOVA</th>
<th>Unstd. coeff.</th>
<th>Std. coeff.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Collinearity statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sum of squares</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>Mean square</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>54.205</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.034</td>
<td>462.917</td>
<td>.000*</td>
<td>.265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>1.360</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55.566</td>
<td>588</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Const.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGP1</td>
<td>.665</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td>75.488</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGP2</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>17.161</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGP3</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>14.005</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGP5</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>5.425</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>.673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGP6</td>
<td>.244</td>
<td>.113</td>
<td>.542</td>
<td>48.477</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGP7</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>4.762</td>
<td>.599</td>
<td>.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGP8</td>
<td>.189</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>29.111</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.673</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5. Regression coefficients and collinearity statistics for anti-greens (PTE<4.97)

Independent variable: PGP, dependent variable: PGI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>ANOVA</th>
<th>Unstd. coeff.</th>
<th>Std. coeff.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Collinearity statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sum of squares</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>Mean square</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regression 63.964</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>63.964</td>
<td>318.244</td>
<td>.000*</td>
<td>.572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual    136.071</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>.201</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total       200.035</td>
<td>588</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGP1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.963</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>3.169</td>
<td>.327</td>
<td>.673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGP2</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>5.075</td>
<td>.276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGP3</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>3.056</td>
<td>.2623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGP4</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>8.425</td>
<td>.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGP5</td>
<td>.294</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.619</td>
<td>32.651</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGP6</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>2.007</td>
<td>.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGP7</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.10777</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>1.097</td>
<td>.299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGP8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
reveal a considerably high value to 1 confirming non-collinearity as VIF values considerably greater than 1 are indicative of multi-collinearity (Netter, Kuttner, Nachtsheim & Wasserman, 1996) and greater than 2.5 are cause of concern (Allison, 1999) (VIF=1/tolerance). The results showed that while the pro-greens perceived image of their restaurant was strong on the basis of green practices adopted namely usage of recycle bins ($\beta = .414$, $t=58.488$, $p<.01$), usage of energy-efficient illumination system ($\beta = .324$, $t=26.075$, $p<.01$), maintenance of greenery ($\beta = .319$, $t=52.477$, $p<.01$) and moderately on the basis of usage of eco-friendly cleaners for furniture and floors ($\beta = .121$, $t=14.056$, $p<.05$) and usage of energy-saving cooling and ventilation system ($\beta = .469$, $t=11.007$, $p<.05$), while the anti-greens only framed green-image of their restaurant on the basis of usage of recycle bins ($\beta = .565$, $t=17.839$, $p<.01$) and maintenance of greenery ($\beta = .619$, $t=32.651$, $p<.01$). Probably lack of awareness amongst the anti-greens about the impact level of the measures can be a possible reason for absence of significant association with other green initiatives. Table 4b displays the results between association and dependability of perceived green practices (PGP) and behavioural manifestation (BM) for the pro-greens. The results reveal that behavioural intention of the foreign tourists with a high level of PTE is influenced by the perceived green practices of their restaurants namely usage of recyclable bins ($\beta = .549$, $t=75.488$, $p<.01$), usage of energy efficient lighting ($\beta = .367$, $t=14.005$, $p<.05$), usage of environment friendly floor and furniture cleaners ($\beta = .321$, $t=12.056$, $p<.05$) and maintenance of greenery ($\beta = .542$, $t=48.477$, $p<.01$). The results indicate that perceived green practices can be a useful predictor towards formation of image of the restaurants as well as behavioural attitude of the foreign tourists. Regression analysis for the low PTE group (anti-greens) was not carried out as the structural model did not indicate a significant path relationship between perceived green practices (PGP) and behavioural intention. The results on structural path analysis and multiple analysis support $H_3$ and $H_4$.

Hierarchical regression analysis was deployed by considering the average (mean) values of the variables (across the items) to understand the direct and the mediating effects of perceived green image and perceived tourist effectiveness on perceived green practice-behavioural manifestation link, with perceived green practice being considered as the independent variable. To provide empirical evidence to our hypotheses, we propose an ordinary least square (OLS) regression for our dependent variable behavioural manifestation (BM). The following models were constructed:

$$BR = \beta_0 + \beta_1*PGP + \beta_2*PGL + \beta_3*PTE + \beta_4*PGP*PGL + \beta_5*PGP*PTE + \beta_6*PGL*PTE + \epsilon_i$$

where, BM represented behavioural manifestation of tourists, PGP perceived green practices of the restaurants, PGI perceived green image and PTE denoted perceived consumer effectiveness.
The regression models are displayed in Table 6. Four models were generated. Model 1 depicts the direct effects, Models 2 and 3 represent the binary interaction and Model 4 represents the ternary interaction between variables. Standardisation was applied to avoid interference with regression coefficients arising out of multicollinearity between interaction variables (Irwin & McClellan, 2001; Aiken & West, 1991). The VIF (variance inflation factor) corresponding to each independent variable was less than 5, indicating that VIF is well within the acceptable limit of 10 (Ranaweera & Neely, 2003). Results of Model-1 revealed that PGP was significantly predictive for BM ($\beta = .198^{**}$, $t= 10.092, p<0.01$) and so was PGI ($\beta = .211^*, t=15.001, p<0.01$), while PTE was found to be moderately predictive of BM ($\beta = .084^*, t=8.117, p<0.05$).

Results of Model 1 reinforced support for $H_1$, $H_2$ and $H_3$. The binary interaction between PGP and PGI (Model 2) indicated that with an increase in PGI, the impact of PGP on BM moderately increased ($\beta = .078^*, t=7.274, p<0.05$) while the binary interaction between PGP and PTE (Model-3) portrayed that an increase in PTE will have positive and significant impact of PGP on BM ($\beta = .301^{**}, t=19.649, p<0.01$). Results of Model 2 and Model 3 lend support to $H_4$ and $H_5$ respectively. Model 4 revealed the ternary interaction whereby it was established that BM will be favourable under the influence of PGP if PGI and PTE were perceived to be high ($\beta = .271^{**}, t=15.221, p<0.01$). Model 4 accepted $H_6$.

**Table 6. Regression models testing the interaction effects (Equation-1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Dependent variable: Behavioural manifestation (BM)</th>
<th>Model-1</th>
<th>Model-2</th>
<th>Model-3</th>
<th>Model-4</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variables</td>
<td>$\beta$ / $t$ / Sig.</td>
<td>$\beta$ / $t$ / Sig.</td>
<td>$\beta$ / $t$ / Sig.</td>
<td>$\beta$ / $t$ / Sig.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGP</td>
<td>.198** / 10.092 / 0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGI</td>
<td>.211** / 15.001 / 0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTE</td>
<td>.084*  / 8.117 / 0.003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.087</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Binary interaction effects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$\beta$ / $t$ / Sig.</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PGP*PGI</td>
<td>.078* / 7.274 / 0.011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGP*PTE</td>
<td>.301** / 19.649 / 0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.517</td>
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</table>

**Ternary interaction effects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PGP<em>PIT</em>PTEI</td>
<td>.271** / 15.221 / 0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- $R^2$  
- Adjusted $R^2$  
- F-value

a. Dependent variable: BM  
b. Independent variable: PGP  
c. Moderating variable: PGI & PTE
Table 7. Summary of fit indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fit indices</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>RMR</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>1084.163</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.981</td>
<td>0.979</td>
<td>0.984</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was deployed to understand the convergence, discriminant validity and dimensionality for each construct to determine whether all the 22 items (Table 2) measured the construct adequately as assigned to. LISREL 8.80 programme was used to conduct the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) was applied to estimate the CFA models. A number of fit-statistics (Table 7) were obtained. The GFI (0.981) and AGFI (0.979) scores for all the constructs were found to be consistently >.900 indicating that a significant proportion of the variance in the sample variance-covariance matrix was accounted for by the model and a good fit had been achieved (Baumgartner & Homburg, 1996; Hair et al., 1998, 2006; Hulland, Chow & Lam, 1996; Kline, 1998; Holmes-Smith, 2002). The CFI value (0.984) for all the constructs obtained were > .900 which indicated an acceptable fit to the data (Bentler, 1992). The RMSEA value obtained (0.063) was < 0.08 for an adequate model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The probability value of Chi-square ($\chi^2 = 1084.163$, df=587) was more than the conventional 0.05 level (P=0.20), indicating an absolute fit of the models to the data.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the relationship among the constructs. All the 18 paths drawn were found to be significant at $p<0.05$. The research model held well (Figure 5) as the fit-indices supported adequately the model fit to the data. The double-curved arrows indicate co-variability of the latent variables. The residual variables (error variances) are indicated by $\varepsilon_1, \varepsilon_2, \varepsilon_3$ etc. The regression weights are represented by $\lambda$. The co-variiances are represented by $\beta$. To provide the latent factors, an interpretable scale of one factor loading was fixed to 1 (Hox & Bechger, 1998).

**Conclusion**

The study reinforced existing research outputs and contributes to the extant literature by providing empirical evidence of responsible tourist consumption. The study delved into a relatively unexplored area in the context of a regional tourism market, which had been integrating pro-green initiatives with basic tourism operation, and attempted to empirically investigate the impact of green dining services, as a relatively novel tourism trend, on foreign tourist behaviour, specifically, on foreign tourists' perception.
Figure 5. Structural model for the proposed research model framework

of firm’s image and subsequent behavioural intention of the foreign tourists. The segmentation of foreign tourists on the basis of their attitude to endorse greendining services (pro-greens, anti-greens and neutral-greens) confirmed the research work carried out by Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007. The study lends support and expands the behavioural realm of tourists towards patronising green products/services (Griskevicius, Tybur & Van der Bergh, 2010; Stern, Dietz & Kalof, 1993).

The study confirmed a high level of environment patronisation by foreign tourists and it symbolises the significantly elevated level of awareness about environmental conservation from possible detrimental effects of tourism activities. The study revealed that foreign tourists availing restaurant services can be categorised into geo-clusters, a process of segmenting customers (tourists), on the basis of criteria called perceived
tourist effectiveness (PTE) which reflects their attitude and beliefs that might positively influence environmental issues. The study reflected that foreign tourists with high PTE are more enlightened and concerned about environmental hazards and consider pro-environmental practices as an important element to perceive firm image and their subsequent behavioural intention is also influenced by their firm image perception. It was revealed that foreign tourists with high PTE level and with better green-image perception of their firms tend to be more loyal and displayed lesser propensity to switch and increased positive tourist advocacy. In the process of the study, some tourists detailed about their early experience of visiting Sikkim and expressed their satisfaction about the natural ecogeological terrain and environment which attracted them to revisit and patronise the destination. The study also found that organic food consumption is considered to be an important perceived green practice of restaurants. Sikkim-tourism made a conscious effort to ensure offering organic food in the majority of its restaurants which appears to be a major green-initiative to ensure sustainable tourism.

The study has major managerial implications. As perception of green practices emerge as a potential factor to perceive green image, employees of firms pursuing eco-friendly marketing should initiate communication with the consumers explaining the green initiatives adopted by them and stating what triggered them to adopt such a strategy. A possible long-term symbiotic relationship between the foreign tourists and the service providers seems to be developing as the latter are extending their business domain to engulf and showcase the environment and landscape in its natural posture. Gradual dissemination of awareness regarding the virtues of green consumption amongst the domestic tourists is highly recommended and the tourism products, including the restaurant services, should be communicated and promoted accordingly. Integration of tourists with the inculcation of green practices should be a strategic intent for restaurant service providers as they are receiving support from the government to strengthen their green initiatives. The tourists should be stimulated to engage in advocacy to enhance green-restaurant traffic. A demonstration of organic farming, recycling of waste materials and usage of renewable sources of energy can be effectively encapsulated and presented as an integral part of tourism to expose the tourists to the initiatives of the service providers.

The study will further stimulate researchers to explore eco-responsibility (of service providers) as a component to their corporate image.

Future expansion of the study can be made by incorporating demographic influence on perceived image vis-à-vis behavioural intention. In addition, a price-sensitivity study may be conducted as a measure towards adoption of green services. A longitudinal study should be done to identify the gradual shift in perception and adoption of pro-environmental tourist behaviour.
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Review Paper

Human Resource Management, Service Delivery and the Job Satisfaction/Alienation Paradox: A Hospitality Industry Perspective

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Abstract: This review clarifies and defines the role of HRM in a hospitality context concluding its position as a ‘map’ or philosophy rather than a series of prescriptive procedures. The absence of holistic HRM strategies in many hospitality organisations is noted and held responsible for these challenges including inconsistent service delivery, low wages, low skills and high levels of labour turnover. It then considers the characteristics of the industry (including seasonality) and its labour market and discusses the apparent job satisfaction/alienation paradox. Some key explanatory theses are advanced including inherent entrepreneurial behaviours of workers, the marginal worker and affluent worker constructs and the occupational community phenomenon known to exist in organisations with impoverished and unsupportive styles of management. A review of current HRM practice reveals that the historical HR situation has changed little over the last several years.

Key words: Hospitality, HRM strategy, job satisfaction, organisational culture


Introduction

It has long been argued by Kandampully (2002) and others that employees perform the most important role in hospitality organisations, particularly at the point of service delivery. As ambassadors of their employing firms, workers have a key role in differentiating the product and contribute to establishing competitive advantage. According to Maxwell, Watson & Quail, (2004) employees are ‘service performers’ and their effective management is central to service quality. Despite the challenges of

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establishing reliable metrics, the positive association between human resource management (HRM), performance and service quality is recognised by other researchers including Garavan (1995), Gilbert & Guerrier (1997), Cheng & Brown (1998), Hoque (1999) and Mohinder (2004). This relationship is also confirmed internationally by Chandy & Katou (2007) in their study of Indian hotels. Others sharing this view include Grönroos (1994), Pitt, Foreman & Bromfield (1995), and Nolan (2002). Therefore, the central role of HRM in hospitality organisations cannot be underestimated.

The aim of this critical review using secondary data is to clarify and define the role of HRM. It is then considered against the the unique characteristics of the hospitality industry and its labour market. The review continues by identifying and discussing the apparent job satisfaction/alienation paradox. Some key explanatory theses are then advanced followed by a review of current HRM practice in a hospitality context. Therefore, the methodology used does not follow that of primary research papers. Rather, it is manifested in the form of reviewing extant data by section to establish a strong case for likely job alienation. It then juxtaposes the apparent job satisfaction/alienation situation and advances a number of likely key constructs which help explain this phenomenon. The originality here lies not in primary data analysis but in its critical analysis of important related studies and in the synthesis of new outcomes in a manner previously under-represented in contemporary research data.

Defining HRM

International human resource (HR) practitioners and professional bodies, including the UK’s Chartered Institute of Personnel Development and the Australian Human Resources Institute consider that organisational effectiveness is down to managing human resources. Moreover, management of human resources, as valued business resources, is key to gaining competitive advantage (Basterretxea & Albizu, 2011). However, a definitive understanding of the term ‘human resource management’ is difficult to ascertain. Prescriptively, notions of HRM often use ‘personnel management’ constructs in order to make their point. Chronologically, the latter precedes the former, and is operationally based and managed by a discrete personnel department. On the other hand, HRM tends to have a broader and more integrated organisational role. Thus, personnel management addresses issues that include discipline, employment contracts and compensation.

Legge (1995) disagrees with the alleged extent of these disparities between the two and argues further that HRM is principally unethical as it is covert manipulation of workers by management. Earlier Fowler (1987) was similarly orthogonal commenting that, “HRM represents the discovery of personnel management by chief executives” (p. 76). Whether one sympathises with either author or not, there is no
doubt that a universally applicable definition of HRM is hard to identify. Indeed, the comprehensive work of Torrington (1989) and particularly Timo & Davidson (2005) suggest that HRM means whatever the hospitality wielder wants it to mean depending on his purpose. After reviewing the evidence, McGunnigle & Jameson (2000) are similarly less prescriptive considering HRM as a 'map', 'notion' or 'theory'. They too agree that there is no comprehensively accepted definition of HRM.

Despite the above conclusions, there is some agreement that HRM can be divided into two constructs; these are 'soft' and 'hard'. The former regards employees as assets essential for gaining competitive advantage. Employee commitment strategies are advanced believing that workers share organisational goals and orientate themselves with the employer's goals. McGunnigle & Jameson's (2000) position resonates with Guest's (1987) normative model of HRM. This has employee commitment as the common denominator of HRM. Such an orientation feeds other associated areas including organisational culture, employee empowerment and reward systems (p. 405). Alternatively, the hard perspective is where workers are viewed in a utilitarian manner as a resource in which the firm invests to produce economic return. In reality, most firms work between the two constructs.

In sum, it would appear that HRM should be considered a philosophy rather than a prescriptive set of immovable practices and procedures. On one hand, administration linked to the personnel function falls into the hard 'rational' economic category. Alternatively, HRM is also based on the idea that workers are intelligent and emotional beings; thus, they cannot be treated like other resources.

Ideally, HRM should embrace both soft and hard notions recognising that achieving an appropriate 'fit' between employees' and organisational goals is essential. For the purpose of this review, it is more expedient to acknowledge the inherent complexity of HRM as an organisational function and fashion an expression accordingly: "The role of HRM is to help hospitality firms meet their shared strategic goals by attracting, developing, maintaining and managing workers effectively and efficiently."

The following section focuses on the hospitality labour market in an attempt to highlight the complexities and unique nature of human resources in the sector. It does this by discussing 'seasonality', job tenure, skills, management practice and the nature of hospitality workers.

**Literature Review**

**Seasonality and the Labour Market**

The hospitality labour market is shaped by several factors. The first and most powerful is the seasonal nature of demand, characterised by periods of high and low activity. This 'inevitably' shapes the second, which is the intrinsic nature of employment. Many
jobs are temporary, part-time and arguably low skilled with poor levels of pay. Seasonality also helps sculpt management practice and working conditions, many of which could not be described as ideal. Indeed, Lucas (2004) describes management styles as poor and arbitrary. Lee-Ross (1996) observes that the hospitality industry has perennially been accused of having managers who are autocratic, take ill-planned decisions and spend much of their time working alongside employees to minimise costs. Earlier, Witt & Witt (1989) traced this behaviour to the way managers are trained and developed1 coined as the ‘being there’ style of management. Baum (1989) also identifies this approach and warns that the alleged uniqueness of an industry should not overshadow general principles of good management. He further adds grist to the mill, identifying some common industry characteristics, “…low productivity, poor remuneration, demanding working conditions and limited opportunities for training and personal development” (Baum, 2008: p. 725).

Poulston’s (2008) study of hospitality firms’ HRM practices reveals that training is ‘poor’, ‘misused’ and ‘inappropriate’ (p. 421). She also considers management approaches to be inadequate and questionable. Seeking to understand the HRM challenges of the hospitality industry, Poulston considers the presence of a number of ‘institutionalised’ areas of concern:

- **Under-staffing due to poor pay, long hours, boring work and social stigma**: Leads to stress and is negatively associated with customer satisfaction. Moreover, it causes labour turnover and is also linked with job alienation (Robinson & Barron, 2007), poor supervision and employment conditions.

- **Training**: Formal training is rare as operational skills required are extensions of domestic skills. Skills are also deemed as generalisable, that is, they can be applied over a range of jobs in other hospitality establishments; no employee training is therefore required. This situation pervades the industry as labour turnover is typically high. Managers are less willing to invest in training as the employee is expected to seek alternative employment within a short period of time. Pratten (2003) and Lashley & Best (2002) support this position adding that service quality may also suffer as a result of little or no training.

- **Theft**: Mars & Nicod (1984) identify theft as a cultural norm in the hospitality industry. They explain this using their ‘total rewards system’ construct. This comprises ‘official’ rewards such as wages and informal tipping with ‘unofficial’ ‘fiddles’ and ‘knockoffs’. In part, this behaviour is thought to be ‘acceptable’ because of poor wages. Thoms, Wolper, Scott & Jones (2001) lament this

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1 This is because the hospitality industry is, in some way, alleged to be unique requiring similarly unique management training.
situation as it contributes to high staff turnover. Reduced profits through theft is considered to mitigate the opportunities for training and staff development.

Lucas (2004) identifies a lack of trade union presence in the hospitality industry leaving employees ‘vulnerable’. Timo (1999) agrees but uses the term ‘precarious’. Several reasons for poor union representation have been advanced including:

- Traditionally hostile and union-busting management style
- Hospitality industry dominated by small firms which makes organisation and coordination of union activities difficult.
- Highly fragmented workforce.
- High level of part time and temporary workers and high level of labour turnover. This also makes conditions less than ideal for organisation of union membership and activities.

Other issues thought to impact labour turnover are summarised by Lee-Ross (1996), Lashley & Lee-Ross (2003) and Timo & Davidson (2005) and shown in Table 1.

Additionally, there may be other reasons behind the impoverished working conditions in the hospitality industry. Poulston (2008) cites ‘barriers’ to entry as one key antecedent. In short, she argues that anyone can start up a firm whether or not they have relevant expertise or experience. Moreover, she notes that some entrepreneurs only enter the industry temporarily. Generally, reasons often cited by entrepreneurs for starting up include, emotional attachment to a romantic ideal, being one's own boss and status. Interestingly, a lesser quoted motivation is a preference to work alone or a dislike of ‘taking orders’ from other people (Dalglish & Evans, 2000).

The key structural outcome of seasonality is a division of the labour market into two distinct categories. The first is known as primary or internal. Here, employees are known as core workers and they enjoy more favourable working conditions than their counterparts who inhabit the secondary or external labour market. These employees are known as peripheral workers whose ranks swell or recede depending on the demand for the composite product. During ‘high’ periods more are employed to cope with the increased demand and vice versa. Generally, peripheral workers are low paid, undertake jobs of short tenure which have no clear opportunities for career progression with little chance of moving from the secondary to the primary segment (Piore, 1975). Their position within the secondary labour market is consolidated as there are fewer opportunities for skills updating. According to Atkinson's (1985) model of the ‘flexible firm’ developed at the Institute of Manpower Studies in the UK, these workers find less intrinsic satisfaction in their jobs because they are less important to their employer and are designed accordingly. However, in the hospitality industry, many peripheral jobs involve direct service delivery. For example, seasonal
Table 1. Market and industry characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labour market characteristics</th>
<th>Industry characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unstable with high propensity to quit jobs</td>
<td>Majority of jobs are casual, temporary, part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers on average younger than other industries and paid less earning around 75% of the all industry average</td>
<td>Inclusion of customer in employment relationship (over reliance on tipping to augment income) and ‘unofficial’ rewards and other non-pecuniary benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs attractive to younger people as ‘working holiday’ or stop gap until something better comes along or a chance for excitement and travel</td>
<td>Most jobs have few skill barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak internal labour market</td>
<td>Jobs in high demand so little pressure on employers to increase pay rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>Despotic management styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnically diverse</td>
<td>Lack of formal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some employees prefer employing temporary and part-time work only</td>
<td>Provision of on-site worker accommodation perpetuates paternalistic employment relationship and allows immediate access to labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasingly workers retrenched from other more traditional (male) occupations – stigma attached to ‘service’ jobs dominated by females</td>
<td>Individual contract-making with employer</td>
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Foodservice operatives play a key role in differentiating the product as they are ambassadors of their employing organisation. Thus, Atkinson's notion of linking importance with the labour market segment appears to be less relevant in the hospitality context.

Collectively, these issues appear to be neither inconsistent with munificent employers nor do they suggest the presence of a formal systematic HRM strategy. However, extreme as these factors appear to be, several authors have noticed an apparent paradox in terms of worker satisfaction in the hospitality industry. The following section outlines the associated arguments.

Satisfaction Versus Alienation in the Workplace

Paradoxically, many hospitality employees do not report low levels of job satisfaction or become alienated from their work, yet labour turnover remains high. A high rate
of part-time and temporary workers would intuitively account for increased labour turnover only if it were accompanied by alienation as an antecedent. This becomes more curious when other apparently negative work characteristics are considered including:

- Few opportunities for training, development and promotion
- Less job security
- Fewer statutory employment protections and exclusion from contributory social security benefits (Dickens, 1992)

However, authors including Euzeby (1988) have another plausible explanation citing work life balance, for example, where part-time and temporary working allows the employee to manage other aspects of their life more satisfactorily. Another thesis advanced is the entrepreneurial flair that some workers are said to possess, particularly at the service interface. Leinster (1985) suggests that front-line workers have much in common with their employers. When they interact with customers at the service interface they 'perform' in order to increase their economic returns through tipping. As a related issue, this practice also reinforces low pay in the industry. Employers consider it acceptable to abdicate responsibility for remuneration, preferring customers to fortify workers' pecuniary benefits.

Additionally, Lucas (2004) notes that to some workers, hospitality jobs are perceived as being glamorous as they allow incumbents to meet VIPs, public figures and celebrities. She also notes the key role social interaction plays in service jobs. Clearly there would be an appropriate 'job fit' between this kind of employment and individuals with such a desire or motivation. A further associated sociological perspective is the 'marginal worker' theory where individuals have a key role in setting their own patterns of work and personal preferences. This orientation is characterised by significant bonding with others in their work group (Mars, Bryant & Mitchell, 1979). This view is strongly associated with the 'occupational community' perspective where people become bonded to their work and work colleagues to such an extent that work and social activities cannot be separated.

Salaman (1974) defines them as:

"People who are members of the same occupation, or who work together, have some sort of common life together, and are, to some extent, separate from the rest of society" (p. 19).

A sense or meaning of work is made by those undertaking it and there are two overall types of occupational community. One is known as 'local' where employees work in the same organisation. The second or 'cosmopolitan' is where individuals do the same work but in different geographical regions. Both communities are found in
hospitality organisations but organisational cultures are not uniform (Lashley & Lee-Ross, 2003). For example, in Lee-Ross' (1996) earlier study of hotel workers, four different types of communities were identified. Rather than forming into groups based on job tenure or department, they were characterised across dimensions of living on or off their employers' premises and whether they described themselves as year-round or seasonal employees. On the other hand, Pryce's (2007) study of hotel workers found a 'pan-industry' sense of belonging or culture. Here, hospitality workers identified strongly with groups across several different organisations revealing a more cosmopolitan occupational community. This also resonates with the marginal workers thesis given the strong association between work groups rather than jobs themselves. The characteristics of occupational communities are summarised in Table 2.

Other evidence which seemingly supports the job satisfaction/alienation paradox is presented by Martin (2004) who notes that hospitality employees have 'orientations' to work. Here the individual has significant control over the job and employment relationship helping him/her maximise the incidence of job satisfaction. Martin's research is based on the earlier work of Goldthorpe, Lockwood, Bechhofer & Platt (1968). Their 'affluent worker' construct notes that orientations to work are identified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td>Pervasive and sets norms for activities outside workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>Set limits over non-work activities influencing friendship patterns, non-work norms and values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-job activities</td>
<td>Organisation controls activities outside work like eating, sleeping, recreation etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Jobs of short duration may cause cultural norms and values to be set outside workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills – procedural and cognition – maintain 'mystery'</td>
<td>One thing having knowledge, facts and descriptions but another knowing how to apply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-control</td>
<td>Reliance on ill-defined procedures thus self-control of community is maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-based friends, interests hobbies</td>
<td>Members discuss jobs outside organisation, read work-and related literature, have work-related hobbies, join work-related clubs and friends are also members of the occupational community</td>
</tr>
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Adapted from: Lashley & Lee-Ross (2003: p. 158)
based on the meaning work has to the individual via expectations they bring into the workplace. In short, orientations are classified as:

- 'Instrumental' - employees consider work as a means to an end
- 'Bureaucratic' - employees view work as a means of social status and a means of long-term security
- 'Solidaristic' - employees view work as a form of group activity where norms and values are more important than economic return for labour.

Overall, these complimentary theses help in the understanding of an apparent job satisfaction/alienation paradox. Workers may prefer not engaging directly or frequently with their employers. Indeed, according to Leinster (1985) they are in effect working for themselves. Moreover, a strong sense of belonging to a group of like-minded individuals with a need for social interaction also seems important. Here the emotional side of the employment relationship appears to be bound with customers, work life balance and other workmates with a solidaristic orientation to work. These employee coping mechanisms might have been created by an industry which has a disturbing legacy of impoverished employment relationships and despotic styles of management. Historically, hospitality employees have had to take significant responsibility for issues of work-life balance and personal well-being as management has consistently abdicated responsibility for such matters.

**Discussion**

Labour turnover in the hospitality industry is a widely recognised phenomenon but the precise association between the variables remains unclear. Practical attempts to minimise it may therefore be ill-informed and thus only partly successful. Not all issues are under the control of employers in any case. For example, worker transience, work orientation, culture and work life balance have already been discussed. Some actually favour labour turnover because with new employees come new ideas. While this cannot be denied, excessive labour turnover is unacceptable because it is detrimental to the consistent delivery of high quality service because incumbents are ever-changing, each of whom may have differing standards. Moreover, temporary worker shortages increase the workload of others. Retained trained workers are more likely to deliver a service based on agreed organisational quality standards. Additionally, a continuous stream of employees with low skills is unlikely to bring anything novel or valuable to the organisation.

Whilst this review has identified an employment situation where management tends to be unsupportive and employees toil on their own and their work group's interests, the situation is far from ideal. Employers must focus on HR dimensions which they can control effectively. In no particular order, these include their own
management style, motivation and retention, induction, training, employee development, pay and associated working conditions. Of paramount importance are effective leadership and management of espoused organisational culture and how it is communicated to employees. Graham & Lennon (2002) agree but favour the term ‘relationship building’ between staff and management. This should motivate employees to redirect their behaviour towards achieving organisational goals, personal development and quality performance (p. 219). For example, the service encounter is the point at which management has least control over the employee. Therefore, adoption of espoused organisational norms and values rather than those of the culture in practice (imbued informally by the worker group) are essential if service quality is to be achieved and maintained (controlled indirectly). In short, managers should consider the adoption of appropriate HRM strategies.

However, formal HRM as a hospitality strategy or function seems unrequited. McGunnigle & Jameson (2000) note that many organisations consistently fail to adopt formal HRM models, preferring to hire and manage workers informally. They note:

“Our research illustrates that it may still be the case that the willingness [of hotels] to adopt HR may be no more than ‘an empty shell’, or at least piecemeal and fragmented” (p. 416).

More contemporarily, Maxwell & MacLean (2008) similarly state: “...the hospitality industry is not renowned for highly developed human resource practices” (p. 822). Other researchers with similar misgivings include Haynes & Fryer (2000) and Watson (1996). Timo & Davidson (2005) agree and consider HRM practices in the small- to medium-sized hospitality sector to be largely absent, or informal. Baum (2008) notes that the hospitality industry merely seeks ad hoc solutions to perennial HR challenges. This belies a general reluctance to pursue comprehensive and integrated approaches to human resource management, instead, preferring to rely on cheap unskilled labour.

After reviewing the evidence, Hoque (1999) notes that only large hotels are likely to experiment with HRM practices. These are present in rare cases such as the Hilton group’s focus on service quality through their HR policy initiative ‘Esprit’. The foci are on customers, service quality, employees and profit (Maxwell, Watson & Quail, 2004, p. 170). Timo & Davidson (2005) disagree noting that cost minimisation strategies dominate in firms where low pay is the norm and tipping used to increase pay rates. They consider that even multinational luxury hotel chains fail to pursue ‘new’ HR strategies in achieving competitive advantage. Instead they maintain a common low cost HRM strategy based on a flexible and low cost labour force.

Thus, most extant HR strategies in the hospitality industry focus either on cost and fewer on quality (Lashley & Lee-Ross, 2003: p.16-17). The essential differences between the two are that a cost approach aims to create competitive advantage by low selling prices and cost management. The alternative aims for the same outcome
by building and delivering a service of high and differentiated quality. Other features include how employees are perceived by employers. The cost perspective sees them as liabilities which are easily controllable operationally; the quality strategy views them as assets. Similarly, workers’ skills are viewed as essential (particularly at the customer interface) and training and practice are geared to this core belief. The alternate strategy simply pays wages set at the minimum level by the national or state government.

The problem with the more common low cost strategy is that it creates negative outcomes indirectly including recruitment difficulties, high levels of labour turnover, lost customers through poor and inconsistent service delivery and deliberate acts of sabotage by workers. Moreover, there is ‘low-skill expectation’ associated with the low cost strategy and many roles have been deskilled by employers. A legitimate way to manage such workers according to the contingency theorists (for example, see Fiedler, 1954; 1967) is to focus on work tasks rather than job incumbent. This management style is often autocratic and a great deal easier to implement than a more people focused approach. Taken with the prevailing unsupportive style of managing hospitality workers (especially in the seasonal sector), it becomes easy to ‘hire and fire’ on a whim, given the increased supply of unskilled workers (despite the inevitable negative impact on service quality and productivity).

Conclusion

Whilst the metrics for measuring the association between HRM and employee performance are equivocal, research suggests that there is a positive correlation; so too between employee performance and service quality. Moreover, performance at the customer interface is the point at which management lose control of their employees. It is therefore important that HRM strategy and practice account indirectly for this weakness inherent in service delivery. Given the key role hospitality employees play in differentiating the service product, a review of key working conditions and labour market characteristics seems appropriate. An important issue is to first define what HRM is in the hospitality context. There have been several attempts to do this resulting in a common understanding. Simply, despite technical and situational differences, HRM is akin to a map or philosophy subsuming personnel practice rather than a set of universal rules and regulations.

Establishing effective HRM strategy and practice in the hospitality industry is challenging, not least because of extant working conditions and characteristics of the labour market. Seasonality is an often cited reason for these problems, some of which are easier to manage than others. The industry has been accused of employing unskilled and consequently low paid non-unionised workers. Many of these have part-time and only temporary job tenure. Effectively most hospitality workers occupy a position on the periphery of the organisation which entitles them to only basic
rewards for their labour. Traditionally, these jobs are viewed as inferior to those operating at the core of the organisation. However, and contrary to Atkinson's flexible firm construct, many peripheral workers operate at the service interface. This author argues that these roles should not be underestimated, given the ambassadorial nature of service food and beverages, receiving customers, entertaining customers and so on.

Managers have also been criticised for their various approaches to managing people. Authors have accused them of being despotically, autocratic, non-supportive, ad hoc, too operationally focused and so on. According to some, the unique management training individuals receive is responsible. Others argue that the hospitality industry has few barriers to entry where almost anyone can start up including those with no relevant experience or qualifications. The psychological profile of entrepreneurs is also held blameworthy for this state of affairs.

Alternatively, labour force characteristics are similarly regarded as employer barriers to embracing effective HRM strategies and practices. For example, evidence suggests that many hospitality workers are below the age of 25, choose jobs in the industry as stop-gap prior to commencing a 'real career' and prefer to work part-time and temporarily for reasons of work-life balance. Whilst the statistics are not clear, an unfortunate symptom is poor performance at the interface, inconsistent service delivery and rampant labour turnover. This situation is exacerbated by an almost wholesale failure to embrace comprehensive HRM strategies by most hospitality organisations including large firms in the affiliated sector. Most extant HR strategies in the hospitality industry focus on cost rather than quality. These aim to create competitive advantage by low selling prices and cost management and view employees as dispensable controllable liabilities. Some argue that labour turnover is acceptable given the novel ideas newly employed workers may bring to the job. However, temporary worker shortages increase the load of others. Also, retained trained employees are more likely to deliver a service based on agreed organisational quality standards. Moreover, a continuous flow of low skilled recruits is unlikely to bring anything novel or valuable to the organisation.

The original contribution identified here shows that employer failure to recognise the link between appropriate HRM strategies, improved performance and enhanced service quality has resulted in an apparent paradox. That is, many employees do not become alienated from their work; curiously they appear to be satisfied. Researchers have suggested several reasons for this phenomenon. One perspective suggests that workers may prefer not engaging with their employers but effectively are working for themselves, performing at the customer interface to maximise tips received. Others consider the glamour associated with service encounters an important motivator. Alternatively, the opportunity the job bestows for social interaction and being part of
an unofficial group of like-minded individuals (not management) may also play a role. The latter is known as an occupational community view of organisations and is an extreme informal structure where people become bonded to their work colleagues to such an extent that work and social activities cannot be separated. Moreover, organisational norms are set by members of this culture in practice rather than the espoused official culture.

Overall, this review of these theses helps to understand the job satisfaction/alienation paradox. However, on a cautionary note, this situation becomes problematic where community norms and objectives conflict with those of the employer; which is frequently the case. Essentially, these behaviours are employee coping mechanisms filling a void due to absent formal HRM procedures. Hospitality employees have to take responsibility for personal well-being in the workplace as management consistently abdicates responsibility. A laissez-faire management style is not acceptable and creates barriers to the design and effective implementation of HRM strategies. Furthermore, it serves to perpetuate problems which with careful planning could be mitigated or resolved successfully.

References


Review Paper

Theme Parks in South East Asia: A Case Study of LEGOLAND® Malaysia

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Abstract: Theme parks are an important component of the tourism industry in much of the world and of considerable economic significance as they require heavy investment and involve some very large corporations. The sector is less established in parts of Asia, but is flourishing there as a result of economic development which is encouraging demand for leisure and tourism and facilitating funding. International operators are interested in the ensuing commercial opportunities and often encouraged by authorities seeking the benefits which can accrue to destinations from hosting parks. This paper presents a case study of the first LEGOLAND in Asia and examines the background to its opening in Malaysia and future prospects. Influencing factors on likely success within internal and external domains are identified. While factors seem to favour the park's sustainability and the launch of more theme parks, there are also challenges to overcome.

Keywords: Internationalisation, Southeast Asia, theme parks.


Introduction

Theme parks have become popular around the world in recent years, especially in Asia where the industry has seen significant growth and heavy investment. International brands are often courted by destination authorities because of their perceived contribution to tourism development and enhanced destination image. Enterprises with Western origins are also pursuing opportunities for expansion beyond mature markets of Europe and North America, but with minimum risks. Success is not

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guaranteed, however, and this paper discusses challenges in opening and running new theme parks with particular reference to the sixth LEGOLAND which was launched in Malaysia in 2012. It is the first such park in Asia and inspired by the toys produced by a Danish company, rendering it an appropriate and timely case study. Current industry trends are outlined in order to set the scene and the literature is reviewed. Core internal and external influences on theme park performance and prospects are identified, representing a framework for analysis of the new park. Finally, some general conclusions are derived from the specific example in an attempt to illuminate critical aspects of theme park operation and underlying dynamics. A case study approach was selected as most suitable for the purpose and findings are based on material in the public domain, supplemented by two visits to the park.

The Theme Park Industry

Recreational parks have a long history (Jones & Wills, 2005), but the modern concept of a theme park is relatively new and usually attributed to Walt Disney who opened Disneyland in California in 1955 (Clavé, 2007). There is diversity in character and scale (Wanhill, 2008), yet most conform to the definition of Pikkemaat & Schuckert (2007: p. 201) quoting Page (2000) who write of a site which is ‘designed around a central theme or group of themes’, ‘combines rides, attractions, shows’ and charges a ‘pay-one-price admission fee to visitors’. A coherent and consistent theme is not always discernible and an amusement park might be a more accurate term, although it has associations of a different type of facility from an earlier era. Modern theme parks are commonly outdoors and the largest occupy a considerable amount of land, functioning as a resort when accommodation is provided. They are a significant component of the tourism and leisure industry worldwide, notably in the USA where 400 parks generate about USD12 billion in revenue and contribute an estimated USD57 million to the economy (IAAPA, 2012a). Disney’s Magic Kingdom in Florida and Disneyland in California are the busiest parks globally with 17.1 million and 16.1 million visitors respectively in 2011 when visitation for Walt Disney Attractions as a whole was 120.6 million.

Second to Disney is the British headquartered Merlin Entertainments Group which had attendances of 46 million in 2011 (TEA/AECOM, 2012). It is responsible for 87 attractions, six hotels and two holiday villages in 19 countries (Legoland Malaysia, 2013a). Merlin purchased LEGOLAND parks in 2005, paying almost USD460 million to the Danish toy firm which had decided to concentrate on its core business while retaining a 15% stake in the parks (Wanhill, 2008). LEGO® is an abbreviation of the Danish phrase læg godt, which translates as play well, and was the name given in the 1930s to the company founded by Ole Kirk Christiansen and the toys it made. The underlying philosophy from the beginning was grounded in the notion of ‘learning
and development through play’ and it evolved into the world’s third largest toy manufacturer measured by sales (LEGO Group, 2012). The company later set up parks in Denmark (1968) and the UK (1996), both of which have hotels, and then in the USA (1999) and Germany (2002). A second American park opened in 2011. Ownership of the LEGO Group is handled through the KIRKBI investment company and the LEGO Foundation; the former owns 75% of the LEGO Group and 38% of Merlin (LEGO Group, 2012). Two private equity firms are other major stakeholders in Merlin (Legoland Malaysia, 2013a).

The move to open a Legoland in Malaysia reflects the rapid rise in Asian park attendances which surpassed 103 million in 2011, compared to 127 million in North America and 57.8 million in Europe. Interest has been fuelled by economic advances which have boosted demand and supply (Milman, 2010). Analysts have commented on the creativity and innovativeness of parks in Asia, where new rides sometimes debut ahead of their American introduction, and the generous amounts of reinvestment. The most popular venues are listed in Table 1 which indicates the drawing power of the Disney and Universal Studios brands and the establishment of the industry in Japan and South Korea. However, China is agreed to be the fastest growing market and OCT Parks China is the only Asian park corporation in the world’s top 10, albeit with comparatively modest attendances of 21.73 million in 2011 (TEA/AECOM, 2012).

Worthy of note is the latest Universal Studios in Singapore which started operating in 2011 and had approximately 3.4 million visitors in its first year (TEA/AECOM, 2012). It is situated in a complex with a casino, hotels, shops and other diversions; such so-called integrated resorts are increasingly favoured by developers in the region. This new park is another sign of appreciation of the potential within South East Asia,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Attendance (millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tokyo Disneyland</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokyo Disney Sea</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Studios</td>
<td>Osaka, Japan</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean Park</td>
<td>Hong Kong SAR</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everland</td>
<td>Gyeonggi-Do, South Korea</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Disneyland</td>
<td>Hong Kong SAR</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagashima Spa Land</td>
<td>Kuwana, Japan</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotte World</td>
<td>Seoul, South Korea</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCT East</td>
<td>Shenzhen, China</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yokohama Hakkeijima Sea Paradise</td>
<td>Yokohama, Japan</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: TEA/AECOM, 2012
although China is likely to remain the focus of commercial activity. A Disney park is
due to open in Shanghai in 2015, the second in China after Hong Kong Disneyland.
It would be misleading, however, to conclude that Westernisation is rampant within
the Asian industry and many of its parks have a national orientation with themes
which are rooted to the place; others are without a strong theme, but sell rides and
entertainment to satisfy local customers. Operators from outside the region have also
made efforts to localise their products, sometimes in response to problems engendered
by an initial reluctance to do so (Matusitz, 2011).

Theme Park Success

Despite the above expansionary trends, there is competition among parks and between
them and other entertainments for people’s leisure time and money. Good management
is clearly fundamental to whether a park prospers and is linked to matters of corporate
strategy and policy. It spans decisions about organisational structures and funding
(van Oest, van Heerde & Dekimpe, 2010) through to marketing, although commercial
viability relies heavily on maximising capacity and managing revenues (Alexander,
MacLaren, O’Gorman & White, 2012; Heo & Lee, 2009). Research into facets of
management is comparatively limited, but Lee, Chung & Chen (2011) propose that
financial, internal business processes and human resources are the foundation of success.
Conversely, Pikkemaat & Schuckert (2007: p. 205) cite ‘flop factors’ which explain
park failures. These are insufficient innovation and capital investment, inappropriate
pricing and promotion, and poor human resources policies together with an inability
to match customer expectations. It is argued that parks have a greater chance of
succeeding if they are associated with a well-known and respected corporate brand
which assists in cultivating a good reputation and promoting trust (Erdem & Swait,
1998; Hyun, 2009). Loyalty is also encouraged through branding and visitors are likely
to be willing to pay extra for a brand name which they admire.

Many researchers address questions of visitor satisfaction (Bigne, Andreu & Gnoth,
2005; Dong & Siu, 2013) and the range of attractions and facilities emerge as a key
consideration for Asian and European markets (Boshoff, 2006; Kawamura & Hara,
2010; McClung, 1991; Roest, Pieters & Koelemeijer, 1997). Constant updating and
refreshment of existing amenities and the installation of new features, in correspondence
with changing tastes and fashions and harnessing improved technologies, are deemed
crucial in drawing first time and repeat customers. Spending time together as a family
is a powerful motivator of visitation (Ryan, Shuo & Huan, 2010) and an educational
element fused with fun, or ‘edutainment’, is another priority for parents (Johns &
Gymothy, 2003; McClung, 1991). Children play a central part in decision-making
and theme parks must possess child appeal, yet have to cater to the adults who
account for most visitors (McClung, 1991). Customers expect a certain standard of
service delivery and friendly and courteous staff who are knowledgeable about the park (Milman, 2009). Disney parks are seen to lead the way with their ‘cast members’ dedicated to creating ‘magical moments’ for guests (Jones, 2012).

Ride waiting time can be more of a concern than service quality and excessive queuing is a cause of dissatisfaction (Heung, Tsang & Cheng, 2009). Long queues for rides are one of the primary complaints of visitors (Koseluk, 2004; Schoofield, 2005), but they can signify an attraction of great popularity which is worth the wait. Effectively managing queues and capacity in general is therefore necessary (Pikkemaat & Schuckert, 2007) to deal with fluctuations in demand and avoid disgruntled customers. Safety is also of vital importance (Emmons, 1999; Gram, 2005; IAAPA, 2012b). Any incidence of serious injury or death is likely to be widely reported (Avery & Dickson, 2010), undermining the idea of parks as safe and secure environments (Johns & Gyimothy, 2002). Additional aspects such as value for money and weather affect overall customer enjoyment, but seemingly to a lesser extent than the aforementioned points.

Park location is of importance in determining physical access and the size of the catchment area. However, the desirability of proximity to other attractions is debatable. Competition may be beneficial as more visitors are drawn to clusters of venues, yet customers could be lost if rival parks are perceived to be bigger and better. Due regard must be given to cultural sensitivity and adaptations to suit local circumstances when companies enter unfamiliar markets (Brannen, 2004; Matusitz, 2010, 2011). Theme parks and especially those of Disney have stimulated argument about their deeper meaning and role as a manifestation and instrument of globalisation. ‘Disneyfication’ has become a term of abuse for some commentators, akin to ‘McDonaldisation’ (Ritzer, 2010), with implications of cultural imperialism and homogenisation. At the same time, there is a realisation that the global and local are not necessarily mutually exclusive or antagonistic, but may co-exist and intermingle (Robertson, 2007) in a more synergistic relationship. Negotiation and accommodation between the two can occur within the arena of theme parks, although multinational operators must strike an appropriate balance between indigenous and exogenous motifs.

Factors and forces external to corporate affairs and the park should not be overlooked and politics impinges on the theme park industry. Government support can be essential for larger scale parks which rely on public sector infrastructure development, exemplified by Disneyland Paris (McNett, 2013) and Hong Kong Disneyland (Financial Times, 2009). Authorities are often eager to entice internationally renowned brands because of a belief in their capacity to burnish destination image and act as a catalyst of tourism growth. Popular parks are prized as creators of employment and income, justifying official backing. Such a stance has its critics and French and Hong Kong officials were censured for expending public money on
tourist-oriented projects, neglecting more pressing needs of citizens. There were further disputes in Hong Kong about environmental impacts (Tsai & Lui, 2011), suggesting the advantages of a demonstrable commitment to corporate social responsibility in helping to avert public criticism. All visitor attractions are also affected by economic and social conditions which can have positive and negative repercussions. The state of national and global economies has consequences for investor confidence and the availability of funding as well as demand, while park themes and narratives should be intelligible to and resonate with contemporary society.

There is thus a multiplicity of considerations which contribute to successful theme park operation. Key points are summarised in Figure 1 which forms the framework
for the discussion of LEGOLAND Malaysia in subsequent sections. A distinction is made between internal and external dimensions, but these interact and influences flow in both directions.

**Internal Issues**

**Corporate Policies**

Plans for LEGOLAND Malaysia were announced in 2008 after a deal between Merlin and a Malaysian consortium led by Iskandar Investment and involving the latter’s wholly owned subsidiary, Themed Attractions and Resorts. Iskandar Investment itself is 60% owned by Khazanah Nasional, a state strategic investment fund, that launched the subsidiary in 2009 to ‘develop, manage and operate theme parks and attractions in Malaysia under Khazanah’s Leisure and Tourism Division’ (Themed Attractions Malaysia, 2013). The situation reveals a political agenda which is elaborated upon later. The opening is aligned with Merlin’s expansion programme in Asia Pacific where sites run by the company increased from 2 to 21 in the period from 2000 to 2012. The Chief Executive has mooted the idea of a LEGOLAND in Japan and a third elsewhere in the region, possibly in South Korea. The strategy was interpreted as a bid to impress investors in anticipation of an initial public offering (IPO) sometime in the future, following the withdrawal from an attempted IPO in 2010 (*Financial Times*, 2012). For the LEGO Group, the parks serve as a sales and marketing vehicle for its toys which are increasingly well known in Asia (LEGO Group, 2012).

**Finance and Management**

The LEGOLAND deal was reputedly worth RM750 million (USD232 million) (*The Edge*, 2008) and the Malaysian partner was reported to be the majority shareholder. The Malaysian government was said to have been asked for a loan of around RM 500 million (USD155 million), or two thirds of the funding, to kick start the scheme due to problems of securing finance from other sources in the troubled economic climate (*Business Times*, 2008). A subsequent media report stated that the theme park and water park were ‘fully funded by the Malaysia government’ at a cost of RM720 million (USD223 million) (Lee, 2012), but the authors have been unable to verify these figures. It was also reported that it was Iskander Investment’s plan to dispose of a portion of its equity over time to other parties so that ‘investors are motivated to ensure the park’s success’ (*Malaysia Today*, 2008). LEGOLAND Malaysia was formed to own and operate the park; Merlin receives management fees and has an option to buy 20% of the business (*Financial Times*, 2012). According to the General Manager, recovery of full investment will ‘depend on the long-term development of the park’ and ‘usually takes about 15 to 20 years’ (Lee, 2012).
Branding

The LEGO brand carries connotations of superior quality and learning, attributes which have been transferred to the parks and inspire confidence among visitors (Bakir & Baxter, 2011). Sales of LEGO toys in Asia are much lower than those in Europe and America, but are growing at a faster pace and there are forecasts that Asia Pacific will be the world’s leading toy market by 2016 (*The Wall Street Journal*, 2013). As stated previously, the LEGO toy brand is becoming more recognised in Asia and the excellent prospects there are acknowledged (LEGO Group, 2012). There are corporate offices in Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, China and Singapore and a factory is being built in China. The company has been praised for its skill in innovating and staying relevant to modern children’s play, with regular new product launches, while many of its counterparts are struggling (Sauer, 2013).

Attractions, Amenities and Service

All the LEGOLAND parks are designed for families with children aged between two and 12. The 76 acres in Malaysia is divided into seven themed areas with over 40 rides, shows and attractions which are often linked to LEGO toys. It boasts 15,000 LEGO models built from more than 50 million LEGO bricks. There are three restaurants, four food stalls and 11 food carts. The park contains Asia’s largest LEGO shop and four smaller retail outlets. An educational component is incorporated into most of the rides and exhibits, several of which are interactive. The promise is that children will have an ‘opportunity to push the boundaries of their imaginations and creativity and have fun while learning’ (LEGOLAND Malaysia, 2013a) and special programmes offer hands-on ‘interesting out-of-the-textbook lessons’ for students (LEGOLAND Malaysia, 2012). Visitors are advised that it takes 12 hours to fully participate in all the activities (LEGOLAND Malaysia, 2013a). Looking ahead, a management agreement was signed in 2012 between Merlin and LL Themed Hotels (a 51-49 joint venture company between Destination Resorts and Hotels and Iskandar Harta Holdings) to erect a hotel at the site (*Bernama*, 2012) and a Water Park is scheduled for 2014.

Location

LEGOLAND Malaysia is situated in the Iskandar Malaysia development zone in Malaysia’s southernmost state of Johor, approximately 30 kilometres from the state capital of Johor Bahru. The park is accessible by direct bus services from the surrounding area and coaches from the federal capital of Kuala Lumpur, a journey which takes four to five hours. There are also coaches from Singapore, the island city state at the tip of the Peninsular Malaysia, which is connected to Johor by a road.
bridge and causeway. The driving time for Singaporeans is about 15 minutes once they have crossed the Straits of Johor and the park can accommodate 3,500 cars. The nearest airport is Senai, 35 kilometres away, and three airlines fly to seven Malaysian and one Indonesian destination. In terms of park security, strict checks ensure that only ticket holders are permitted entry and there is a police post outside the main entrance. Video surveillance cameras are installed throughout the grounds which house a first-aid station. The tropical climate is a function of the geographical location and characterised by hot and humid weather with frequent thunderstorms. A leaflet warns about the closure of outdoor rides during storms and recommends that guests devote such time to eating, shopping and indoor amusements (LEGOLAND Malaysia, 2012).

Global-Local Mix

The corporate website claims that while favourite attractions from the other parks can be found, ‘everything is tailor-made for the local environment’ (LEGOLAND Malaysia, 2013b). Adaptation to regular attractions is most obvious at Miniland where five of the 17 replicas are Malaysian landmarks and all the others, with the exception of a pirate scene, are Asian. Food caters to local and international tastes and is certified halal so that it is acceptable to Muslims. There are also Muslim prayer rooms and it must be recalled that 60% of Malaysians and 13% of Singaporeans are followers of Islam.

Marketing

On opening, the entrance fee was RM140 (USD43) for adults and RM110 (USD34) for children aged three to 11; annual passes cost RM325 (USD101) and RM255 (USD79) respectively. Marketing is directed at local citizens, those living elsewhere in Malaysia and Singaporeans. Some attention is given to overseas visitors from these and other countries with an emphasis on South-east Asia. Intermediaries of tour operators and travel agents are targeted as well as private individuals. Management anticipates ‘working with other attractions in the vicinity to offer attractive packages’ (Lee, 2012). Iskandar Malaysia is also home to Puteri Harbour Family Theme Park, containing a Sanrio Hello Kitty Town, and a factory outlet shopping mall. Universal Studios Singapore is presented as complementary, rather than competitive.

External Issues

Political Environment

Political imperatives and pro-tourism policies facilitated the project, demonstrated by the formerly cited government connections of several Malaysian companies with an involvement. Tourism is officially viewed as an economic development tool by
Malaysian federal and state authorities and has a place in national strategic plans (The Economic Planning Unit, 2010). The choice of site at the centre of the aforementioned Iskandar Development Region (IDR), covering 2,217 square kilometres, can also partly be attributed to official decision making. The IDR is one of five formally delineated growth corridors aimed at promoting balanced regional development and faster growth. The current national plan (2011-2015) talks of refocusing on a ‘limited number of high density clusters’ in the corridors and collaborations with private enterprise to nurture priority industries (The Economic Planning Unit, 2010: p. 118).

Iskandar Investment is the commercial investment holding company overseeing development in the heart of the region. Activity has been fostered in accordance with key economic areas which include tourism together with education, finance, logistics and the creative industries (Iskandar Investment, 2013a; Shun, 2013). Approved companies can take advantage of incentives such as a 10-year corporate tax holiday and cheap land (Iskandar Malaysia, 2013). These are proffered in conjunction with the Iskandar Regional Development Authority, the federal government statutory board set up in 2007. Its purpose is to regulate the various stakeholders and impel them towards realising the vision of Iskandar Malaysia as a ‘strong and sustainable metropolis of international standing’ (Iskandar Regional Development Authority, 2013) with an envisaged population of three million residents by 2025 (Business Times, 2013a). LEGOLAND Malaysia is described as ‘catalytic’ and the ‘first iconic tourism and leisure project’ (Iskandar Investment, 2013b), the intention being that other well-known names will follow and thereby assist in the attainment of objectives.

**Market Conditions**

In terms of the market, the location is hailed as strategic because of the access granted to large numbers of residents of Malaysia and Singapore. Malaysia is a developing country, ranked 64 in the UN Human Development Index for 2012 with a GDP per capita of USD8,418 (UNDP, 2013), but there is a thriving middle class (Embong, 2002) among the population of 28.3 million. Kuala Lumpur is a federal territory housing 1.6 million and is within the State of Selangor whose population of 5.5 million is the nation’s most affluent (Department of Statistics, 2010). Johor has 3.4 million inhabitants and it too is one of the wealthier Malaysian states, gaining commercially from its closeness to Singapore. The latter’s population of 5.2 million is more prosperous than that of its neighbour and has a GDP per capital of USD43,865 in 2012 when it was placed 18 in the UN index (UNDP, 2013). Comparatively high disposable incomes of Singaporeans have led to a propensity to consume discretionary goods and services (Euromonitor, 2012) and improving standards of living in Malaysia underpin a growth in consumer spending on recreation and leisure (Euromonitor, 2013).
The market extends to foreign tourists staying in Malaysia and Singapore. A total of 24.7 million international visitors entered Malaysia in 2011 (UNWTO, 2012) and Singapore had in excess of 14 million in 2012 (STB, 2013). There is heavy cross-border traffic and other members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the rest of Asia are also major countries of origin. Inbound flows from China and India are escalating and many tourists from the Middle East choose Malaysia for reasons of religious affinity (ASEAN Secretariat, 2012). Tourism is expanding across the ASEAN region stimulated by the ascendancy of its middle classes which, in turn, is attributed to economic development and related social and demographic trends (Shiraishi & Phongpaichit, 2008). Internal travel has been further boosted by the burgeoning low cost airline business (ASEAN Secretariat, 2012).

Conclusion

The above account suggests that the new park possesses several strengths arising from internal and external circumstances. Positive attributes are reflected in the popularity of the park on opening in September 2012 when the busiest days saw attendances of over 10,000. It is estimated that about half were Malaysians, predominantly from the state of Johor, and a quarter from Singapore (Business Times, 2013b). Management anticipated one million visitors annually in the early years and revenue of RM100 million (USD31 million) for the first year (Malaysia Today, 2008). Over 1,000 ‘model citizens’ or staff would be employed and a total of 1.8 million visitors are expected by 2020. Nevertheless, the ability to deal with crowds during peak periods is a concern (Chua, Liu & Ngiam, 2013) alongside visitor comfort in light of the heat and humidity, prompting some visitors to propose more tree cover and outdoor air conditioning units (Yahya, 2013).

There might be reservations about long term prospects and a key challenge will be to maintain momentum by enticing sufficient numbers of new and returning visitors. There are questions about the attractiveness of the site for the primary target markets once the novelty has worn off and whether it can support the repeat visitation which will be critical to revenue generation. The extent to which LEGOLAND Malaysia is able to lure visitors from beyond Malaysia and Singapore also remains to be seen as it confronts rivalry from better endowed parks and destinations. As the first such park in Asia, where toy sales lag behind the West, there might be some uncertainty about brand recognition and receptiveness to the theme and its presentation. While the design for younger children and their families is a point of differentiation from other parks, it limits the customer base. The park’s fortunes are also linked to those of the development zone in which it is located and it is difficult to predict whether ambitions for Iskandar Malaysia will be fully realised.
LEGOLAND Malaysia thus merits examination for the insights it affords into the theme park industry and the internationalisation of demand and supply, especially in an Asian context. The appeal of theme parks and the products with which they are associated may transcend national boundaries and large firms with an international presence are powerful actors in the marketplace. Modern theme parks are costly to develop and operate, requiring heavy investment and patience regarding returns on spending. Governments are prepared to intervene and provide financial and other forms of support to secure brand names which are perceived to have the capacity to help transform destinations. Western businesses are looking eastwards, but cautious about the scale of their monetary commitment. The result is complex financial and organisational mechanisms involving different types of partnerships between and within enterprises of host and origin countries and official agencies of the former. Companies are adapting their product offerings, yet cannot move too far from the central theme and its underlying principles for fear of compromising core values and causing confusion over identity.

The theme park industry in Asia, not least South-east Asia, seems likely to thrive in parallel with general economic development. Unprecedented commercial opportunities will ensue, but stakeholders in the private and public domain must overcome certain obstacles in setting up and operating parks. Substantial amounts of finance have to be raised and return on investment is only possible over an extended period of time. Reinvestment is also essential to maintain standards and innovation, providing reasons for visitors to return. Cross-cultural differences and contrasting geographies, encompassing climate, must be appreciated by Western-based operators which regard the East as a route for expansion yet have little experience of doing business there. Commercial and other dilemmas attendant on theme park opening and running are evident in the case depicted in this paper and it will be interesting to monitor the progress of Asia's first LEGOLAND as it strives to establish itself.

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Book Review


by Jeetesh Kumar & Kashif Hussain, Taylor’s University, Malaysia

A desire to explore, find and become enriched still drives individuals to travel nowadays. The need for travel has made tourism the number one industry in several countries worldwide. The travel and business industry is one among the few industries contributing to a positive trade balance for the world’s economy. It is among the most important employers, developing workers in the least levels and areas of experience. According to World Tourism Organisation, tourism is one of the world’s largest industries today; it is a key to development, prosperity and well-being for nations. By 2012, it had generated 9% of direct, indirect and induced impact on GDP, employed 1 person in every 11 jobs and expended USD 1.3 trillion in exports with 6% of worldwide exports. Moreover, it had grown from 25 million international tourists in 1950 to 1.035 million in 2012 while having 5-6 million of domestic tourists generating USD 1,075 billion international tourism receipts and further it is forecasted that there will be 1.8 billion international tourists in 2030 (UNWTO, 2012).

When the global recession hit a few years back, it was travel and tourism that pulled many countries out of their crisis. Praised by *The New York Times* for its "meticulous reporting and often disturbing expose", *Overbooked* shows how travel and tourism is having a profound impact on countries, the environment, and cultural heritage. Whether pollution left in the wake of cruise ships or the millions of tourists overwhelming the city of Venice, Elizabeth Becker offers anecdotes to illustrate her investigation. Costa Rica pioneered ecotourism to protect its natural resources while the Cambodian temples at Angkor are sinking because too many tourist establishments are draining the water table, just one of the precious cultural sites in jeopardy due to over tourism. From France to China to Brazil to Dubai to Zambia, her investigation is a first hand examination of one of the largest enterprises in the world.

This award winning author of several books has organised this book into six parts as follows:

Part I, "The Tourism Become an Industry", focuses on all positive effects of this industry and how it is so important currently for the development of a country. The
decreasing cost of long-distance flights has placed exotic destinations within the reach of people who could not have indulged their wanderlust after reading the National Geographic.

Part II is on “Cultural Tourism” where the author specifically has given an overview of a few destinations like such as France, Venice and Cambodia. In the face of the traveler onslaught, some governments have acted with foresight and sensitivity. Becker lavishes praise on France that has protected its coasts and its cottage industries as well as winemaking and cheese production, through a combination of subsidies and strict environmental laws. At the other end of the spectrum is the Kingdom of Cambodia, which has pursued tourist dollars with very little concern for the environmental or human consequences. The temples of Angkor Wat are being degraded, and therefore the mystical atmosphere, Becker writes, has been lost “in a beginning of foreigners with guides shouting in competing languages.” Fueled by government corruption, sex tourism has flourished in Phnom Penh and in other Asian cities.

Part III is on “Consumer Tourism”. Here Becker aims her sharpest barbs at the cruise ship industry that claims to add some USD 40 billion a year to the United States economy. Giants like Royal Caribbean and Carnival Cruise Lines avoid paying pay and exempt themselves from environmental scrutiny by registering their vessels under the flags of countries with lax or non-existent regulations. They lure cruise passengers into making expensive purchases of diamonds and art from firms that supply dubious money-back guarantees. They have turned bound ports of decision into crowded bazaars stuffed with tacky merchandise and traveler hordes. “They’re like transportable low-rent Hiltons.” Becker mentions that one of the tour guides said, “They go everywhere with very little concern for the garbage they leave behind or the disturbance they create within the short time they invade an area.” Dubai, transformed by oil wealth into an oasis of conspicuous consumerism, condemns its labourers to the equivalent of indentured servitude and expends huge amounts of energy air-conditioning its skyscrapers, hotels and shopping malls. Dubai and Abu Dhabi, in Becker’s view, “are currently global cities with very little left of their desert heritage, their environment or their hold on the future should all those foreigners leave.”

In Part IV which deals with “Nature Tourism”, Becker says Costa Rica has become the world’s pioneer of “ecotourism,” turning cloud forests into nature reserves and inspiring hotels to go green. The Costa Rican government even refused to sign a free-trade pact that would have forced it to admit developers from the United States and thus jeopardize control of its coastline. Looking for a safari, Becker avoids Kenya and South Africa, which have increasingly become “Out of Africa” theme parks. Instead she heads to Zambia, where the safari industry is just beginning to be
built up. Here she finds conservationists, government officials and tour operators seeking a balance between encouraging tourism and safeguarding the country’s wildlife. “Zambia is still wide open,” she observes, “with more than a hint of the Africa that the Europeans fell in love with a century ago”. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union opened regions that had been once off limits. Before 1990, Becker reports, 60% of the world’s international tourists visited Western European countries. “Afterwards, the holidaymaker map was redrawn” to incorporate the former eastern bloc and “vast swathes of Africa and Asia.” The result, she says, was a remarkable surge within the overall variety of foreign visits, from 25 million in 1960 to at least one billion in 2012. Today, “in gross economic power,” the business enterprise of tourism “is in the same company as oil, energy, finance and agriculture.”

The author devotes Part V to “The New Giant” to refer to China, the huge industry. She shares her experience while she was on travel to China with her husband where she experienced the local Chinese traditional hotel and became angry with one the tour guides who said that if the government hadn’t moved down pro-democracy demonstrators at Tiananmen square. “China would have folded”.

The last part of the book, Part VI, is the end of Becker’s investigation. Here, she takes a look at tourism within the United States which took an idiosyncratic path after 9/11. While the rest of the world was opening its doors to foreign guests, the State Department tightened visa necessities and foreigners were subjected to imprisoned interrogations at entry points, even jailed after they inadvertently overstayed their welcomes. “Travel to America? No Thanks,” ran the headline on a scathing article within the Sunday Times of London. American tour operators call the period a “lost decade,” claiming the industry lost USD94 billion and 200,000 jobs within the initial five years after the attacks. Given the horrors Becker vividly documents in “Overbooked,” it might be time for places like Cambodia and Dubai to adopt the same approach.

Overall the book is well written and well structured. As mentioned above, the author shares her personal travel experience of several countries and summarises how tourism is currently very important to the world. End notes are given at the end of all parts of the book, which serve to provide a clear structure to the discussion.

Reference

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