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Gdansk University of Physical Education and Sport, Poland
Faculty of Tourism and Recreation
ul. Kazimierza Górskiego 1, 80-336 Gdańsk, Poland

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University of Oradea
Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning
Territorial Studies and Analysis Centre
1 Universităţii St., 410087, Oradea, Romania
Phone/fax: +40 259 408 475
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UTILIZING THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS APPROACH TO EVALUATE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FROM THE RURAL HOST COMMUNITIES' POINT OF VIEW: THE CASE OF CAPPADOCIA (TURKEY)

Onur ÇAKIR

Kırklareli University, Faculty of Tourism, Kayali Campus,
39100 Merkez, Kırklareli, Turkey, e-mail: onurcakyr@gmail.com

Savaş EVREN

Gümüşhane University, Faculty of Tourism, Bağlarbaşı Mahallesi,
Gümüşhane, Turkey, e-mail: savasevren3011@gmail.com

Emrullah TÖREN*

Anadolu University, Open Education Faculty, Yunus Emre Campus,
26470 Eskişehir, Turkey, e-mail: torenemrullah@gmail.com

Nazmi KOZAK

Anadolu University, Faculty of Tourism, Yunus Emre Campus,
26470 Eskişehir, Turkey, e-mail: nkozak@anadolu.edu.tr

Abstract: The objective of this study was to contribute to and expand the limited knowledge base of the ways in which tourism development impacts rural livelihoods. It traced the process of tourism-based livelihood development in the Cappadocia region of Turkey by using The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) framework to provide the perspectives of those who chose to incorporate tourism as a major part of their overall livelihood strategy. The results showed that tourism development had a great impact on the locals' livelihoods. In order to enhance the locals' livelihood and achieve an environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable outcome for tourism livelihood, the recommendation is to support and encourage small local establishments versus large scale foreign investments, increase the number of overnight stays by promoting Cappadocia as a main tourist destination, take precautions to prevent fraud and forgery in locale handicrafts and souvenir shops, and enact a protection law that prevents harm to the environment caused by traffic, shops, balloons, and hydroelectric power plants.

Key words: Tourism Development, Tourism Impacts, Sustainable Livelihood Approach, Oral History, Cappadocia.

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION

With their unique natural, cultural, and social resources, rural areas have been used as repositories to respond the post-modern tourists' quests for authenticity (Urry,

* Corresponding author

2002). Thus, governments regarded tourism as a panacea for increasing quality of life of people living in rural areas. As a developing country, Turkey also utilized tourism for poverty reduction in rural areas. In this respect, tourism is considered to be an important socio-economic development tool in Turkey. Cappadocia is one of the regions that has successfully utilized tourism benefits to enhance life standards in Turkey. Although it is an undeniable fact that tourism played an important role in the development of the Cappadocia region, it is a controversial issue that it is sustainable and it has had the same positive effects on the livelihoods of local people. Amalu and Ajeke (2012) stated that the high rate of tourism activities in a region might not improve the local people's standards of living. Research regarding tourism development in the rural areas has centered on one of the following aspects of tourism at any given time: income generation, production, marketing, or impacts of tourism. This situation has been recently criticized for its lack of focus on livelihoods and for not considering other aspects of tourism development. Some authors argue that this deficiency can be addressed by using the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) (Shen et al., 2008; Tao, 2006; Ashley, 2000; Ashley et al., 2000).

The SLA generally focuses on the local people's five capital-based assets (natural, financial, physical, human, and social capitals), their vulnerability, their usage in tourism and non-tourism related activities, and their outcomes' sustainability (DFID, 1999; Scoones, 1998). Therefore, the SLA does not only comprise sustainability, but also involves the context of vulnerability, livelihood strategies, and outcomes. The SLA provides us with a better understanding of the tourism development process from the rural host communities' point of view. It is also a practical tool kit to analyze tourism impacts and interactions within the local community (Wu & Pearce, 2014). For these reasons, in the study, the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) has been adopted in order to examine tourism development in the Cappadocia region from the rural host communities' point of view. It has been employed to understand indigenous views and responses of local people concerning the changes induced by tourism development. In order to better understand the tourism development of the Cappadocia region and its effects on the locals' livelihoods, an oral history methodology is used. By conducting semi-structured interviews, 36 locals' oral stories about tourism development in Cappadocia were collected. The data obtained from these oral narrations were analyzed systematically by using the SLA framework. In the light of these narrations, the study aims to explore how tourism has become the main source of income in the Cappadocia region in detail, how the assets of tourism (natural, human, economic, social and institutional capitals) are utilized, and what kind of impacts tourism had on people living in the Cappadocia region.

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The SLA is an alternative approach to development, which focuses on people and their connection with the environment as well as the concept of sustainability (Sharpley, 2002). The SLA was first proposed by an advisory panel of the WCED in 1987, and the first research published on the livelihood approach was conducted by Chambers and Conway in 1991. Their report adopted many of the principles of sustainable development, and placed a central importance on host communities. The SLA approach has since gained popularity in examining rural development (Adato & Meinzen-Dick, 2002; Carney, 1999; Chambers, 1992; Lee, 2008).

The SLA approach was also adapted in tourism research. One of the earliest research that utilized the SLA was conducted by Ashley (2000) who assessed the impacts of tourism development in the livelihoods of rural communities in Namibia. The study

showed that the SLA offers a useful perspective on tourism for enhancing local benefits. The concept of the SLA was later adapted for tourism by Shen et al. (2008), who suggested a new approach to the SLA with an emphasis on tourism namely "Sustainable Livelihood Framework for Tourism". In this study, this framework is utilized to form themes and to interpret findings. The core concepts of the framework are tourism context, tourism livelihood assets, institutional arrangements, vulnerability context, livelihood strategies, and tourism livelihood outcomes (Figure 1).

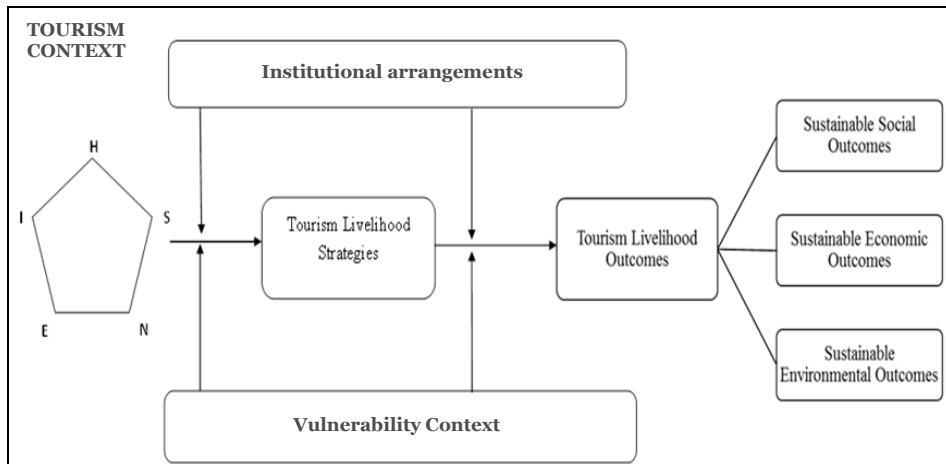


Figure 1. Sustainable livelihood framework for tourism
(Source: Adapted from Shen et al., 2008; DFID, 1999)

In order to define tourism context, consumers (in this case tourists) profiles are needed to be defined, since different market orientations shape tourism products and local host communities in different ways (Shen et al., 2008; Cattarinich, 2001). For example, economically, international tourists generally require high quality tourism products which need high levels of investments whereas domestic tourists may prefer medium quality, or lower priced forms of accommodations. Therefore, when examining tourism development in an area, the tourism context must be addressed.

Tourism assets are at the center of any tourism development program. In order for tourism to be developed in a certain area, there must be some capital assets that can be used. With the SLA approach, these assets are investigated under five capital titles forming a pentagon namely human, social, natural, economic, and institutional capitals (Shen et al., 2008). Tourism changes local institutional arrangements. When tourism has begun in a region, tourism related governmental sectors reinforce relations at the national, regional, and local level. Besides, external investors, NGOs and tourists alter the local institutional structures. These alterations result in changes in laws, policies, regulations, and informal rules like norms which directly affects the rural host communities' lives (Shen et al., 2008). The vulnerability context addresses shocks, trends, wars, seasonality, etc. that negatively effects tourism development in a region. In the study, the aim is to reveal what kind of vulnerabilities occurred in the Cappadocia region and how the locals have dealt with them. With the SLA, livelihood strategies are defined as tourism-related (TRAs) or non-tourism related activities (NTRAs) that people undertake to achieve their livelihood goals. TRAs include employment in tourism industry, formal and informal tourism businesses, farming for tourism purposes, etc.

On the other hand NTRAs include labor migration, non-tourism related employment, farming, and others. These livelihood activities can be changed and can become dominant over one another (Schen et al., 2008). Therefore, in this study, both TRAs and NTRAs are examined in the tourism development process in the Cappadocia region. According to the SLA, for tourism to achieve desired livelihood outcomes, it needs to offer local people a long-term, reliable income source; socio-culturally maintain a stable local society and integral culture; environmentally protect local natural resources; and, institutionally maximize opportunities for local participation and involvement (Schen et al., 2008); thus a sustainable destination will be maintained. In this context, the issue of sustainability of both livelihoods and tourism need consideration.

METHODOLOGY

Research Area (Cappadocia Region, Turkey)

Located at the heart of Anatolia, Ancient Cappadocia region covers Nevşehir, Kayseri, Niğde, Kırşehir, Aksaray and some parts of Yozgat, Çorum, Malatya and neighboring provinces in modern-day Turkey (Umar, 1998). With its valleys, fairy chimneys, cave churches, etc., which are common in towns, such as Göreme, Avanos, Ürgüp and Uçhisar, Nevşehir is the most developed province among all provinces cities in terms of tourism (Tucker, 2003). The valleys and the fairy chimneys were formed by volcanic residues, such as dust, ash and lava from Hasandağı and Erciyes volcanos eroded under the effect of the natural events, such as rain, wind, etc. for millions of years (Çuhadar, 1997; Ayyıldız, 1990). Besides, the people in this region, where the soft geological structure allows for stone carving, produced various structures by carving the stones since the early ages (Akşit, 1988; Karakaya, 2002). Being significant housing, worship, and sanctuary areas of their time, these structures are considered to be significant tourist attractions today. The French were the first people to discover the natural, cultural, and artistic riches of the region as modern tourism values in early 20th century. It is stated that the notes written by a French author (Guillaume de Jerphanion) had an influence on the people who read them. They started to visit the region individually as of the 1950s, and then the small group tourism emerged. After the 1980s, the tourism movement has increased (Tosun, 1998; Tucker, 2003). In recent years, millions of people, especially Japanese and German tourists, have been visiting the attractions in the region. According to the information provided by the governorship, 2.8 million people visited the region in 2014. However, along with the rapid growth of mass tourism, the commercial use of the natural structures has increased and the natural-cultural environment has begun to be damaged. Within this context, one of the most important subjects from the 1990s in this region has been sustainable development of tourism (Tosun, 1998).

Research Method and Data Analysis.

Tourism as a lived experience, from the perspective of being a livelihood strategy, has received little consideration in either the livelihood research to-date or the literature on alternative forms of tourism development, which addresses the concept of sustainability. Therefore, in this study the oral history methodology is employed. By using the oral history methodology, 27 local people who have chosen tourism as their main livelihood strategy were interviewed. Interviewees consisted of eight hotel owners, five travel agents, five tour guides, four food and beverage establishment owners and four local craftsmen coded as HO1-HO9, TA1-TA5, TG1-TG5, FB1-FB4, C1-C5 respectively. In the following section, the data collected from the 27 cases of interest are presented in an interpretive response under main themes namely tourism context, tourism livelihood assets, vulnerability context, tourism livelihood strategies, institutional arrangements, and tourism livelihood outcomes.

FINDINGS

Tourism Context

Under this main theme, the development of tourism within national and international context, the changes and innovations have been analyzed and the statements of well-informed people have been directly cited. The main theme of the tourism context and the subheadings under this main theme are shown in Figure 2.

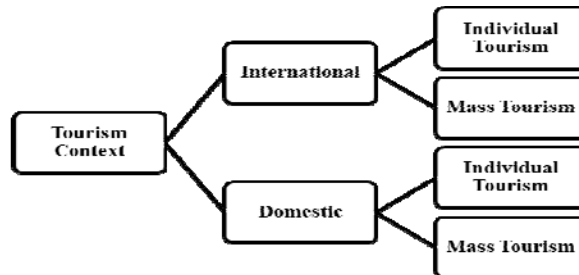


Figure 2. Main Theme of the Tourism Context

Although the Cappadocia region has always been an attraction for visitors, these visitors only became one of the main means of living for the local people starting with 1960s. The authorities stated that the remarkable foreign tourist visits date back to the 1950s and those people were French tourists who were influenced by the novel named *Three Nights in Rock Churches of Cappadocia* by Nobel-winning author Yorgo Seferis, and who visited Cappadocia for cultural and religious purposes (Tosun, 1998: p. 599). It is stated that regional tourism began to develop with the French tourists, who drove their own vehicles until the 1980s, and with the hitchhiker hippies (HO1, HO5, HO4). Since the tourism infrastructure was inadequate and there were no facilities to host those tourists in those days, the tourists had the opportunity to experience Turkish hospitality at its finest, and these experiences made a great contribution to regional tourism development. Witnessing the tourists sleeping in caves or gardens in their sleeping bags, the local people began to host these people in their houses as required by their traditions (FB3). These people, who realized that they could generate income by commercializing what they did, decided to include tourism into their livelihood strategies (HO1). In this sense, tourism developed spontaneously in the 1970s (HO4). The income generated by the families who transformed their houses into guesthouses, became conspicuous and gave rise to the number of guesthouses. *“It all started with guesthousing. If the tourists could not find a place to stay, the local people would take them to their houses and let them stay overnight. The tourists would be treated as family members”* (HO8).

Tourism activities, which continued as guesthousing for foreign tourists until 1975, turned into large-scale tourism facilities together with TURBAN¹ hotels, which were established in 1975. These hotels in Ürgüp, Avanos, and Nevşehir had a key role in giving the local people the notion that they were professional tourism entrepreneurs. With their help and support, the managers of these hotels, Abbas Ataman, Saffet Yatağan, and

¹ As in the development of many sectors in Turkey, the core strategy is to make reference investments through state economic enterprises and provide service as financial provider. The name of the state economic enterprise, which was established to serve for the development of tourism sector, is “Turizm Bankası A.Ş. (Bank of Tourism) or TURBAN” in brief. TURBAN, which was established with the Cabinet Council’s decision no: 4/5413 in 23.06.1955, actually began to operate in 1962 (Özdemir and Kozak, 2000). Being a leading and reference institution for tourism sector, TURBAN A.Ş. also established hotels in Cappadocia region and engaged in significant activities to meet the requirements of qualified tourism personnel.

Kürşat Numanoglu made great contributions to development of tourism in the Cappadocia region. *“Saffet Yatağan is the initiator of tourism-related activities in this region. Saffet Yatağan and Kürşat Numanoglu... We snatched up this hotel business from them. I think those two set an example for us”* (HO7).

When it comes to the 1980s, the number of large-scale facilities intended for mass tourism increased. Especially after the enactment of the Tourism Encouragement Law of 1982, large-scale tourism facilities began to open (HO3, HO4, TG3). *“After 1989, the investments went sky-high; everybody started to build hotels and restaurants. The bed capacity rapidly increased ten times... Now everyone builds boutique hotels. If a person has three rooms, he/she builds a boutique hotel with those three rooms”* (FB3).

When considered within the context of tourism, it has been observed that while tourism development was spontaneous with the hippies and European tourists led by the French groups in the 1960s, it turned into a mass tourism movement in the 1980s and 1990s. While the travel agencies in this region were arranging package tours especially for the French, they started to attract tourists from all of Europe and the Far East as of the 1990s (HO2). The transformation into mass tourism movement led to a change in tourist profiles. Especially the Far-eastern tourists, who prefer to visit this region in winter, became a golden opportunity for extending the season and increasing productivity (HO5).

As the negative impacts of mass tourism became evident, a luxury tourism movement began along with the mass tourism and shopping tours after the 2000s. While producing luxury and custom services, hotel management concept has also changed and the number of boutique hotels has increased in new investments. The number of boutique hotels, the first of which was opened by a lawyer in 1993, began to increase after the 2000s, and improved the mass and cheap destination image with luxury and premium services (HO4). Since the foreign mass tourists did not yield as much income as they used to, and since the Cappadocia region was well-promoted in TV series, it is observed that domestic tourists began to groove on that region in the early 2000s (TG4, HO2, HO3, HO6). It is stated that this interest was largely based on the TV series named “Asmalı Konak”, which was shot in this region, and attracted the attention of the paparazzi (HO2, TG4, TG3). Today, tours are organized from all over the world to Cappadocia for domestic and foreign tourists. With the diversity of tourists, the development of the destination, and the corporate enterprises, the region is capable of meeting this demand.

Tourism Assets

In the sustainable livelihood approach, tourism assets are analyzed within the scope of natural, social, human, economic, and corporate capital aspects (Shen et al., 2008). Under this theme, tourism assets of the Cappadocia region are discussed in detail (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Main Theme of Tourism Assets

The most powerful asset of tourism in Cappadocia is shaped around natural and social capital. The valleys and fairy chimneys, which were formed in hundreds of years with the volcanic residues of Mount Erciyes and Hasandağı (Ayyıldız, 1990), and are mostly located between the Ürgüp-Uçhisar-Avanos triangle, are the most significant and unique natural capital of Cappadocia (Çuhadar, 1997). The shrines and especially

hundreds of cave churches from the Byzantine period and the mural paintings on the walls of these churches may be analyzed within the context of social capital as cultural values. Similarly, the underground cities, which are one of the most significant remnants of the Byzantine period, are also significant social capital elements that have been open for visits since the 1960s (TG5). Another social tourism capital of Cappadocia is the Avanos-based pottery art and the art pieces created within this context (C1, C3). The artworks, which were large and created for use until the 1970s, began to rapidly transform into miniature artworks after the 1980s in line with the demands of the tourists (C2, HO8, C4). In addition, carpet businesses, and jewelry and marble-masonry may also be considered among socio-cultural tourism assets of the region (TG5). Activities such as wine harvesting festivals and wine tastings are also among the significant elements of the social capital. The most important capital element, which ensures that tourism develops and becomes a sector, is the economic capital. The establishment of accommodation and food & beverage facilities, travel agencies, and the introduction of public investments are all related to the economic capital. In the early years, the economic capital in Cappadocia began to emanate by means of minor initiatives of local elements. The fact that the local elements initially and mostly provide rudimentary services is one of the key features of the development of tourism destinations (Butler, 1980). In the 1980s, depending on the overall tourism breakthrough in Turkey, the incentives (1983, Tourism Promotion Law) became weighty matters in terms of economic capital. However, what is more important regarding tourism in Cappadocia is the first major investments made by state-funded Turban hotels. Later, the local elements and the investors from major cities ensured that the investments increased both by utilizing the incentives and their own equity capitals. The people in those days started to sell their previous sources of income, such as crop fields, trucks and savings, and started to become hotel owners and travel agents by utilizing various incentives (FB3, TA3, HO9).

The rapid growth of the tourism sector specifically unveiled the urgent need for human capital. The administrative staff of the hotels, who increased in number in 1980s in Cappadocia tourism, and who were initiated by the locals, who opened up their houses for the first individual visitors, namely the hippies, continued with the establishment of small guesthouses, and finally with the establishment of major hotels, were transferred from Turban hotels. Within this context, Turban hotels served as applied training schools in the early years in Cappadocia. Later, these managers made an effort to improve their own personnel (HO4, FB3). The most significant name in Cappadocia regarding the development of human capital is Saffet Yatağan. *"They came from Hilton in 1973. They were brought to Cappadocia by Saffet Yatağan, the most prominent name for tourism in Cappadocia. Maitre d'hotel (master of hotel) of Hilton provided training programs in Ürgüp Büyük Hotel. I have a waitering diploma with "excellent" degree, certified by the Ministry of Tourism"* (HO7). Nevşehir University, Tourism and Hotel Management Academy, which was established in 1984, had a significant influence on the development of human resources in tourism. In addition, along with the development of tourism, well-educated, multilingual tourism professionals started to migrate to the region and enriched the human capital of Cappadocia (HO1, FB3). Women's employment is also another key matter in human capital. In the early 1960s, the local people were not up for women's employment because of their cultural structure. However, especially after the mid-1980s, the sector started to develop when tourism was promoted and when the people began to realize that they could earn big, and more women began to get involved in tourism sector (FB3, HO4, C4). Another aspect of the sustainable livelihood approach is the corporate capital. The corporate capital is approached within the frame of subjects, such as ensuring access of the public to the tourism

markets, sharing of tourism outcomes, and participation in decision-making processes (Shen et al., 2008). In fact, tourism in the Cappadocia region actually started when the public gained access to the tourism markets and began to offer service to tourists and generated income. In this sense, it did not take too long for the public to access to the tourism sector and to have a share. The local people generated income by opening small guesthouses, agencies, and souvenir shops that shaped tourism in Cappadocia (HO3).

The involvement of the local people in the decision-making processes was partial through their representatives in municipalities, since the local decisions were also taken and implemented under the control of the central government. Institutionalization of the relations between the destinations may also be considered within the scope of the corporate capital. Within this context, this fact, which has emerged in terms of tourism in Cappadocia in recent years, is the collaboration project among the destinations between Erciyes Ski Resort and Cappadocia, which is initiated under the title of “cultural skiing”. Basically, winter is the peak season at the Erciyes Ski Resort and the off-peak season in Cappadocia, and the distance between these two destinations is 45 minutes by land. Within this framework, the efforts made by Erciyes A.Ş., Erciyes’s destination management organization, produced its first results in 2014, and a Dutch tour operator created a package tour, which included five days in Erciyes and two days in Cappadocia (Demiroğlu, 2015). While this project provides a solution for non-contemporary off-seasons of both destinations, it is also expected to increase the overall number of visitors with the synergy effect.

The five dimensions of Cappadocia’s tourism capital have been distorted in time. For example, mass tourism, an unplanned tourism superstructure, and natural events have caused significant damages on valleys and fairy chimneys, which are the main attractions of the region. Although Göreme Valley was taken under protection by UNESCO in 1985, these protection policies and decisions were mostly ineffective against the power of the capital (FB3, TG5). The municipalities fail to prevent this due to lack of technical staff, legal or bureaucratic problems, and relations based on mutual interests and unearned income (C4). In addition, apathetic and harmful acts of the local people were also evident at times. For example, the people living in historically valuable houses sometimes attempted to destroy (painting, etc.) the historical texture of their houses in fear of governmental confiscation (TG5). The tourist groups also destroyed the historical texture. Some destructive acts occurred during mass tourist movements in those attractions. Lack of knowledge regarding protection is also another significant point. For example, the damage caused by photo-flashes on historical structures was discovered not too long ago (TA3). The elements within the scope of the social capital were also ruined in time. For example, some domestic and foreign tourists engraved their names with sharp objects on murals in centuries-old cave churches (HO4, TA3).

In addition, the facilities, such as the dams and the hydroelectric plants, which increased humidity in the region, also damaged the natural structure by triggering erosions. *Seven dams were built in this region, and there will be 20 dams in total. There is a 70-km- long dam in here. The humidity exceeds 33% now and it never exceeded 10% before. UNESCO warns us regarding protection, but nobody listens* (HO9). With the high levels of humidity that they produce, hydroelectric plants also damage winemaking activities, which are other significant social capital elements in this region. Another alteration regarding winemaking is related to the festivals. Within this context, Tokmak states that wine festivals named “binlik²”, which are a tradition inherited from the Hittites and the Greeks, were organized in this region in the past (before 1980), and the

² The name of the three liter bottles used for wines

repressions that were brought by the 1980 coup d'état³ and in the later years turned those "binlik" festivals into a long-lost cultural element. However, these vine harvesting festivals have been organized in recent years under the sponsorship of some major wine companies and this culture is kept alive to some extent.

The havoc regarding the human capital was evident in terms of working conditions, wages, etc. Low wages, hours of labor up to 16 hours and social rights have always been the most important problems for the employees in Cappadocia (FB3). Another havoc regarding the human capital is related to tour guiding. Tour guiding has emerged with foreign language students coming from major cities in summer to work as tour guides in Cappadocia, and then licensed tour guides have taken over the business. However, the unqualified and commission-money oriented business began to create problems in time. TG4 gave the following statements regarding this issue: *"They made up a term as 'pocket tour guide'. Who are those pocket guides? The ones with no self-esteem, who do this job for free. The ones, who guide the tourists for chicken feed. Because of them, a Korean comes in and makes twice as much income than the Turkish tour guides."*

Economic capital has evolved from a structure mostly predominated by the local people, and later, dominated by major investment groups. Tokmak stated that family guesthousing decreased significantly especially after the 1991 Gulf crisis, and that the number of guesthouses went down from 48 to six in 1998 in Avanos, and the development was confined. This sets forth a consequential havoc in terms of the corporate capital. Now, lack of communication between the local people and the tourists who visit the region as the customers of major hotels and agencies, became evident. According to Tokmak, this increased the number of tourists who take photographs and leave quickly within a couple of days without actually discovering Cappadocia. The common view regarding the thing that damages all tourism capital dimensions in Cappadocia is a low-price policy and short periods of stay. In this region, where the room rates were relatively more expensive until the mid-1990s, the prices have begun to fall rapidly and the guests could find a room for only eight euros. This causes damage on natural, historical, and cultural attractions by attracting more tourists than the region can bear; the decline in pricing also negatively affects economic and human capital by reducing tourism income, because the enterprises in the red first begin to make concessions on human resources. The decline of prices also changes the tourist profiles. The region, which used to attract high income groups in the past, is today preferred by lower income groups (FB3, HO7). The region, which used to attract more naïve, sophisticated, and artistic people between the 1970s and the 1980s, began to attract people from different circles in recent years (HO8). FB3 stated that while they used to sell approximately 4000 bottles of wine in the 1980s, they could only sell around 200 bottles of wine although the prices dropped by half in recent years and have underlined the decline in income levels of the visitors. FB3 stated that business relations have also become uncomfortable and talked about the carpet stores sponsoring tourist groups and offering free accommodations in some hotels for those who purchase carpets from those stores within this context.

Vulnerability Context

Under this main theme, the periods, events, and practices that create vulnerability the Cappadocia region were analyzed in terms of tourism. The conditions, such as regional political issues, and terrorist actions, which create vulnerability on touristic movements in this region, are given in Figure 4 and presented with direct quotations from the interviews.

³ The years between 1971 and 1980 are referred to as a period, where terrorist actions and anarchy were on the rise in universities and on the streets in Turkey, and where the country was on the verge of a civil war. Since the political power could not find a solution for these problems and failed to form a government between 1979 and 1980, Turkish Armed Forces seized the control of the country in September 12, 1980 (Öcal, 2009).

When considered within the context of vulnerability, the problems encountered in the Cappadocia region were interpreted under the following sub-themes: breaking up of Yugoslavia, the influence of regional political issues such as Gulf War I, economic turmoil and negative effects of inflation, unplanned investments, and intense and attritional competition based on an astronomical increase in supply, and terrorist actions.



Figure 4. Main Theme of Vulnerability Context

The tourism activities in Cappadocia have begun with the hippies from Europe, driving in their trailer caravans. This type of tourism has developed until 1980's. After the death of Josip Broz Tito in 1980, there were large-scale ethnic conflicts and economic depressions which started Yugoslavia's break-up process. Due to the negative situations in Yugoslavia, tourists have stopped coming to Cappadocia by road. HO2 expressed the impact of the break-up of Yugoslavia on tourism in Cappadocia as follows: *"When the Yugoslavian Wars began, the caravaneers, and the tourists that we called 'pasan (passing on)' or individual tourists stopped visiting and the lean times has begun for the sector."* It is observed that the war in the Balkans prevented the arrivals by land, however, in conjunction with the development of air transportation, this gap was filled by other air-land connected transportation types. However, the first Gulf War in the 1990s had devastating effects on the development of tourism in the Cappadocia region. The common view of all interviewers is that the most challenging period in the development of tourism in Cappadocia region was during the first Gulf War period. Some interviewers refer to this as a period where tourism significantly shrunk and even came to an end (TG4, C4, HO4, HO8, TA3, TG3). *"... no one knows how they got the news, or how did that happen. Cappadocia was deserted" (FB3). When Iraq attacked Kuwait, the customers left this place lamentingly. They were terrified" (TA3).*

Turkey was best known for its economic crises and depressions throughout the 1990s. Just as the economic crises in 1991, 1994, 1998-1999 and 2001 affected the entire country, it also had a negative impact on tourism livelihood of the local people in the Cappadocia region. The fact that money was constantly devalued compelled the local people, who had to struggle with high interest rates and inflation. This distressed the local investors, who made an investment by borrowing, and it also restrained them from predicting and making plans for the future by disserving their thinking skills. These circumstances prevented the local investors from making new investments and made them incapable of sparing their time and financing and making new investments that would develop their livelihoods (HO1). When the people realized the profitability of tourism investments after the Tourism Promotion Law of 1982, the tourism investments in the Cappadocia region increased astronomically. The unplanned investments, which were made regardless of the supply-demand equilibrium, created another vulnerable point for the Cappadocia region. Since the core competitive strategy of the local people is price competition, the prices decreased drastically as the number of tourists visiting Cappadocia has been increasing rapidly (HO3, FB3, HO7, HO1).

"The most crucial mistake in tourism occurs because of competition. It does not matter if you are an agency or a hotel owner, you cannot make a vast sum of money"

(HO1). *"We have only one competition system, and that's the price competition. Everyone started to compete on price. The prices decreased so much that they are now going through the floor"* (FB3). *I think the number of tourists are increasing, but the benefits brought by these tourists are decreasing. They are being led to some certain places. I think this is upsetting in terms of Turkish tourism"* (TG3).

Another significant vulnerability of the 1990s was terrorism. The interviewers stated that whenever a bomb exploded in the vicinity of Southeast Turkey, the tourism activities in Cappadocia stopped immediately, and they emphasized that they were negatively affected by the instability in the Southeast (HO1, HO4).

Today, many of these vulnerability points have been solved. Although the civil wars in neighboring Syria and Iraq still continue, and some individual terrorist actions still exist, the interviewers stated that they are not affected by these incidents as they were in the past and the vulnerabilities against these incidents decreased. In addition, the Turkish economy seems to have a stable outlook in economic terms. Today, among all other vulnerabilities, only the low prices based on intense competition seem to remain as the most vulnerable point of regional tourism.

Tourism Livelihood Strategies

Tourism's influence on other sectors with direct and indirect connection with tourism, and to what extent these sectors benefit from tourism movements are discussed under this theme. The subheadings under the tourism livelihood strategies' main theme are given in Figure 5 in detail.

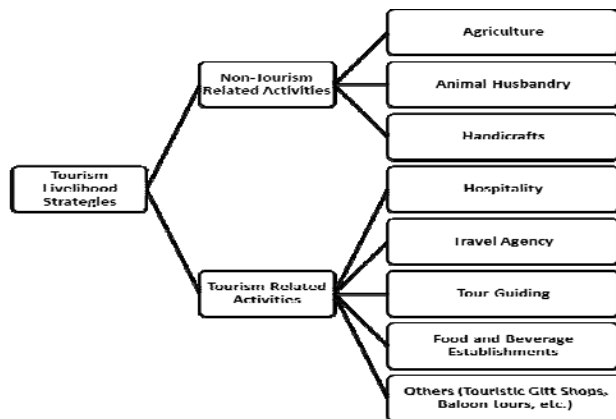


Figure 5. Main Theme of Tourism Livelihood Strategies

Before the development of tourism, the main sources of living for the local people of Cappadocia were agriculture, animal husbandry, and handicrafts, such as pottery. Together with the development of tourism, significant changes have occurred in these livelihoods and the livelihood strategies of the local people. *"It is almost impossible to keep away from tourism if you live in this region, because you are involved in tourism in any given time. We have been living together with the tourists populating the streets since our childhood. You cannot help but get involved in tourism"* (HO6). The local people had no other choice but to get involved in tourism. C4 gave the following statements regarding the influence of tourism on almost all people of the region: *"Tourism surely had an influence on all people, all craftsmen from A to Z. It has been a positive influence"* (C4). The main livelihood of the local people is agriculture, and tourism had both a positive and negative effect on the lives of those people living on agriculture. With the increasing number of tourists visiting the

region, the people had the opportunity to sell their agricultural products (especially potato and greenhouse vegetables, etc.) directly to the enterprises without paying commission to another reseller (TG5). However, the people who turned towards tourism in Cappadocia, began to remove agriculture from their livelihood strategies, because agriculture is considered to be more difficult and relatively more likely to generate less income than tourism (HO8, HO1, TG4). Another group, which was positively affected by the development of tourism, is the people involved in animal husbandry. With the increasing number of foreign tourists, the livelihood of the people, who are involved in poultry husbandry, egg and meat production, has also improved (HO1).

Another significant strategy pursued by people to make a living is the immigration strategy (Scoones, 1998). Before 1980, Cappadocia had been an emigrant region and many of the interviewers stated that the development of tourism reversed migration and many departers came back and the people began to migrate to Cappadocia from other regions (TA3, TG4, C4, HO8). *“The development of tourism prevented out-migration from Cappadocia. Cappadocia had been an emigrant region until the 1980s and the 1990s. But it stopped; people even began to migrate to Cappadocia”* (C4). *My two brothers have returned; the children of my maternal uncle have returned, and the son of my uncle has also returned back from Izmit because of tourism”* (TA3).

The Cappadocia region also has a rich history in terms of handicrafts. Pottery, which has 5000 years of history, the carpet business, hand-crafted dolls, and onyx stone carvings are other crafts that the people do for a living. When the use of plastic increased in 1963, the pottery activities in this region have suffered (C1). With the development of tourism, these values have turned into commercial merchandise and the local people gained a new income channel with touristic souvenir sales, and these vanishing handicrafts continued to exist. *“Handicrafts have been developed in here. The dishware that we used to call crocks and used for eating and drinking are today’s souvenirs”* (HO1). *“Here, both the handicrafts and rug-carpet weaving had begun to be forgotten, these crafts are revived again”* (C4). With the development of tourism, the largest carpet stores in Turkey began to open up in Cappadocia and Cappadocia became one of the most important locations, where the foreign tourists purchase Turkish carpets (HO1). However, as it is in all other businesses, the commercialization of these handicrafts led the opportunists, who want to cut corners, to manufacture low-quality carpets, rugs, potteries and onyx products (HO8, C2). *“They switched from tradition to touristic field and began to manufacture small, petite, miniature but expensive products. But while the craftsmen used to produce handicrafts with madder, now they use chemical dyes... the colors die away within a couple of days... I mean, money changes everything”* (HO8).

The unique and unrivaled scenery of the fairy chimneys and the suitable climate for hot air ballooning led to an increase in hot air balloon tours as another popular activity. Witnessing the balloon tour of an American tourist, Robinson Club Company started to offer this service for its own customers in 1993 and initiated balloon tours in this region together with two professional balloon pilots. Today, balloon tours are one of the main touristic activities in this region and provide a means of livelihood for many people (HO7). Accommodation sector, which is one of the building blocks of the tourism industry, has always been one of the most significant means of livelihood for the local people. This process began when the local people started to open up their houses for foreign tourists back in the day when professional hotel management was not common in this region and this sector became one of the main means of livelihood for the local people of Cappadocia. Today, many people, who used to host tourist in their carved stone houses as required by their hospitality in the past, generate income by turning their houses into

boutique hotels (HO1, HO8, HO4). In the early years of tourism activities, there were not many food & beverage facilities in Cappadocia. It is observed that until the 1980s, the region did not have any food & beverage facilities for tourists. There were only a few diners intended for the needs of the local people. The first restaurant having a tourism operation license was opened in Avanos by FB3 in 1986. *"Our restaurant is the first restaurant certified by the Ministry of Tourism. The others were some sort of ordinary restaurants. ...After 1989, the investments peaked, everybody began to build hotels and restaurants. Many restaurants were opened in Uçhisar and Ortahisar"* (FB3).

The high incomes of tourism agencies in Cappadocia led the local people to include tourism agency activities into their livelihood strategies. However, the earliest form of tourism agencies was poorly and stressfully performed, where the hotels and agencies were jumping on tourists getting out of the bus station. Since means of booking and communication were not as common in the past, the tourists were all walk-in customers and they used to search for guesthouses, hotels or agencies. Agency and tour guiding services, which started out as welcoming and guidance at the bus station, have improved in due course and have been carried out more professionally (TA1).

"There weren't any licensed tour guides, and I used to guide ten-fifteen buses in English and German" (TG4). *We began to operate illegal tours with a van. We were organizing tours for places, such as Göreme outdoor museum, Kaymaklı, Derinkuyu underground city, Paşadağ, Avanos and Ürgüp. We started out with minor tours around those places. Of course, as they were approved by the government, I mean the travel agencies, they didn't give us a chance. When the people filed reports to the gendarmerie, it was prohibited, so I opened a branch of Efor tour and continued for 7 years and that's how my dream of opening a tour agency came true"* (TA3).

As it is observed, the livelihood strategies of the local people of the Cappadocia region were diversified in line with the development of tourism; the previous livelihoods of the region, such as agriculture, animal husbandry, carpet business and pottery, etc. were protected and improved and the local people developed and adapted new livelihood strategies depending on the development of tourism with activities such as hotel and agency management, tour guiding, restaurant business and hot air ballooning, etc. Another remarkable point is that these people were the local people of the Cappadocia region. It is observed in all interviews that both the tourism investments and the traditional means of livelihood were utilized by the local people; unlike other regions, where tourism develops, the extraneous investment groups never had a determining role in this region and the local people have always been the main determinant in strategy preferences and the utilization of the resources.

Institutional Agreements

The relations between the national government, local authorities, and domestic tourists in the onset, development and continuation periods of tourism and institutionalizations within this context were analyzed under this main theme. The main topics under the main theme of institutional agreements are given in Figure 6, and the theme is supported by the statements of reference.

When Cappadocia Region is analyzed within the context of the Institutional Agreements theme, the locals' viewpoint of tourism and tourists, cultural interaction, changes in human relations, local government-tourism relationship and effects of tourism on cultural norms become prominent. Although it is believed that the conservativeness of the people of Cappadocia is not well-matched with tourism, the people managed to reach a certain level in their relations with the tourists, and to institutionalize this to allow for cohabitation within reasonable limits. The generation who grew up acquainted with

tourists in their childhood adopted tourism today as their primary mains of livelihood (HO2). In addition, before realizing the economic yield of tourism, the local people were biased against the tourists, and regarded them as weird and eccentric people who wandered around Cappadocia for unknown reasons. However, the tourists were also timid in the early years of tourism in Cappadocia. With the mutual acquaintance and gradual suppression of mutual biases, the relations between these groups became so much friendlier that even many intermarriages between Turks and foreign tourists occurred within this context (HO8, TA3, HO7, TG4, C4, HO1, FB3).

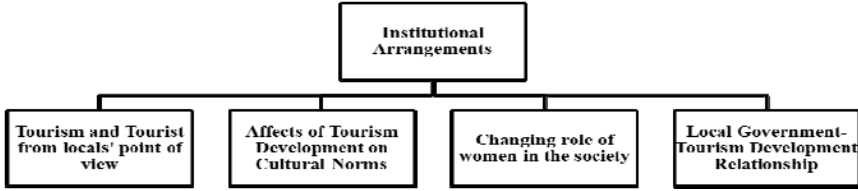


Figure 6. The Main Theme of Institutional Agreements

“Let’s say the people of Cappadocia blew the cobwebs away. We went through fire and water: the people casted away the tourists, and did some things based on hearsay evidences. The kids used to throw stones to the tourists... In some regions, it took ages to explain the benefits and opportunities brought by these tourists to the reclusive communities” (TG4). The institutionalized social structure in the early years of tourism did not allow women to work. The society was biased against female employment in the tourism sector in the early years. However, this biased view has changed over time, and female employment in tourism sector became legitimate (TG5, HO4).

“We weren’t able to find any housekeepers. It was almost impossible. We would kindly ask, but still took no for an answer. They used to tell us ‘if I send my wife, or my daughter to the hotel to work, what would they say behind my back?’ We would try to convince them by saying the hotel was a professional enterprise; the working hours and the breaks are all specified. They would come to work in the morning, and go back to their homes at 5 pm. We even provide shuttle busses for the employees. But we couldn’t convince them. However, they have realized that it was not the case after 1985. The people work hard for the money, to improve themselves, to maintain their economies and generate income. The viewpoints of the local people have changed afterwards” (HO4). Tourism also had a significant influence on the cultural values of the region and the lifestyles of the local people, and it led to a significant change in the traditional structure. The touristic regions have come a long way in many fields, especially in terms of infrastructure, and they have developed in terms of socialization (HO4, HO8, TA3, TG4). *“When people realize that they could earn a lot of money on tourism, they begin to leave some of their values behind. I mean, we begin to see things through a materialist point of view (HO4). “It took a lot more than it gave us. The love and respect of the family, as I said before. When the kids earn a couple of bucks in summer, the families turn a blind eye to it” (TA3). “Private hospitals, especially those, which are somehow related to the overseas institutions, and which operate under agreements with insurance, healthcare insurance companies... Both the number of hospitals and the services have increased” (C4). Today, these services are at the highest level in tourism-intensive regions as service sector, development and education” (TG4).*

If we examine the relationships between the local authorities and bureaucratic channels in the Cappadocia Region, it is observed that the Turban hotels had a great

influence on the onset of tourism in Cappadocia, and these hotels also made great contributions in terms of training qualified personnel for the sector. New hotels were established with the incentives provided, especially in the 1980s (HO1, FB3). The municipalities also had hand-in-glove relations with touristic activities and facilities and they made great contributions in the early years and development stage of tourism (HO1, HO8, TA3). By establishing reference facilities in the region, the municipalities pioneered and supported the adoption and embodiment of the business methods of tourism by the local people (HO1, TA3). *"The municipalities have built these hotels under difficult conditions; now these hotels are of no use, I mean, in terms of tourism. Some of those buildings became dormitories, others became I know not what; but they became the fire starters and locomotives (HO1). "The municipality already influenced on those matters. The people, who would be engaged in tourism business were supported as the people of Göreme, the local people." (TA3).* When it comes to the present day, the fact that the mutual biases in the onset and development periods of tourism in Cappadocia were overcome in every aspect with the development of tourism and the efforts to make the relationships sustainable, is one of the most notable facts when the titles under the Institutional Agreements theme are individually examined.

Tourism's Livelihood Outcomes

The tourism activities in Cappadocia Region and the sustainable development and livelihood outcomes of this development are examined within the scope of the subheadings given in Figure 7.

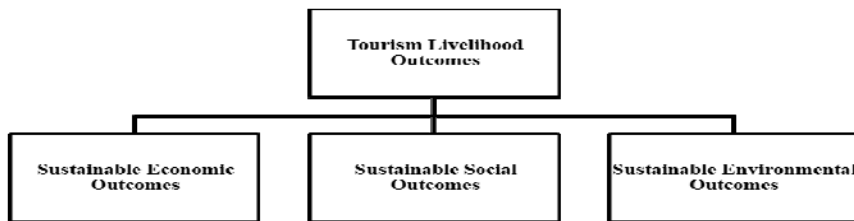


Figure 7. The Main Theme of Tourism's Livelihood Outcomes

The sustainable livelihood outcomes are discussed within the scope of social development, economic development and environmental development. When the subject is analyzed within the frame of environmental development, although a tolerant approach is adopted against especially the major investment groups, albeit inadequate, an effort is made to pursue the protection-utilization equilibrium through the Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation Board (FB3). According to some interviewees, these efforts are ostensible and these boards are one of the main actors of the destruction of this region (HO9). In addition, the activities conducted by non-governmental organizations and activists within the scope of environmental protection may sometimes have an influence (HO1). However, HO8, who is the president of the Cappadocia History Culture Research & Protection Association, and who states that only 6% of the people in the region is aware of protection according to a study conducted by UNESCO, also states that some industrialist NGOs make an effort to remove the protected area (SIT) status of some areas. HO8 states that the effect of the structuring that develops solely for monetary concerns without any historical and cultural awareness has been increasing, and emphasizes the lack of qualified organizations in charge of protecting the region.

In addition, the activities conducted by the municipalities under the name of urban transformation significantly damage the historical texture (HO8). *"Here, two major*

investment groups tried to build ultra-luxurious boutique hotels by cutting and carving into the fairy chimneys. 9 NGOs have united under the name of Cappadocia Platform and conducted significant protests. We run petitions. We tried to draw attention at national and international level. We filed a lawsuit but these men are powerful. However, a government executive, who is responsible for protection of this region, exerts himself to derive profit for these men." People also individually damage (such as carving on walls and murals) the natural and cultural texture in Cappadocia (HO4, TA3). Other than these, the damages caused by the hot air ballooning sector on cultivated areas have an impact on tourism. Within this context, the gases released by hundreds of balloons and the activities of ground services especially harm the vineyards (HO8, HO7). The people who could not make money through agriculture sold their croplands to tourism initiatives in due course with the influence of these factors (TG4). The most important factor that affects the environmental problems in Cappadocia is observed as the low-price policy. This policy causes a density of tourists exceeding the capacity of the region and new facilities are opened continuously to satisfy this density. The natural and cultural attractions, such as museums, churches and fairy chimneys, which are visited by thousands of people daily, suffer the most within this vicious circle. The gases released, and the vibrations caused by the buses, which go all the way into the cultural heritage areas, and the body temperatures of hundreds of people damage the natural structure more with each passing day (HO7, HO8, TG4, C4).

When it is discussed in terms of economic sustainability, again, the low-price policy appears as the main problem. The general view in Cappadocia is that the million-dollar hotels are marketed for rock-bottom prices and the hotels try to offer service to a number of guests beyond their capacity (HO8, HO7, C4). When it is combined with short overnight stays, the revenue generated by tourism remains limited along with the ecocide (HO7). FB3 emphasizes the significances of the sectors within the scope of economic sustainability and states that the sustainability of especially the accommodation sector is very low. Low-priced and short-term room sales are the most important problems regarding the sustainability of accommodation sector in Cappadocia. FB3 underlines the power of souvenir sector against the negative effects of the accommodation sector. FB3, who compares European countries and Cappadocia tourism, states that the souvenir sector in Cappadocia takes hold of the region. Although not yet certain, the rate of overnight stays in Cappadocia region is around 1.8, and the authorities do not lift a finger to improve this rate (HO9). FB3 gives the following statement regarding this issue:

"From the 1987-88s until the 94-95s, the periods of stay in Cappadocia were three days in the worst case. I mean, a tourist could stay in Cappadocia for three nights. Today, they are having difficulties to make, for example, the Japanese stay for more than one night." When examined within the scope of sustainable social development, the topics, such as cultural development of the local people, emigration of well-educated-sophisticated people to the region and improvement of women's place in business and social life, become prominent. The development of tourism in this region created awareness among people, who were not aware of the surrounding values before tourism. The lifestyles of the people, who started to work for or get service from the tourism facilities, began to change. Especially the facts that the employees began to earn money and to get acquainted with new people by communicating with tourists led to significant changes in their perspectives and social lives. The development of tourism also led well-educated-sophisticated people to move into this region. These people living in this region have enriched Cappadocia (FB3, HO4). Tourism has also relatively changed the living conditions of the local women. While female employment was scarce before and in the early years of tourism, the women began

to work together with the development of tourism and their social lives have changed in time. Today, the men can work together with their daughters and wives in the same hotel and maintain the economic persistency of their families (TA3).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The effect of the development of tourism on the local people and the sustainability of tourism takes shape in accordance with the type and form of tourism developing in that specific region, the tourism assets of the region, the strategies pursued for utilization of these assets, the vulnerability points to be dealt with, and the grade of outcomes. However, understanding the current position of all of these variables is inadequate to evaluate the sustainability of tourism in a region. Therefore, within the frame of the themes suggested by the SLA frame, the oral history method, which is one of the qualitative research techniques, is used by considering the time dimension in examining the changes created by tourism in Cappadocia and how the livelihood outcomes of the local people have changed as a result of these changes.

When the tourism context in the Cappadocia region is analyzed, it is determined that some transformations have been experienced from the past to the present day. The region, which has been a mecca for individual special interest tourists, and which was missing a planned tourism development until the 1980s, has turned into large-scale enterprises, which appealed to mass tourism for foreign tourists by evaluating its natural, cultural, social, economic, human and institutional resources in time, and then turned into boutique hotels and facilities that offer special and luxury products for individual and mass tourists. In line with the development of tourism, the main livelihood strategies of the local people have also diversified; the traditional means of livelihood, such as agriculture, animal husbandry and handicrafts, such as carpet business and pottery, etc. have been protected and developed, and the local people have managed to adapt new livelihood strategies depending on the development of tourism with activities such as hotel and agency management, tour guiding, restaurant business and hot air ballooning, etc. Unlike other tourism destinations, it is observed that the local people have always been the main determinant in strategy preferences. Another factor having an influence on utilization of tourism assets and determination of the strategies is the vulnerability context. Breaking up of Yugoslavia, 1st Gulf War, economic crises, terrorist actions and attritional price policies depending on intense competition, which directly and indirectly affected the livelihood of the local people within the development process of tourism in Cappadocia region, became the vulnerability points for the development of tourism and livelihood of the local people. Today, all vulnerability points, except for unplanned investments and price-based competition, became ineffective. According to the SLA, for tourism to achieve desired livelihood outcomes it needs to offer local people a long-term, reliable income source; socio-culturally maintain a stable local society and integral culture; environmentally protect local natural resources; and, institutionally maximize opportunities for local participation and involvement (Schen et al., 2008). Regarding these requirements of SLA, it is possible to make some points and suggestions for Cappadocia by taking the statements of the interviewers into account.

Unplanned investments and price-based intense competition, the most significant vulnerability points for tourism industry in the Cappadocia region, appear to be the biggest obstacles before the economic sustainability. The low numbers and prices of overnight stays in Cappadocia and the large-scale investments are not adaptable to the cultural texture of the region and have a negative impact on the sustainability of the touristic means of livelihood of the local people; it seems impossible for the small

businesses of the local people to stand against the rock-bottom prices given by the major tourism facilities in the region. The tourism structure, where the tourists are taken around between the giant hotels and shops, should be transformed as to revive the small businesses that form the essence of the tourism in Cappadocia region. Encouraging and supporting the facilities operated by the local people and adaptable with the cultural texture will have an effect on introducing the tourists with the culture of Cappadocia and creating suitable conditions for fair sharing of tourism revenue (HO8). Another obstacle against the economic sustainability is short overnight stays. Especially in recent years, the Cappadocia region has been marketed as a side destination as one or two-day tours for the tourists visiting other destinations, such as Istanbul and Antalya. However, the Cappadocia region has the capacity to become a main destination. Marketing this region as a main destination, instead of side or complementary destination, may provide a solution for the low number of overnight stays. Within this context, a destination management organization should be established and the destination should be marketed as a main destination. In terms of economic sustainability, deterrent measures should be taken in order to prevent the sales of overpriced souvenirs and counterfeit products, which have become common in recent years, because the bad image spreads abroad and threatens the souvenir sector, which is the strongest element of tourism in Cappadocia.

When examined within the context of sustainable social livelihood, the shrines, churches, mosques, caravansaries, etc., and the unique historical-cultural elements left by the ancient civilizations in Cappadocia become prominent. It is crucial to take and implement radical decisions to protect these areas from artifactual damage that has been going on since the early years of tourism in the region (HO8, C4). The activities related to pottery, carpet business, jewelry and winemaking are the significant factors of social livelihood as cultural elements. At this point, it is necessary to prevent over-commodification of the artwork, excessive prices, and high-percentage commission bargains and to revive the activities related to viticulture (HO8). Another important issue regarding social livelihood is the transformation of the local people of Cappadocia. Together with the development of tourism, and the communication with the tourists and tourism professionals, the lifestyles of the people, who began to understand the value of the cultural heritages, have changed and developed in years. Female employment has increased together with the development of tourism and the Cappadocia region has socially developed by allowing qualified immigrants into the region. However, the popularization of tourism in recent years and the tourism system implemented by major facilities (hotels, shops, and agencies) have limited the relations between the local people and the tourists to the supplier-receiver level and cultural sharing has decreased. Turning tourism into a system where micro-sized enterprises are common will also have a positive impact on this matter. When examined within the scope of environmental sustainability, it may be helpful to introduce a special protection law for Cappadocia (such as Bosphorus Law). A special and controlled body to be established within the frame of this law may be effective to ensure protection-utilization equilibrium of the region, because neither protection boards nor municipalities are able to ensure required level of protection within this present order (C4). In addition, a solution should be provided for the vehicular traffic, which causes significant damage on natural, historical and cultural texture of the region. Within this framework, vehicular traffic may be prohibited around the fairy chimneys and museums and alternative means of transportation, such as rail systems, bicycles and coaches may be suggested (C4). In addition, it should be considered to remove and centralize the souvenir cabins, which cause visual pollution, to stop the HES projects, which damage both the natural texture and the cultivated areas, and to impose

restrictions on the activities of hot air ballooning sector (HO8, HO9, C4). Within the scope of sustainable institutional livelihood, Cappadocia may become affiliated with other religious tourism attractions in Turkey, just as the institutionalization of the relationship between Erciyes and Cappadocia. Within this context, tour packages may be created by determining the religious tourism attractions with a mutual marketing effort.

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AIRBNB IN BUDAPEST: ANALYSING SPATIAL PATTERNS AND ROOM RATES OF HOTELS AND PEER-TO-PEER ACCOMMODATIONS

Lajos BOROS*

University of Szeged, Faculty of Science and Informatics, Department of Economic and Social Geography, 2 Egyetem utca, 6722, Szeged, Hungary, e-mail: borosl@geo.u-szeged.hu

Gábor DUDÁS

Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, 42 Szabó Dezső utca, 5600, Békéscsaba, Hungary, e-mail: dudasgabor5@gmail.com

Tamás KOVALCSIK

University of Szeged, Faculty of Science and Informatics, Department of Economic and Social Geography, 2 Egyetem utca, 6722, Szeged, Hungary, e-mail: mrkovalcsik@gmail.com

Sándor PAPP

University of Szeged, Faculty of Science and Informatics, Department of Economic and Social Geography, 2 Egyetem utca, 6722, Szeged, Hungary, e-mail: papp.sandor.geo@gmail.com

György VIDA

University of Szeged, Faculty of Science and Informatics, Department of Economic and Social Geography, 2 Egyetem utca, 6722, Szeged, Hungary, e-mail: vidagyorgy.vida@gmail.com

Abstract: The aim of the paper is to reveal how the proliferation of Airbnb is shaping hotel room and short-term accommodation rates in Budapest, which areas are most affected and whether there is any spatial concentration. We performed a manually made internet data query and applied GIS-based mapping methods to visualise the spatiality of Airbnb in Budapest and highlight the differences in room rates. Our results show that both the hotel and Airbnb supply concentrates mainly in the centre of the city, causing fierce competition between hotels and Airbnb hosts. Furthermore, Airbnb also has a strong impact on the rental market through the increasing rental prices.

Keywords: sharing economy, Airbnb, Budapest, collaborative consumption, short-term accommodation

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the development and diffusion of ICT worldwide alongside the growth of Web 2.0 have facilitated and enabled the emergence of peer-to-peer (P2P) online platforms that promote user-generated content, sharing, and collaboration

* Corresponding author

(Hamari et al., 2015; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). These platforms and marketplaces are byproducts of a larger economic-technological phenomenon called the sharing economy¹ (Hamari et al., 2015; Pizam, 2014). The phenomenon itself is not new, but the internet is accelerating its proliferation into everyday life, opens up new opportunities in the relationship between consumers and service providers, fosters the exploitation of resources, and its recent impact on various industries is significant (Olson & Kemp, 2015). The sharing economy is changing consumer habits and facilitates the formation of companies with huge revenues like for example, Airbnb, Uber, or Lyft. According to PricewaterhouseCoopers research conducted in 2014, the five main sharing economy sectors – P2P lending and crowdfunding, online staffing, P2P accommodation, car sharing, music and video sharing - generated \$15bn in global revenues in 2013, and according to the forecasts these five sectors will generate \$335bn in 2025 (PWC, 2014).

Consumption based on sharing is considered a new trend, which radically transforms consumer behaviour in relation to resources (Bálint & Trócsányi, 2016; Chen, 2009; Leismann et al., 2013). In the resulting collaborative consumption, social relations and market coordination are becoming more important (Cusumano, 2015). This is because over possession the role of renting and swapping is growing, which is motivated by environmental concerns, the need of conserving resources, or the lack of space to store various tools. Moreover, the ever cheaper and faster communication enables consumers to transact directly and share their idle capacities by eliminating the traditional intermediaries thus shortening the duration of the transactions (PWC, 2015b; Zervas et al., 2016). In addition, economic downturns also facilitate the spread of sharing economy as in crisis periods consumers are seeking for more economical solutions to meet their needs (Tussyadiah & Pesonen, 2015). Some studies have shown that the desire for community experience also strengthens sharing economy: through consumption people became a part of a community, establish new contacts or strengthen the already existing ones (Botsman & Rogers, 2011). In the operation of the sharing economy, trust has a pivotal role as consumers do not make their decision based on trusted brand names but in general, they rely on other users' feedbacks and ratings (Ikkala & Lampinen, 2014). Accordingly, some research stresses that this could assist discrimination as during the search process the photo of the accommodation seeker and provider is displayed (Edelman & Luca, 2014). However, it is important to note that short-term accommodation rental and the sharing economy, usually raises many other issues regarding the avoidance of tax payment, quality assurance, and consumer protection (PWC, 2015b).

In this milieu, the proliferation and diffusion of sharing economy are unbroken and several companies became global players like Uber or Airbnb. However, due to the rapid changes, so far, relatively few studies have dealt with the operation, spread, and effects of these sharing economy companies. Some of these studies focus on car sharing (e.g. Lyft, Uber) highlighting that these companies contribute to the reduction of emissions and fuel consumption (Cervero et al., 2007; Martin et al., 2010). Other studies investigated restaurant and accommodation ratings appearing in social media in the context of gentrification; as these do not only provide information for future customers but affect investments by creating a positive or negative image. However, Zukin, Lindeman, and Hurson (2015) analysed the restaurant rating site Yelp. They found that ratings were influenced by ethnic and racial prejudices forming a "discursive redlining", which meant that restaurants located at neighbourhoods inhabited by minorities received more and

¹ It is extremely challenging to offer a definition of what is the "sharing economy" and which platforms are included in, as platforms position themselves as part of the sharing economy (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016) – to gain advantage of the positive symbolic meaning of the concept – so usually "self-definition of the platforms defines who is in and who is out" (Schor, 2014, 2). For sharing economy definitions see studies of Botsman, 2015; Frenken et al., 2015; Oskam & Boswijk, 2016.

stronger criticism. Thus, they appeared on the social media as less attractive to consumers or investors. Nevertheless, during the analysis of the reviews, it should be taken into account that not all of them are based on real consumer experience; they could be written by the owners, competitors, or even by paid commenters (Luca & Zervas, 2016).

P2P marketplaces associated with sharing economy operate particularly within the field of travel and tourism (Ert et al., 2016). As the rapid rise of the sharing economy is still too recent academic literature could not reflect thoroughly, although Airbnb is the best-documented case in P2P accommodation (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). Papers studying on Airbnb focus on some key issues such as trust or the reliability of online reviews (Ert et al., 2016; Ikkala & Lampinen, 2014; Guttentag, 2015; Zervas et al., 2015), address legal issues surrounding Airbnb (Guttentag, 2015; Kaplan & Nadler, 2015; McNamara, 2015), or there are studies quantifying the impact of Airbnb on the hotel industry (Choi et al., 2015; Zervas et al., 2016). However, there is also rising interest in the spatial distribution of hotels and Airbnb listings (Dudás et al., 2017b; Gutiérrez et al., 2016; Quattrone et al., 2016) within major cities to locate those parts of the city, which have seen the greatest pressure from tourism or “touristification” and its negative impacts on cities and residents diagnosed in a few studies (Blickhan et al., 2014; Dudás et al., 2017a; Oskam & Boswijk, 2016; Zarrilli & Brito, 2017). Based on the previous paragraphs the aim of our study is to contribute to the academic discourses about the spatiality of Airbnb, thus our research is focusing on the Hungarian capital as the rapid rise of Airbnb creates competition with the traditional accommodation sector and transforms the real estate market as well (Dudás et al., 2016a). We seek to understand how the proliferation of Airbnb is shaping hotel room and Airbnb accommodation rates in Budapest, which areas are most affected and whether there is any spatial concentration. In the first half of the study, we briefly summarize the main characteristics of the short-term rental site Airbnb and present the applied methods used in this research. In the second part, we analyse the spatiality of Airbnb in Budapest and present our findings using charts and thematic maps.

AIRBNB, THE MONETIZED FLAT SHARING SITE

The most popular P2P rental site is Airbnb (Gutiérrez et al., 2016; Pizam, 2014) a travel accommodation provider that describes itself as a “trusted community marketplace for people to list, discover, and book unique accommodations around the world – online or from a mobile phone or tablet” (Airbnb, 2017a). Since its foundation, Airbnb has grown extremely rapidly and now surpasses the major hotel chains in accommodation offered and market valuation (Guttentag, 2015; Oskam, 2016; Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). Airbnb is present in more than 65 000 cities and 191 countries, has more than 3 million global listings (Airbnb, 2017a) and was valued more than \$24 billion in 2015 and the company’s revenue is expected to grow to \$10 billion until 2020 (Winkler & MacMillan, 2015). Essentially, Airbnb is an online platform through which ordinary people can lease their unused spaces/properties as accommodation. Therefore, this short-term rental site provides the opportunity to lease entire apartments but also to advertise only a single room, so it offers more flexible and wider supply than hotel chains. However, it is important to note that on the site of Airbnb not only individuals but the traditional Bed & Breakfasts can list their accommodations (PWC, 2015a) but the blocks of identical rooms are barred (Guttentag, 2015; The Economist, 2012). Accommodations vary on a broad spectrum starting from a living room mattress, we can even rent out entire islands by using the application (Wortham, 2011). However, the majority of the listings offer private rooms, entire places, and houses for the tourists (Guttentag, 2015).

The Airbnb’s user interface is easy to use and operates in a similar way as the major travel search sites (e.g. Expedia, booking.com, or Orbitz). The traveller sets the primary

search parameters (e.g. destination, travel dates, number of guests), the website then displays the available accommodations matching the search criteria, which can be further refined by adding additional parameters (e.g. price, location within the city, ancillary services, availability, etc.). If the accommodation meets the tourists' requirements, a reservation request (only registered Airbnb users are allowed to book) or an inquiring message could be sent to the host. Then, the host responds to the question or accepts or rejects the booking request. The booking is made via the system of Airbnb, thus the host and the guest do not receive each other's contact details. This guarantees that the company would not be bypassed and the fees charged by Airbnb will be paid. In the case of successful reservation, the payment is also made via Airbnb and after the transaction took place, Airbnb charges 3 percent host service fee for the host and 5-15 percent guest service fee – depending on the booking price – for the guest (Airbnb, 2017 b, c).

In tourism, the significance of trust is crucial and trust is strongly related to the experiences and satisfaction of costumers (Bar et al., 2016; Maghsoodi Tilaki et al., 2017; Wendt et al., 2016). The operation of this P2P rental site is also largely based on trust. To reinforce trust between strangers, Airbnb makes the profile of the host visible in addition to the accommodation features, however, some research highlights that this provides an opportunity for discrimination (Edelman & Luca, 2014). The profile of the host contains a photo, a brief description of the host, and a user-generated rating system. This additional information may help for future guests to establish a picture of the host based on former reviews and to facilitate the final decision.

The idea of Airbnb was formulated in the minds of Brian Chesky and Joe Gebbia in San Francisco in 2007. Later on, Nathan Blecharczyk joined the team, so the three of them founded the company AirBed & Breakfast in August 2008, which was shortened to airbnb.com in March 2009. In the beginning, the services provided by the company had limited popularity, and it took 2,5 years to reach 1 million booking nights in February 2011 (Airbnb, 2011; Gallagher, 2017). Since then, the number of booked room nights have shown rapid growth: until June 2011 the numbers doubled, in early 2012 reached 5 million, while in June 2012 has exceeded the number of 10 million (Taylor, 2012; Thomas, 2012), accordingly, in the first five months of 2012 the number of booked room nights increased with 5 million. This growth was continuous, and bookings were about 37 million room nights per year, which is approximately 20 percent of InterContinental Hotel Group's 177 million booked room nights in 2014 (Baker, 2015; Mudallal, 2015). In parallel with the growth of room nights, both the number of guests and the number of accommodations listed on Airbnb show dynamic growth (Figure 1). In mid-2012, around 38 thousand people booked on a daily basis, while until the end of 2012, a total of 4 million people used to stay in an Airbnb accommodation of which 3 million was in 2012 (GSV Capital, 2014; Guttentag, 2015). According to the forecast of GSV Capital (2014) (Figure 1), further continuous growth can be expected regarding annual guest numbers. They estimate that by 2018 51 million people will use accommodations offered by Airbnb. The supply is also keeping up with the increased number of guests, thus at the beginning of 2012, there were already 120 thousand listed accommodations on Airbnb. Figure 1 also clearly highlights the dynamics of this growth; nowadays the number of listed accommodations exceed 1,8 million and future growth is expected. The dynamic growth of the sharing economy and Airbnb can be likely traced back to the unregulated market environment. The current market regulations in most cases could not be applied to these novel sharing economy companies having complex operation models, and in most countries, the legislation is also not prepared to regulate these companies (PWC, 2015a). Consequently, the key to the success of Airbnb mainly lies in the fact that in most countries a major part of the accommodations operates illegally or semi-legally. The

renting of rooms happens through the platform of Airbnb, however, mostly in the informal sector, thus both the guests and the hosts avoid paying the taxes, which is one of the greatest competitive advantage of Airbnb over the traditional accommodation sector.

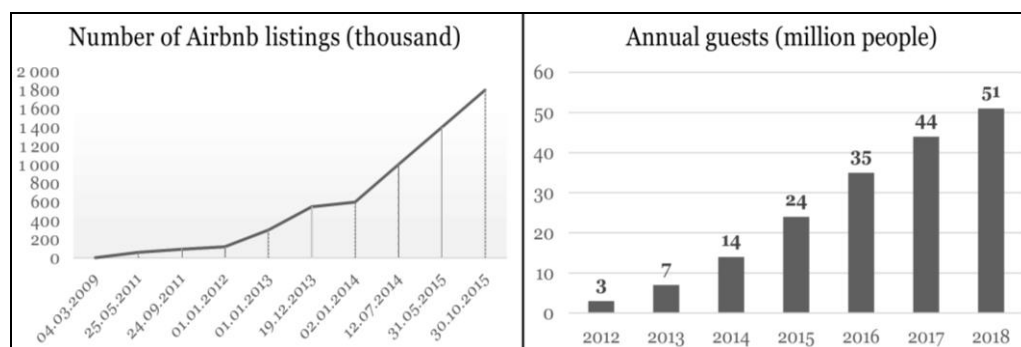


Figure 1: Number of Airbnb listings and annual guests (Source: based on Cherney, 2015; GSV Capital, 2014; Lawler, 2013; Mandell, 2013; Mudallal, 2015; Rao, 2009; Winkler, 2015; Winkler & MacMillan, 2015; edited by the authors)

If an appropriate regulation could be developed in cities where Airbnb is present, it would have a positive impact on the local economy as it boosts tourism resulting in extra revenue for both the local governments and the hosts. Airbnb data shows that average Airbnb users are educated professionals above the age of 30, who spend more time in a city than hotel stayers and they more likely will return. Nevertheless, Airbnb tourists want to get acquainted with local customs and local cuisine, thus in almost all cases, they purchase local products having a significant positive impact on local communities and businesses. In addition, it has other positive elements as it brings additional income for hosts, thus, helps people paying the bills and the mortgages and preventing them from evictions (BBJ, 2015). As the previous researches revealed, the majority of Airbnb listings are outside the areas where hotels are concentrated (Guttentag, 2015), so Airbnb involves new areas into tourism and deconcentrates accommodation supply within the city. However, we have to note that this effect depends on the cities' historical development path and structure, so especially it appears at those places, where the residential function is weak in the inner city so there are few properties for rent.

APPLIED METHODS

The examination of short-term rentals in the sharing economy sector is very difficult due to the deficiencies of official databases and as Airbnb operates mostly in the illegal, semi-illegal sector (Guttentag, 2015). Therefore, in the absence of appropriate databases, we had to perform our own data collection based on researches (Dudás et al., 2016bc; Edelman & Luca, 2014; Law et al., 2011; Zervas et al., 2016) facing similar problems. We selected Budapest as our study area and collected data about hotel room prices and Airbnb accommodation prices within the administrative boundaries of Budapest. The accommodation prices of Airbnb were queried from www.airbnb.com, while the source page for hotel room rates was a travel metasearch site www.trivago.com. It is important to note, that Trivago is not the only online search site for hotel room rates. There are other relevant online travel agencies (e.g. Expedia, Orbitz, etc.), travel metasearch sites (e.g. Kayak, Skyscanner, etc.) or online accommodation booking sites (e.g. booking.com, etc.) as well.

However, during the test queries, Trivago displayed the most applicable information and had the most user-friendly interface, moreover, it lists also room

rates of online travel agencies and online accommodation booking sites as well. Due to our limited resources and constraints of the data source page (www.airbnb.com) we performed one manual query to obtain the necessary data, thus, it should be noted that by the interpretation of the results it should be taken into account that increasing the volume of the data query may result in slightly different spatial patterns, but the main characteristics of the Airbnb and Hotel supply are outlined in this study. The query was on 1 June 2016 for checking in on 19 August 2016 (Friday) and checking out on 20 August 2016 (Saturday). The data collection concerned Airbnb listings and hotel rooms in Budapest at the given time and contained the accommodation prices for one person for a one night stay. Finally, after querying and organising the data, the geomarketing software (Regiograph) and GIS software (ESRI ArcGIS 10) was used to map the spatiality of Airbnb in Budapest.

PEER TO PEER ACCOMMODATION IN BUDAPEST

Recently, peer to accommodation has acquired significant market share compared to the traditional accommodation sector, not only abroad but also in Hungary as well. According to Airbnb, the number of listed properties has grown 70 percent in 2015, so approximately there were 6700 listings in Hungary on the site – approx. 3800 in Budapest - and the number of bookings increased 145 percent (BBJ, 2015).

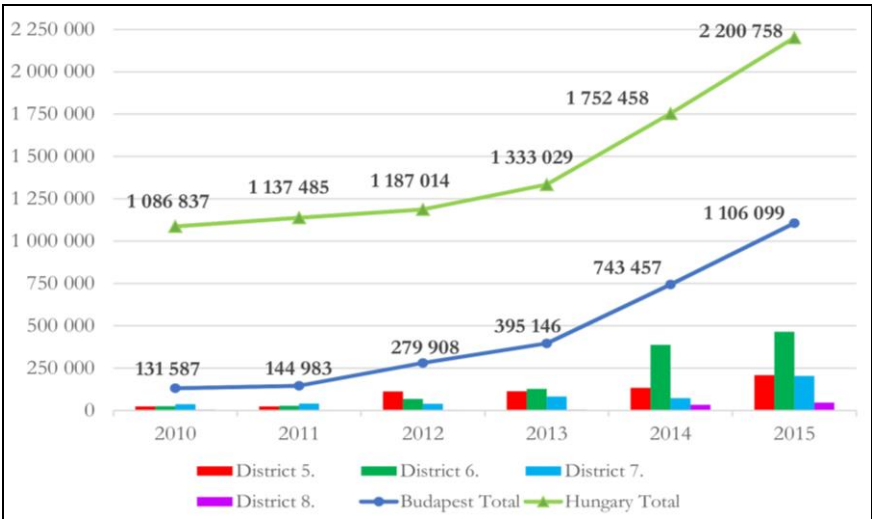


Figure 2. Number of foreign tourist nights in other business type accommodation establishments (2010-2015), (Source: based on Dudás et al., 2016a, and Statistical Yearbook of Budapest, 2016, edited by the authors)

The Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) categorize Airbnb as other business type accommodation establishments. Figure 2. highlights that the number of foreign tourist nights in this accommodation category shows moderate increase in 2013 on a national level, but in 2014 a sharp increase can be observed, which continued in 2015. Accordingly, in 2014 the number of foreign tourist nights increased by more than 30 percent (419 429 nights), while in 2015 by more than 25 percent (448 300 nights), so people have spent a total of 2 200 758 nights in this type of accommodation establishments in 2015. More than 80 percent of this growth is concentrated in Budapest since in 2014 there were 348 311, while in 2015, 362 642 more nights were spent than in the previous year. However, it is important to note that the statistics of the HCSO include

only the hosts, who are registered by the local government, so this growth could be even greater, as Airbnb operates mostly in the informal sector and hosts do not register in order to avoid paying the taxes. At the time of the study, according to data provided by AIRDNA, there were 4574 listings in the Hungarian capital in June 2016. The vast majority of these accommodations were entire places (88%) with an average daily price of 46 EUR, while the share and average price of private rooms (11%; 21 EUR) and shared rooms (1%; 12 EUR) were much lower (AIRDNA, 2016).

The main characteristics of hotel and airbnb supply in Budapest

Based on our data about listings offered by Airbnb and hotels in Budapest, Table 1 shows that there were 1630 accommodations offered by Airbnb compared with that of 482 of the city's hotels. However, this should be put into context as hotel offerings cover 365 days of the year and offer more rooms in one location until then Airbnb accommodations are available for fewer days and if the place is booked for date than it does not appears on the website for that time. The average hotel room rate was 78,6 EUR, while in the case of Airbnb offerings, 71 percent were entire places with an average price of 102,5 EUR, 25 percent were private rooms (54,4 EUR) and only 4 percent were shared rooms (38,6 EUR).

Table 1. Basic data on listings offered by hotels and Airbnb in Budapest

		Room type			Total Airbnb	Hotel
		Entire place	Private room	Shared room		
Listings		1150	411	69	1630	482
Price	Mean	102,5	54,4	38,6	87,7	76,8
	SD	84,4	35,4	37,3	77	66,8
Number of beds	Mean	2,9	2	4,2	2,8	-
	SD	2,4	1,9	4	2,4	-
Number of reviews	Mean	26,1	18,2	16,6	24,1	1042
	SD	35,4	25	27,1	33,4	1534,7
Ratings*	Mean	4,67	4,56	4,48	4,64	81,1
	SD	,359	,487	,460	,395	6,8

* Airbnb ratings use a scale ranging from 1-5, while hotel ratings range from 1-100

The spatial distribution of the accommodations shows a clear concentration in the inner districts of Budapest regarding both Airbnb and hotel supply (Figure 3). The results highlight that Airbnb listings in the 5th, 6th, and 7th district exceed the number of 250, while hotels the number of 70. Within these three districts, the hotel supply is evenly distributed in district 5, while in district 6 and 7 higher density can be observed in the inner parts of the districts within the boulevard of Teréz and Erzsébet (Figure 4). In the spatial distribution of hotel rates, there is no clear geographical concentration, however, the more expensive hotels are rather located at the intersection of these three districts, while the cheaper ones in the vicinity of boulevard Teréz and Erzsébet.

The Airbnb supply shows similar patterns as the hotel supply except that Airbnb accommodations are denser located resulting from the higher item numbers (Figure 5). In the spatial distribution of hotel rates, there is no clear geographical concentration, however, the more expensive hotels are rather located at the intersection of these three districts, while the cheaper ones in the vicinity of boulevard Teréz and Erzsébet. The spatial pattern of hotels and Airbnb presumably influence by the radial road network, the prestige of certain neighbourhoods and the location (and density) of attractions. The case of the formerly stigmatized 8th district illustrates the importance of these factors. The inner part of the district is a gentrifying area with growing Airbnb activity, while outer parts are still deprived and stigmatized (Czirfusz et al., 2015; Fabula et al., 2017; Kovács, 2009; Rátz et al., 2008). In these outer parts, the presence of Airbnb is significantly lower. The same applies for the prices of hotel rooms and Airbnb

accommodations within the district: the prices are higher in the gentrifying neighbourhoods than in the peripheral areas of 8th district (Figure 4, 5).

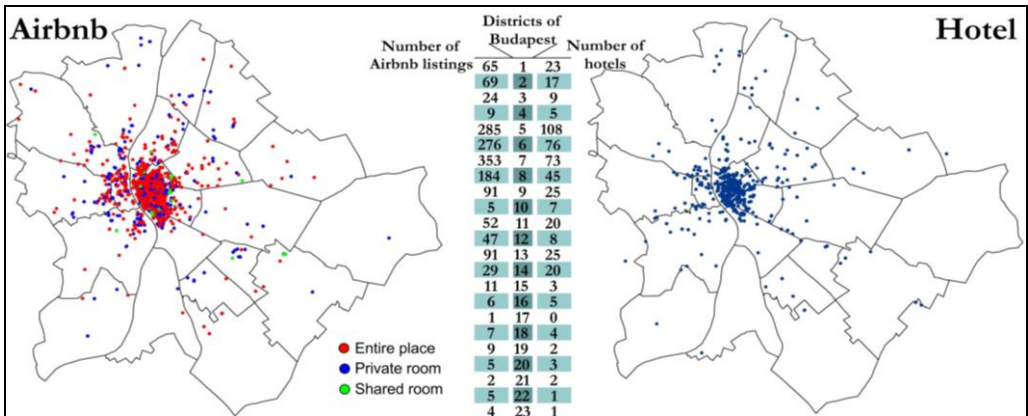


Figure 3. The spatial distribution and the number of hotels and Airbnb listings in Budapest

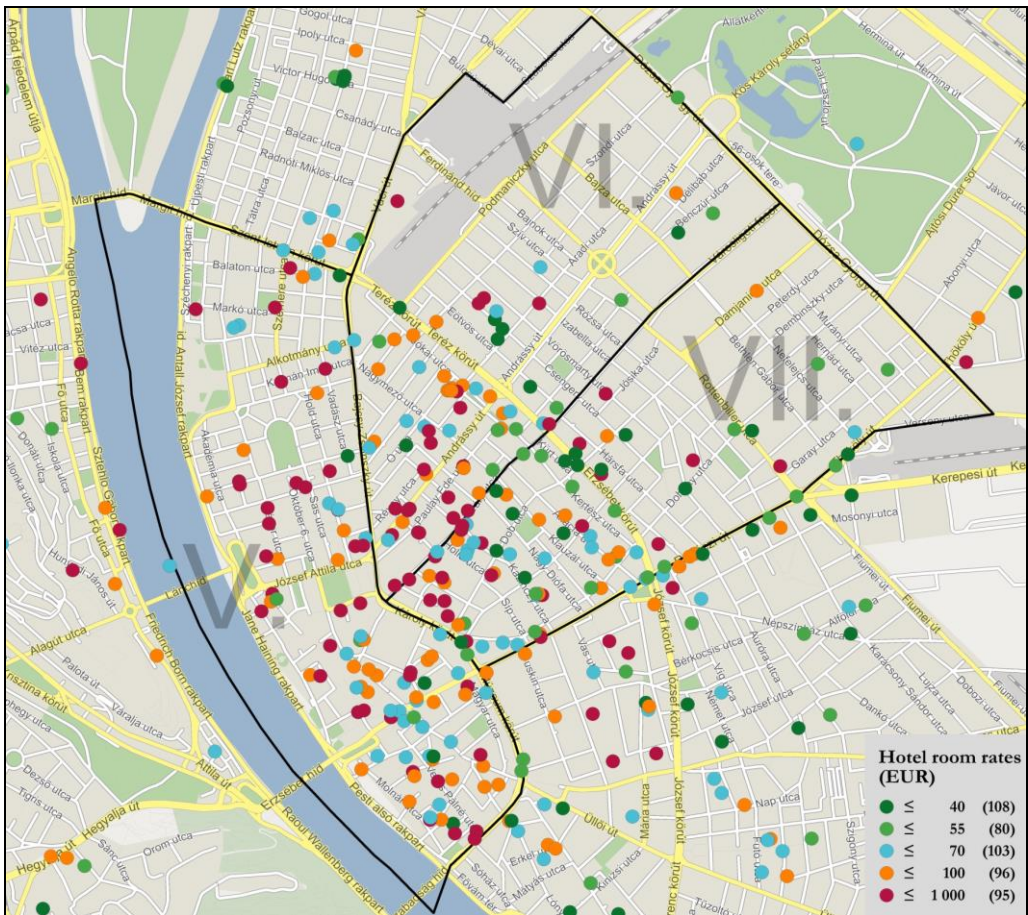


Figure 4. The spatial distribution and rates of hotel rooms in district 5, 6, and 7 (01.06.2016)

Focusing on the prices of different Airbnb accommodations in district 5, 6, and 7 it was outlined (Figure 6) that similar to the spatial distribution it shows great diversity. Studio and one bedroom Airbnb accommodation are at a similar price level moving around 75-80 EUR, while accommodations with two and more bedrooms are much higher priced in all three districts.

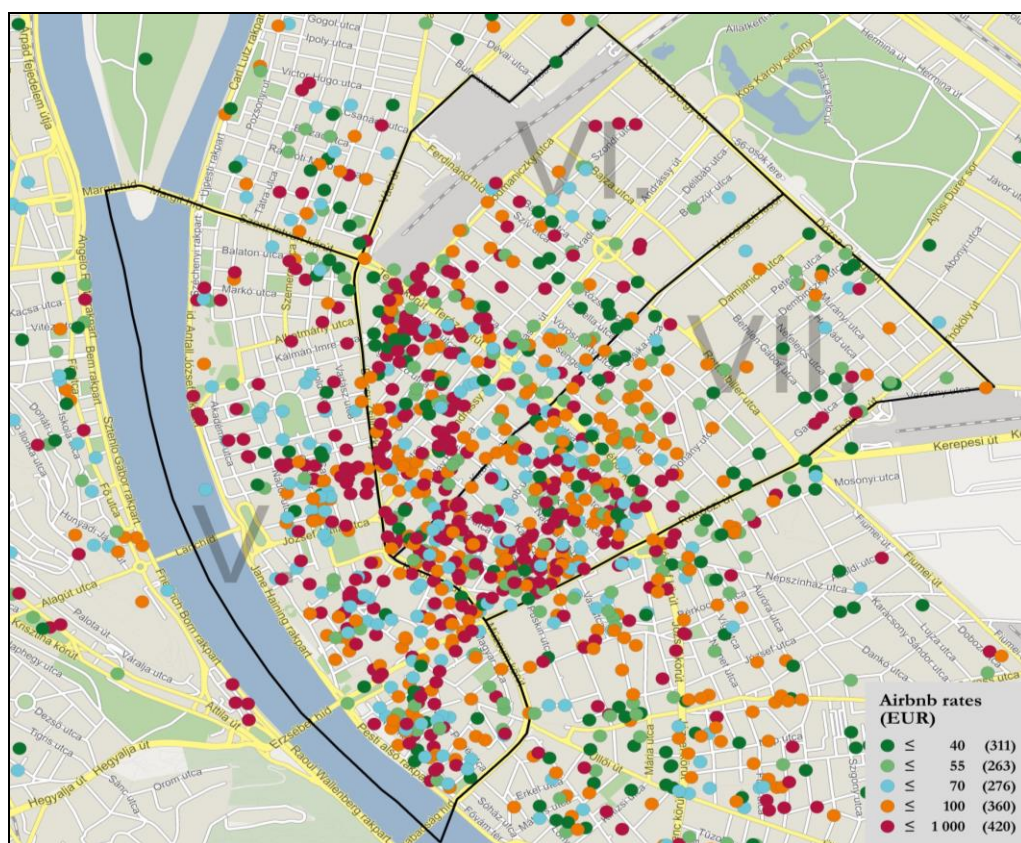


Figure 5. The spatial distribution and rates of Airbnb accommodations in district 5, 6, and 7

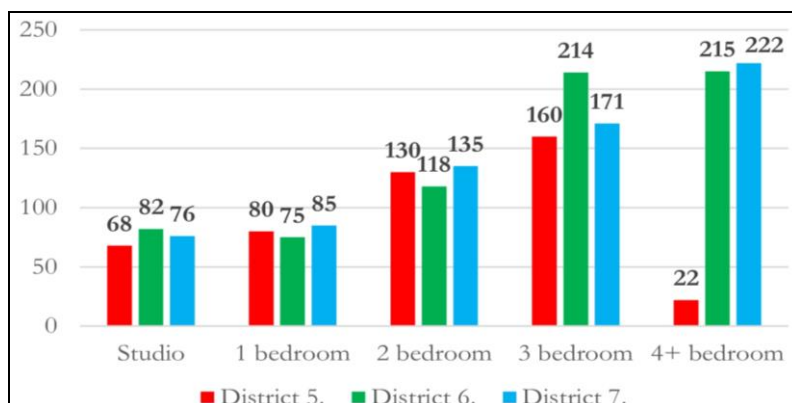


Figure 6. Average Airbnb accommodation rates/night based on room type (EUR)

Comparing these prices with average hotel room rates by comfort level (Figure 7), we can conclude that studio and 1 bedroom Airbnb locations may attract guest from 4 and 5-star hotels as they offer lower prices but offer similar comfort level. Nevertheless, lower comfort level hotels face serious competition, as studio and one bedroom Airbnb rentals are a slightly more expensive but offer higher comfort level.

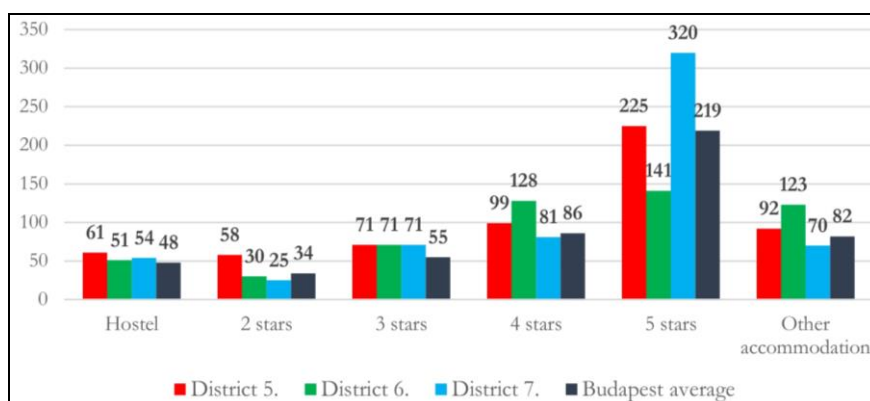


Figure 7. Average hotel room rates/night based on comfort level (EUR) (01.06.2016)

CONCLUSION

In this work, we presented a case study about the hotel and Airbnb supply of Budapest and studied the spatiality of hotels and Airbnb accommodations in the Hungarian capital. We adopted data collection methods utilised in previous studies (Dudás et al., 2016 a, b, c; Law et al., 2011; Liang et al., 2017) and have built a large database containing data about Airbnb and hotel listings. It is important to highlight, that the data collection and analysis have certain difficulties and limitations due to the availability of data and the transparency of Airbnb activity. Our results highlight that the proliferation of P2P accommodation in Budapest is apparent. Furthermore, Airbnb listings tend to be concentrated in city centre and in the vicinity of popular tourist locations creating fierce competition with hotels – mainly in the inner districts of Budapest (5., 6., 7., districts), which probably derives from the history and urban structure of the city. This revealed spatial concentration shows great similarity with the results of other European studies as for example, highlighted in the case of London (Quattrone et al., 2016) and Barcelona (Gutiérrez et al., 2016), and shows different spatial pattern than that of the North American cities. This spatial proximity strengthens the competition between business and P2P accommodations. However, the spread of short-term rentals is not only challenging for hotels but for the local government and for the Hungarian state, since P2P accommodation providers pay significantly less tax than traditional hotels. At the same time, Airbnb still contributes significantly to the local economy through the increased tourist arrivals and tourist spending despite the tax avoidance of hosts. Last, but not least, the proliferation of Airbnb seems to be interconnected with gentrification processes; gentrification enhances the reputation of particular neighbourhoods thus makes them more attractive for tourists – enhancing the demand side. At the same time, Airbnb can foster gentrification, since it offers better investment opportunities and boosts real estate market.

In this study, we present a snapshot of the P2P accommodation sector of Budapest reflecting the situation of 01 June 2016. Although, we have to note that due to rapid changes in the sharing economy sector and in legislation this picture can change quickly – for example, the government regulations regarding Uber in 2016 – which have led to the

pulling out of the company from the Hungarian market. Accordingly, this study provides a meaningful contribution to the P2P accommodation literature, although it has certain limitations. First, the analysis is limited to one destination, Budapest. Therefore, the generalization of results might be challenging, so further studies should expand the number of cities included in this kind of research. The second limitation is that we utilized only cross-sectional data for one day, therefore, a time-series analysis is needed to conduct a deeper analysis and to draw generalized conclusions. In addition, the study could be expanded in qualitative direction as well, with interviews with hosts, guests, and local residents to reveal the effects of Airbnb on destinations. Thus, the effects on local communities and the rental market can be explored – which has a special significance for decisionmakers to develop appropriate urban policies.

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IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE DRAWSKO LANDSCAPE PARK (POLAND)

Łukasz MARSZAŁEK*

Pomeranian University in Słupsk, Institute of Geography and Regional Studies,
Poland, e-mail: marszalek1984@gmail.com

Abstract: Landscape parks are one of the large-scale forms of nature protection in Poland. They are created mainly due to the need to protect valuable, and often unique elements of the natural environment, but also equally valuable landscape, historical, cultural, and anthropogenic features of a given area. Drawsko Landscape Park is one of 122 landscape parks in Poland. This paper presents the main natural values of the park and the way to use them for tourism purposes.

Key words: natural values, tourism, Drawsko Landscape Park

* * * * *

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The main objective of the research was to present the most important natural values of Drawsko Landscape Park and the possibility of using these conditions in a tourism. The first stage of the work included in-depth familiarization with the area of Drawsko Landscape Park, mainly based on the principles of self-exploration area. Then available literature, containing possibly many examples in which similar issues as those contained in the study were raised, was collected. The last stage of the study concerned the analysis of collected publications and cartographic materials, which in conjunction with the information collected in the field, has allowed to make a thorough assessment of natural values and to draw appropriate conclusions. Currently in the scientific literature there are publications describing the problems of tourism development in landscape parks (Puciato, 2009; Marek, 2011; Szydłowska et al., 2010; Zawilińska, 2010) and the use of natural assets for tourism development (Akama, 1996; Cavuta, Di Matteo, 2016; Felencka-Jabłońska, 2012; Ilieș et al., 2014; Tucki, 2003 Warszzyńska, 1974;). This article is one of the first attempts to describe the importance of environmental conditions for the development of tourism in the Drawsko Landscape Park. This elaboration about use of natural values in tourism can be used by the management of other landscape parks, local governments and institutions associated with the development of tourism.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH AREA

Drawsko Landscape Park is one of 122 parks in Poland (*Ochrona środowiska*, 2015). It was created on April 24, 1979. It has an area of 41 430 ha. The buffer zone of the

* Corresponding author

park occupies 22 212 hectares and acts as an area that protects park against harmful external factors. The park was established to protect the most attractive part of Drawsko Lake District characterized by unique natural, cultural, historical and landscape values. Agricultural lands, forests and other properties located within the park were left for further economic use (Szwichtenberg, 1999). The Park is situated in north-western Poland (Figure 1), in the administrative borders of the West Pomeranian Province, in its eastern part (Figure 2). In the case of division into districts, the park covers an area belonging to three administrative units: Świdwin county, Drawsko county, and Szczecinek district. It is also a land belonging to six municipalities: Połczyn Zdrój, Ostrowice, Drawsko, Złocieniec, Czaplinek, and Borne Sulinowo. These municipalities belong to the Association of Municipalities and Districts of Drawsko Lake District.

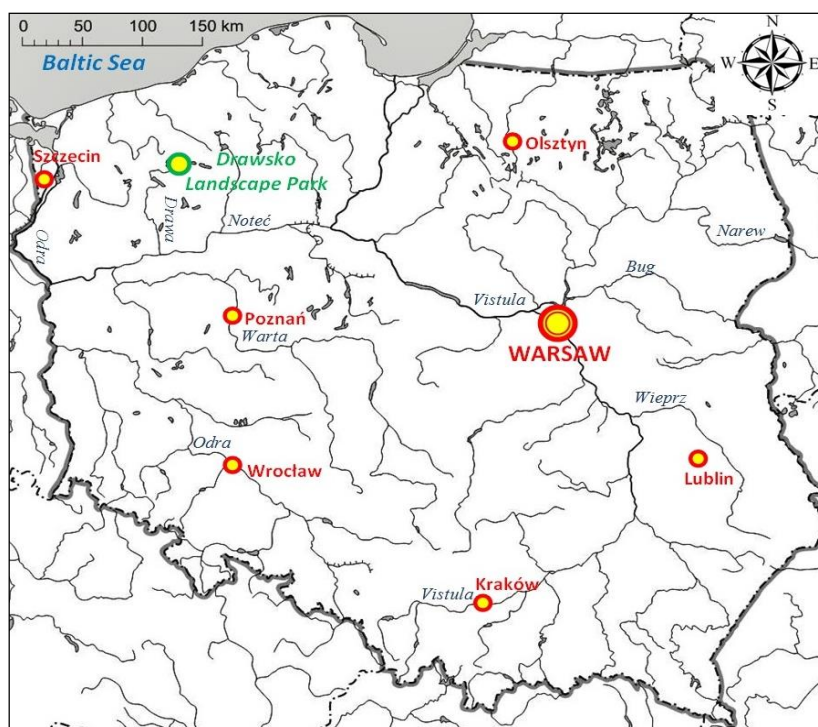


Figure 1. Location of Drawsko Landscape Park in Poland
(Source: Poland contour map 1:5 000 000)

Taking into account the regionalization by Kondracki (2002), the area of Drawsko Landscape Park and its buffer zone as a whole are located in the Drawsko Lake District mesoregion. This mesoregion is part of the West Pomeranian Lake District macroregion. In turn, the area of West Pomeranian Lake District macroregion belongs to the subprovince of South-Baltic Lake District. The surface relief and landscape wealth, Drawsko Landscape Park owes the sculpture-forming activity of Scandinavian glacier. The West Pomeranian Lake District, where the park is located, lies entirely within the last glaciation range. Regional variation of the macroregion results, among others, from varying intensity degrees of post-glacial sculptures in different marginal zones and genetic forms arrangements. It is also a result of the land fragmentation by the valleys into separated plateaus as well as the position differences and the resulting differences in a mesoclimate (Kondracki, 1978).

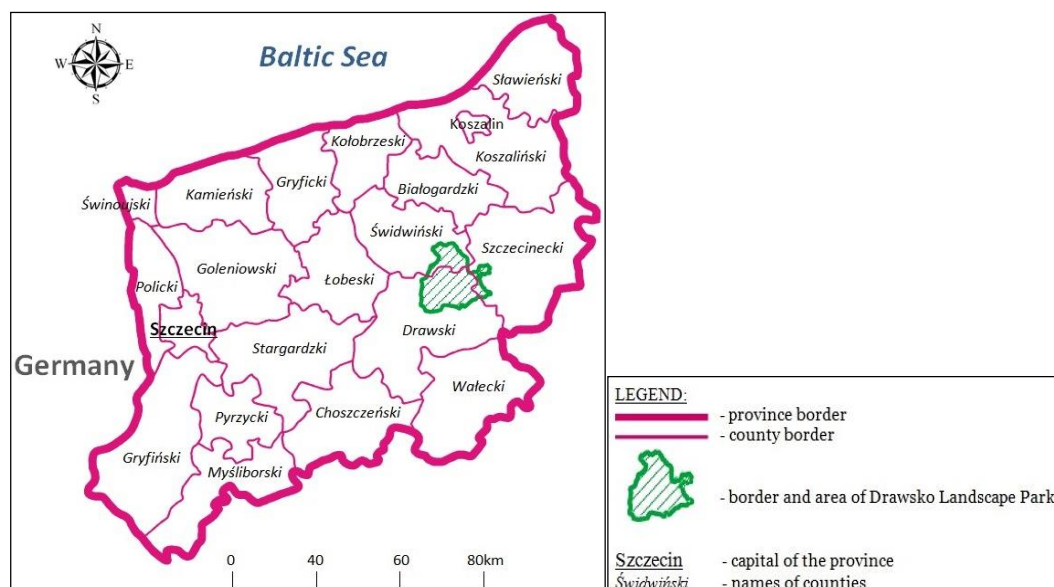


Figure 2. Location of Drawsko Landscape Park in West Pomeranian Province
(Source: West Pomeranian Province, Tourist map 1:230 000)

In the geomorphological structure of Drawsko Landscape Park, forms of glacial and river-glacial accumulation from the Baltic glacial period, shafts of accumulation moraines, and subglacial (lakeside) gutters, can be observed. These are forms of glacial and river-glacial erosion. The southern part of the park is the most geomorphologically diverse. The system of gutters crossing between moraine shafts includes the largest lake in this area - Lake Drawsko. In this part, in the gutter recesses, there are also following lakes: Komorze, Żerdno, Prosino, Dolgie Wielkie, Wilczkowo, and Krosino. There are also accumulation forms, which are sandy plains occurring in the area of Złocieniec and south of Czaplinek, as well as corrugated moraine area in the southeastern part of the Drawsko Landscape Park. Lakes Debno and Kolbackie situated in the eastern part of the area and Lake Siecino located in the western part, are the ribbon lakes, the gutters of which are surrounded by hilly marginal zone. In hypsometric terms, the area of Drawsko Landscape Park is very patchy. In the northern part of the park, there are the greatest height differences. This section includes the highest hill in the park – 222.8 m a.s.l. (Wola Góra near Czarnekowo) and the lowest area – 63.9 m a.s.l. (Ogartowo, 4 km east of Połczyn). Given the general division of Poland into 28 climatic regions, the area of Drawsko Landscape Park is located within the Middle-Pomeranian region. Its range covers the central part of the Pomeranian Lake District. The Middle-Pomeranian region is mainly characterized by higher than in many other areas, number of days with moderately warm weather and high cloudiness. On average, there are about 50 such days within the whole year. However, there are 26 days with cold and rainy weather. Days with moderately warm weather with high cloudiness and precipitation, counting to more than 36, are also specific. The main difference between other regions is less number of days with very hot, sunny, no precipitation weather, reaching 11 (Woś, 1996).

NATURAL VALUES OF DRAWSKO LANDSCAPE PARK

The vegetation in the area of Drawsko Landscape Park is very diverse. One of the main reasons for this is the form of the surface. It is also the result of a high diversity of habitats, among which the most important are those associated with water, banks of water

reservoirs, swamps, and bogs. Vegetation currently present in the park is a result of natural processes, among which the dominant role was played by the Pleistocene glaciation, as well as human activity. Peculiarity of the flora within this area consist of relict plant species. They are traces of the following transformation of the natural environment ranging from the glacial, by tundra conditions, forest phase of the Holocene, until the present, where human activity has a pronounced effect on vegetation. The largest number of glacial relics occurs in the eastern and south-eastern part of the park. These include the following species: slim-stem small reed grass (*Calamagrostis epigejos*), wild rosemary (*Ledum palustre*), and black crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*). Examples of postglacial relics in the park are: lake quillwort (*Isoëtes lacustris*), water lobelia (*Lobelia dortmanna*), least water-lily (*Nuphar pumila*), alternate water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum alternifolium*), and yellow pimpernel (*Lysimachia nemorum*). Drawsko Landscape Park as a whole is located in the zone of marine climate influence. This is the reason of occurrence of several plant species characteristic of this climate type in this area. These are the following species: little white bird's-foot (*Ornithopus perpusillus*), smooth cat's ear (*Hypochoeris glabra*), grey hair-grass (*Corynephorus canescens*), Merlin's grass (*Isoëtes lacustris*), alternate flower water milfoil (*Myriophyllum alternifolium*), cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*), common broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), Belgian gagea (*Gagea spathacea*), Dortmann's cardinal flower (*Lobelia dortmanna*), marsh pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*). Areas where these plants are usually met are wetlands, peats, sandy shores, standing water, as well as wet meadows. In general, these are areas inaccessible to man, which undoubtedly affects the relic character of vegetation (Izydorek, 1993). In the area of the park, there are also species of boreal vegetation. They are represented by: wood small-reed (*Calamagrostis epigejos*), grey alder (*Alnus incana*), swamp cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccus*), chickweed-wintergreen (*Trientalis europaea*), crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*), Marsh Labrador tea (*Ledum palustre*), bog blueberry (*Vaccinium uliginosum*), dwarf waterlily (*Nymphaea candida*). Characteristic positions of these plants are peaty and water-associated habitats. The peculiarity of the Drawsko Landscape Park are mountain plants species, which include: yellow pimpernel (*Lysimachia nemorum*), European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), heath speedwell (*Veronica officinalis*), grey alder (*Alnus incana*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*). They occur mainly on the slopes, bottoms of ravines, undulating slopes falling towards the edge of water reservoirs overgrown by beech and deciduous forests with an admixture of beech, and with microclimate similar to the mountain one.

The park flora also includes species of plants that are rare on Polish territory. These are: Merlin's grass (*Isoëtes lacustris*), Dortmann's cardinal flower (*Lobelia dortmanna*), shore-weed (*Littorella uniflora*), and dwarf waterlily (*Nymphaea candida*). In addition to the plant formation of a natural character, also plant groups closely linked to human activity can be found here. They have developed mainly on fresh and wet meadows as well as pastures, roadsides. and in the vicinity of human habitats (Izydorek, 1993).

Currently, in the area of Drawsko Landscape Park, there are about 750 species of vascular plants. Of these, 42 species are legally protected, including 28 species are fully protected, while 14 species are covered by partial protection (Szwichtenberg, 1999).

Fauna of Drawsko Landscape Park is very diverse and species-rich. It has been divided into four main groups: herpetofauna (amphibians and reptiles), ichthyofauna (fish), avifauna (birds), and teriofauna (mammals). The variety of habitats in the area affects the fact that animals have particularly good living conditions here. Fish composing the ichthyofauna in the park are undoubtedly considered as the natural and economic wealth of this area. Within the limits of Drawsko Landscape Park, there are 36 fish species and 1 species of *Cyclostomata*. Of these, species such as spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*), brook lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), Eurasian minnow (*Phoxinus phoxinus*), and

European weather fish (*Misgurnus fossilis*) are under legal protection. Clean river water and 47 lakes located in the area create a friendly living environment for ichthyofauna. The best purity of waters distinguishes lakes defined as sielawa-fishing ones. They are inhabited by the following fish species: vendace (*Coregonus albula*), bleak (*Alburnus alburnus*), European smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*), European perch (*Perca fluviatilis*), Eurasian ruffe (*Gymnocephalus cernua*), European white fish (*Coregonus lavaretus*), common bream (*Abramis brama*), roach (*Rutilus rutilus*), European carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), and northern pike (*Esox lucius*). Large lakes of this type are: Drawsko, Siecino, Wilczkowo, Żerdno, and Komorze. Considering rivers flowing through Drawsko Landscape Park, Drawa river is the most abundant in ichthyofauna (Górski, 1993).

Herpetofauna of the park is represented by 12 species of amphibians and 5 species of reptiles. Amphibians belong to 6 families. A representative of the tailed amphibians order (*Caudata*) is *Salamandridae* family, while frog order (*Anura*), *Alytidae*, *Pelobatidae*, *Bufonidae*, *Hylidae*, and *Ranidae* families (the most numerous).

When describing the Drawsko Landscape Park, the most valuable fragments for herpetofauna life is an area located in the north of the park in the triangle Ostrowice – Chłopowo – Polczyn Zdrój, and vicinity of lakes: Dlusko, Wilczkowo, Pasiecznik Mały, Pasiecznik Wielki, Okole. A large variety of habitats and water reservoirs is a characteristic feature of these regions. Avifauna occurring within the park represents the largest group of vertebrates in the area - 148 species of breeding birds. Such a large species diversity makes a high ornithological attraction of the park. Therefore, Drawsko Landscape Park is a refuge for birds of a national importance. Among the endangered species, following ones can be found here: 4 pairs of white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), 3 pairs of lesser spotted eagle (*Clanga pomarina*), 2 pairs of red kite (*Milvus milvus*), 6 pairs of black stork (*Ciconia nigra*), and over 100 pairs of white stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) (Górski, 1993). Teriofauna within Drawsko Landscape Park is represented by more than 40 species of mammals. The largest group consists of rodents (*Rodentia*). Within the park limits there are 8 species of bats (*Chiroptera*). Among the insectivorous mammals in the area of the park, there are 5 species. Among the carnivores (*Carnivora*) living in the area, 10 species can be distinguished. These are: raccoon dog (*Nyctereutes*), true foxes (*Vulpes*), European badger (*Meles meles*), European polecat (*Mustela putorius*), least weasel (*Mustela nivalis*), European pine marten (*Martes martes*), beech marten (*Martes foina*), stoat (*Mustela erminea*), European otter (*Lutra lutra*), and gray wolf (*Canis lupus*). The latter two ones – European otter and periodically occurring wolf – are listed in Polish Red Book of Animals. This area is also a habitat for species of ungulate mammals (*Ungulata*), including: wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), roe deer (*Capreolus*), and Deer (*Cervus*). The park is also periodically place of stay for the largest representative of deer - elk (*Alces alces*) (Górski, 1993).

Forests in Drawsko Landscape Park cover 10.3 thousand ha, which represents about 25% of the area. In the buffer zone, it is the acreage of about 10.1 thousand ha. The forest communities include: Central European alder forest, currant-alder forest, peat-alder forest, lowland ash-alder riparian forest, sub-Atlantic hardwood deciduous forest, fertile lowland beech forest, acidic lowland beech forest, sub-Atlantic acidic beech-oak forest, mixed forest, boggy birch forest, and also boggy forest (Szwichtenberg, 1997). One of the natural conditions for tourism development in the area of Drawsko Landscape Park are undoubtedly monuments and nature reserves. At present, 247 natural monuments are created in Drawsko Landscape Park. For the most part, these are distinguished by age and conformation: oaks, lindens, beeches, hornbeams, and maples. A principal form of environmental protection in the area of Drawsko Landscape Park are nature reserves. Nature reserve, besides national park, is the highest form of nature conservation. It differs from the national park in that it has different organizational nature, and has no

specific lower limit size. Currently, 7 such objects are created here. Each reserve is characterized by homogeneity of the ecosystem. Among them, there are reserves: landscape, peat and forest, peat, flora, water and flora, soil, and bird sanctuary. The largest is the nature reserve "Valley of the Five Lakes" of the area of 228.78 hectares, while the smallest is the soil reserve "Brown Soil" occupying an area of 1.10 ha (Szwichtenberg, 1999). The first order watershed runs through the Drawsko Landscape Park. It separates the catchment of Parsęta river that drains water from the region directly to the sea, from the Odra river catchment. North and north-western part of the park is located within the catchment of Parsęta river. It covers approximately 15% of its area. Mainly, this area is drained by Dębnica river, which is a tributary of Parsęta river. Only to a little extent, water from this area is also discharged by another tributary of Parsęta river, i.e. Gęsia Rzeka river. The largest area representing about 85% of the park is the river Drava catchment, from which the water through the Noteć, Warta, and Oder rivers flows into the Baltic Sea. The smallest catchment in Drawsko Landscape Park is represented by Gwda river, which is a tributary of Noteć river. Within this catchment, there is located the south-western part of the park, which is drained by Pilawa river (Florek, 1993).

The largest river in the park is Drava. It reaches a length of 199 km, while its catchment area is 3 198 km². Drava river in its course passes through most major reservoirs in the area of the park. These include lakes: Prosino, Żerdno, Drawsko, Rzepowskie, and also Krosino. The main tributaries of Drawa river in this area are: Miedznik, Kokna with Rakon, Wąsawa, and Mąkowarka (Szwichtenberg, 1998).

Drawsko Landscape Park is a protected area characterized by a unique richness of surface water. In this area, there are 77 lakes, 47 of which are situated within the boundaries of the park, while the remaining 30 are located within the buffer zone. The area occupied by lakes in the park is 4 043.8 ha. Therefore, the jeziorność in this region is equal to 10.5%, meanwhile in the buffer zone, the total area of lakes is 795 ha, which gives the jeziorność of 3.5%. The lakes are also an essential element of the Drawsko Landscape Park landscape. A special role is played here by ribbon lakes distinguished above all by large areas, considerable depths, and varied coastline. Examples of these lakes are: Drawsko, Siecino, Komorze, Żerdno, and Krosino. The lobelia lakes located in the park and its buffer zone are undoubtedly valuable in the landscape and nature terms. These include, among others, lakes: Czarnówek (nature reserve protection), Kapka, Leśniówek, and Kaleńskie. The lake Drawsko is the largest and also the deepest lake not only in Drawsko Landscape Park, but also the entire Drawskoe Lake District. It occupies an area of 1 781.5 hectares. In terms of depth (79.7 m), it is the second lake in the whole country. In addition, the Drawsko lake is characterized by well-developed coastline, which reaches a length of 76 km. It is very diverse. Hence, some sections of the coastline are cliffs, the height of which reaches up to 40 m. Due to its origins, specific elements are numerous, deeply indented bays and several peninsulas. Additionally, there are also 14 islands, including the largest island of the lake - Bielawa (Szwichtenberg, 1998).

Drawsko Landscape Park is also the deposit of mineral waters. It was estimated that a layer of water containing more than 2 g of mineral salts in 1dm³ is probably at a depth of 300-400 m, mainly in the upper Cretaceous and Jurassic formations. However, in the Upper Triassic and Jurassic formations at depths from 700 m to 1100 m, the occurrence of water with mineralization above 35g/dm³ has been found (Florek, 1993). The largest layers of mineral waters are located in the northern part of the park near Połczyn Zdroj.

IMPORTANCE OF NATURAL VALUES FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

One of the primary roles in the economic activity in the area of Drawsko Landscape Park is tourism. The abundance of natural values occurring in Drawsko Landscape Park

offers excellent conditions for resting and practicing different forms of sport. It is evidenced by undoubtedly well-organized network of hiking trails within the park. These routes have been created in order to provide the best valuable natural and cultural assets of the region for leisure, tourism, as well as research and teaching purposes. Here we can distinguish the following types of routes: walking, cycling, horse riding, water, and nature trails.

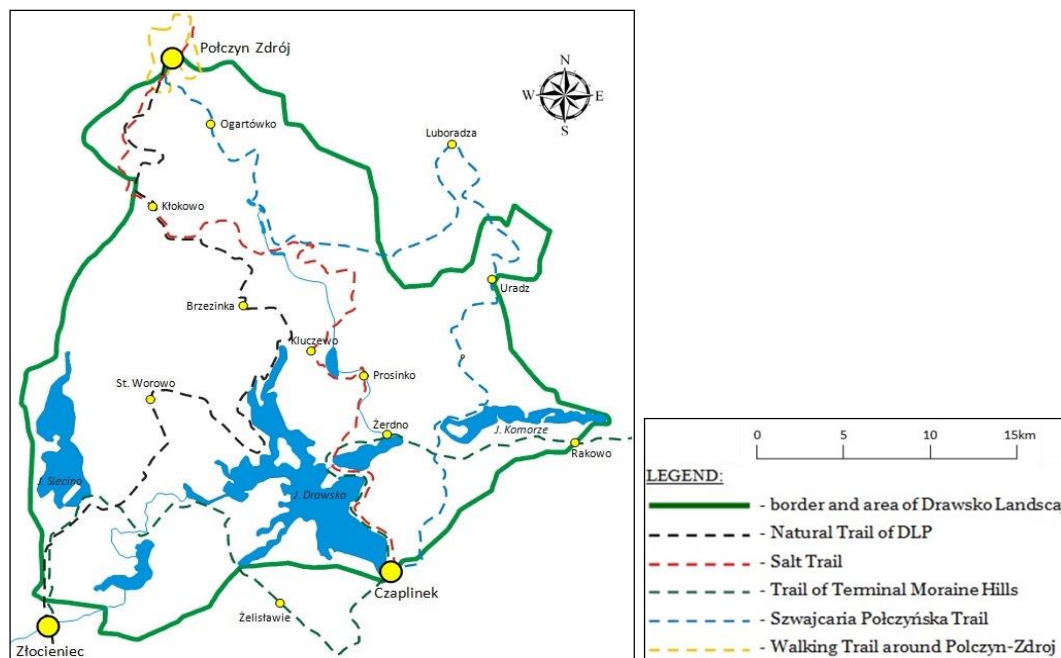


Figure 3. Hiking trails in Drawsko Landscape Park (Source: Drawa Lake District. Tourist map 1:150000)

Currently, within the limits of the park, 5 trails for hiking are designated (Figure 3). Their total length ranges around 227.7 kilometers. Most of the stages on the trails can be overcome with the help of the bike. As for professional cyclists, they have a choice of 6 routes specially adapted for cycling in this area (Figure 4). The water sports enthusiasts have the opportunity to discover the beauty of Drawsko Landscape Park from the perspective of the river course. Two kayak routes were created for this purpose. Unfortunately, only their initial fragments are situated within the limits of the area. One of the interesting elements of this infrastructure type are 4 nature trails designed by the park authorities. In addition to typical tourist function, they are also very valuable in terms of research and teaching, mainly due to the presented values closely associated with the local environment and specific landscape (Nowicki, 1995). Tourism in Drawsko Landscape Park is also related to the abundance of surface waters. Availability of many water bodies rich in various fish species promotes fishing enthusiasts. There are also plenty of water sports enthusiasts. To meet the needs of this group of tourists, water equipment rentals and marinas were organized at several points in the lakes, especially on Lake Drawsko. In Złocieniec and Czaplinek, the water sports centers also operate. Tourism and leisure on the water is also a necessity to ensure the holidaymakers the access to beaches and the ability to take a bath. For this purpose, a number of bathing areas are organized, which during the holiday season are guarded by lifeguards.

The above-mentioned mineral deposits located in the vicinity of Polczyn-Zdroj are also important for tourism in Drawsko Landscape Park. They found a particular use in spa treatment in this city. Primarily brine is currently used here. Mineralized drinking

water is also an attraction for the spa. It has no medicinal properties, while has the beneficial effect on digestion processes. It is exploited and bottled within the city (Szwichtenberg, 1998). It is also worth mentioning about riding tourism. Lovers of this kind of qualified tourism will also find something for everyone in this area. Six stables have been organized within the park. In addition, special routes for convenient horse-riding were also prepared. Elements of the tourist auxiliary base are presented in Figure 5. Varied terrain affects the rich landscapes virtues of the area. Numerous occurring hills made it possible to locate the viewpoints, from where the beauty of the surrounding nature can be admired. At present, there are 24 such points here.

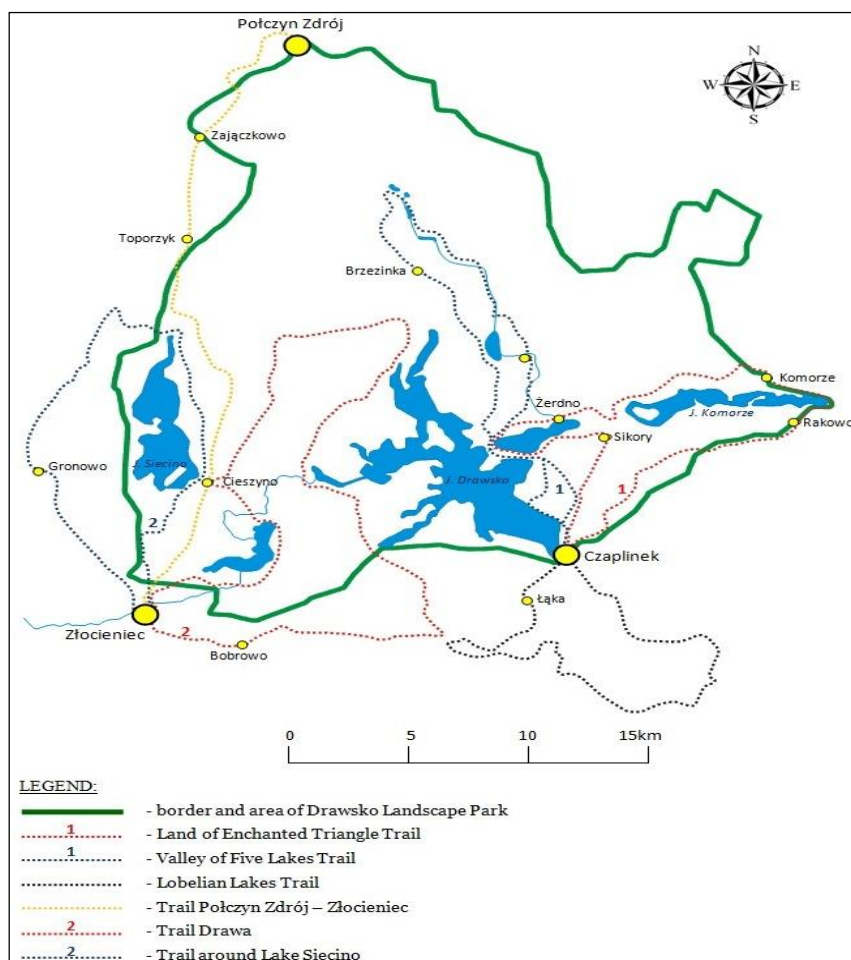


Figure 4. Bike trails in Drawsko Landscape Park (Source: Drawa Lake District. Tourist map 1:150000)

CONCLUSIONS

After careful analysis, it can be concluded that the natural values of Drawsko Landscape Park are the dominant group of conditions posing opportunities for tourism and its further development. It is influenced by the fact that the developed unit is one of the basic forms of nature conservation. However, a unique microclimate prevailed in the park, the undoubted benefit of which is clean air, is also important. Among other things, it has a beneficial effect on the regeneration of physical and mental features of a man. Understanding

the tourism development in this area as well as existing accompanying infrastructure during the course of studies, it can be deduced that elements of the natural environment discussed in this publication are fully used for the purposes of tourism.

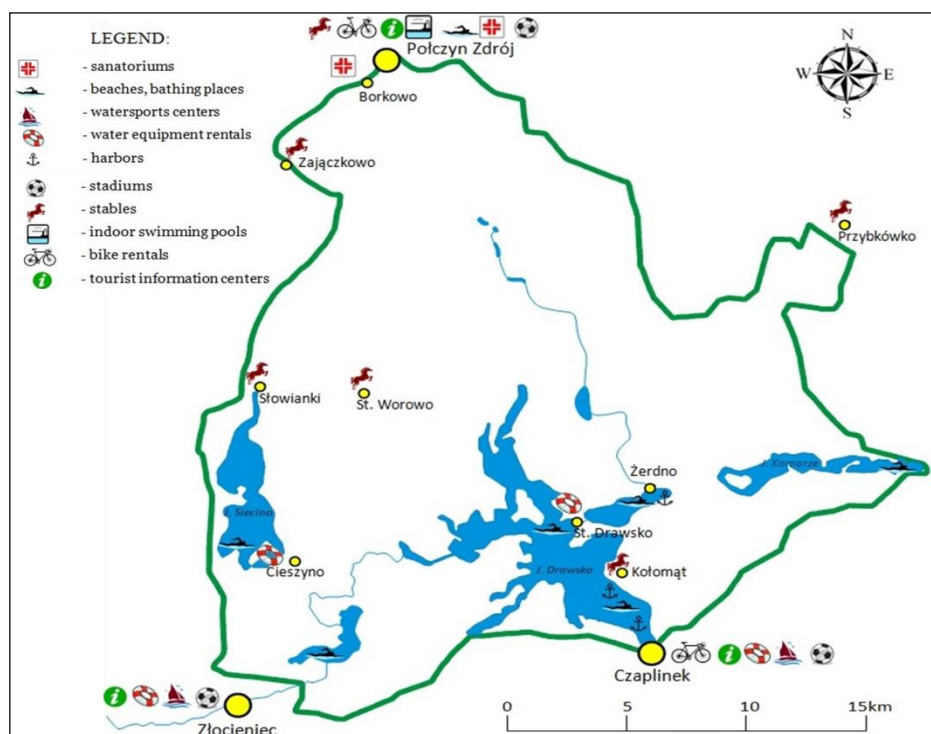


Figure 5. Selected elements of auxiliary infrastructure in Drawsko Landscape Park
(Source: Drawa Lake District. Tourist map 1:150000; Pojezierze Drawskie..., 2015)

The tourism sector becomes the main department of the local economy, guarding the proper functioning of the natural resources and cultural heritage. The increase in tourism can have negative consequences for the environment such as: landscape transformation, deterioration of air quality, water pollution, partial degradation of the geographical environment (Wendt, 2011; Ilię & Wendt, 2015). So the park authorities take care to increase the tourist attractiveness of the region within conditions of rational management with respect for the environment. In this regard, a number of measures have been undertaken, which aimed at: conservation of biodiversity of the area, preserving the conditions of ecosystems functioning, protection of specific characteristics of young glacial post-lake landscape, restoration of natural assets lost or disturbed as a result of human activity, if there are theoretical and practical possibilities of such action, protection against development, including against excessive tourist development of areas with the highest natural values, education of the local community to protect nature, landscape and cultural values of the park.

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TOURISM SILENCE IN GEOMORPHOSITES: A CASE STUDY OF ALI-SADR CAVE (HAMADAN, IRAN)

Azam SAFARABADI*

Shiraz University, Faculty of Economics, Management and Social Sciences,
Department of Tourism Management, Shiraz, Iran, e-mail: a.safarabadi@shirazu.ac.ir

Somayeh Sadat SHAHZEIDI

University of Guilan, Department of Geography, Rasht, Iran,
e-mail: shahzeidi2012@yahoo.com

Abstract Geotourism is one of the branches of tourism which is based on knowledge of geomorphosites and special geomorphic perspectives and by combining the cultural, historical and ecological heritage, it offers potentials in planning sustainable tourism. Geomorphosites of caves is a perfect example of complex systems. The multiple relationships between components and performance of these systems create unique and innovative forms which have great potential in stimulating aesthetic sense of people and attracting visitors. Ali-Sadr cave has a great potential in attracting visitors because of its diversity, uniqueness and convenient access. In this study, the potential geomorphosites of Ali-Sadr cave is under investigation applying Reynard and Pereira's model. The results show that based on Reynard's model, the additional value criterion accounts for 52% of the total mean score and has the utmost importance, which is due to the high rate of economic potential, the geohistorical importance, the variety of monuments and ecological effects. Then, the criterion of scientific value by 35% ranks the second due to the high points of Paleogeographic sub-criterion. The results of the evaluation of potential geomorphosites of cave based on Pereira model shows that the geomorphological value with an average of 6.86 has allocated the highest rank and management value with an average of 6.32 ranks next. In general, the results obtained from Pereira model show that the criterion of usage, with 39 percent of the total points of this model, allocated the highest rank of importance, which is due to the high rating of sub-criteria of accessibility and visibility. Scientific and additional value with a share of 21% of the total points rank the second.

Key words: geomorphosites, geotourism, Ali-Sadr cave, Hamedan

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INTRODUCTION

Geomorphotourism as a segment of tourism developed worldwide is emerging as a new global phenomenon in recent years. It is a special form of tourism and focuses on morphological features and the types of landscapes. Furthermore, the primary focus of geomorphotourism which is sustainable tourism is on experiencing the landform types in a way that fosters geomorphological and cultural understanding, appreciation and

* Corresponding author

preservation, and is locally advantageous (Dowling, 2008). Geomorphotourism is one form of tourism based on nature which is formed of two words of geomorphology and tourism and it includes tourist attractions based on the performance of morphogenetic systems on the ground that has an extraordinary ability in attracting visitors through the creation of attractive forms with aesthetic value (Ramesht & Shahzeidi, 2011.). In other words, geomorphotourism is one domain of earth science studies and it studies of tourism that focuses on identifying geomorphosites or especial prospects of geomorphology. By combining cultural, historical and ecological heritage, this area offers a great potential in planning of regional sustainable tourism (Fakhri et al., 2013). Geotourism which Dowling (2011) considers as 'geological tourism' includes two aspects. The geological element focuses on geology and landscape. It consists of 'form', such as landforms, rock outcrops, rock types, sediments, soils and crystals, and also 'process', such as volcanism, erosion, glaciation etc. The other element, that is tourism, includes tourists visiting, learning from, appreciating and engaging in geosites. According to Adryansiah, Ulfa, Amalina and King-King (2016), a better understanding of the Earth can be achieved through geotourism in the way that its geological attractions can be acknowledged. Geotourism preserves the place's identity with the introduction of geomorphological landforms to tourists (Bayati Khatibi et al, 2010). Accordingly, geomorphotourism can be defined as the science of studying geomorphosites or the special geomorphic landscapes which benefit scientific, ecological, cultural, aesthetic and economic value simultaneously (Pereira et al., 2007). Geomorphosites are geomorphological landforms which have gained scientific, historical, cultural, aesthetic or socioeconomic value due to human knowledge and exploitation (Shayan et al. 2011). So, geomorphosites in combination with cultural, historical and ecological heritage would have great potential in the development of sustainable tourism (Coratza et al., 2008, 107). Geomorphosite term was first proposed in 1993 by Panniza. Basically geomorphosites are landforms that gain certain values such as scientific, cultural, historical, aesthetic and social-economic over time (Panniza, 2001). In general, geomorphotourism capabilities are considered as the unique assets of each country and region which are very important to be identified, classified and planned in order to develop scientific tourism (Beladpas, 2011). Basically, tourism attractions are based on a systematic structure that in accordance with the charm rate can attract tourists (Fennell, 2009). The main objective of geomorphotourism is to train tourists and make them familiar with the geomorphic phenomena and to protect the natural environment and its prospects in relation to human interference in changing the appearance of the earth. In this regard, Shayan et al (2012), studying the additional and scientific value of touristic places of Giyan hill in Nahavand plain, report that the calculated value with an average of 0.68 represents the significant potential for tourism development of this geomorphosite. Yamani et al., (2012) studied the tourism potentials of some geomorphosite of Guilan province applying Pralong and Pereira models and suggest that among the studied geomorphosites, raised beaches got the highest score and muds got the lowest score in tourism development. Maghsoudi et al., (2011) studying the geomorphotouristic potentials of Maranjab region geomorphosites using the Reynard's model suggest that based on the two criteria of scientific value and the supplementary value, terraces lake are introduced as the best site in the area.

Sepehr, Safarabadi & Biglarfadafan (2014) in an investigative attempt prioritized areas for solid wastes disposal considering the Geomorphologic factors in Mashhad (Iran) applying ranking MCDM methods including TOPSIS and AHP based on seven geomorphologic criteria involving slope, lithology, fault distance, surface water distance, ground water depth, and land use and geomorphology type. The authors found that region 2 (the new landfill, located in Miami Road) had first rank to waste disposal and the region 1 (located in Nishabour road) which is the old landfill of Mashhad is not a suitable

place for waste disposal. Kubalíková and Kirchner (2016) proposed a method for finding out the sites which are suitable for geotourism development and assessed the selected sites of the Vizovická vrchovina Highland (Czech Republic) cv. Based on this, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified. The assessment and the following analysis of the area can serve as a basis for the future proposals for geotourist use of the sites. González-Amuchastegui et al., (2011), evaluating the geodiversity and geomorphosites in a natural protected area in Spain, introduced a series of tools that the manager can apply to integrate abiotic aspects in the evaluation and protection of areas with outstanding natural diversity and considerable natural heritage.

Artugyan (2016), in another investigation, used the Pralong method for geomorphosites assessment in the Anina karst region, in Romania and he evaluated many geomorphological sites, such as karst springs, caves, gorges and karst plateaus with a high density of karst features. The author found that in this region, it is more important that these geomorphosites are appropriately exploited in order to protect the karst landscape.

Coratza et al., (2011) conducted a study for the identification, selection and enhancement of the rich geomorphological heritage of the area and represented the first step and the necessary basic knowledge for possible enhancement of geomorphosites in Malta and the promotion of tourism activities at the Il-Majjistral Nature and History Park through the auspices of environmental agencies. Gravis et al., (2016) studied the role of cultural and indigenous values in geosite evaluations on a quaternary monogenetic volcanic landscape at Ihumātao, Auckland (New Zealand). The authors also showed that implementing management strategies to add and conserve geosite values in the region could provide positive outcomes; however, reduction of its main geosite values would be inevitable and irreversible should proposed urban development take place on a block of land immediately bordering the OSHR. Geosite evaluations demonstrate that high geoheritage values of regions like the Ihumātao Peninsula are influenced by the strong cultural link between the community (in particular the indigenous population) and the volcanic landscape. These cultural factors could be given more weight in currently used geosite evaluation methods, enabling such geoheritage values to be demonstrated in a more explicit and meaningful way and providing a basis for further community education and protection of specific sites within the geographical context of the Ihumātao Peninsula.

In another study, Pica et al., (2016) enhanced geotourism in the city centre, by describing the palaeogeography of ancient Rome through the landforms that were still visible and identified two geomorphosites. In their investigative attempt, Pica, et al. (2016) developed an evaluation model of the geotouristic value of a Site (VSG index), which consisted of the quantification of five fundamental attributes for a geosite, characterizing its scientific and geotourist interests. The VSG index produces an order of priority for geosites for their enhancement. The major outcome of their study was to supplement a proposal for developing the historical and cultural tourism of the *Aeterna Urbs* combined with its natural environment features. More recently, Badang, et al., (2016) conducted a study in Sarawak Delta, Sarawak, Malaysia and through the geoheritage concept which involves proper identification, characterisation, assessment and rank of significant geoheritage sites based on its scientific, aesthetic, cultural and recreational heritage value, propose the area as partially geoconserved for geotourism purposes. The authors also established further understanding of the relationship between the field of geology and sustainable development through geoheritage development of the proposed Sarawak Delta Geopark.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on descriptive and analytical method relying on field survey. Spatial distribution of landforms was determined through an extensive literature survey and

documents using topographic maps, digital elevation models and field survey. Then, in order to assess the geomorphosites tourism potentials of Ali-Sadr cave, Reynard and Pereira model was used. In Reynard's method, a geomorphosite is evaluated based on scientific value, additional value and the synthesis value. In scientific value, the index of rareness, representativeness, integrity and palaeogeographic value indices are considered and in the additional value, the indices of ecological, aesthetic, economic and cultural (with an emphasis on geohistorical importance) are taken into account. The additional value can make a connection between geomorphology and tourism by highlighting the considered indices. In this value, due to the development of particular ecosystem or the presence of certain plant species, the ecological sub-criteria is of particular importance. In the aesthetic sub-criterion, the number of landscapes and perspectives and in the cultural sub-criterion, the mystical and religious aspects are important. Also in this sub-criterion, historical and archeological heritage is also important. In the economic sub-criterion, the gained revenue and profit from the number of tourists is considered. In the synthesis value, the global, educational, threats and management indices are taken into account. The sub-criterion of synthesis value, the emphasis is on officials' management practices and planning for tourism development, creating tourism infrastructures, and publicity measures (Table 1). Questionnaires were designed based on Reynard's model and filled out by 30 experts (tourism, natural resources and watershed management, teachers and students). In this method, scoring was conducted by averaging individual scores and integration of experts' opinions.

Table 1. Criteria, sub-criteria and ranking based on Reynard's model (Source: Reynard et al. 2007)

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Content	Ranking			
			Weak	Average	Good	Excellent
			0-0.25	0.25-0.5	0.5-0.75	0.75-1
Scientific	Integrity	State of conservation of the site. Bad conservation may be due to natural factors (e.g. erosion) or human factors.				
	Rareness	Concerns the rarity of the site with respect to a reference space				
	Representativeness	Concerns the site's exemplarity. Used with respect to a reference space (e.g. region, commune, country).				
	Paleogeographical	Importance of the site for paleogeomorphology and paleoclimatology				
Additional	Ecological value	Ecological impact				
		Protected sites				
	Aesthetic value	View points				
		Contrasts, vertical development and space structuration				
	Cultural	Religious importance				
		Historical importance				
		Artistic and literature importance				
		Geohistorical importance				
	Economic	Economic products				
Synthesis	Global value	The importance of site at global level				
	Educational value	Importance of the site for education (school, universities).				
	Threats	Natural and human existing and potential threats.				
	Management measures	Proposed measures in order to protect and/or promote the site				

Table 2. Geomorphological value of geomorphosites (Source: Pereira et al. 2007)

Scientific value of geomorphosites (Maximum 5.5)		Additive value of geomorphosites (Maximum 4.5)	
Rareness in relation to the area	score	Cultural value	score
It is not one of the most important 5	0	Without cultural features or with cultural features damaging the site	0
It is not one of the most important 3	0.25	Cultural features with no connection to landforms	0.25
One of the most important 3	0.50	Relevant cultural features with no connection to landforms	0.50
The most important	0.75	Immaterial cultural features related to landforms	0.75
The only occurrence	1	Material cultural features related to landforms	1
Integrity/Intactness	rank	Relevant material cultural features related to landforms	1.25
Highly damaged as a result of human activities	0	Anthropic landform with high cultural relevance	1.5
Damaged as a result of natural processes	0.25	Ecological value	rank
Damaged but preserving essential geomorphological features	0.50	Without relation to biological features	0
Slightly damaged but still maintaining the essential geomorphological features	0.75	Occurrence of interesting fauna and/or flora	0.38
No visible damage	1	One of the best places to observe interesting fauna and/or flora	0.75
Representativeness of geomorphological processes and pedagogical interest	rank	Geomorphological features are important for ecosystem(s)	1.12
Low representativeness and without pedagogical interest	0	Geomorphological features are crucial for the ecosystem(s)	1.5
With some representativeness but with low pedagogical interest	0.38	Aesthetic value	rank
Good example of processes but hard to explain to non-experts	0.67	Low	0-.05
Good example of processes and/or good pedagogical resource	1	Medium	0.5-1
Other geological features with heritage value	rank	High	1-1.5
Absence of other geological features	0		
Other geological features but without relation to geomorphology	0.17		
Other geological features with relation to geomorphology	0.33		
Occurrence of other geosite(s)	0.5		
Number of interesting geomorphological features (diversity)	rank		
1	0		
2	0.33		
3	0.67		
More than 3	1		
Rareness at national level	Rank		
More than 5 occurrences	0		
Between 3 to 5 occurrences	0.17		
3 cases at national level	0.33		
Being unique at national level	0.5		
Scientific knowledge on geomorphological issues	Rank		
None	0		
Medium: presentations, national papers	0.25		
High: international papers, thesis	0.5		

In Pereira's model, the geomorphological and management values of geomorphosites to develop tourism is assessed. The geomorphological value is obtained from scientific and additional values. The scientific value is calculated based on the sub-criteria of rareness, intactness, pedagogical potentials of geomorphological processes, diversity of geomorphological features, geological features with heritage value, rareness at national level, scientific knowledge on geomorphological issues and additional value is assessed based on cultural, ecological and aesthetic values.

Table 3. The management value of geomorphosites (Source: Pereira et al. 2007)

USE VALUE (maximum 7.0)		PROTECTION VALUE (maximum 3.0)	
Accessibility	Rank	Vulnerability of use as geomorphosites	rank
Very difficult, only with special equipment	0	Very vulnerable, with possibility of total loss	0
Only by 4 wheel-drive vehicle and more than 500 meters by footpath	0.21	Geomorphological features may be damaged	0.5
By car and more than 500 meters by footpath	0.43	Other, non-geomorphological features may be damaged	1
By car and less than 500 meters by footpath	0.64	Damage can occur only in/along the access structures	1.5
By 4 wheel-drive vehicle and less than 100 meters by footpath	0.86	Not vulnerable	2
By car and less than 50 meters by footpath	1.07	Integrity/Intactness	rank
By bus on local roads and less than 50 meters by footpath	1.29	Highly damaged as a result of human activities	0
By bus on national roads and less than 50 meters by footpath	1.5	Damaged as a result of natural processes	0.25
Visibility	Rank	Damaged but preserving essential geomorphological features	0.5
Very difficult or not visible at all	0	Slightly damaged but still maintaining the essential geomorphological features	0.75
Can only be viewed using special equipment (e.g. artificial light, ropes)	0.3	No visible damage	1.00
Limited by trees or lower vegetation	0.6		
Good but need to move around for a complete observation	0.90		
Good for all relevant geomorphological features	1.2		
Excellent for all relevant geomorphological features	1.5		
Present use of other natural and cultural interests	Rank		
Without other interests, promotion and use	0		
With other interests but without promotion and use	0.33		
With other interests and their promotion, but without other use	0.67		
With other interests, with promotion and use	1		
Equipment and support services	Rank		
Hostelry and support services are more than 25 km away	0		
Hostelry and support services are between 10 and 25 km away	0.25		
Hostelry and support services are between 5 and 10 km away	0.5		
Hostelry or support services are less than 5 km away	0.75		
Hostelry and support services are less than 5 km away	1		
Legal protection and use limitations	Rank		
With total protection and prohibitive use	0		
With protection, with use restriction	0.33		
Without protection and without use restriction	0.67		
With protection but without use restriction or with very low use restriction	1		
Present use of the geomorphological interest	Rank		
Without promotion and not being used	0		
Without promotion but being used	0.33		
Promoted/used as landscape site	0.67		
Promoted/used as geomorphosite or geosite	1		

The total obtained rank would be 10 at this stage. On the other hand, the management value is obtained from the sum of use and protection value of geomorphosites. The use value consists of accessibility, visibility, use of other natural and cultural interests, equipment and support services, legal protection and use limitations, use of the geomorphological interest and protection criteria consists of vulnerability of use as geomorphosites and intactness. In general, the sum of these two values shows the potential of a geomorphosites in developing tourism. The more the obtained amount is near to 20, the higher the potential of the site in tourism planning. Tables 2 and 3 represent the scoring method to various criteria and sub-criteria in Pereira's model.

THE LOCATION OF THE STUDIED AREA

Ali-Sadr cave is one of the most unique scenic and natural caves in the world and it is located 75 kilometers to the northwest of Hamedan in a village by the same name which is one of the districts of Kabudarahang Township. The region has a semi-arid climate and the average annual rainfall is 300 ml. Geologists believe that the rocks of this mountain pertain to the second geological period i.e. Jurassic (190-130 million years ago). Ali-Sadr field itself is a fold of a large anticline that its main axis is in north-south direction. The angle of the layers in the cave and its surrounding area is about 40 to 45 degrees. The length of the cave is about two kilometers. The maximum height of the field is 2180 meters and the height in the entrance of the cave is 1980 meters.

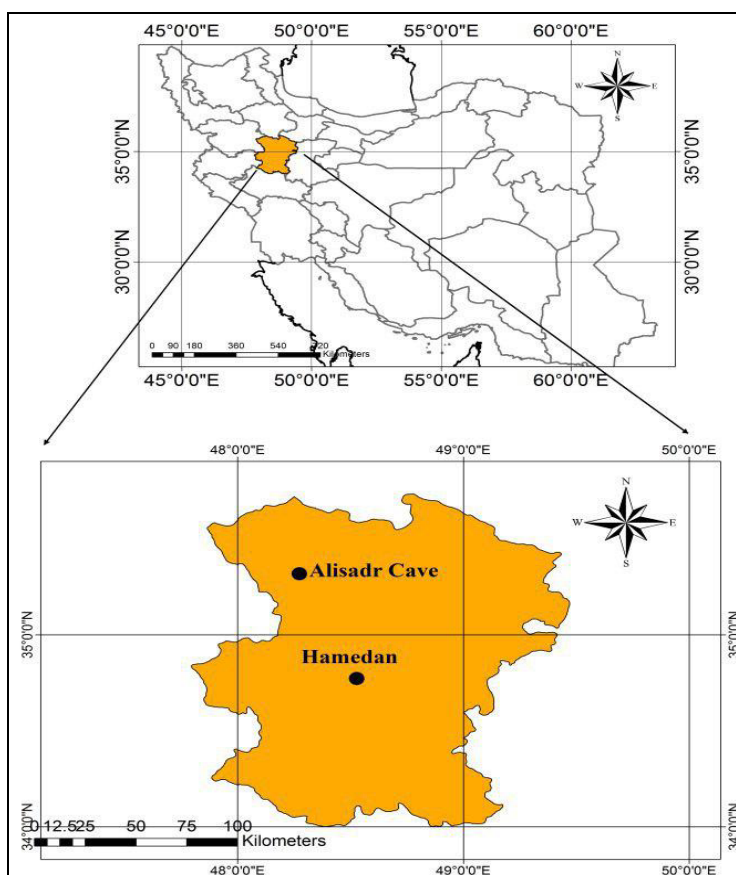


Figure 1. The location of the studied area

After entering the cave, the carbonate sediments hanging from the ceiling attract a lot of attention. The water in the cave is formed by several winding halls which are connected through the grid corridors. The cave has a river flowing through it and most travel through the cave system is done by boat. The cave water is cool of about 12 degrees and it is light blue and it is so clear that in some parts of the lake with a depth of 5 meters, the floor water is clearly visible. In Ali-Sadr cave resort, facilities include a hotel, a wooden villa, suite accommodations, pavilion, restaurant, food and crafts shopping mall, toilets, car parking, children's play equipment, landscaping and the possibility of climbing.

DATA ANALYSIS

Geomorphosites characteristics of Ali-Sadr cave

Ali-Sadr cave in Hamadan Province is one of the most important water caves of Iran which is made by the impact and progress of karst phenomena. Geologically, the cave is developed in crystallized limestones and Jurassic schists in the region. In terms of karstology, this cave is among karst caves of anastomotic type. No advanced surface karst phenomena or an obvious case can be seen in the region, but numerous sub-surface phenomena can be seen in the cave. The origins of the cave is not accurately identified but probably the phenomenon of differential solubility between the hard schists and layers of soluble limestone has a special role. The creation and development of karst phenomena and Ali-Sadr cave can be divided into six distinct periods. In terms of hydrology, it turned out that the values of PH, dissolved oxygen and water temperature did not show much change up to 10 meters, while the EC value exponentially increases with the increasing depth (Rahnamaee & Afrasiabian, 1994).



Figure 2. Images of Ali-Sadr cave geomorphosites

ASSESSING THE ALI-SADR GEOMORPHOSITES APPLYING THE REYNARDS MODEL

Table 4 presents the average score given by experts for value and sub-criteria based on Reynard's model. Results show that the scientific value has allocated 2.6 ranked. According to the table, paleogeographical sub-criterion got the highest rank scoring 1 and Integrity with 0.21 got the lowest among all sub-criteria. Also, additional value gained 3.82. In this value, economic with the grade of 1 and religious importance with the grade of 0.08, gained the highest and the lowest rank, respectively. In addition, synthesis value scored 0.99. In this value, threats gained 0.2 and education gained 0.58, ranking the lowest and the highest, respectively. Figures 3 and 4 show the score of each value and its sub-criteria.

Table 4. The average score of values based on Reynard's model considering results obtained from the survey (Source: Current study's calculations)

Value	Sub-criteria	Content	Score
Scientific	Integrity	State of conservation of the site	0.21
	Rareness	The rarity of the site with respect to a reference space	0.72
	Representativeness	The site's exemplarity with respect to a reference space (e.g. region, commune, country)	0.67
	Paleogeographical	Importance of the site for paleogeomorphology and paleoclimatology	1
Additional	Ecological value	Ecological effects	0.64
		Protected site	0.18
	Aesthetic	View points	0.58
		Contrasts, vertical development and space structuration	0.42
	Cultural	Religious importance	0.08
		Historical importance	0.11
		Artistic and literature importance	0.13
		Geohistorical importance	0.68
	Economic	Economic products	1
Synthesis	Global	The importance of site at global level	0.21
	Educational	Importance of the site for education (school, universities).	0.58
	Threats	Natural and human existing and potential threats.	0.2
	Management method	Proposed measure in order to protect and/or promote the site	0.01

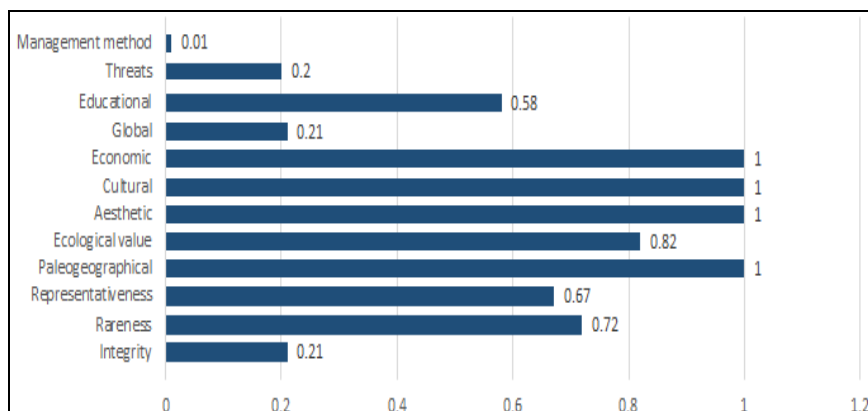


Figure 3. The plot of rating the sub-criteria based on Reynard's approach by respondents

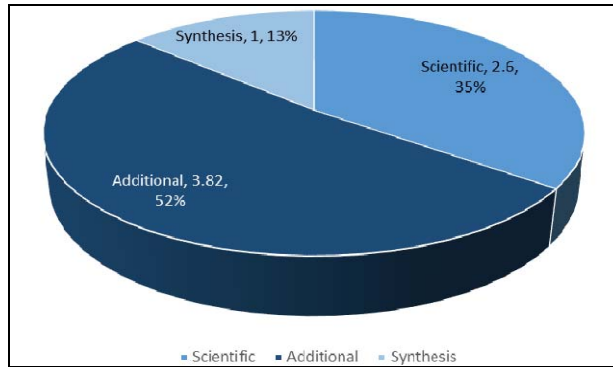


Figure 4. Diagram of the importance of the values according to the scores earned

ASSESSING ALI-SADR CAVE GEOMORPHOSITES APPLYING PEREIRAS MODEL

Table 5 shows the scores obtained by each value in Pereira's model. Results show that from 6.86 points gained by geomorphological value, 4.04 goes for scientific value and 2.82 goes for additional value of geomorphosites. According to the results, rareness at national level in the scientific value of geomorphosites with the score of 0.07 is the lowest and aesthetic value in additional value of geomorphosites criterion with the score of 1.4 got the highest rank. In addition, results point that management value scored 6.32, 5.19 of which goes to use value of geomorphosites and 1.13 goes to protection value of geomorphosites. In use value, the highest score is for accessibility which is 1.37 and the lowest one is for present use of the geomorphological interest, with the score of 0.35. In addition, in protection value of geomorphosites, the lowest point is for vulnerability of use as geomorphosites with the score of 0.68 and the lowest one goes for intactness scoring 0.45. Figures 5 and 6 represent the average points scored by each of the criteria and sub-criteria and also the importance of values and criteria.

Table 5. Scoring values based on Pereira's model considering the results obtained from survey, (Source: Current study's calculations)

Value	Criteria	Sub-criteria	S
Geomorphological value	Scientific value of geomorphosites	Rareness in relation to the area	0.73
		Integrity/Intactness	0.46
		Representativeness of geomorphological processes and pedagogical interest	1
		Number of interesting geomorphological features (diversity)	1
		Other geological features with heritage value	0.31
		Rareness at national level	0.07
		Scientific knowledge on geomorphological issues	0.47
	Additive value of geomorphosites	Cultural	0.36
		Ecological	1.06
		Aesthetic value	1.4
Management value	Use value of geomorphosites	Accessibility	1.37
		Visibility	1.5
		Present use of other natural and cultural interests	0.43
		Equipment and support services	0.68
		Legal protection and use limitations	0.86
		Present use of the geomorphological interest	0.35
	Protection value of geomorphosites	Vulnerability of use as geomorphosite	0.68
		Intactness	0.45

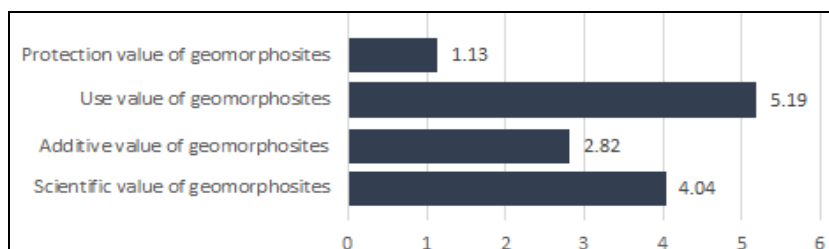


Figure 5- The average score obtained by each sub-criteria based on Pereira's model

CONCLUSION

Caves are defined as geomorphological processes and forms for understanding the evolution of the earth and one of the most influential geosites and worthy of geotourism industry boom of each country. Ali-Sadr cave geomorphosite is one of the rare tourist attractions in Iran and the world and it is a combination of scientific, rareness and aesthetics values which is of great importance in terms of Paleogeography.

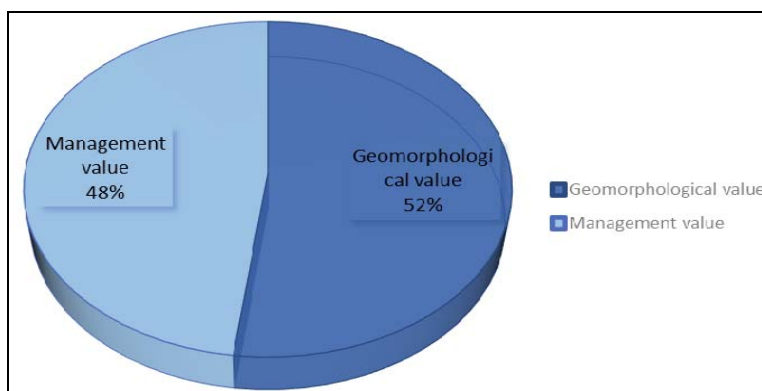


Figure 6- The importance percentage of each criterion and value based on Pereira's model

This study intended to find the geomorphotouristic potentials of Ali-Sadr cave applying Reynard and Pereira model. Results of the study point that based on Reynard's model, additional value has been accounted for 52% of the total mean score and it is of utmost importance, which is due to the high rate of economic potential, the geohistorical importance, the variety of monuments and ecological effects. Then the criteria of scientific value by 35% ranks second due to the high points of Paleogeographic and Representativeness sub-criteria. The low point obtained by integrity, ranked the scientific value lower than the additional value. Results obtained show that synthesis value with the percentage of 13%, due to the weak rank of management method and natural and human threats of the geomorphosites sub-criteria got the lowest importance in assessing the geomorphotouristic potentials of Ali-Sadr cave. Based on this finding, the management sub-criterion with the score of 0.01 has the lowest importance. This reflects the weakness of the administration in protection and promotion of the geomorphosites.

The results of this model point that the additional value with the average of 3.82 got the highest score, and the scientific value with the average of 2.6 and synthesis value with the average of 0.99 come second and third, respectively. On the other hand, the results of the evaluation of geomorphosites potentials of cave based on Pereira model

shows that the geomorphological value with an average of 6.86 has allocated the highest rank and management value with an average of 6.32 ranks next. Based on this model, the sub-criterion of visibility with the score of 1.5 and aesthetic value with the score of 1.4 got the highest scores. In general, the results obtained from Pereira model show that the criteria of usage with 39 percent of the total points of this model allocated the highest rank of importance which is due to the high rating of the sub-criteria of accessibility (1.37) and visibility (1.5). Scientific and additional value with a share of 21% of the total points rank the second. In addition, the protection value with the score of 9 shows the weakness in managing this geomorphosites.

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GASTRONOMIC PERCEPTION AND MOTIVATION OF A TOURISTIC DESTINATION: THE CITY OF QUITO, ECUADOR

Tomás LÓPEZ-GUZMÁN*

University of Córdoba, Department of Applied Economics. Agrifood Campus of International Excellence, ceiA3, Adarve St. 30, 14071-Córdoba, e-mail: tomas.lopez@uco.es

Mónica TORRES NARANJO

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral, Campus « Gustavo Galindo, Guayaquil, Ecuador, e-mail: mmtorres@espol.edu.ec

Jesús Claudio PÉREZ-GÁLVEZ

University of Córdoba, Department of Applied Economics. Agrifood Campus of International Excellence, ceiA3, Puerta Nueva St., 7. 14071-Córdoba, e-mail: dtipegaj@uco.es

Wilmer CARVACHE FRANCO

Department of Tourism, Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral, Campus « Gustavo Galindo, Guayaquil, Ecuador, e-mail: wcarvach@espol.edu.ec

Abstract: The segmentation of international tourists who visit the city of Quito according to their perceptions with regard to the gastronomy. To achieve this objective, the methodology used in this investigation has been the application of a multivariate technique of item grouping and the realization of an univariate ANOVA post hoc analysis. The main conclusions that emanate from this research focus on the segmentation of international tourists into three different groups and in how the attraction to the gastronomy, considered by the travellers implies a greater satisfaction of the destination. The main practical implications are centred on a better understanding of key factors about how gastronomy can reinforce a touristic destination and achieve a greater satisfaction considered by the traveller.

Key words: Gastronomy, WHS, Segmentation, Latin America, International tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Traditionally tourism has prioritised one of the senses, sight, over the rest of them. In fact, sometimes, the tourist turns into a mere observer of reality who contemplates a landscape, a building or a work of exposed art in a museum. In reply to this strong bias towards sight, the tourists demand trips which also will involve, more profoundly, other senses. Similarly, and in line with responding to a greater enjoyment of other senses, new products appear such as wine tourism (Ungureanu, 2016), gastronomic tourism, beer

* Corresponding author

tourism or olive oil tourism. In this way, food and beverage tourism allows you to experience a complete sensory experience, especially in terms of the flavour, which suggests, according to Cohen and Avieli (2004), that the tourist receives a greater interaction with the destination through the gastronomy. Different researches have highlighted that each country, region, province or city could publicise its own cuisine to attract tourists (Kivela & Crotts, 2005). In fact Bjork and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016) present two concepts that relate to the promotion of a geographical area through gastronomy and tourism. These authors present the concept of local food that makes reference to culinary dishes of a geographical area and that are served in a particular destination as well as the concept of a local food market that connects gastronomic culture and the culinary specialities of a particular geographical area and the consumption of them in certain establishments. The cuisine involves a transfer of knowledge and information about culture, the traditions and the identity of the local community (Ignatov & Smith, 2006), since the gastronomy is something rooted in one's own culture and tradition of these geographical areas (Mitchell & Hall, 2006). However, traditional cuisine, like the rest of economic sectors, also has a constant need for innovation both with the products and the techniques. Latin-American cuisine in general and the Ecuadorian in particular, begin to be recognised internationally by different attributes such as the quality of the raw materials used or its innovative character. On the other hand, the Latin-American gastronomy, and in particular, the highlands of the Andes, provides the culinary concept of ceviche, which is basically a gourmet dish, where fish or seafood is mixed with the acid of the citrus juices and flavoured with onions or coriander, among others. In addition, and in line with the contributions of Bjork and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016), Ecuador presents some local and unique food markets, so-called, "huecas", where the local community, increasingly used as a tourist attraction in recent years, enjoy the recipes of the traditional Ecuadorian cuisine. The "huecas" were originally street sellers who specialised in a certain culinary recipe, although nowadays they are restaurants that combine local culinary tradition and gastronomical innovation. In this way, Ecuador, as well as the quality of their own cuisine, also features a typical place where you can consume such culinary specialities and that, surely, serves to differentiate the touristic product from other destinations.

The aim of this paper is to present an analysis of how gastronomy can become a key factor in the competitiveness of touristic destinations, and therefore the focus on gastronomy becomes a basic tool for the promotion of a geographical area, as is the city of Quito, registered as World Heritage Site. This paper includes the result of a research that addresses the relation on international tourists who have visited the city of Quito to, in first place, segment them according to their attitude towards the gastronomy and, then, to transfer the segmentation to its relationship both with the perception with the gastronomy of Quito, as with the satisfaction with the destination. To obtain this objective, the paper is structured, after this introduction, in a second section which is a review of scientific literature; a third segment which presents a brief description of the geographical area under consideration, the city of Quito; a fourth section that defines the methodology used in the research; and a fifth section which presents the results of the research and their discussion. The paper ends with the conclusions and the references which have been used.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Gastronomy and tourist destinations

Gastronomy has been set up in recent years as one of the key elements for the empowerment and consolidation of tourist destinations. Gastronomical tourism studies

have emerged in the last decades, focusing on food destinations, gastronomical tourists, and hygiene issues, using both qualitative and quantitative analysis (Lee & Scott, 2015). The local food can give an added value to the destination and contribute, in this way, with the competitiveness of the geographical area (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999) and, in this sense, many researchers believe that each geographic area should promote food as a central attraction to tourists (Nam & Lee, 2011) as dining out and trying national and local cuisine are fundamental elements for most tourists (Harrington & Ottenbacher, 2010).

Academic literature has analysed gastronomic tourism in different studies. Among them, we highlight the work of Hjalager and Richards (2002), which brings together a series of papers of leading experts at the time; the work of Boniface (2003); the contributions of Long (2004), which groups together articles which dealt with the identity of gastronomic tourism; the research of Cohen and Avieli (2004), the work coordinated by professor Hall which analyses the gastronomy (Hall et al., 2003) or the contributions of Croce and Perri (2011). Also, gastronomic tourism is addressed in different parts of the world in scientific literature, emphasising, above all, the geographical areas of Asia, due to the different conception that exists with the western cuisine, which is setting the trend in this segment. As well, it discusses the importance of gastronomic tourism in Hong Kong (Au & Law, 2002; Mckercher et al., 2008) in other Asian countries (Cohen & Avieli, 2004) or in Turkey (Okumus et al., 2007). Also, the western countries have conducted various research such as those that focus on Argentina (Schütler & Gándara, 2003), Canada (Stewart et al., 2008), Chile (Ascanio, 2009), Croatia (Fox, 2007), Finland (Tikkanen, 2007; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014), Italy (Fuschi & Evangelista, 2017), Portugal (Oliveira, 2007), Slovakia (Matlovicova & Pompura, 2013) or Spain (López-Guzmán & Sánchez-Cañizares, 2012). In this sense, studies which have been carried out in this area in Latin America are still scarce. Different authors have presented many lines of research which exist regarding the relation between tourism and gastronomy.

Thus, Henderson (2009) presented three lines of research regarding the relationship between tourism and gastronomy: gastronomy as a touristic product, the marketing of food to tourists, and cuisine tourism as an instrument of destination and general development. For his part, Tikkanen (2007) points out the gastronomy establishes a synergy with the tourism through four different aspects: first, as an attraction, which means that the destination can use this item to publicise this place; second, as a component of the product, where it goes deeper into the design of gastronomic or oenological routes; third, as an experience, addressing the existence of one or several places where the cuisine takes on a different level and becomes a strategy itself, like the cooking being carried out by great masters; and fourth, as a cultural phenomenon, based on the existence of different gastronomic festivals. Finally, Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016) point out that the current trends regarding the relationship between gastronomy and tourism is based on two different lines: first, gastronomy has emerged as a tourist attraction because travellers seek out new culinary experiences, and new experiences related to the culinary offer; and second, it has increased the interest of tourists to find local cuisine, and in this way, gastronomy becomes an important part of the tourist's trip.

The promotion of a destination through its cuisine is done through the presentation of a clear differentiation of their culinary resources, you must have a cuisine that is recognisable by travellers (local food) and which has a number of varied and important establishments where travellers can enjoy the cuisine (local food market) (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016). Enright and Newton (2004), in their research on Hong Kong

show how gastronomic cuisine is the second most important element of attraction, just behind the citizen's safety, and before certain tourist attractions. In addition, and if we consider their relative competitiveness, the cuisine becomes the most important attraction, even surpassing the security of citizens.

Gastronomy and international tourism

As to the segmentation of tourists according to their nationality, with a distinction between domestic and international visitors, the studies related to food and beverage tourism which discuss the segmentation of visitors with the objective of performing different exploratory studies are different. So, Alonso, Fraser and Cohen (2007) presented the results of a research to determine the socio-demographic profiles of the wine tourists in New Zealand, segmented by nationality. Also in the area of gastronomic tourism, Nam and Lee (2011) present a study on the satisfaction of international visitors in traditional Korean restaurants. For his part, Horng, Liu, Chou & Tsai (2012) focuses on the analysis of the perception of the brand equity in international tourists. On the other hand, the studies that focus on the analysis of the perceptions and motivations of foreigners with regard to the cuisine of a particular place are different. Thus, we highlight those carried out in Ghana (Amuquandoh & Asafo-Adjei, 2013), Croatia (Fox 2007), Korea (Nam & Lee, 2011), Laos (Staiff & Bushell, 2013) or Hong Kong (Tse & Crotts, 2005).

Gastronomy and tourist segmentation

Hall et al. (2003) point out that there is a difference between tourists who make the cuisine a part of their experience during their visit to a particular destination, and visitors who do not opt to do so and just consider the cuisine as an essential element of their journey. According to Kim, Eves and Scarles (2009) the model of local food consumption on trips is based on three different elements. The first of them are the motivational factors which cover aspects such as the search for new experiences, social prestige or authenticity. The second element are the demographic factors which include, among others, gender, age or educational level. And the third is based on psychological factors associated to the cuisine and where it deals with the food neophilia and the food neophobia. Therefore, it is necessary to segment the tourists into the destinations in relation to its relation with gastronomy. Hjalager (2004) divides the tourists regarding their relation with food in four groups: existential, experimental, diversionary and recreational. For their part, Smith and Costello (2009) refer to two clusters: food focusers and event seekers. Thompson and Prideaux (2009) establish three different clusters for which he used four questions related to the motivation that the cuisine (and wine) has for a traveller to go to a destination. For their part, Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016) *group it into three clusters: survivors, enjoyers and experiencers*.

Hypothesis to contrast

H1: Tourists show different attitudes towards the gastronomy as a variable of interest in the choice of the destination (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016).

H2: The culinary motivations are heterogeneous and conditioned by the behaviour of the tourist towards the gastronomy in his travels (Kim et al., 2009).

H3: The gastronomy is a factor which contributes to and conditions the tourist's experience and satisfaction (Haven-Tang & Jons, 2005).

H4: The amount of satisfaction towards the local gastronomy is influenced by the culinary motivations of tourists (López-Guzmán & Sánchez-Cañizares, 2012; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016).

H5: The perception of the local food by travellers is significantly different, the quality and authenticity of the dishes are appreciated to a greater extent by tourists with a special interest in gastronomy (Kim et al., 2009; Ron & Timothy, 2013).

DESCRIPTION OF THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Ecuador is an important tourist destination in Latin America because it brings together rich heritage (with two cities recognized as World Heritage Site - Quito and Cuenca), varied gastronomy, natural parks (standing out, above all, Galapagos), and important cities in the business world (for example, Guayaquil). In the year 2015 Ecuador received 1.543.091 foreign tourists (Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador, 2016). This implies that tourism activity is set up as one of the main economic engines of the country with a contribution to the economy of 1.557, 4 million \$ in 2015 (Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador, 2016). In this way, tourism occupies now the third place in the non-oil exports of the country, only exceeded by the export of banana and shrimp. Also, the economic importance of tourism is reflected in the conduct of academic studies, among which we highlight those carried out by Ruíz-Ballesteros (2011), Erskine and Meyer (2012), Everingham (2015), Gascón (2015), and Croes and Rivera (2016). Focusing on the geographical area object of this research, the city of Quito, capital of Ecuador, is situated in the north of the country, on the western side of the Andes mountain range, and has a population of 2.2 million inhabitants. The beauty of the city of Quito is a response to both the natural environment as their cultural heritage, reflecting a significant fusion in its population. The historic centre of Quito was declared World Heritage Site by the UNESCO in 1978 with the purpose of preserving the colonial style of the historic centre. Its historic-artistic heritage and its burgeoning business have substantially increased the number of tourists that come to the city each year. The number of tourist arrivals at the Mariscal Sucre international airport of Quito in 2015 was 706,848 and the number of travellers lodged in hotel establishments of the city in 2015 was 827,560.

In terms of gastronomy, it has become one of the great tourist resources of Ecuador and is allowing visitors to get to know the culture of the country better through its culinary specialties. So, the gastronomy of the city of Quito is characterized by having four types of different cuisine: pre-Hispanic, Colonial, Republican and Contemporary. The Hispanic cooking is based on the use of the products such as the “chuchuca”, “catzo”, “humita” cooked in water, the varieties of “locros” or “mazamorras”. The Colonial cuisine stands out for the use of products such as figs, limes, onions, oregano, beans, lentils, wheat, garlic, pork and sugar cane, among others. The Republican cuisine has a strong French influence, using dishes such as vegetable stew, desserts and soups. And finally, the Contemporary cuisine is presented as a fusion of these three lines of cookery. All of this culinary richness has been used to strengthen and promote tourism products focusing on the gastronomy, among which stand out the celebration of different food festivals.

METHODOLOGY

Data collection

The methodology used in this research is based on the realization of a field work to a representative sample of foreign tourists that visit the city of Quito (Ecuador) with the aim of knowing their opinion in relation with the gastronomy and its perceptions. From an initial survey, and by means of successive purges, which included a pre-test with an initial sample of tourists with similar characteristics to the final sample, we reached the final format. The final version of the survey was seeking for the clarity of the questions and the greater adjustment of the responses to achieve the objectives set in the research and the maximum precision possible not to extend the interview too much for the surveyed visitors. The surveys were carried out in the departure terminal of the international airport Mariscal Sucre of Quito, and with the premise that the tourist respondent was a foreigner and had spent a certain time in the city of Quito and,

therefore, could give a constructed opinion (Correia et al., 2013; Remoaldo et al., 2014). The surveys were carried out on different days and at different times, to try to catch the widest possible range of people and situations. The surveys were undertaken by a team of interviewers, perfectly prepared and trained for the occasion, linked to the *Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral* (ESPOL) of Guayaquil (Ecuador), and coordinated and led by the authors of this study. They carried out a total of 539 surveys, being 516 valid during the months of July to October 2015. They used a non-probabilistic technical sampling, commonly used in this type of research where respondents are available to be surveyed in a time and space (Finn, Elliott-White and Walton, 2000). It was not stratified nor by gender, age, education, nationality, nor by any other variable in the absence of previous studies that supported this stratification. The rate of denials to the questionnaire was low and not significant in any variable function what so ever. In no case, the duration of the survey was more than 15 minutes long.

Survey design

The survey used in this research is based on different previous studies (Kim et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2013; Pérez-Gálvez et al., 2015; Björk et al., 2016) and responds to diverse questions about tourism and gastronomy. The survey was distributed in two languages (Spanish and English). In terms of the survey's structure, it is divided into three large blocks. The first of them intended to gather up the characteristics of the trip or visit; a second block focused on the gastronomic issues; and a third block, which gathers the socio-demographic characteristics of visitors. In the survey we used questions with yes/no answers, questions with open-ended and closed answers, and questions where a Likert scale of 5 points (1 = not very important; 5= very important) was used.

Sampling and sampling error

The specific framework of this research is the foreign tourist that visits the city of Quito; regardless of whether they spend the night or not or they visit other places in the Pichincha province or the country. The first limitation that we face is the difficulty of obtaining figures relating to the number of tourists. Therefore, we used as the population the datum provided by the Metropolitan Public Company of Management of Destination Tourism (438,822 tourists). Although these figures do not represent the total number of foreign visitors to the city, since not all passengers have to arrive in Quito by air, at least it allows us to get an idea of the size and evolution of foreign tourism demand in the city. It has been taken as a reference to the statistics of foreign travellers lodged in hotel establishments, well-known, and in accordance with the data obtained in this research, that 2.4% of our sample did not stay overnight in the city and, those who did, 65.1% did so at hotel establishments, you can infer that the universe of study would be of 709.278 foreign visitors. Taking this figure into consideration, the sampling error for a confidence level of 95% would be $\pm 4,31\%$.

Analysis of the data

The tabulation of the data has been carried out by the collaborative team using the computer program SPSS v. 22. Various statistical techniques were used. In this sense, we have used statistics to assess the reliability and validity of the answers of the survey applied (Cronbach's alpha). The multivariate technique for clustering cases has been used (clusters, K-means) in order to analyse the similarity or resemblance existing between the respondents, taking as a reference point indicative variables of the greater or minor attitude towards gastronomy as a variable of interest at the time of travelling. Statistical procedures have been applied from the groups or segments obtained to perform contrasts of hypotheses on means from the analysis of variance (ANOVA univariate post hoc), allowing to find out which mean in particular differs and, therefore, control the error rate.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to analyse and characterize the interest that tourists have with regard to the gastronomy, the international tourists surveyed we requested to value their level of knowledge in relation with the gastronomy and the importance of the culinary experience in their decision to travel. To do this three items were established, which are compiled in table 1. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the final scale reaches a value of 0,794, which indicates an internal consistency of merit between the items of the scale. The critical level (p) associated to the F-statistic (185,551) of the analysis of variance to test the null hypothesis that all the elements of the scale have the same mean (ANOVA) is less than 0,001, and, therefore, it is not possible to maintain the hypothesis that the averages of the elements are equal. According to the scores of the items we performed a non-hierarchical cluster analysis. Under the criterion of maximizing the variance between typologies and minimizing the variance within each of them, the best solution that meets these criteria is the one that establishes three clusters. Each of these clusters is associated with a type of tourist in relation with the gastronomy. Thus, we refer to each of these clusters, following Bjork and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016), as survivors, enjoyers and experiencers.

Table 1 shows the characterization of the clusters from the average of the considered items. The F-statistic of the ANOVA allows us to contrast that the compared means are not equal, but it does not allow us to specify where the detected differences are. To know which mean differs from another, a particular type of contrast has been used, called multiple post hoc comparisons or ex post comparisons. That the population variances are equal since the critical level associated to Levene's test is less than 0.05 cannot be assumed for the purpose of these comparisons, so we reject the equality of variances. The F-statistic of the ANOVA is based on the fulfilment of two assumptions (normality and homoscedasticity), and given that it is not possible to assume that the variances of population are the same, recourse is made to Welch's t-test as an alternative to the F-statistic of the ANOVA (table 2). The critical level associated with both statistics is less than 0.05 and, therefore, we can reject the hypothesis of equality of means and conclude that the averages of the motivational variables of the three clusters compared are not equal.

Table 1. Characterization of clisters from the variable means of interest for gastronomy

Interest for gastronomy	Cluster membership			ANOVA	
	Survivors	Enjoyers	Experiencers	F	Sig.
	Mean	Mean	Mean		
How it would value your level of knowledge in the world of gastronomy	1.66^(*)	3.39	3.51	386.071	< 0.001
On some trips knowing the gastronomy of the tourist destinations that I visit was its main objective	1.54^(*)	1.99^(*)	3.92^(*)	634.483	< 0.001
On some trips knowing the gastronomy of the tourist destinations that I visit was its secondary objective	2.62^(*)	3.38^(*)	4.33^(*)	194.011	< 0.001
(*) The values in bold show significant differences in two of the means of the three clusters in post-hoc analysis of the Anova. To be able to verify the significant differences between the different means the Games-Howell test was applied.					

The first of the clusters is integrated by 35.4% of the respondents, being the group that scored the lowest records on all of the items. This cluster has been called the survivors. The second group represents 26.0% of the sample and is characterized by scoring

intermediate scores in the different items, marking it as a segment of tourists interested in gastronomy which we have called enjoyers. The third of the clusters were characterized by scoring high scores in all items, representing 38.6% of the respondents, being categorized as experiencers. In line with other research (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016), the results allow testing one of the hypotheses of the research in question: tourists show different attitudes towards gastronomy as a variable of interest in the choice of destination (H1).

Table 2. Robust test of variances homogeneity and variable means equality of interest for gastronomy

Interest for gastronomy	Variances homogeneity (Levene)		Means equality (Welch)	
How it would value your level of knowledge in the world of gastronomy	26.975	< 0.001	479.279	< 0.001
On some trips knowing the gastronomy of the tourist destinations that I visit was its main objective	12.555	< 0.001	589.459	< 0.001
On some trips knowing the gastronomy of the tourist destinations that I visit was its secondary objective	6.256	< 0.002	217.270	< 0.001

Gastronomy and tourism

One of the hypotheses of this research is to assess the reasons that tourists have to taste the local cuisine. To do this we came up with a question that sets out the main motivations for the consumption of the most frequent and relevant local food products analysed in previous research adapting and taking into account the specific characteristics of the tourist destination and of the visitors (Kim et al., 2009; Sims, 2009; Kim et al., 2013; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016). After the completion of a pre-test, we selected a total of 12 items on a Likert scale of 5 points (1 being scant and 5 a lot) to determine the relative importance of a number of reasons in their decision to consume local cuisine. The items were grouped into three different gastronomical dimensions: new food experiences, cultural and socialization. Table 3 states the different motivations of the respondents to consume local food products. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the final scale reaches a value of 0,821, which indicates an internal consistency of merit between the items of the scale. The critical level (p) associated to the F-statistic (65,623) analysis of variance (ANOVA) is less than 0.001, not being possible to maintain the hypothesis that the averages of the elements are equal. The results reveal that the search for new food experiences is the main motivational dimension of the tourists regarding the local gastronomy. On a Likert scale of 5 points (where 1 is to be in disagreement and 5, to be in agreement), 58% of respondents considered "discover something new" as one of the main reasons to taste the cuisine in a tourist destination. Also, "it is different than what you normally consumed" and "the dishes taste different to the ones made in my region" stand out as reasons to get to know the gastronomy of the city of Quito (main reasons for 56% of respondents). On the other hand, the less relevant motivational dimension is socialization, leaving the cultural dimension on an intermediate level. The least powerful motivations to consume local products are the "being able to transmit my experiences with the local food", "tasting local food increases family and friendship bonds" and "allows me to enjoy pleasant moments with family and/or friends".

The analysis by the three clusters presented above allows us to contrast that the means compared are not equal for the three motivational dimensions considered (table 4). Therefore, it cannot be assumed that the population variances are the same as the critical level associated to Levene's test is less than 0.05. Since the critical level associated to Welch's t-test is less than 0.05, we can conclude that the means of the motivational variables

collected in table 4, and related to the three segments of gastronomic identified, are not the same. The results show that two of the three dimensions discriminate significantly in terms of the motivation for the consumption of the local cuisine (cultural and socialization). Thus, tourists are looking for new food experiences in the consumption of local food, not existing significant statistical differences in function of the greater or less interest in gastronomy. The segment of tourists (experiencers) is characterized by scoring the highest values in the motivational three dimensions. Thus, and unlike the rest, this is a visitor who also uses the local gastronomy as a cultural and interpersonal tool. These results are in line with other research (Kim et al., 2009) and help to obtain evidence for the research hypothesis (H2): The culinary motivations towards the consumption of local food are different, being conditioned by the greater or less interest of the traveller towards the cuisine.

Table 3. Assessment of motivations for the consumption of local cuisine

Gastronomical motivations			Mean	Ranking
New Food Experiences	Cronbach's alpha (0.703)	Discover something new	4.46	1
		It is different to what I normally consume	4.43	2
		The dishes taste different to the ones made in my region	4.42	3
		An authentic experience	4.33	4
		I am excited to try the local food in its place of origin	4.29	6
Cultural	Cronbach's alpha (0.675)	Discover the flavour of the local cuisine	4.31	5
		Increase my knowledge about different cultures	4.20	7
		It offers an unique opportunity to understand the local culture	3.97	8
Socialization	Cronbach's alpha (0.779)	Advise on dining experiences with local travellers	3.94	9
		Allows me to enjoy pleasant moments with family and/or friends	3.86	10
		Tasting local food increases family and friendship bonds	3.81	11
		Being able to transmit my experiences with the local food	3.55	12

Table 4. ANOVA analysis of motivations for consumption of local cuisine

Motivational dimensions	Gastronomic segments			ANOVA		Variances homogeneity		Means equality	
	Survivors	Enjoyers	Experiencers	F	Sig.	Levene	Sig.	Welch	Sig.
New Food Experiences	4.31	4.40	4.44	3.00	<.005	8.656	<.001	2.680	<.007
Culture	4.01	4.09	4.35^(*)	12.862	<.001	22.320	<.001	15.338	<.001
Socialization	3.30^(*)	3.84^(*)	4.21^(*)	55.441	<.001	52.750	<.001	53.081	<.001
(*)The values in bold show significant differences in two of the means of the three clusters in post-hoc analysis of the Anova. To be able to verify the significant differences between the different means the Games-Howell test was applied									

Gastronomy and Satisfaction

One of the assumptions made in this research is to show the evidence on the positive impact of gastronomy on the experience and satisfaction of tourist. In this sense, the level of satisfaction measured declared on a Likert scale of 5 points is high (4.47 points), with a high percentage of tourists who declare to be fully satisfied. Thus, 60.9% reported a score of 5. In this group are most often the segments of tourists, experiencers. In addition, and considering the little importance of the non-satisfied, only 8.8% of the respondents show a score less than or equal to three. On the basis that the visitors leave very happy with the cuisine of Quito, it elaborates on this aspect by analysing what kind of

relation could exist with the reasons to taste the local cuisine. The goal is to determine which gastronomical dimensions have an impact on the satisfaction experienced by the foreign visitor. The results show that the three dimensions considered discriminate significantly in terms of the level of gastronomic satisfaction perceived (table 5). Despite not being very high, the index of correlation is corroborated by the correlation between the degree of satisfaction and the three dimensions. The results suggest that the increased presence of reasons related to the cultural and socialization dimensions contribute the most to the perception of satisfaction in relation to the local cuisine. One of the main contributions of this research is the verification that the local gastronomy is a tool that conditions the tourist experience and satisfaction (H3).

Table 5. ANOVA analysis of gastronomic satisfaction and motivational dimensions

Variables	ANOVA		Pearson's correlation
	F	Sig.	
New Food Experiences	3.654	<.001	0.22(**)
Culture	10.840	<.001	0.25(**)
Socialization	4.643	<.001	0.25(**)

(**) The correlation is significant at the level 0.01 (bilateral)

Based on the segmentation carried out, it is necessary to analyse the relation that the three clusters could have with the satisfaction of gastronomic perceived (table 6). The analysis reveals a very positive valuation of the dining experience gained by the three groups of visitors. The valuation is higher in the experiencers segment. Also, it confirms the greater relevance of the cultural and socialization dimensions in connection with the gastronomic satisfaction. The results highlight that foreign tourists made a significantly different valuation from their dining experience according to whether they are more or less related to the reasons that motivate the consumption of local products. This fact has one clear implication for the proper management of the tourism companies and the public sector of the city, in the sense that the initiatives to increase the gastronomic satisfaction visitors must start from an analysis of the reasons that motivate their consumption and influence on the presence and proper delivery of the product.

The present study supports the results of how the local cuisine contributes to the satisfaction and the behavior of the economy (H4). In line with other studies (López-Guzmán & Sánchez-Cañizares, 2012; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016), the results show evidence of the presence of travellers with a special interest in the local cuisine that, in addition to looking for new experiences in the food, uses the cuisine as a tool to learn more about the culture of the destination and satisfy, in this way, the needs of interpersonal relationships with friends and/or family members. Similarly, respondents were asked for an assessment on a series of attributes of the gastronomy of Quito to identify strengths and points for improvement. The valuation of some of these attributes is not as high as the level of general satisfaction, being very specific aspects and in which assessment includes many personal and private factors. In relation with the most valued attributes stand out tasting traditional culinary dishes, the customer service offered by the catering establishments and the quality of the dishes. Among the points of improvement, we should work on a greater level of innovation and new flavours in dishes as well as on the atmosphere of the establishments. Among those identified as the most well-known typical dishes by foreign visitors stand out, and in this order, the potato “locro”, the “fritada” and the “hornado”. On the other hand, among those identified as less well-known are the “dulce de higo” with cheese and “seco de chivo”. The analysis by segment reveals the existence of statistically significant differences regarding the perception of the attributes collected and which are

listed in table 7. We can assume to the purpose of making the comparisons that the population variances are equal since the critical level associated to Levene's test is higher than 0.05. Again, the greater ratings correspond to the segment of tourists, experiencers. The differences show that the perception of the local food by travellers is significantly different (Kim et al., 2009; Timothy & Ron, 2013), being valued at a greater degree, the innovation of the dishes by the tourists with special interest in gastronomy (H5).

Table 6. Characterization of segments from the culinary satisfaction variable

Gastronomic segments			ANOVA		Variances homogeneity		Means equality	
Survivors	Enjoyers	Experiencers	F	Sig.	Levene	Sig.	Welch	Sig.
4.38	4.39	4.60^(*)	4.336	<.014	7.417	<.001	5.167	<.006
(*)The values in bold show significant differences in two of the means of the three clusters in post-hoc analysis of the Anova. To be able to verify the significant differences between the different means the Games-Howell test was applied.								

Table 7. Characterization of segments from aspects of the gastronomy of Quito

Attributes of the gastronomy of Quito	Gastronomic segments			ANOVA		Variances homogeneity	
	Survivors	Enjoyers	Experiencers	F	Sig.	Levene	Sig.
Facilities	4.11^(*)	4.31	4.37^(*)	4.958	<.007	0.107	<.899
Prices	4.07^(*)	4.22	4.33^(*)	4.329	<.014	1.274	<.281
Atmosphere of the establishments	3.98^(*)	4.15	4.25^(*)	4.539	<.011	2.082	<.126
Innovation and new flavours in dishes	3.78^(*)	4.14	4.19^(*)	8.906	<.001	0.745	<.475
(*)The values in bold show significant differences in one of the means of the three clusters in post-hoc analysis of the ANOVA. To be able to verify the significant differences between the different means the Scheffe test was applied.							

CONCLUSIONS

Gastronomic tourism is currently defined as one of the major issues to boost or consolidate certain tourist destinations, due to the increasing importance that it has for travellers, the knowledge of everything related to the gastronomic culture of the places you visit. So, in fact, already there are certain travellers that consider it as a primary motivation for their trip to go to a particular restaurant or simply to know better the cuisine of a specific geographic area. In this paper, we present a research on the existing relation between the international tourism and gastronomy in the city of Quito. Tourists who visit a particular cultural destination, in addition to participating in the knowledge of their heritage, want to increase their sensory experience, thanks, above all, to the gastronomy. And, in this sense, the gastronomy and its relation with tourism has become a key aspect in the analysis of tourist destinations, especially those related to culture and heritage. The results show the existence of three typologies of tourists, who are considered to be validated and useful to segment a tourist destination in function of the attitude, as declared by the visitor to the cuisine as a variable of interest to a tourist (survivors, enjoyers and experiencers). The higher or lower gastronomic attitude affects the culinary and the perception of satisfaction experienced by the tourist. One of the main contributions of this research is verifying that the level of satisfaction towards the local gastronomy is influenced by the motivations of culinary tourists. From the motivational point of view, the results show that tourists are more satisfied with the local cuisine, in addition to searching for new food experiences, they use cuisine as a tool to learn more about the culture of the destination and satisfy the needs of interpersonal relationships with friends and/or family members. In fact, the motivational

dimensions, culture and socialization contribute the most to the satisfaction of the tourist. Visitors report a high satisfaction with their dining experience, being the valuation significantly different according to the declared attitude towards the cuisine. Similarly, the greater attitude translates into significantly different perceptions in relation to the attributes of the gastronomy of Quito, being valued to a greater extent the facility, the atmosphere of the establishments and the innovation of the dishes by the tourists, experiencers. The main limitations of this research are found in the time period used, with which we believe that it would be convenient to extend the research to the tourism arrived in the city during every month of the year. As the main future line of research, we recommend strengthening the research to know if the tourists that visit the city of Quito and consume its food, later on in their places of origin also consume culinary products produced in this geographical area.

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WINTER TOURISM IN GREECE: AN APPROACH TO TOURISTS' BEHAVIOR AND NEEDS

Georgia YFANTIDOU*

Democritus University of Thrace, Department of Physical Education and Sport Science,
University Campus, 69100, Komotini, Rodopi, Greece, e-mail: gfantid@phyed.duth.gr

Malamati NIKOU

Democritus University of Thrace, Department of Physical Education and Sport Science,
University Campus, 69100, Komotini, Rodopi, Greece, e-mail: mnikou@phyed.duth.gr

Ourania MATSOUKA

Democritus University of Thrace, Department of Physical Education and Sport Science,
University Campus, 69100, Komotini, Rodopi, Greece, e-mail: oumatsou@phyed.duth.gr

Abstract: Greece has been dominated by efforts to regenerate winter sports resorts and ski centers during the last decade. The purpose of this paper is to give a brief overview of the profile of winter tourists in Macedonia Greece by the examination of tourists' behavior and their physical and mental needs through a case study of Kaimaktsalan Ski Centre. Specifically, the case study of Kaimaktsalan Ski Centre is examined. The questionnaire Tourist Role Preference Scale was used in order to collect the data. This research revealed the tourists' behavior and their human needs during their holiday. The main findings of the research indicated that half of the participants claimed that they sometimes feel satisfied with the winter tourism activities in general. The majority claimed that they are very satisfied with their physical and psychological needs during their winter tourism vacations. The profile of winter sport tourists in Kaimaktsalan ski center is mainly women, single, 17-39 years-old, university graduates, with full-time occupation and with a medium family income. It is crucial to take these results into account to employ the right measures to increase customer satisfaction. Thus, managers of ski resorts are advised to first discover the structure and segments of their clientele, and then analyze their satisfaction surveys by considering the moderating effects of lifestyles, spending levels and skiers' skills.

Key words: environment, human needs, ski center, tourist behavior, winter tourism, sport tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Sport tourism and leisure

Tourism is conceptualized as a 'special form' of leisure. The term sport tourism has been adopted in recent years to describe sport related leisure travel (Gibson, 1998). Leisure/tourism become ways of making knowledge: the individual comes to know about

* Corresponding author

the world in new, more complex ways. The individual activates, influences and negotiates, acts subjectively. Thinking in terms of 'the subject' permits the consideration of human activity rather than of the individual being only the object of numerous events impacting, determinedly, on him/her (Pile & Thrift, 1995). It enables a focus on leisure/tourism as encounters. Interpreting leisure/tourism it is easy to note the representation and not the practice, partly because of the requirements of appropriate research methods. In all tourism/leisure practices the individual is surrounded by space. The encounter with the world can also be expressive. Leisure/tourism are moments of expression through the body that activate places. Leisure/tourism spaces are sites of friendship and social engagement and become meaningful through the ways in which people are encountered. Harre's notion of 'the feeling of doing' points to that component of leisure/tourism where the individual has a sense of abutting a surrounding world and thereby of engaging that world of people, materiality and so on. This is captured and developed, unevenly, through interpenetrating awareness of surrounding volume and its characteristics, which may be exemplified in a park or a ski slope. There is a considerable challenge for leisure research to unpick and to articulate this greater complexity of what leisure means in relation to everyday life (Crouch, 2000). When speaking of leisure, Pearce and Lee (2005) identified the four core motives for undertaking this type of travelling as: escape and relaxation; social interaction; novelty seeking; and self-development. People have been aware for a long period of time that health and well-being are improved by leisure activities in natural settings (Pretty et al., 2005; Ilieş et al., 2013). Leisure has a social dimension (Godbey et al., 2005), since people are motivated by social interaction and personal competence to engage in leisure activities (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Leisure related social interaction is an important concept with strong relevance to active living (Freysinger, 1999). Many leisure and tourism activities are undertaken in order to make contact socially, so the desire for social contact may be recognized as one of the key motivational factors for these activities.

Meanwhile, according to Crouch (2000), leisure/tourism is important in the '... figuring and re-figuring an account of a place', constituting processes that are negotiated and shaped in the context of human relationships and emotions. Importantly, Crouch (2000) contends, it is the characteristics of place rather than 'nostalgia' that establishes the link between leisure/tourism and identities. Subjectivities are important in these linkages, along with signification of the material content of places. Therefore, travel and tourism to Albania during summer and having access to the sea are, for participants, important elements of transnational movements, as it is the case with leisure. It is time for more studies on such movements that link the different parts and people of the Balkans and their diasporans in webs of leisure and tourist movements (Vathi, 2015).

Different individuals engage in the same activities, but those activities will be classified as leisure or tourism activities, depending on the interpretations of 'leisure' and 'tourism' that are used (Hede & Hall, 2006). Cohen and Cohen (2012) suggest a method of better understanding tourist behaviour is to consider it part of an individual's overall lifestyle, with a particular focus on leisure behaviour. People frequently take part in activities similar to their everyday leisure pursuits when on vacation, which means there is behavioural consistency in their leisure behaviour in the tourism context. Ryan (1994) found a parallel between holiday and leisure activities based on the similarity of their behavioural patterns, in areas such as relaxation, skill acquisition and self-development. Leisure and tourism literature (Brey & Lehto, 2007; Chang & Gibson, 2015) has been primarily focused on single leisure activity (mainly sport activity) as a means of explaining the leisure tourism continuum, this research conducted broadens understanding of leisure behaviour as set of different leisure activities which are consistent within the tourism framework. Therefore, the motivation for leisure and

tourism could be regarded as similar, especially if the activity includes clear elements of both. People are motivated to participate in a leisure activity to satisfy certain needs, which is also common with the goals of tourism.

Alpine destinations and ski resorts

Physical separation causes people to desire different recreational, climate, environmental, and cultural experiences has also become a reason to equate a tourist destination. Destinations will use their name, term, symbol, and design to distinguish themselves from other competitors and obtain unique advantages (Liang, 2017). According to the argument of Tangeland, Vennesland and Nybakk (2013), nature-based tourism activities, that is, commercial or non-commercial activities held primarily in a natural setting, are dependent on or enhanced by the natural environment.

Further, the theory posits that if a person can find another activity through which they receive equal fulfilment, they are likely to be more willing to substitute. The theory has been utilized in a previous study of demand side adaptation options in alpine settings (Dawson et al., 2013), thus supporting its relevance to the context of the current study. The relevance of the theory of leisure substitution in behavioral adaptation becomes evident. Place attachment is recognized as a dichotomous construct, consisting of place dependence, or the usefulness of a place as a facilitator of leisure participation and place identity, representing a psychological or emotional connection to place (Williams & Stewart, 1998). Place attachment has previously been applied to the context of recreation in alpine settings (Alexandris et al., 2006). Alexandris et al., (2006) examined the impact of place attachment and service quality on loyalty at a ski resort. The study found that place attachment was highly correlated with customer loyalty, suggesting the propensity of place attachment to represent the likelihood of loyalty among tourists at a ski destination. It is also possible that the Australian market is already substituting their leisure, and travelling overseas to participate in winter sports at destinations perceived to have better natural snowfall than in Australia (Cocolas et al., 2016).

Behringer, Bürki and Fuhrer (2000) and König (1998) studied the skiers' behavior under specific scenarios. They found that skiers are very adaptable and can easily change their destination and the timing of their trips, or replace the ski activity with another leisure activity (e.g., a beach holiday). Also, Bürki (2000) asked skiers from Switzerland, to respond whether they would change their plans in a hypothetical scenario of climate change. In particular, the skiers were interviewed about "Where and how often would they do skiing, if they knew that the next five winters would have very little snow? ". The majority of the participants (58%) responded that they would continue skiing with the same frequency (30% in the same resort and 28% in a more reliable resort). Almost a third (32%) of the respondents replied that they would ski less often and only 4% said they would stop skiing. Hard-core skiers are motivated by skiing conditions as well as fun and excitement. As a result, ski challenges would be attractive to this segment. However, this segment will not be satisfied if snow cover is reduced and is therefore likely to be only attracted to resorts at the peak or optimum time of the ski season (Hall et al., 2017). It is important to reiterate that the entire ski industry is not at risk to climate change, rather it will be individual ski areas that are either unable to adapt or withstand changes in ski demand. Differential vulnerabilities within the ski industry result from technical snowmaking capabilities, location (i.e., latitude, elevation, proximity to markets) and business models (e.g., resort size, winter versus an all-season resort, diverse ownership structures and access to capital) (Rutty et al., 2017). Littering, skiing off-piste, and skiing through vegetation at times of low snow level, have all been found to be environmentally damaging aspects of skiers' behavior. To change this behavior, it is necessary to create a condition of 'dissonance' in the skier's mind, that is a conflict between what the skiers

know and how they are behaving. For instance, if a skier knows that by skiing off-piste they are disturbing and harming wildlife, they are in a state of dissonance. The effect of this is to create an imbalance, which means the skier is taking corrective action to cope with it. For some skiers, the action would be to adopt corrective behavior to reduce the level of dissonance (i.e. stop skiing off-piste) but for other skiers it may be to accommodate this knowledge and carry on with the same behavior through an internalized justification of their actions (Holden, 2000).

Although the major winter sports centers have demonstrated a clear capacity to adapt, their future is not necessarily assured. Competition between resorts remains intense. As the number of skiers in Europe has stabilized, resorts, in their attempts to maintain market share, have been challenged increasingly. In this context, they still face certain shortcomings. For instance, resorts located at a high altitude continue to lack charm and character, and attracting tourists in summer remains difficult; situated close to the tree-line, the mountain landscape is less aesthetically appealing than at a lower altitude, and the uninspiring architecture appears even less inviting than when partially snow-covered in winter. Currently the appeal of these resorts is largely restricted to their range of sporting activities. For this to change, the establishments require further refurbishment and embellishment, activities need to be diversified and the growth of a permanent population would help increase the range of services offered to tourists, rendering these localities more attractive (Tuppen, 2000). Nicholls (2006) has concentrated on the potential impacts of climate change on tourism and outdoor recreation in Europe. The relationship between climate change, recreation and tourism, is of a two-way nature, however. Tourism, in particular, is a major contributor to global warming, due to the greenhouse gas emissions associated with tourism activity. To maximize its effectiveness, future recreation, tourism and climate change research must be carried out using an inter-disciplinary approach and by a broader range of scientists than have previously participated (Kontogianni & Kouthouris, 2014; Tătar & Herman, 2013).

Winter tourism

Winter tourism is of great economic importance for the eastern Alpine regions of Europe. In certain regions, winter tourism accounts for 20% of the created economic value and provides thousands of jobs (CIPRA, 2003). There are tourists who desire to combine their vacation with sports. Specifically, this choice is a combination of an athletic activity and amusement. However, there are tourists who decide to spend their winter vacation at ski centers or at traditional mountain villages. Thus, they are engaged with winter sports, such as ski, ice-skating, snowboard and curling (Bank, 2011). Also, it was discovered that winter tourism is related to spa tourism. Thus, there are tourists who desire to spend their winter vacation at saunas and Turkish bath facilities. Winter tourists have a different approach when it comes to the selection of vacation. In other words, winter tourists behave totally different than the classic tourists. Winter tourists wish to visit ski centers in order to acquire experiences through sport activities. On the other hand, the classic tourists desire to visit ski centers in order to see the landscapes and relax (Falk, 2010).

Furthermore, winter tourism is a form of tourism that has an unprecedented bloom across the globe. Specifically, winter tourism is famous in countries that have been established as popular ski resorts. For instance, the city of Turin decided to build a ski center in the Italian Alps to promote winter sport tourism in the area (Gios et al., 2006). Leisure services are important assets for the prosperity of cities and regions. The last decades have witnessed a debate on the importance of leisure and tourism services by both scholars and local and national policy-makers. The influences of leisure and tourism services on the performance of a local economy are manifold. First, leisure and hospitality services often represent a significant share of the total economic activity in a region. This

characteristic of leisure services makes them potentially important for employment and growth. Second, these services are recognized as essential for the attractiveness of a region. Leisure and tourism services can be thought of as regional amenities because they make available a range of possibilities for consumption, experiences, and recreational activities. New Economic Geography (NEG) offers a microeconomic theoretical underpinning for the concept of market potential. The idea is used to work out the market demand over distances. This line of theorizing is especially suitable for modelling demand directed to service providers. This is because the sale of services is especially distance sensitive. Naturally, this is true for leisure services where customers need to travel to take part in the consumption of them. It is argued that in order to appreciate the importance of demand for the presence of leisure services in a local market, it is crucial to take the spatial continuum of demand into account. The almost universal, but not random, flux of population and economic activities among growing and declining localities and regions influence services that are dependent on close by customers. In this ever-changing landscape of demand some regions gain and some lose, with great significance following for the leisure service sector (Öner & Klaesson, 2017).

Winter tourism in Greece achieved a rapid rise in recent years with the creation of several ski centers and hosting sites. An intense promotion of winter tourism, especially in the northern part of Greece where the climate and topography allows the construction of ski centers, has been observed. The activities, carried out during the winter, are related to skiing, where appropriate equipment and infrastructure are needed. Most skiers in Greek ski centers combine skiing with relaxation and visits to the nearby ancient monuments. Furthermore, winter tourism has become more popular in Greece the last decade, especially after 2005. According to Paulopoulos (2001), winter sports were invented by the British leisure classes at the Swiss villages of Zermatt (Valais) and St. Moritz in 1864. The first winter sports package holidays took place in 1902 at Adelboden, Switzerland. Winter sports were a natural answer for a leisure class looking for amusement during the coldest season. Therefore, winter tourism is the vacation attitude when tourists combine winter sports with relaxing. Furthermore, Paulopoulos (2001) supports that winter tourism could be categorized as ski tourism, winter sport tourism and the winter Olympic Games tourism. In Greece, the most popular places, which show excess winter sports activity, are Macedonia, Thessaly, Ipiros, Central Greece, Peloponnese and Crete. The most commonly known ski Centers in Greece are Vasilitsa, Pilio, Arachova, Psiloritis and Kaimaktsalan.

Sport events represent the most fast developing sector of tourism market and the research of Funk et al., (2006), underline the importance of social-psychological motives concerning sport event and the cultural-educational motives concerning international travel. More specifically in order to increase tourism we should study ways of handling with respect the important experience of tourists, which is the behaviour that reflects the original motives (Foo et al., 2004; Gibson & Yiannakis, 2002). Gibson et al., (2002), described tourist behaviour by 15 tourists roles and 3 of them concerned sports tourism: active sports tourist, explorer and thrill seeker. Also, based on another research of Yfantidou, Costa and Michalopoulos (2008), the incentive of a tourist to travel and to participate in tourism activities can be defined as a set of needs and behaviors. Furthermore, the motivations derive from the basic psychological and sociological needs, which enhance the specific tourist behavior. Finally, the researchers have identified that there are differences between gender and age concerning the choice of a specific sport tourist behavior. Demographic characteristics were used in many researches in order to analyze tourist behavior. In this direction Henderson (2009) referred that gender has emerged as an influential moderating variable in leisure and tourism research, since

men and women are qualitatively different in the nature of their roles, constraints, social expectations and socializing forces. Males are more drawn towards things that present challenge and competition, whereas females spend less time outdoors and place more importance on social items (McFarland et al., 2014). Educational level is another predictor for leisure and tourism activities. Droomers, Schrijvers, van de Mheen and Mackenbach (1998) found a clear correlation between educational level and physical inactivity, with groups who have a higher education level being more physically active in their leisure time. Nature Seekers are generally motivated by socialising and looking for relaxation and escape in nature as main domains in their leisure time. Nature Seekers – whose leisure behaviour is more oriented towards nature, relaxation and social interaction – make tourism choices based on their habits in their home environment. In this respect, the presence of evidence for leisure behaviour and tourism choice is once again confirmed (Marinkovic et al., 2016).

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to give a brief overview of the profile of winter tourists in Macedonia Greece by the examination of tourists' behavior and their physical and mental needs through a case study of Kaimaktsalan Ski Centre. Thus, the statistic hypotheses explored if there are any differences to tourists' behavior and their needs (physical and psychological), due to their gender, age, occupation and personal income.

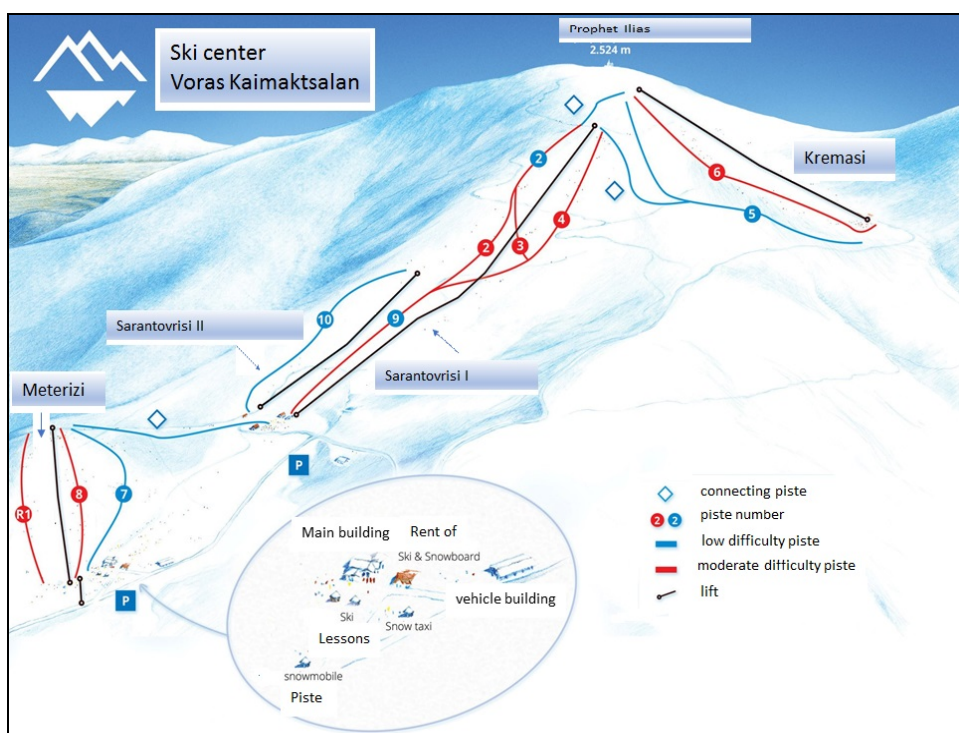


Figure 1. Kaimaktsalan Ski Center graphic of piste and lifts (Source: <http://kaimaktsalan.gr/>)

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample were 274 tourists who visited the ski center of Kaimaktsalan in Northern Greece during the period of January-March 2013.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire is based on the "Tourist Roles Preference Scale" of Gibson and Yiannakis (2002), and was translated in Greek by Yfantidou, Costa and Michalopoulos (2008). The questionnaire included 92 Likert Questions (5-scale) and closed-ended questions that recorded: (a) a description of tourist's activities with 34 questions, (b) a section of preferred sports activities with 26 questions, (c) an examination of major human needs with 22 questions, (d) demographical and personal data with 7 questions and, (e) certain destination preference with 3 questions. The methodology of this research is based on the academic paper of Yfantidou et al., (2008) in which they used the Tourist Role Preference Scale (TRPS) to investigate their case. They explored the tourists' roles in Greece and especially the roles related to sport tourism. The research results showed that the TRPS seems to be applicable in Greece. Also, they discovered that the tourists' behavior could be categorized in various tourist roles and the most frequent roles in Greece were: "Sun Lover", "Anthropologist", "Archaeologist", "the Independent Mass Tourist" and "Escapist".

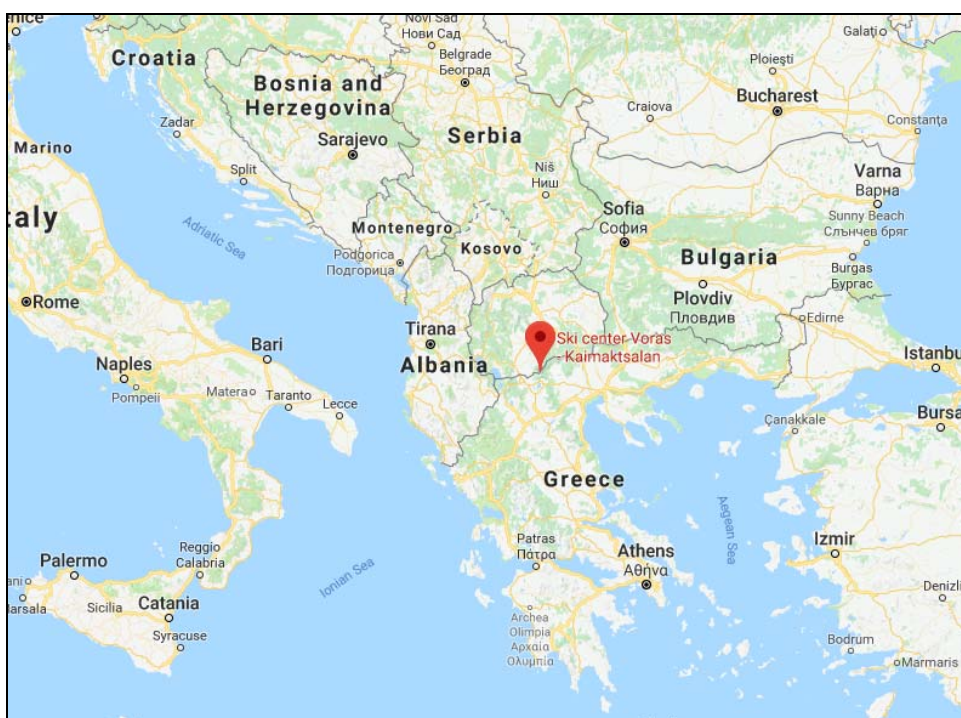


Figure 2. Map of Greece and the point of Voras ski center at Kaimaktsalan
(Source: Google maps, <https://maps.google.com/>)

Process

The questionnaires were distributed at Kaimaktsalan ski center in Northern Greece with the physical presence of the researchers at regular intervals from January until the end of March 2013. Kaimaktsalan ski center and Voras mountain is located nearby Thessaloniki, second largest city in Greece. Voras Mountain is located at the borders with F.Y.R.O.M. and its crest-ridge is the limit line of the two countries. It is the third highest mountain in Greece after Olympus (2917 m.) and Smolikas (2637 m.), with an altitude of 2524 m, on the peak of which stands Kaimaktsalan Ski Center

(Figure 1). The view from the mountain is amazing, since one can see as far as Thermaikos Gulf, the peak of Olympus mountain and, of course, the 3-5 Pigadia Ski Center in Naoussa, which is across the peak (Figure 2). Thus, it was decided to conduct a research at the ski center of Kaimaktsalan. Initially 300 questionnaires were distributed, but 274 were fully completed and were used for this research.

Statistical Analysis.

Finally, the statistical analysis was performed by using the statistic procedures of descriptive statistics, factor analysis, Cronbach's reliability test, t-test for independent samples and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

RESULTS

Two factor analyses were implemented to thirty-four (34) tourists' behavior questions and to twenty-two (22) tourists' needs questions by implementing the principal component analysis and the varimax rotation. The number of factors was determined by using the criterion of eigenvalues, which should have been greater than one (>1). Also, the maximum iterations number of convergence should have been equal to .40. Thus, eight factors were revealed for the tourists' behavior scale: active sport tourist, knowledge tourist, explorer, high class tourist, sun lover, independent mass tourist, organized mass tourist and escapist. On the other hand, five factors were extracted for the need's scale: physiological needs and self-esteem, love and belongingness, safety and security needs, self-actualization, the external environment. Maslow (1970) was the first researcher who provided the same hierarchy of needs that influence behavior. The reliability analysis was made by utilizing Cronbach's a methodology. The tourists' behavior scale presented reliable scores (table 1).

Table 1. Reliability Test – Tourist Roles (behavior)

Tourist Roles	Cronbach's alpha
Active Sport Tourist	0,853
Knowledge Tourist	0,844
Explorer	0,748
High Class Tourist	0,769
Sun Lover	0,682
Independent Mass Tourist	0,700
Organized Mass Tourist	0,619
Escapist	(1 question)

Also, for the tourists' needs scale the reliability analysis was performed by utilizing Cronbach's a methodology. The scale presented again reliable scores (table 2).

Table 2. Reliability Test – Human needs

Human Needs	Cronbach's alpha
Physiological needs and self-esteem	0,871
Love and belongingness	0,866
Safety and security needs	0,748
Self-actualization	0,698
The External Environment	0,601

A further investigation of the factors was conducted by using t-test for independent samples and one-way analysis of variance (One-way ANOVA). The analysis revealed that gender is a catalytic variable at the role of organized mass tourist (table 3).

Table 3. T-test between tourist roles (behavior) and gender

Tourist roles (gender)	F levene	P – levene*	t statistic	P*	Mean Difference
Active Sport Tourist	1,395	0,242	1,363	0,177	0,270
Knowledge Tourist	9,056	0,004	1,591	0,119	0,386
Explorer	3,321	0,073	0,628	0,532	0,147
High Class Tourist	1,671	0,200	1,684	0,097	0,372
Sun Lover	0,112	0,739	0,440	0,661	0,083
Independent Mass Tourist	1,144	0,289	1,223	0,226	0,252
Organized Mass Tourist	1,352	0,249	-2,057	0,043	-0,401
Escapist	2,662	0,107	0,512	0,610	0,163

*95% confidence interval

Another important variable seems to be the education level. Especially, for the category of explorer and the category of organized mass tourist (table 4).

Table 4. ANOVA between tourist roles (behavior) and education levels

Tourist roles (education)	F-Value	Probability (P)*
Active Sport Tourist	1,057	0,398
Knowledge Tourist	1,379	0,237
Explorer	3,089	0,010
High Class Tourist	0,441	0,849
Sun Lover	1,255	0,291
Independent Mass Tourist	1,918	0,092
Organized Mass Tourist	2,536	0,029
Escapist	1,016	0,423

*95% confidence interval

Moreover, the analysis of variance showed that tourists with different occupations also have different behavior (table 5).

Table 5. ANOVA between tourist roles (behavior) and occupation

Tourist roles (occupation)	F-Value	Probability (P)*
Active Sport Tourist	0,639	0,671
Knowledge Tourist	1,063	0,389
Explorer	0,318	0,901
High Class Tourist	0,307	0,907
Sun Lover	0,599	0,701
Independent Mass Tourist	2,390	0,047
Organized Mass Tourist	2,677	0,029
Escapist	0,416	0,836

*95% confidence interval

In addition, there are no differences between tourist roles and age variable and the variable income is affecting only the role of explorer tourist (table 6).

Table 6. ANOVA between tourist roles (behavior) and income

Tourist roles (income)	F-Value	Probability (P)*
Active Sport Tourist	1,479	0,235
Knowledge Tourist	2,712	0,074
Explorer	5,841	0,005
High Class Tourist	1,641	0,202
Sun Lover	0,900	0,411
Independent Mass Tourist	0,570	0,568
Organized Mass Tourist	0,352	0,705
Escapist	0,049	0,952

*95% confidence interval

The same variables were examined with human needs factors. Gender didn't affect them, but education levels presented many differences at four of the five human needs. Specifically, tourists with a master degree have different needs than tourists with lower education levels/bachelor degree (table 7).

Table 7. ANOVA between human needs and education levels

Needs (education)	F-Value	Probability (P)*
Physiological needs and self-esteem	0,798	0,575
Love and belongingness	2,473	0,033
Safety and security needs	2,275	0,047
Self-actualization	3,675	0,003
The External Environment	3,012	0,012

*95% confidence interval

Also, the findings show that tourists with different occupation have only different safety and security needs (table 8).

Table 8. ANOVA between human needs and occupation levels

Needs (occupation)	F-value	Probability (P)*
Physiological needs and self-esteem	1,822	0,121
Love and belongingness	1,413	0,232
Safety and security needs	2,517	0,038
Self-actualization	1,225	0,308
The External Environment	1,627	0,166

*95% confidence interval

Also, it was discovered that the variable age presented many differences compared to human needs factors (table 9).

Table 9. ANOVA between human needs and age

Needs (age)	F-value	Probability (P)*
Physiological needs and self-esteem	1,395	0,255
Love and belongingness	8,485	0,001
Safety and security needs	0,841	0,436
Self-actualization	3,665	0,031
The External Environment	4,604	0,013

*95% confidence interval

Finally, tourists with different family income have different safety and security needs (table 10).

Table 10. ANOVA between human needs and income

Needs (income)	F-value	Probability (P)*
Physiological needs and self-esteem	0,428	0,654
Love and belongingness	1,536	0,223
Safety and security needs	3,972	0,023
Self-actualization	2,466	0,093
The External Environment	2,889	0,063

*95% confidence interval

The main findings of the research indicated that 51.43% of the participants claimed that they sometimes feel satisfied with the winter tourism activities in general. Also, the 42.86% of the participants mentioned that they are partially attracted by the winter sports activities that they do at the ski center. 65.71% of the tourists claim that they are very satisfied with their physical and psychological needs during their winter tourism vacations. The profile of winter sport tourists in Kaimaktsalan ski center is mainly women

(61.43%), single (37.14%), 17-39 years-old (80%), university graduates (44.29%), with full-time occupation (45.71%) and with a family income of 20.000-60.000 euro (48.57%).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Most winter tourists, are attracted by ski and snowboard activities. Furthermore, 2/3 of winter tourists claim that they excessively satisfy their physical and psychological needs. In other words, the ski center of Kaimaktsalan is selected by the winter tourists in order to rest and escape from their daily routine. The selection of ski and snowboarding activities supports that idea. People desire to increase their adrenaline level to feel free and revitalized, facts that are in line with several researches (Goulimaris et al., 2014; Kontogianni et al., 2014). Most winter tourists in Voras ski center came from Greece and the Balkans. It is reasonable because the ski center is located in Northern Greece near F.Y.R.O.M., Romania and Bulgaria, but there seems to be an important absence of winter tourists who come from other locations worldwide and visit Greece in winter. It may occur because the quality standards in Kaimaktsalan ski center are not aligned with the quality standards of ski centers in Central Europe. Thus, the European winter tourists do not want to visit Kaimaktsalan ski center. On the other hand, there is not instant access from Europe to Kaimaktsalan. The international airport "Macedonia" of Thessaloniki enables access from Europe, but it is not enough, because there is a remaining route of 124km to the ski center, which is not easy to be covered. Place has been persistently important in thinking about leisure/tourism. In considering popular practice and lay knowledge, the processes of leisure and tourism merge. Leisure/ tourism are encounters in different ways: with other people, with material space, with one's imagination, ideas, metaphors of place, of leisure and tourism, of nature and of the city. These encounters may be with memory and people and places in other parts of one's life. To focus on encounters makes use of 'non-representational theory' (Thrift, 1997) and this provides the focus of interest that this paper mobilizes towards an animation of leisure/tourism.

The demographic characteristics showed that families with low and medium income prefer Voras ski center in Greece as vacation destination. Most tourists have full time job/businesspersons. Gender was not different between its categories and especially women have a good representative percentage. Age had big percentages at the category 17-39, but ages of 40-59 and 60-over recorded small percentages. Finally, education levels revealed supremacy of University graduates. This is in accordance to Standeven & De Knop (1999), who came up with the same result, except the high income level at this results. But the difference in income may raise by the economic crisis in Greece and the big percentage of Greek tourists at this ski center. According to the research objectives, the findings indicate that male and female respondents present similar needs but they have differences in terms of the behavior of the organized mass tourist. Differences were also found regarding education levels and occupation. Those findings are similar with the findings from the researches of Gibson et al., (2002) and Yfantidou et al., (2008). However, the fact that the current research is focused on an area where there are not any other investigations, makes those findings unique.

This research is a case study of Kaimaktsalan ski center. Future research should explore the conditions of other ski centers in Macedonia or Greece to discover more accurate evidences for ski centers in Greece. Also, a research comparison should be performed across Europe in order to discover any similarities or differences with other ski centers. Gios et al., (2006), discuss that analytical studies show notable differences between different areas in terms of total number of visitors or in relation to the willingness to pay for the fruition of the area. The area of Voras mountain can be representative for many mountain areas. In conclusion, generally, the whole area has an

environmental wealth which is not utilized, or is utilized only minimally, for the benefit of the local population. As has already been observed, succeeding in modifying this situation is fundamental for the future development of this kind of areas.

The interpretation of the results shows that there are significant differences to some tourist roles and needs due to demographic characteristics and they will be presented below. Specifically, more women select to travel to ski centers with organized groups. The explorers and the organized tourists are mainly people with high educational level and explorers have also medium income. Furthermore, independent and organized mass tourists are in the majority students or unemployed or household keepers. As far as needs, all needs except physiological needs and self-esteem are influenced by educational level, specifically, tourists with high educational level showed that they are satisfied by these needs at this point in their life (vacations to ski center). Safety and security needs are covered by tourists who have full time occupation or they are retired, in addition to unemployed tourists. The same needs of safety are more satisfied to young and older people, in addition to middle age who face up the crisis in their family life. This is with accordance to medium income tourists who pointed more positive answers to safety than low income tourists. Miragaia and Martins (2015), suggest that organizational decision makers identify the attributes valued by consumers at this destination type and take this information into account so as to raise tourists' satisfaction levels. However, maintaining this consistently over time requires constantly monitoring whether the consumer profile is changing or not. In addition, holding and running entrepreneurial and innovative initiatives, able to bring continuous improvements to the services provided without ignoring the characteristics of the destination's differentiating resources, would boost the resort's respective level of competitiveness.

Moreover, the fact that is very worrying is that the local economy, where the ski center is located, is supported by Greek and Balkan tourists, whose income is limited especially this period of economic crisis. Tourism is of great economic importance and significance for the European East Alpine regions. But to an increasing degree, low productivity resulting from the small business structure of the Alpine region weakens the economic and social leadership of tourism. In the last few decades overcoming these difficulties often included substantial supporting of institutionalized tourism organizations by tourism policy, with the intention to bundle forces and to achieve growing global competition (Pechlaner & Tschurtschenthaler, 2003). The experience thus far with tourism development cautions that while tourism can be a powerful agent for local economic prosperity, it is a significant challenge to ensure that it fosters the kind of environmentally and culturally sensitive development (Stevens, 2003).

In addition, it is important to mention that 66% of the participants declare that they do not desire to revisit the ski center of Kaimaktsalan. Operators of recreational ski resorts continue to face challenges in developing more loyal skiers. It has been reported that many skiers either drop out of the activity or they have low frequency of participation (Alexandris et al., 2017). Thus, future research should explore this condition further in order to discover the reasons. Hence, it is crucial to take these results into account to employ the right measures to increase customer satisfaction. An undifferentiated assessment of satisfaction drivers may hide the true importance of the single satisfaction dimensions and may mislead managers in setting the right priorities. Thus, managers of ski resorts are advised to first discover the structure and segments of their clientele, and then analyze their satisfaction surveys by considering the moderating effects of lifestyles, spending levels and skiers' skills. By setting target groups, specific improvements in relation to the right satisfaction dimensions in each segment can be realized. Also, overall satisfaction and thereby loyalty can be increased. An analysis of this type provides

managers with clear advice about where improvements necessary and meaningful (Matzler et al., 2007). It is important for policy-makers and local communities to improve the quality of tourist experience (Wang et al., 2016). Voras ski center should successfully provide “tourism products” that cover all tourist roles.

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A TALE OF A CITY, THROUGH ITS URBAN LANDSCAPE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE HEART OF EUROPE: THE CASE STUDY OF ORADEA CITY (ROMANIA)

Federica BADIALI

Department of Chemical and Geological Sciences, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia,
Via Campi 103, 41125 Modena (Italy), e-mail: fedebadiali@libero.it

Dorina Camelia ILIEȘ*

University of Oradea, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning,
1 University st., 410087 Oradea, Romania, e-mail: iliesdorina@yahoo.com

Doriano CASTALDINI

Department of Chemical and Geological Sciences, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia,
Via Campi 103, 41125 Modena (Italy), e-mail: dorianio.castaldini@unimore.it

Abstract: The urban landscape of Oradea city is characterized by the presence of the Crișul Repede River and of the Renaissance Fortress. In the present study an interdisciplinary methodology for the diachronic study of the interrelationship between man and his landscape has been applied. The study of the paleorivers shows that the hydrographic network (the distinguishing and bonding element of the city) was subject to natural evolution and to human intervention. The knowledge of Oradea's urban landscape represents a tool for rediscovering the geomorphological heritage, between use of resources and environmental conditioning. The relationship between fortress and rivers can be a chance for urban geotourism.

Key words: Fluvial plain, urban landscape, cultural heritage, Oradea, Western Romania, urban geotourism

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INTRODUCTION

Oradea is a north western city of Romania, Bihor County, with about 200.000 inhabitants; it is located at the limit of the Apuseni Mountains (belonging to the Carpathian mountain range) on the eastern edge of the fluvial plain opening toward Hungary (the border is 12 km westward) (Figure1). Its favourable location has made it one of the most important cities for communications between the western, central and southern Europe (Petrea et al., 2005; Stupariu, 2014); moreover, about 10 km southeast of the city are located two of the most famous spa resorts in Romania: Băile Felix and Băile 1 Mai (Ilies et al., 2015). A particularly dynamic hydrographic network has been the distinguishing and bonding element of the urban landscape of Oradea since the first construction stages of the

* Corresponding author

fortress, the most antique centre of the town, but most antique traces of the old town were destroyed by dense urban planning during the 19th and 20th centuries.

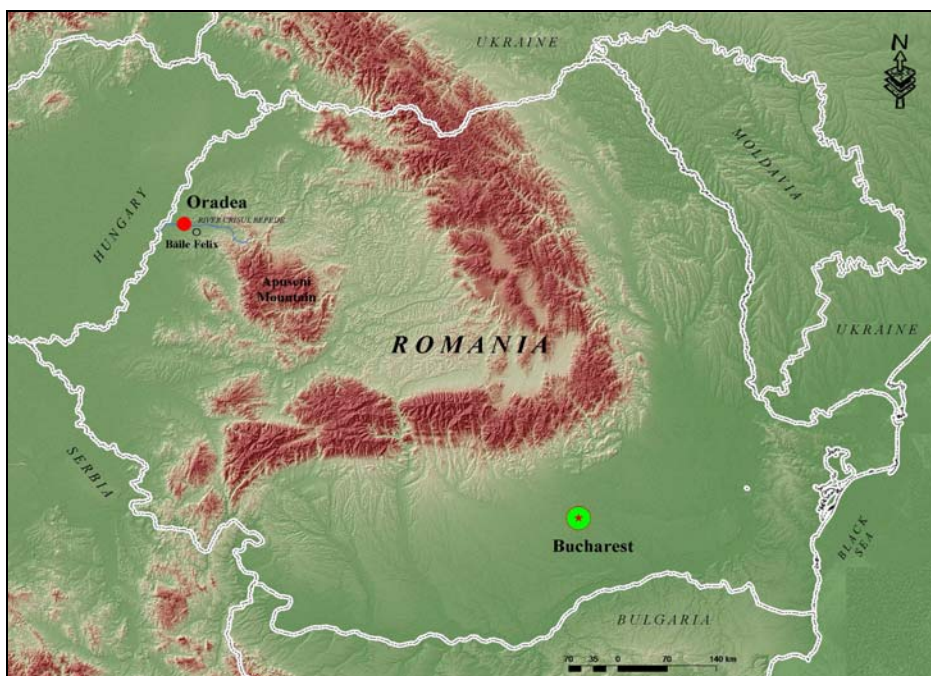


Figure 1. Location of Oradea city (Bihor County, NW Romania)



Figure 2. The Crișul Repede River crosses Oradea City.
In the background, the city centre

The urban landscape of Oradea city is strongly characterized by the presence of the Crișul Repede River and of the grand pentagonal Renaissance fortress, built by

Italian architects (Badiali & Ilieș, 2011; Ciure, 2007; Marosi, 1975; Maggiorotti, 1939), even if the cultural links between citizens, river and fortress have been almost forgotten. Oradea can be a significant example, of both distant and recent past, in what regards the development of relationships between landforms and urbanization, how the geomorphological heritage and its use could be a tool for urban geo-tourism enhancement, and how to increase residents' awareness of their own heritage, both geomorphological and cultural.

Geological and geomorphological outline of the Oradea metropolitan area

Oradea city is located at an altitude of approx 140 m a.s.l. on the fluvial plain of the Crișul Repede River, at the contact with Apuseni Mountains, maximum altitude of 350 m a.s.l. in the metropolitan area (Ilieș et al., 2007). The Crișul Repede River it reaches the plain S-E of Oradea, where currently the river bed has been deepened by about 2-3 m (Borcea et al., 1997) and then crosses the city (Figure 2) with a trend from ESE to WNW. In more detail, Oradea is located on the lower level of a flood plain constituted by gravels and sands from the upper Holocene (Figure3). After Josan et al, 2003, Ilieș et al 2007, the flood plain is overlooked by 5 orders of fluvial terraces and glacial deposits located on the slopes of the Apuseni Mountains in which sands in alternation with sandy clays crop out. The glacis are constituted by gravel and sands of the Upper Pleistocene. The fluvial plain is characterised by a dense network of abandoned river beds, with E-W and SE-NW trends, which can be clearly recognized in remote sensed images (aerial photographs and satellite images) as well as in the field (Figure 4) and which can be easily mapped (Figure 5). Some of these rivers are still active in maps dated from the 18th and 19th centuries (Emódi, 2007).

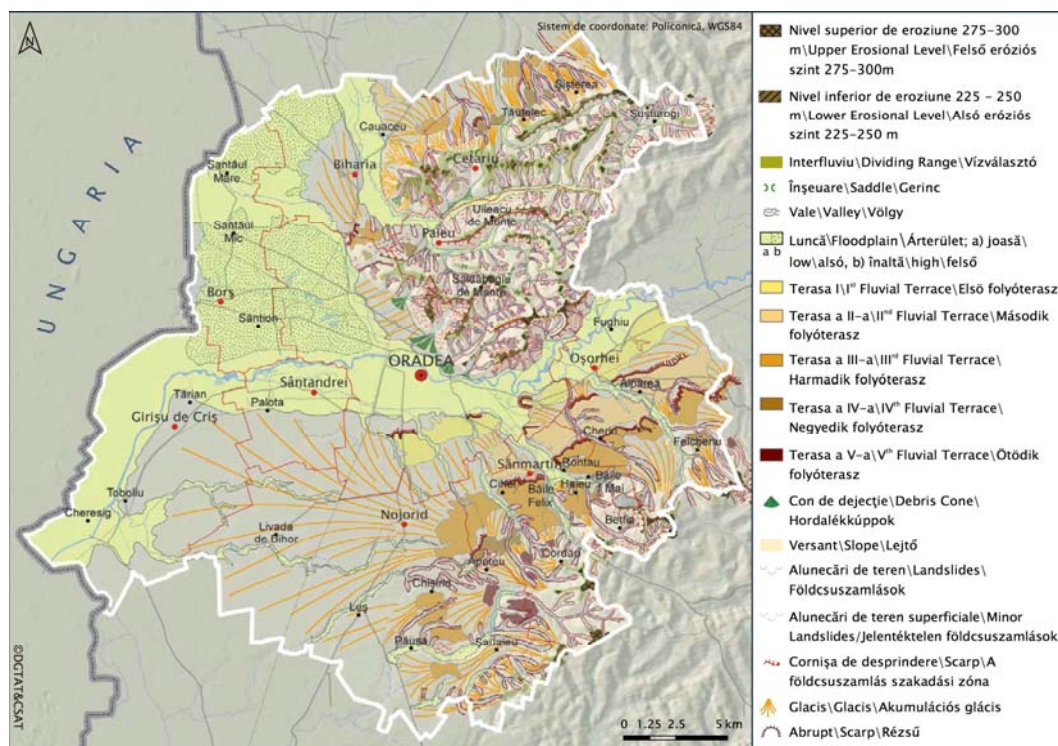


Figure 3. Geomorphological map of the Oradea metropolitan area (Ilieș et al., 2007, 21)



Figure 4. Abandoned river bed in the Oradea fluvial plain
(the green belt in the centre of the picture)

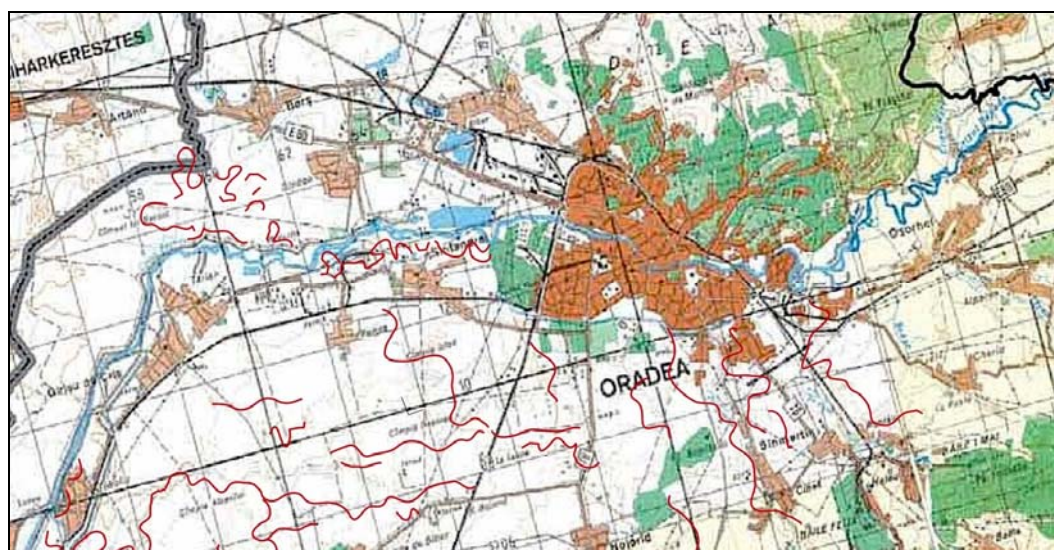


Figure 5. Abandoned river beds (red colour) in the Oradea fluvial plain
(Source: topographical map 1:25 000)

METHODS AND MATERIAL

The landscape must be studied as a complex system of interactive elements, through a substantial integration of diverse disciplinary areas of interest (Panizza & Piacente 2003; Reynard et al., 2011). Thus, in the present case study we applied an interdisciplinary methodology for the diachronic study of the interrelationship between man and his landscape. The course of investigation shown here, proposes a phase of

intense and thorough research which is a basic requirement, important for the comprehension of any area, and on which communication and disclosure are founded, involving also the local communities (Coratza & Panizza, 2010). The substantial valuation and the active use of the landscape are in fact the foundations for the ethical construction of a collective memory: due to the interdisciplinary methodology applied, it was possible here to obtain positive results and to open new perspectives for research. The first step for the reconstruction of the past landscape is the comprehension of the modern landscape, as a spatial-temporal *continuum*, not as a group of landscapes, geographically and chronologically separated; the interactions between man and landscape express themselves through complex relationships, in an uninterrupted flux: landscape is a living organism over time. In other words, the elements of the present landscape are signs, more or less ancient, more or less lasting, of its own history (Badiali, 2012). So, it is necessary to characterize a common methodology which, by using different instruments, can be modified to different case studies. The dialogue and interaction between branches of knowledge, on which we've founded our landscape study, is nowadays the topic of an epistemological debate, related to the more general idea of *scientific* method (Donghi, 2006): whereas the current epistemological approach is addressed and based on relations among interacting systems, indivisible into smaller entities, in which the structures of each system derive from the relationship and interconnection of all parts. In this perspective, new meanings must be given to knowledge related to the environmental context, consisting of natural, social, cultural, historical and political factors. Thus a *complex* approach is necessary, and also a complex way of thinking, particularly appropriated to landscape study, in which the parts are not separable from the whole, because they are thoroughly and interactively connected. In other words, a holistic approach can effectively help us to rediscover the geomorphological heritage.

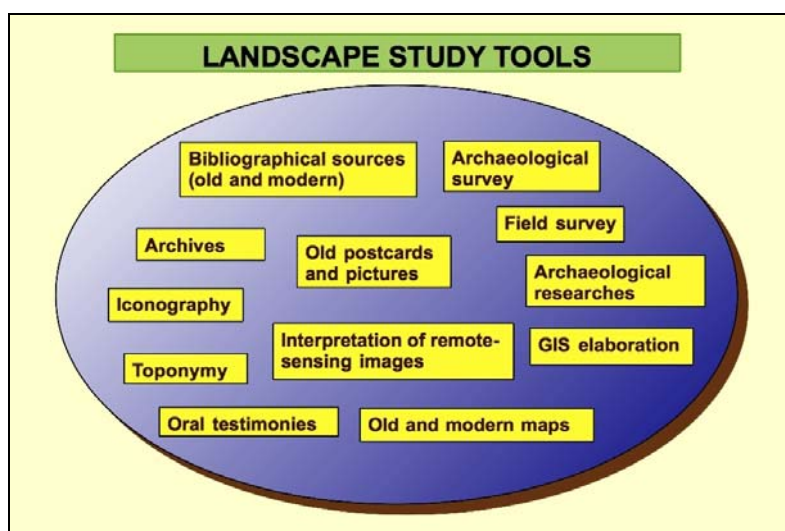


Figure 6. Different tools for a single method: the holistic approach to rediscover the geomorphological heritage

If, for the holistic understanding of the landscape, a deeply interdisciplinary approach is necessary, as shown, related to the involved research fields, then a cross engagement of the society is even more essential. In fact, the study of the landscape

concerns the whole territory, but at the same time, it concerns people living and working in that territory, who can both effectively contribute to research and benefit from the achievements, in terms of sustainable management, planning, protection and enhancement. Therefore, landscape knowledge and communication are closely linked and consequent, and they must even use a common language taking into account both the subjects and the addressees. In other words, even science must learn how to write in everyday language (Donghi, 2006). Although an integral analysis of the landscape would allow us to study all its aspects, it is evident that this is impossible because of various problems like scientific skills, knowledge, time and facilities; however, an integrated analysis seems more realistic including both the breakdown of the system into its more significant parts, and the choice of some elements, in a global view of unitary organization (Panizza & Piacente, 2003). As a consequence of the above illustrated concepts, from a practical point of view, the research has used different analytical tools which can be described as a system of variables interacting with one another, as shown in figure 6. Therefore, the application of this methodology, unitary in its complexity, will provide for the use of different instruments from time to time, because case studies are always different; in other words, the research adapted itself to the continuous transformation, which is the main feature of the landscape.

The relationship between landforms and Oradea's urbanization

Natural factors (geology, geomorphology, hydrology, vegetation, soil, etc) to which were added socio-economic factors, had an important and decisive role, in shaping Oradea's settlement patterns and they have also influenced its evolution (Petrea et al., 2007; Stupariu, 2014). The reconstruction and comprehension of Oradea's urban landscape development has been possible, as stated before, thanks to the comparison of cartographical material and documentation from the 16th and 17th centuries (maps and prospective views of the town and fortress and chronicles from the same period, mostly unpublished, or never studied from this point of view), bibliographical and archival sources, archaeological published research, old postcards and pictures, oral testimonies, integrated and supported by the study of remote sensed images (aerial photographs and satellite images) and by field surveys. In particular, the study of the abandoned river beds shows that the hydrographic network was subject to natural evolution, still ongoing, and to human intervention, such as channelization or changes of river courses. The city centre and the fortress are located in a belt of about 700 meters wide between the Crişul Repede River and the abandoned stream (the old course) of the Peţea Stream (Figure 7). In particular, the Peţea Stream is a secondary stream which is generated from thermal hot water springs located in the Băile Felix and Băile 1 Mai area (about 10 km away from Oradea), well known and used from the Roman Age until today; in the early decades of the last century, its course has been artificially diverted to the southern outskirts of the city. The fortress (Figure 7) is the most antique part of the city centre, but the traces of the old town were destroyed by dense urban planning during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Oradea fortress was placed very close to the course of Crişul Repede River in order to facilitate the filling with water of the defensive moat around it. Over time, the evolution of Oradea city was strongly influenced by the Crişul Repede River, an important connection route (Josan et al., 2003). Therefore, initially the city developed based on the most affordable landforms for building houses, access roads, water supply etc., which was the lower level of the floodplain of the Crişul Repede River. The sector of Oradea hills are characterized by steep slopes and is affected by numerous landslides (Figure 8); therefore, these geological factors (*s.l.*) limited the city's northward expansion. From the beginning of

the 1990s, after the fall of communism, the city expanded through modern neighbourhoods on the southern slopes of the Oradea Hills (Borcea et al., 2007, 11-12; Balaj & Ilieș, 2003).



Figure 7. Aerial photo of Oradea (original scale 1:25.000, source: geoportal.gov.ro) with the course of the Crisul Repede River, the old and current courses of the Peța Stream, the fortress, St. Anna Church (1) and a Mill (La Moara Veche, 2) which was destroyed few years ago



Figure 8. Landslides Oradea city, Ciuperca Hill (2016)



Figure 9. Aerial view of Oradea fortress. In the background the Crișul Repede River, in the foreground the old moat surrounding the fortress, partly occupied by buildings (left) and partly turned into an urban park (Source: Google Earth- <https://www.google.ro/intl/ro/earth/>)

The fact that Oradea has been built on the banks of a river means that, through the centuries, the city has been, flooded several times by the Crișul Repede River, as testified in several maps conserved in the Historical Archive of the Oradea Municipality. In order for the citizens to remember the flood hazard, the level that the water reached in 1851 is signed on the walls of St. Anna's Church (Figure 10) in the city centre (n.1 in Figure 7).

Among the most significant old cadastral maps used in this study, we would like to briefly remind of three examples that clearly show the wealth of information from the cartographical documents. In a map of the Olosig quarter (which means “*italian quarter*” and it is the name of the quarter even today), dating 1774 (Figure 11), on the right bank of the Crișul Repede River, west of the city centre, the defences of the river banks are precisely described, between the two bridges, and also, the letter R, top-left, indicated a recently flooded zone (*nuperrima exundatione*), where the houses had been destroyed by the rising water levels. A second map (Figure 12) concerns the properties of catholic institutions of Oradea, in 1797. In this elegant cartographic document, with a detailed map legend in latin language, the urban development appears strongly influenced by the Crișul Repede River and Pețea Stream and by the fortress. The city, in blue, occupies the area in which the rivers are closer, and a very broad square extends between the city and the fortress, used for markets and fairs until the 20th century (in yellow); moreover, the map indicates, noted by the letter G (at the top right, not coloured), an important mill (in Romanian *Molă*) on the Pețea Stream (located to the East of the fortress and today destroyed), that worked even in winter, due the presence of its hot thermal waters.

The changes in the hydrographical network are confirmed even in a more recent cadastral map dating from 1857 (Figure 13), that represents the eastern part of Oradea:

the abandoned meanders of the Crișul Repede River, eastward, are clearly mapped out, and progressively registered as agricultural lands.



Figure 10. a. St. Anna's Church (Ursuline Complex); **b.** The arrow indicates the position of the small marble plaque (visible on the right) which shows the water level reached by the 1851 flood from the Crișul Repede River in the city centre

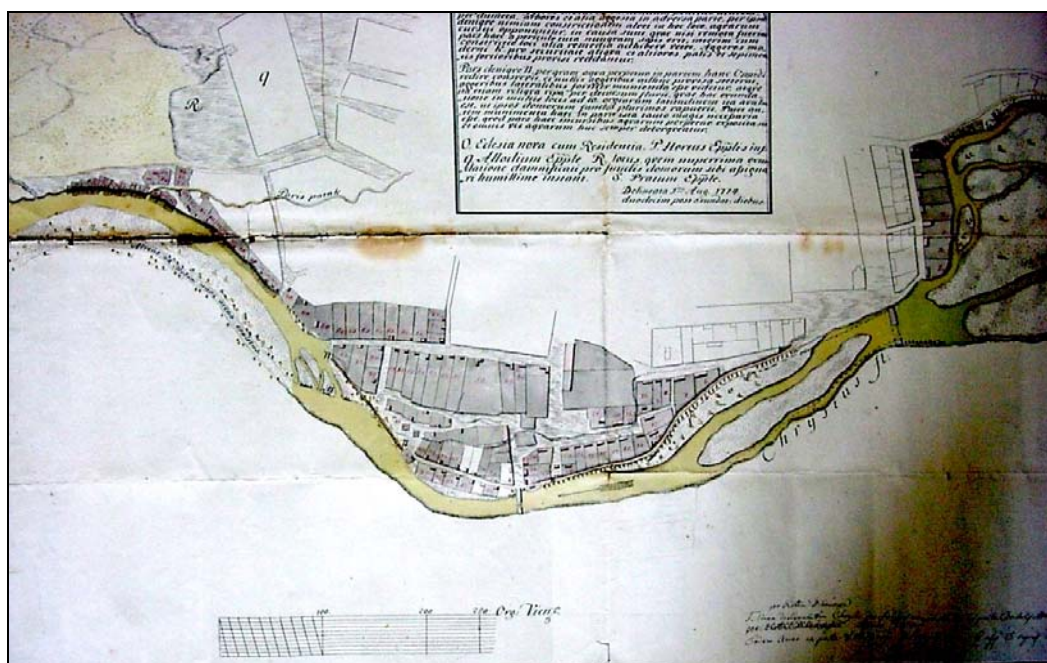


Figure 11. Cadastral map dating from 1774 representing the Olosig quarter: the letter R, top-left, indicated a recently flooded zone, State Archive of Bihor County in Oradea, catalogue number 244 sz (Emödi, 2007)

The relationship between the fortress and the hydrographic network

The first building of the fortress was a monastery, dedicated to the Holy Virgin Mary, founded by the Hungarian King Ladislau 1st (end of the 12th century), in a place chosen by divine inspiration: a wetland often flooded, so the monastery was situated on a fluvial ridge between the two parallel rivers, Crișul Repede River and Pețea. The monastery site, already called Varad ("fortress" in Hungarian) became even more important, as a bishop's seat and centre of pilgrimage, and so it was necessary to construct a fortress of wood and stone, with an approximately round ground plan, inside which were the new bishop's palace and the new cathedral (Borcea, 1995; Emődi, 2007). In 1241 this fortress was destroyed by the Mongol-Tatars, and was soon after reconstructed and built up, with high walls of stone, so that, between the 15th and 16th centuries it was described as unconquerable (Maggiorotti, 1939). The third phase (started in 1569), that we still see today, was built by Italian architects in a "new modern way": a pentagonal shape fortress, with low and thick walls on red-brick and stone, designed to withstand firearms and cannon (Figure 14). Therefore, after being the episcopal seat for 460 years, the fortress became a military fortification of prime importance for the safeguard of the Transylvanian borders (Groza & Prada, 2005-2006). The moat surrounding the fortress was fed by many channels, artificial and/or underground too, which carried there the hot thermal waters of the Pețea Stream. The total area of the fortress, including the moat, was about 150.000 sqm, of which 26.000 sqm were built-up areas, as it is nowadays (Figure 9) (Emődi, 1999).



Figure 14. Map of Oradea (Varadinum) by Joris Hoefnagel, 1617 (Baldescu 2008)

The map in Figure 14 is the 40th table of the *Civitates Orbis Terrarum - Liber sextus* and was draughted by Jacob Hoefnagel in 1617 from a drawing made by his father Joris during the Turkish siege in autumn 1598, as reported in the map legend. This bird's eye perspective has been used as a model by several cartographers in the two following

centuries (Hogenberg & Braun, 2008, Baldescu, 2008). In fact this map is not only an artistic masterpiece, but also gives us several details that can be read in many respects: geomorphology, paleogeography, archaeology and architectural history are involved at the same time in the interpretation of this amazing cartographical document. So, observing this map, we can confirm or specify some aspects, already achieved from studying written documents from the same period. Moreover, such a detailed map makes a lecture possible notwithstanding language problems (many historical and archaeological studies about Oradea have been written in Hungarian), and it can give us information about topics not described in written sources; in addition, a greater emphasis of some details compared to others, something that would normally be considered as a defect, could clarify social and political aspects, that otherwise we couldn't understand. In other words, old maps aren't inexact cartographical documents, but, on the contrary, they offer information that goes far beyond a simple cartographical representation.

The protagonist of the view is the renaissance fortress during its most important construction phase, with the medieval buildings still present inside: the circular high walls and the gothic cathedral. It can be seen very clearly the differences between the constructive stages, and the used materials, such as wood, bricks and stone, and even the surrounded moat, partially occupied by water, and the fortress bridge on woods, as well as all the other bridges in the map. The Hoefnagels' tried to describe the different altitudes between the fortress (northern sector of the map), and the quarter east, in the map legend *Suburbium Venetum*, today Velența. The hydrographic network plays a key role in the layout of the map, which is divided into sectors by the Crișul Repede northward (with the old hungarian name *Sereskeres*), by the Pețea southward and by the artificial channel that connects them. The city hasn't a defensive surrounding wall, only the west side is protected by a brick-wall, so the overall impression is not of a centralised urban settlement, but of various cores, connected to each other, and to the fortress. The road network is carefully shown, inside and out of Oradea, as well as the broad market place between the fortress and the town. The authors wanted to describe, as well, the soil use in the extra-urban area; thus we can note cultivated crops, some fenced in, vineyards on the slopes, and woods in the more distant areas. From a general point of view, the city of Oradea has been developed in its first phase on an approximately rectangular plan, in the narrow space between two rivers (the Crișul Repede River to the north and the Pețea Stream to south) and the fortress (to east). On the west side was built an artificial channel to connect Crișul Repede River and Pețea Stream, and above it a fortified wall on wood, as shown in the renaissance view of Joris Hoefnagel, 1617 (Figure 14). This way, the city and the fortress were completely surrounded by water, with many other channels through the town, so that Oradea was called *Orașul de apă* ("the City of Water"). The presence of water was the basis of the city's development, because handicraft enterprises (mills, tanneries, textile factories, metalworks, sawmills, etc) could develop thanks to the easy availability of hydraulic energy, in particular in the areas close to the fortress, because the hot thermal water of Pețea Stream could provide energy even during the winter, when the water normally froze. During the economic and social change of the 19th and 20th centuries, hydraulic energy outgrew its usefulness, so many channels and factories disappeared, as well as the Pețea Stream, artificially diverted southward, outside the city centre. Therefore, the importance of water today is almost forgotten.

Fragments of the architectural and structural elements of the earlier medieval fortress have been inserted into the red-brick walls of the Renaissance fortress, for decorative purposes; in addition, some sections of the late walls (17th-18th centuries) have been built of white limestone, probably from the Betfia quarry, near Oradea city, these rocks have been used to produce hydraulic lime too. The walls of the fortress, with the

medieval stone fragments included (Figure 15), can be *read* as an historical tale, in a real urban geology path, not only to go back through the history of both this extraordinary building and this amazing city, but also to understand the relationship with the geomorphological and geological features of the territory. In other words, it is a new way to carry information about environment and history, highlighting new contents, which bring into contact geological history and city history (Gregori, 2009 a, 2009b, 2010). In the later decades of the 18th century, the fortress lost its strategic importance, and became a military barracks, until the end of the last century (Groza & Prada, 2005). The fortress risked being destroyed in the 1980s, when the Municipality was considering the possibility to use the huge surface of the fortress for new apartment buildings. Fortunately, the fall of the communist regime, in 1989, avoided this destruction so the various buildings of the fortress hosted temporarily a range of cultural institutions, including the Faculty of Visual Arts of the Oradea University and the regional seat of the State Archive. After a long period of restoration, renovation and protection started in 2009 and completed in 2016 the fortress is once again the focus of the cultural life in Oradea. Nowadays in the fortress there are tourist information centres, a hotel, and areas for music concerts and exhibitions.



Figure 15. White limestone, probably from the Betfia quarry (left image) and fragments of the architectural and structural elements of the earlier Medieval fortress (right image) incorporated in the red-brick walls of the Renaissance fortress

DISCUSSION

The grand Renaissance fortress of Oradea seemed the only testimony of the city's past, which was apparently erased by the heavy urban planning intervention of the 20th century. Conversely, thanks to the interdisciplinary methodology applied in this case study, we were able to reconstruct the features and the motivation of the urban landscape's evolution, and of the relationship between the city and the fortress. We have carried out this study, never done before in this area, on the basis of analysing and comparing several cartographic documents (from 16th to 18th centuries), archaeological and geomorphological evidences, remote sensed images and oral testimonies. In this way it was confirmed that the qualifying and binding element of the urban landscape of Oradea has been - and still is - the presence of several watercourses, in particular in the area between Crișul Repede River and Pețea Stream; this situation was also confirmed by old maps and documents, but particularly by the study of abandoned river beds, that has shown a complex hydrographic network, constantly changing. The richness of waters influenced in the first step the choice of the place where the fortress was built, and then oriented the urban evolution; meanwhile, man interacted with the streams, creating artificial channels, or making partial modifications to the natural

watercourse. In addition, the possibility of using rivers for transporting goods, and of supplying energy to handicrafts, has directly influenced the social and economic development of the city. Therefore, in the past, the citizens of Oradea, had specific and technological skills in the hydraulic field, whose effective application depended on the level of administrative capacity and political and social organization of the city (Ortalli, 2010).

CONCLUSIONS

The study regarding the evolution of Oradea's urban landscape might represent an effective tool for rediscovering the geomorphological heritage, between the use of resources and environmental conditioning; the Oradea Fortress can be a chance for developing urban geotourism: in other words, the sustainable development and the active use of the landscape are in fact the foundations for the ethical construction of a collective memory. Moreover, this case study emphasizes the necessity of studying the urban landscape as a complex system of natural and anthropic interactive elements, through a substantial integration of different disciplinary areas of interest. We can suppose that Oradea should have the typical characteristics of a *resilient society* (Costantini & Martini, 2010), able to face environmental limitations; in the meanwhile, limitations have been transformed into incentives to find resources in difficult times. Today, this kind of social reaction, more evident in the first steps of Oradea's evolution, as well as the urban geology (Gregori, 2009 a, 2009 b, 2010), could become a cultural value, not only for tourist evaluation, but also to rediscover the relationships between the fortress, the city, and the territory, between resource exploitation and environmental conditioning.

In synthesis, the present study, contains many suggestions for further investigation and may be, first of all, an important instrument to improve knowledge about the history of Oradea, and also a basis for future actions on urban landscape, not only for tourist development and information of citizens, but also for territorial planning.

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UNDERGRADUATE TOURISM STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS TOURISM INDUSTRY: THE CASE OF DAEJEON, SOUTH KOREA

Demet TUZUNKAN*

Woosong College, SIHOT Department, 171 Dongdaeyeon-ro,
Dong-gu, 34606 Daejeon, S.Korea, e-mail: demettuzunkan@gmail.com

Abstract: Examining the perceptions and attitudes of current undergraduate tourism students toward tourism industry is the main purpose of this study. In this research, undergraduate Korean tourism students were selected to learn their perceptions and attitudes towards tourism industry. A total of 150 questionnaire were made equally in Daejeon, South Korea, during May 2016-June 2016. When the process completed, datas were imported in to the Statistical Package Social Science 17.0 (SPSS 17.0), where descriptive analyses, factor analysis, Mann Whitney U Test and Kruskal Wallis Test were undertaken. Study results showed that tourism job is interesting, worth of doing, need less skills, people can use their ability and skills and get pleasure while working, on the other hand some negative perceptions and prejudices about tourism industry were derived from to the responses of students.

Key Words: Tourism, Education, Korea, Workforce, Perceptions, Students

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry is the largest service industry and largest employment generator in the world. With increasing globalization and disposable income, tourism has over the last few decades, became one of the largest and fastest growing industries all over the world (Amalu et al., 2012; UNCTAD, 2013). For example while, the number of tourists travelling around the world in 2013 was 1.087 millions of people, this number has increased up to 1.135 millions of people in 2014 (TUOFED, 2015) and it continues to increase. As for the entire world, tourism maintains its characteristic by being a continuously developing industry in South Korea. According to UNWTO, South Korea is the 20th most visited country in the world, and the 6th most visited in Asia, where 12, 1 million foreign tourists visited in 2013 (UNWTO, 2015). In addition to these informations, according to Euromonitor Internationals' 2013 declaration about annual Top City Destinations Ranking, covering 100 of the world's leading cities in terms of international tourist arrivals, Seoul is at the 13 place (Bremner, 2015). Because of rapidly growing of international tourism industry every year in worldwide, customer satisfaction has become most important issue for countries. Although there are many factors that affect tourist satisfaction, such as service quality, attractiveness, activities, destination image, price and so on, labour-force is the most important factor. Factors such as quality of services, business performance, business

* Corresponding author

itself, destination and/or country image and etc. depend on a well-educated, well-trained, skilled, enthusiastic and committed work-force. Bettencourt and Brown (1997) claims that employee attitudes, performance and behavior are key determinants of service quality, which has a direct linkage to customer satisfaction and loyalty. High quality services and work-forces attitudes affect tourists' intention of coming back to business or destination. However, some researchers (Rosentbluth, 1991; Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996) suggested that without employees positive attitude toward their work, there is minimal chance for the organization to achieve customer satisfaction and loyalty. Well educated and well trained work-force gives not only high quality service but also provides healthy and qualified relationship among tourists and workers. Tourism industry entails plenty of "face to face" interaction with its customers and that makes the tourism industry highly dependent on an adequate balance between the hard and the soft skills of its employees (Hinch & Butler, 2007). Olcay (2008) suggests that the high qualified education in the tourism industry which is based on service element, contributes significantly to the regional economic development as well as the employee himself. Up to now, it's point out by researches (Gökdeniz et al., 2002; Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000; Baum, 2006; Deery & Shaw, 1999; Freeland, 2000) that well educated work-force and workers' attitudes and behaviors affect customer satisfaction but these workers stay away from the industry due to some problems. Tourism industry confranted with problem of attaracting and retaining qualified work-force. It's claimed that there are plenty of factors which cause challenges among tourism industry employees. These problems were summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Challenges in Tourism Industry Workforce

Work-force Problems	Researchers
Low wage	Roney and Öztin (2007), Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000), Pavesic and Brymer (1990), Kokko and Guerrier (1994), Iverson and Deery (1997), Goodall (1987), Lucas and Jefferies (1991), Riley at al., (2002)
Poor working conditions	Roney and Öztin (2007), Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000), Pavesic and Brymer (1990), Kokko and Guerrier (1994), Iverson and Deery (1997), Doherty et al., (2001), Jenkins (2001), Goodall (1987), Haywood and Maki (1991), Brien (2004)
Irregular and long working hours	Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000), Birdir (2002)
Seasonal working	Kozak (2009), Pelit and Güçer (2006), Roney and Öztin (2007)
High turnover	Pavesic and Brymer (1990), Kokko and Guerrier (1994), Iverson and Deery (1997), Doherty et al., (2001), Jenkins (2001), Goodall (1987), Haywood and Maki (1991), Doherty et al., (2001)
Low job satisfaction	Doherty et al., (2001), Jenkins (2001), Pavesic and Brymer (1990)
Absence of motivating factors	Doherty et al., (2001), Jenkins (2001), Pavesic and Brymer (1990)
Lack of security	Goodall (1987)
Limited training	Goodall (1987)
Poor image	Lucas and Jefferies (1991), Riley at al., (2002)
Low career potential	Lucas and Jefferies (1991)
Low statue	Riley at al., (2002)

As seen in Table 1, wages are low in tourism industry. Besides, employees work in poor conditions in irregular and long working hours. Turnover rate is high and job satisfaction is low. Security is not efficient and motivating factors don't exist. These problems may cause challenges and obligations in workforce of tourism industry. Tourism industries' development depends on many factors, but one of the most important is the qualification of human resources. Human resources is an important and vulnerable

segment of tourism industry regarding to its role in making a connection with the tourists as the users of services given in tourism industry. Gruescu et al., (2008) argue that the story of successful tourism enterprises is largely about people – how they are trained and educated, how they are valued and rewarded, and how they are supported through a process of continuous learning and career development. The increasing of the tourism industry competitiveness largely depends on the human resources quality improvement (Milic et al., 2011:435). Many studies have recently conducted about focusing on how tourism education must be. For instance, Morgan (2004) found that in order to prepare the students for the future, the industry should be a part of the tourism education. Aksu & Köksal (2005) mentioned that tourism students have negative perceptions and attitudes toward the tourism industry. Lam and Xiao (2000) suggested that there is a big gap between the supply and the demand of qualified personnel and curriculums are generally have poor designs. They found that the tourism graduates from institutes and vocational schools in China often fail to meet industry needs due to the number of unstable curriculums. Several researchers have also studied the perceptions of undergraduate tourism and hospitality management students. In these studies it is found that students tend to be fairly realistic before graduation but turnover number of these students were high (Casado, 1992); the beginner students had positive images of the industry, whereas the students with work experience were less positive. It was obvious that work experience as a trainee in the industry affected their perceptions in a negative way (Pavesicve Brymer, 1990; Kozak & Kızılırmak, 2001; Barron & Maxwell, 1993). Students have negative perceptions towards different dimensions of working in tourism (Unluonen, 2004; Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000); unqualified education in tourism effects students' success negatively in the industry (Birdir, 2002).

According to these researches, it is obvious that sustainable tourism development needs high qualified and educated workforce. So, undergraduate tourism students' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism industry is emphasized in this study. Therefore, tourism businesses and governmental cooperations can see the view of tourism students' and take the precautions in case it needs. Because these students will be the high educated workforce of South Korea tourism industry in the near future.

METHODOLOGY

This research is aimed investigating the perceptions and attitudes of undergraduate tourism students and examine the differences in South Korean students views. A sample was selected from students studying tourism in South Korea. That's why from nonprobability, purposive sampling was chosen. Purposive sampling is a type of sampling that is characterized by the use of judgement and a deliberate effort to obtain representative samples by including typical groups in the sample (Kerlinger, 1986). Undergraduate South Korean tourism students were selected to learn their perceptions and attitudes. A survey was used for data collection. It was composed of two sections: First section was contained as a set of 60 statements about students' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism industry. 5-point likert scale was used to measure the students' agreement to statements. Second section was composed of 7 demographic questions about characteristics of students. In order to measure perception and attitudes of tourism students in South Korea, a multi-dimensional and multi-item attitudes scale was used which Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000) improved. Scale format is the Likert type scale with five categories (1=strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3= No opinion, 4= Disagree, 5=strongly disagree) that selected to measure attitudes. For the sake of the clarity of the statement, the initial scale was pre-tested on a sample of

25 South Korean students. After the pre-test students told that some statements have same meaning for them. That's why these statements were removed from original scale. On the other hand, some statements were not used from original scale because almost half of the students have not any work experience in tourism industry in both countries. A total of 150 questionnaire were made equally in South Korea, during May 2016-June 2016. When the process completed, data were imported in to the Statistical Package Social Science 17.0 (SPSS 17.0), where descriptive analyses, factor analysis, Mann Whitney U Test and Kruskal Wallis Test were undertaken.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, 150 tourism undergraduate students took place in Daejeon city in South Korea. As seen at Table 2, majority of respondents were female (56%) and more than half of them (52.7%) are at 18-20 age. 74 students had a background in other schools rather than vocational high school and most part respondents (30.7%) were freshman in their education.

Table 2. Some Characteristics of Survey Sample in Frequency Distributions and Percentages

	N	%
Age		
18-20	79	52.7
21-23	66	44.0
24-26	5	3.0
Gender		
Male	66	44.0
Female	84	56.0
Type of high school		
Vocational high school (tourism)	39	26.0
Other	111	74.0
Class		
Freshmen	46	30.7
2. Class (Sophomore)	41	27.3
3. Class (Junior)	38	25.3
4. Class (Senior)	25	16.7
Did you choose tourism education voluntarily?		
Yes	143	95.3
No	7	4.7
Did you have any information about the tourism industry while choosing this department?		
Yes	122	81.3
No	28	18.7
If you knew the working conditions in the tourism industry, have you ever chosen this department for education?		
Yes	138	92.0
No	12	8.0
Have you ever worked in tourism industry?		
Yes	75	50.0
No	75	50.0

Almost all students (95.3%) have chosen tourism school willingly and most part of respondents (81.3%) indicated that they had information about the tourism industry while choosing this department. The question - 'if you knew the working conditions in tourism industry, have you ever choose this department?' – was replied with "yes" with

the rate of 92%. This means that almost all of the tourism students have information about tourism industry before they choose this department. In Table 3, a summarized result of perceptions and attitudes of undergraduate tourism can be seen. Attitudes towards each dimension are discussed below:

Table 3. Result of Mann Whitney U Test

VARIABLES		1.Commitment to the Industry	2.Coworkers	3.Managers	4.Promotion Opportunities	5.Nature of Work	6.Social Status	7.Industry-Person Congeniality	8.Family Life	9.Physical Working Conditions	10.Pay/Benefits	11.Future
Gender	Z	-1.324	-.362	-1.170	-2.378	-1.554	-2.833	-1.871	-.932	-.212	-2.877	-1.883
	p	.185	.717	.242	.017	.120	.005	.061	.251	.832	.004	.060
Type of High School	Z	-1.400	-1.542	-1.803	-.847	-1.922	-.688	-2.108	-.560	-1.373	-2.493	-.383
	p	.162	.123	.071	.397	.055	.492	.035	.576	.170	.013	.702
Choosing tourism Education voluntarily	Z	-.041	-.005	-1.452	-3.018	-.829	-2.707	-.701	-.719	-1.214	-.829	-1.040
	p	.967	.996	.147	.003	.407	.007	.483	.472	.225	.407	.298
Worked in tourism industry before	Z	-.813	-2.857	-1.306	-.366	-2.485	-1.33	-3.601	-1.208	-.488	-2.301	-2.277
	p	.416	.004	.192	.714	.013	.182	.000	.227	.626	.021	.023
p< .05												

It can be understood from table 3 that there have been significant differences seen for factors 4, 6 and 10 for the gender variable. For the type of School Variable, there have been significant differences seen for industry-person congeniality and pay/benefit factors. On the other hand, there have been significant differences seen for factors 4 and 6 for choosing tourism education voluntarily variable. For the having worked in Tourism Industry before variable, there have been significant differences seen for co-workers, nature of work, industry-person congeniality, pay/benefits and future factors. Table 4 shows the Kruskal Wallis Test results of dimensions changes according to age and class.

Table 4. Result of Kruskal Wallis Test

VARIABLES		1.Commitment to the Industry	2.Coworkers	3.Managers	4.Promotion Opportunities	5.Nature of Work	6.Social Status	7.Industry-Person Congeniality	8.Family Life	9.Physical Working Conditions	10.Pay/Benefits	11.Future
Age	Chi-Square	1.712	3.360	10.753	12.475	12.409	1.913	5.057	2.698	4.396	5.073	.452
	Pearson	.425	.186	.005	.002	.002	.384	.080	.259	.111	.079	.798
Class	Chi-Square	5.581	4.539	11.778	5.662	10.066	1.102	22.795	2.090	11.647	9.911	1.310
	Pearson	.134	.209	.008	.129	.018	.776	.000	.554	.009	.009	.727
p< .05												

For the age variable, there have been significant differences seen for managers, promotion opportunities and nature of work factors. This is to say, different age group

student has a different idea about managers, promotion opportunities and nature of work. For the class variable, there have been significant differences seen for factors 3, 5, 7, 9 and 10. These results show that when students' education level improves their perception change about managers, nature of work, industry-person congeniality, physical working conditions and pay/benefits.

According to factor analysis, there have been eleven factors which eigenvalues over 1 and factor loadings more than 5. Names have been given to the factors, each reflecting what is believed to be the essence of the factor. The most important factor is factor one and it has been called the '*Commitment to the Tourism Industry*'. Twelve items with factor loadings above 5 constitute this factor: Work in the Tourism Industry allows me to meet new and different people (mean=1.66); I can use the knowledge and experience I have gained while working in the Tourism Industry (mean=1.78); I am happy about working in the Tourism Industry (mean=2.11); It makes me happy that I serve people to make them happy (mean=2.13); Employees' working wish and motivation is high in the Tourism Industry (mean=2.13); My personality is suitable to work in the Tourism Industry (mean=2.15); After graduation, I will come to a good position soon (mean=2.08); Working in the Tourism Industry is enjoyable (mean=2.16); I'm glad that I chose the Tourism Department for Education (mean=2.16); Working in the Tourism Industry provides me learning something new every day (mean=2.19); I love dynamic business environment (mean=2.22) and Managers are respectful to their employees (mean=2.24). These results show that Korean students glad to educate and work in the Tourism Industry. On the other hand, they think that working in Tourism Industry not only teach new things to them but also enables them to use their knowledge and experience.

Factor 2 has been termed '*Co-workers*'. Factor 2 includes these factors: I support those who want to study tourism around me (mean=2.40); In General education level of employees is low in the Tourism industry; (mean=3.58); Many managers in the Tourism Industry are uneducated (mean=3.76), I am ashamed to say to my family and friends that I will work in the Tourism Industry (mean=3.95). Co-worker factor is the second important factor for Korean students. In general, they feel not good of working in the Tourism Industry and they find co-workers' education level not sufficient enough. Factor 3 has been called '*Managers*'. Four items with factor loadings above .5 constitute these factors: There is cooperation between the people working in the Tourism Industry (mean=1.95); Managers support their employees to receive training as professionals (mean= 2.03); The experience of working in the Tourism Industry is considered while promotion (mean=2.00); Managers take into account the recommendations of the employees (mean=2.36). One can understand from these results Korean students believe that there has been coordination between workers and managers in the tourism industry. Factor 4 '*Promotion Opportunities*' includes three features: Encouragements in Tourism are clear and obvious (with a low mean of 2.06), Promotions in Tourism Industry (holiday bonus, insurance, etc.) are sufficient (mean=2.18) and If you want to work in the Tourism Industry, you must have friends in the industry (with a moderately high mean of 2.44). These results state that even promotions are clear and sufficient in the Tourism Industry; they need relatives for working Tourism Industry.

Only two features load into factor 5, 6 and 7. Factor 5 named '*Nature of Work*' which includes: Jobs are very stressful in the Tourism Industry (low mean=2.65) and Works are very tiring in the Tourism Industry (high mean=2.71). Factor 6 has been termed '*Social Status*': Tourism is a profession that is accepted by society (low mean=2.21) and Working in the Tourism industry is a respected business (high

mean=2.62). Factor 7 (named '*Industry-Person Congeniality*'): Working in the Tourism Industry allows me to give an important contribute to the services industry (low mean=2.16) and It requires compromising moral values to work in the Tourism industry (high mean=2.32). Factor 8 named '*Family Life*' and includes three features: Due to the seasonality of the Tourism Industry it is difficult to find regular work (mean=2.95); I wish my children choose Tourism department for education like me (mean=3.01) and Working in the Tourism Industry affects my family life negatively (mean=3.55). Interestingly even Korean students believe that working in the Tourism Industry affects family life negatively and difficult to find regular work they wish their children work Tourism Industry. Only two features load into factor 9, 10 and 11. Factor 9 named '*Physical Working Conditions*': Managers help employees to do their jobs better (with a low mean of=1.96) and It is physically hard working in the Tourism Industry (with a moderately high mean of=2.31). Factor 10 is '*Pay/Benefits*': Working hours are irregular in the Tourism Industry (low mean of=2.90) and Previous graduates are not working in good positions in the Tourism Industry (high mean=3.23). Factor 11 called '*Future*': After graduation, I will not work in places that do not support my advancement (low mean=2.54) and Wages are low in the Tourism Industry (high mean=2.62). Even Korean students perceive working Tourism Industry hard, they think that managers help workers. Unfortunately, wages are low, previous graduates aren't working at good positions and working hours are irregular according to Korean students. So they do not want to work in the Tourism Industry in the future.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated undergraduate South Korean undergraduate tourism students' perceptions and attitudes towards different aspects of working in the tourism industry with relatively reliable and valid attitude scale. A number of findings emerged from the study. According to the demographic questions, it can be seen that students were mostly female, 18-20 years old and in freshman level in their education. Almost all students have information about tourism industry while choosing and they choose tourism department willingly. For the students, tourism job is interesting, low skilled and worth doing it. They choose willingly tourism industry and they have information before choosing they can think like that. On the other hand, interestingly they think that working in tourism industry affect their family life negatively because of the nature of work and working hours are too long. They feel as a slave while working, they don't like to serve people when they're on holiday. They think that employers are uneducated and uneducated employers jealous of educated employers. Students have some positive perception and attitudes towards tourism industry. Study results showed that tourism job is interesting, worth of doing, need less skills, people can use their ability and skills and get pleasure while working, on the other hand, they think that tourism jobs are not accepted in society because they specified that they ashamed to say their relatives that they are working in this industry. According to the respondents, in tourism working hours are too long and family life affect negatively due to the nature of work.

Respondents think that payments are low in tourism industry while considering long and irregular working hours. One important result is about the perceptions towards managers. The perceptions are changing while the students comes closer to graduation. They give high respect to the managers and they believe that managers are supporters. Overall, there are negative tendencies can be seen from the responses but one should take into consideration that they are still undergraduate students. Their opinions derive from observations and gossips. According to their ages, they don't have

any serious working history in tourism industry. They worked as an intern and part-time employee in the industry. It is clear that educators and professors in universities should include some effective practical programmes in to lectures.

The hotel managers should be invited to the lectures to meet with the students. These meetings may give start since freshmen classes. Also, governmental precautions should be taken about payments and working hours. Educated and high-skilled employees are important and valid in tourism industry for both countries. Employers' and governments' cooperation would help to solve some unclear and negative opinions against finding regular jobs in industry. Specially, the students should not be ashamed working in tourism industry. Academy, government and employers must work coordinally and find permanent solutions for these perceptions. Thus, in the future more conscious and merrier tourism industry employees can be seen in South Korea where tourism has an important economic role in.

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THE EVALUATION OF TOURISM DESTINATION BRAND EQUITY FROM THE FEMALE TOURIST'S PERSPECTIVES (STUDY OF 16 CITIES IN IRAN)

Mohammad KAZEMI*

University of Shahid Beheshti, Faculty of Earth Sciences, Department of Human Geography,
Tehran, Iran, No 186, Shadid Beheshti, e-mail: mo_kazemi@sbu.ac.ir

Mehdi HESAM

University of Guilan, Faculty of Literature, Rasht, Iran,
No 19, Khalij-e-Fars Rasht, Iran, e-mail: mhesam@guilan.ac.ir

Majid Saeidi RAD

University of Shahid Beheshti, Faculty of Earth Sciences, Department of Human Geography,
Tehran, Iran, 186, Shadid Beheshti, Velenjak, e-mail: majid.saeidirad@yahoo.com

Mehdi CHERAGHI

University of Zanzan, Faculty of Humanities, Iran
e-mail: cheraghi@zanjan.ac.ir

Abstract: Despite the surge in interest in research on tourism destinations, little attention has been paid to investigating and comparing destination brand equity that implies conceptualizing how tourists evaluate a destination brand is complex. This study examined empirical information to compare and identify the status of destination brand assets of 16 Iranian cities. In recent years feminist tourism is largely neglected in Iran, accordingly the present study aims at evaluating the status of the tourism destination brand equity from the female tourists' perspective in several cities in Gilan province, northern Iran. The statistical population of the study consists of the total number of female tourists visiting different cities in Gilan province. However, regarding the large statistical population, the sample size was determined using random sampling and 380 female tourists were chosen from the population. Since women tend to be more precise and accurate than men in visual fields and accordingly in evaluating a destination, we decided to use a female population in this study. Data were collected by questionnaires measuring variables such as awareness, mental image, perceived quality and loyalty. The data analysis were conducted using SPSS through cluster analysis and logistic regression tests. The results indicate that the status of the tourism destination brand equity in this region is promising; besides, the image of brand was the most influential and the dimension of loyalty was the least influential in promoting the tourism destination brand equity in this region.

Key words: Tourism Destination, Tourists, Brand Equity, Gilan Province's Cities, Iran

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* Corresponding author

INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry as a young and unique section of industry has dominated a significant part of the economic and non-economic activities in the developed and developing countries. The industry has many benefits for communities, including job creation, deployment of economic capital and to promoting political legitimacy (Blanke & Chiesa, 2013; Nunkoo, 2015; Hesam et al., 2016; Saarinen, 2006). Creating and strengthening brand for tourism destinations is of great importance in the long-term success of tourism (Ritchie & Ritchie, 1998; Caldwell & Freire, 2004). Therefore, one of the main goals of managers and destination marketing experts is to increase their revenues and other benefits of this growing global industry through destinations branding (Gretzel et al., 2006). Keller (2003) states using brands to differentiate products is a strong competitive marketing strategy, and Buhalis (2000) believes that utilizing brand in service industries such as tourism has more efficiency in comparison with manufacturing industries. Probably the increasing attention to branding services, including tourism, during the recent decades is an evidence of this trend. According to Gursoy & McCleary (2004), the decisions of tourists is highly influenced by the destination brands. In fact, these brands are providing information identifying the destination and differentiating them from other competitors, as well as forming tourists' expectations from the upcoming travel (Murphy et al., 2007). As a result, tourism destination branding is one of the key aspects of destinations brand management and include many advantages (Kozma, 2010). However, note that many marketing researchers such as Kotler & Gertner (2002) believe that the principles of product branding are not directly applicable to services branding. Konecnik & Gartner (2007) has posed this question that, can the concept of tangible goods and products brand be utilized for tourism destinations? Gursoy & McCleary (2004), argue despite some similarities between the two mentioned concepts, they are evidently distinct. Subsequently, there is no generally accepted framework for evaluating the tourism destination brands, due to their specific complexities (Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). However, the concept of brand equity of tourism destinations contains most of the significant variables in tourism destinations branding.

The tourism industry in every region and country is witnessing high competitive growth (Blanke & Chiesa, 2013), due to this global competition, tourism destinations are seeking a global branding strategy to create strong brands (Kotler & Gertner, 2002), and to overtake competitors and generate differentiation for themselves (Buhalis, 2000). Any product or service requires a purposeful efforts in branding to attract customers and to survive in the competitive market. Destination branding is also pursuing to integrate all the attributes that are associated with a place (i.e. its art, agriculture, sports culture, food, investments etc.), under one concept which represents a unique identity for that place and distinguish it from other competitors (Campelo et al., 2014; Morgan & Pritchard, 2004; Blain et al., 2005). More significantly, branding requires a vision (Miličević et al., 2017) and a mission (Ritchie & Ritchie, 1998) regarding the destination and its future success. Nowadays, customers are surrounded not only by numerous brands but also by various methods of marketing in introducing new brands. In basic marketing, the term Brand is widely referred to any type of product or service. Tourism destination can be also considered as a kind of product or brand with tangible and intangible attributes (Pike, 2005; Pike et al., 2010). Despite the novelty of destination branding concept, many tourism destination around the world are trying to acquire the necessary strategies for branding their places, similar to manufacturing units, in order to obtain a unique identity among their competitors (Hosany et al., 2006; Hankinson, 2005). The Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) are currently facing a constant struggle for attracting tourists and becoming an irreplaceable destination (Pike & Page, 2014); for this purpose, a favorable and

powerful brand is a strong marketing weapon (Morgan et al., 2003), since from tourists' perspectives, a destination with more favorable image and identity may has higher priority comparing to another destination even with outstanding landscapes (Ilieş & Ilieş, 2015; Mao, 2008). One of the shortcomings of tourism products is their intangibility which effects the integration of the tourism service providers attempts and markets stability during different periods, however, tourism destination branding can be a method to decrease the negative influences of this feature (Baker & Cameron, 2008; Weiermair, 2004). In recent years feminist tourism and tourism destinations in Iran are largely neglected and most of the tourist attractions have remained unknown. Besides, the notion of tourism destination is not well-perceived in Iran and in the other word, this concept is still very young and immature in Iran. For that reason, evaluating and identifying the brand equity and influencing factors on its growth from female tourists' perceptions can be very efficient and effective in the branding process and long term marketing for the destinations.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand equity and customer-based approach

Brand equity in customer-centric approach is focused on customers' knowledge about the brand. This knowledge is reflected in their awareness, mental image and brand's associations (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1991). Therefore, brand's power origins from customers' knowledge and opinions which stems from their experiences or the marketing programs related to that brand (Keller, 1993; Lassar et al., 1995). Generally, brand equity is measured from customers' perspectives based on the two behavioral and perceptual aspects (Keller et al., 2011; Keller, 1993). Keller (1993, 2011) was one of the pioneers in theorizing and conceptualizing the brand equity from customers' perspectives with focus on perceptual aspects. Keller assumed that the brand equity is based on knowledge and its comparison with a similar products; moreover, Keller conceptualized the brand knowledge based on the two aspects of awareness and image. Aaker (1991) presented a model based on the two concepts of behavior and perception in order to conceptualize the brand equity. He defined five components for evaluating the brand equity from customers' perspective: brand awareness, loyalty, perceived quality, brand associations and other proprietary brand assets such as patents, trademarks etc. The advantage of Aaker's model is combining the two behavioral and perceptual aspects in one scale for measuring the brand equity. Although customers' perspectives are the prerequisites for the behavioral aspect of brand equity, the evidences indicate that perspective is not an indicator, strong enough for evaluating market behavior, thus, utilizing an scale including both perceptual and behavioral aspects can promote the assessment in this regard (Christodoulides & De Chernatony, 2010; Keller et al., 2011; Feldwick, 1996). Cobb-Walgreen et al., (1995) explain that brand equity from marketing point of view is customer-based brand equity. The complementary research of Yoo, et al., (2000) completed these aspects and finalized them into the four aspects of brand associations, awareness, loyalty and perceived quality, yet in 2003, Keller added the mental image as another influential factor in brand equity. Boo et al., (2009) with regards to the results obtained by Yoo et al., (2000) considered the outputs of the brand equity as consumers' preferences to buy a certain product among its counterparts.

Brand Awareness

Tourism destination marketing aims to maximize awareness about specific destinations through creating a unique brand (Dinnie, 2004; Jago et al., 2003; Sasmita & Suki, 2015). Aaker (1991) believes that brand awareness can be used as a strong lever for a potential buyer to recall and identify a brand in a specific category of products. He has defined several level for brand awareness, from brand recall to leading brand. The leading brand refers to the conditions that a brand turns into the only name that comes to mind for a specific type of product.

Brand Image

Brand images are defined as perceptions about the brands, reflected by brand's associations into the consumer's mind (Aaker, 1991; Graeff, 1997). The brand image is not necessarily objective or real. For example customer's image about the quality of a restaurant's food can be based on the quality of the provided services not only the taste of the food. In fact, the perceptions about the reality are more effective on the image than the reality itself (Biel, 1992; Woodward, 2000). Mental perceptions can be subjective too, which is more common in the field of services, since people can base their perceptions on the experiences which are not tangible and standardized in nature (Martinez & De Chernatony, 2004; Keller, 1993). For instance, customers' perceptions about a park can be only based on their experiences; if they went to the park on a gray rainy day or a very crowded period, they might not have a very positive image about that park.

Perceived quality

Perceived quality can be defined as the Customer perceptions of the general quality or superiority of a product or service than other counterparts (Zheithaml, 1988; Aaker, 1996). Perceived quality is a competitive necessity in branding (Saleem et al., 2015) and most of the companies and organizations are now utilizing the customer-driven quality as a powerful strategic tool (Keller, 1993). Kotler et al., (2014) discuss the association between product quality, service and customer satisfaction and profitability and indicate that in fact, perceived quality is not the reality of the product, but the subjective valuation of the customers about that product. Perceived quality just like the brand's image, provides value for the customer to distinct a product from others and gives a reason to buy a specific brand (Zheithaml, 1988; Kotler & Keller, 2000). However, perceived quality is a very challenging issue, since the tourists overall perception about a destination is a combination of products, services and experiences. Thus Quality has a critical role in determining the consumers' behavioral patterns. Since the tourism products are mostly services and intangible, they cannot be measured simply on quantitative grounds and usually the assessment criteria for perceived quality is the level of quality.

Brand Loyalty

Although the concept of consumers' loyalty has been widely studied in the general marketing, yet investigating the brand loyalty for destination has not been the subject of many researches. Loyalty is evidently leads to the stability of the destination (Oppermann, 2000) and leads to many advantages such as less marketing costs, more influential travel trade and frequency of word-of-mouth marketing (Gitelson & Crompton, 1984; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). Gitelson & Crompton (1984) has referred to five factors resulting in returning the tourists to a previously visited destination:

- Reduction of the risk of an unsatisfying experience;
- The chance to meet people with common interests;
- Emotional attachment;
- Opportunities to have new experiences;
- Expressing the satisfaction from their previous experiences.

Behavioral loyalty also indicates that the past experiences can influence the tourists' present and future decisions in selecting their destination. In fact, many destinations are relying on repeated visits from their customers (Operman, 2000; Pike, 2005) . Operman (2000) suggests that loyalty to a destination should be studied over time, i.e. the continuous behavioral patterns in visits need to be considered. Meanwhile, behavioral loyalty can be a logical and convenient predictor for future choices. Many researchers have proposed several evaluations on the theoretical and the empirical levels, however, according to Yoo & Donthu (2001) there is no consensus regarding the assessment method of brand equity. On the other side, some recent efforts has led to some agreements about brand equity assessment

(Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). In this study for the first time 16 Iranian cities were chosen to their brands be investigated. Also we proposed combination of indicators from some previous studies for accurately measuring the tourism destination brand equity. According the above-mentioned literature the research model was designed (Figure 1).

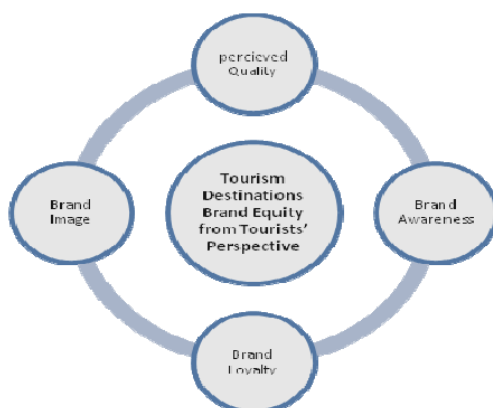


Figure 1. Research model

THE STUDY AREA

Gilan Province is one of the 31 provinces of Iran, lies along the Caspian Sea on the northern Iran with the area of 14711 Km² and located on the geographical coordinates of 37.2774°N 49.5890°E. According to the administrative divisions, this province has 16 cities.

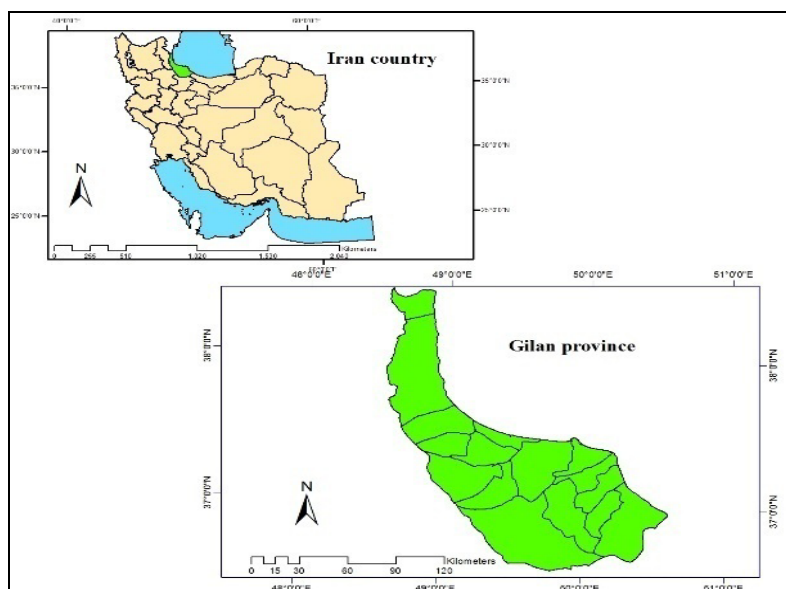


Figure 2. Map of the study area

METHODOLOGY

The present study follows a descriptive –analytical research method which has been conducted through a survey method. The study consists of two documentary and quantitative section. In the documentary section, the literature review was gathered via

library researches, while the quantitative section contained the field surveys which were conducted by means of questionnaires as scale for collecting data. The statistical population of this study contains the female tourists visiting the cities in Gilan province. Since women tend to be more precise and accurate than men in visual fields and accordingly in evaluating a destination, we decided to use a female population in this study. Due to the unknown exact number of the statistical population, the following formula is used to determine the number of research sample. The number of 380 tourists were chosen from the study population.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 P(1-P)}{d^2}$$

Based on the formula (Kotrlik et al., 2001):

N= Sample size

Z = The value of standard variable unit, which is 1.96 in the 95% confidence interval

P = The value of the attribute available in the population. If not available, it can be considered 0.5. In this case, variance reaches its maximum value.

q = The percentage of people who do not have the attribute (q = 1-P)

d = Acceptable error

Table 1. Indicators of tourism destinations ranking based on the tourists' perspectives (source: Sean Hyun & Kim, 2011; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; Gartner & Ruzzier, 2011; Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Walmsley & Jenkins, 1993; Aaker 1991, Arnett et al., 2003; Yoo & Donthu 2001; Keller, 2003; Boo, Busser et al., 2009)

Dimensions	Indicators
Brand Image	Nature and exceptional landscape; quiet and calm environment; relaxing places; desirable weather; lakes, mountains and beaches; historical monuments; cultural attractions; hospitable locals; local foods; unique handicrafts; shopping facilities; adventurous places; generally attractive.
Perceived Quality	Clean air; high quality accommodation centers; high quality transportation infrastructures; road infrastructure quality; physical security; reasonable prices; high quality services; hygienic environment; Appropriate information; easy access; special attention to tourists; persistence (sustainable) quality.
Brand Awareness	Discriminatory power in comparison with other tourist destinations; imaging some attributes, hearing about the destination; logo or symbol of the tourism destination.
Brand Loyalty	Favorite tourist destination; more advantages compared to similar destinations; intend to visit in the future; recommending to others.

DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS

The descriptive findings are indicating the brand equity status of the tourism destinations in the studies area. The city of Lahijan has the highest rate in the brand image dimension and the city of Amlash has the lowest rate. Highest rate for the brand quality dimension is attributed to the Bandar-e Anzali, while Talesh has the lowest rate. Langarud town has the highest rate in the awareness dimension and the lowest rate is ascribed to the town of Siahkal. And finally, for the town of Fuman has the highest rate of loyalty and Rudbar the lowest rate. Regarding the brand equity of the studied tourism destinations and by utilizing the cluster analyzes, the results indicated that 12.8% of the participants believed the brand equity of the studied tourism destinations are weak, while 60.9% rated their brand equity as great and the remaining 26.3% considered it average. To continue the analysis of the results, different dimensions of the brand equity of tourism destinations were compared with each other within three clusters through discriminant analysis. The results revealed that the brand image dimension has the highest value in the weak cluster as well as the average cluster, while in the great cluster, brand awareness has the highest rate and after that there is the brand image.

Table 2. Ranking the brand equity of tourism destinations in under study area

City		Mean	Std. Deviation	City	Mean	Std. Deviation
Astara	image	3.2000	.23332	Siahkal	image	3.2346
	quality	2.8750	.18829		quality	2.7292
	awareness	3.9250	.31519		awareness	1.8250
	Loyalty	3.7875	.43130		Loyalty	2.4125
Astaneh Ashrafieh	image	2.9769	.25828	Shaft	image	3.3346
	quality	2.7167	.23632		quality	2.8833
	awareness	2.5375	.55769		awareness	3.1125
	Loyalty	2.5500	.36814		Loyalty	2.8750
Amlash	image	2.7846	.37569	Sowme'eh Sara	image	3.4192
	quality	2.4417	.20069		quality	2.6250
	awareness	2.0750	.56254		awareness	2.0250
	Loyalty	2.3625	.43282		Loyalty	2.7125
Bandar-e Anzali	image	2.8692	.23158	Fuman	image	3.9346
	quality	3.6167	.25989		quality	3.2042
	awareness	4.3250	.35448		awareness	4.2750
	Loyalty	3.6500	.46169		Loyalty	3.9375
Talesh	image	3.3538	.39885	Lahijan	image	3.9077
	quality	2.3333	.27172		quality	3.2500
	awareness	2.7125	.56937		awareness	4.3875
	Loyalty	2.4250	.39819		Loyalty	3.6375
Rudbar	image	3.2077	.20746	Langrud	image	3.5385
	quality	2.6125	.24073		quality	2.9333
	awareness	2.9125	.61385		awareness	4.4375
	Loyalty	2.2500	.47295		Loyalty	3.3875
Rudsar	image	3.0346	.25141	Masal	image	3.0423
	quality	2.7542	.19585		quality	2.5958
	awareness	3.7000	.42612		awareness	1.9500
	Loyalty	3.7750	.33344		Loyalty	2.3375
Rasht	image	3.8462	.28674	Total	image	3.3404
	quality	3.1792	.33144		quality	2.8417
	awareness	3.9375	.31283		awareness	3.1445
	Loyalty	2.9000	.46876		Loyalty	2.9875
Rezvan Shahr	image	3.7615	.16346			
	quality	2.7167	.22031			
	awareness	2.1750	.45955			
	Loyalty	2.8000	.39403			

Table 3. Brand Equity of the Studied Tourism Destinations

Brand equity clusters	Frequency	Valid Percent
weak	49	12.8
great	100	26.3
average	232	60.9
Total	380	100.0

Based on the logistic regression model, the Omnibus Test is used for evaluating the whole model. This test explains the effectiveness and the explanatory power of the model. Therefore, the results showed that the model is acceptable based on the K-score and the significant level (Table 5). We determined discriminant value of the model and its significance through Wilks' lambda assessment. The proximity of Wilks' lambda value

to 1 and its significance level indicated the suitability of the discriminant analysis method to divide the cities into three clusters of great, average and weak from brand equity of the tourism destinations point of view. The coefficients of the classification functions indicated that all of the cities classified in the weak cluster had the least influence related to the awareness dimension and the most influence related to the quality dimension, therefore, one can conclude the status of the brand awareness is not satisfactory for all of the cities in the studied area. The Wilks' lambda statistic was used to investigate the significant level of different cities regarding various dimensions of brand equity of tourism destinations. The results revealed significant differences in the statistics and we can propose a function for dividing cities with regards to the considered dimensions. The Standardized Canonical discriminant Function Coefficients and Matrix coefficients specify that the dimensions of awareness, quality and loyalty have the major roles in differentiating the studied cities, respectively.

Table 4. Comparing the dimensions of destination brand equity

Cluster		Mean	Std. Deviation
Weak	Image	2.9869	.33215
	Quality	2.4980	.24685
	Awareness	1.7561	.43835
	Loyalty	2.1585	.37398
Great	Image	3.6053	.44595
	Quality	3.2560	.31148
	Awareness	4.3393	.31681
	Loyalty	3.7202	.41509
Average	Image	3.3006	.39488
	Quality	2.7355	.29615
	Awareness	2.9218	.79462
	Loyalty	2.8462	.56021
Total	Image	3.3404	.44263
	Quality	2.8417	.39178
	Awareness	3.1445	1.04316
	Loyalty	2.9875	.70366

Table 5. Evaluating the logistic regression model

Significance	Degree of freedom	chi-square	Results of the final step
0.0000	3	36.587	Block
0.0000	3	36.587	Model

Table 6. Evaluating the total discriminant function model

Discriminant function test	Wilks' lambda	Chi-square	Degree of freedom	Significance
First function	0.967	28.398	3	0.0000

Table 7. Fisher's linear discriminant functions

Dimension	Category		
	Weak	Great	Average
Brand	23.662	29.972	26.625
Quality	30.722	37.888	32.735
Awareness	.955	5.629	3.165
Loyalty	9.631	14.482	11.807
(Constant)	-86.041	-155.961	-111.237

Table 8. The difference in effectiveness of tourism destinations brand equity

Variables	Matrix coefficients	Standardized coefficients	chi-square	Wilks' Lambda	Significance
Brand Image	0/663	0/591	/833 41.58	0/971	0/000
Quality	0/496	0/436			
Awareness	0/621	0/514			
Loyalty	0/458	0/348			

Based on the analytical results, the logistics regression model can be expressed by following formula (Source: Kudryashov, 2015):

$$\ln\left(\frac{n}{1-n}\right) = a + E_1X_1 + E_2X_2 + \dots + E_KX_K$$

where n indicates the number of respondents

B_i are the regression coefficients

X_i are the explanatory variables

$$\ln\left(\frac{n}{1-n}\right) = 1/647(\text{constant}) + 0/591X_1 + 0/436X_2 + 0/514X_3 + 0/348X_4$$

Since the obtained results is positive, the status of the studied cities, as predicted by the model, can be considered as appropriate. Thus, according to this equation, the dimension of brand image is the most influential and the dimension of loyalty is the least influential, regarding the tourism destination brand equity in the considered region.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays a strong and powerful brand equity is a crucial factor in influencing the tourists' perceptions about a destination (Yoo & Donthu, 2001; Ritchie & Ritchie, 1998; Buhalis, 2000; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). In fact, successful brand management is the result of great comprehension and managing the brand equity which could lead to creation of influential features for leading the decision making process of potential visitors and tourists (Sasmita & Mohd Suki, 2015; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Blain et al., 2005). Having broad knowledge and up to date information about brand status among tourists is a key factor in brand management (Caldwell & Freire, 2004; Keller et al., 2011). The present study aimed in evaluating the brand equity of 16 cities in Iran from tourists' perspectives. The results indicated that Lahijan City has the highest mean of brand image dimension and the town of Amlash has the lowest rate. The city of Bandar-e Anzali owned the highest rate in the quality and Talesh had the lowest quality rate. Highest rate of brand awareness was attributed to the city of Langarud and the lowest rate to the city of Siahkal. Brand loyalty had the highest rate in the city Fuman and lowest rate in the city of Rudbar. Since the tourism customers are not able to test their choices physically, they have to make their mind based on the perceived image of the destination. Therefore, activities providers and tourism agencies can utilize this attribute as a marketing instrument in various ways such as brochures, posters and media advertisement to engrave a valuable image in the audiences' minds and encourage the potential tourists to pack their luggage and embark their visit.

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THE STRATEGIC OPTIONS TO ENHANCE THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF MALAYSIAN RESTAURANT SECTOR

Maha Mohammed YUSR*

School of Business; University Utara Malaysia (UUM),
Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia, email: mahayusr@gmail.com

Sany Sanuri Mohd MOKHTAR

School of Business; University Utara Malaysia (UUM)
Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia, email: sany@uum.deu.my

Maruf Gbadebo SALIMON

School of Business; University Utara Malaysia (UUM)
Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia, email: salimonmg@gmail.com

Selvan PERUMAL

School of Business; University Utara Malaysia (UUM)
Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia, email: selvan@uum.edu.my

Abstract: High competition in the market makes competitive advantage one of the absolute options that companies must seek to build and maintain competition. Organizational capabilities form one of the inimitable sources of competitive advantage. Therefore, establishing organizational capabilities is recognized as antecedents of competitive advantage. To build up such capabilities, several strategies have been applied. Thus, this study aims to investigate the role of IMO to enhance and build up the organizational capabilities and the competitive advantage. Hence, the present study to examine the direct effect of IMO on competitive advantage, the mediating role of organizational capabilities between IMO and competitive advantage. To do so, managers of restaurant chains sector were selected as the respondents from which the necessary data were collected. Partial least square was the statistical approach to get the result. The obtained results supported all the proposed hypotheses. Therefore, IMO is considered as one of the strategic options that organizations can apply to enhance their competitive advantage. Further discussion and suggestions for future studies were presented in the last section of the paper.

Keywords: Internal Market Orientation, Organizational Capabilities, Competitive Advantage, Partial Least Square, Restaurant Sector

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* Corresponding author

INTRODUCTION

Restaurant industry in Malaysia is one of the promising industries expected to meet the level of the tourism sector's importance. However, this growth is restricted by many difficulties that restaurants need to overcome through the determination of best strategies (Matlovičová & Pompura, 2013). Among those difficulties is the high rate of turnover among the employees in the restaurant sector (Nasyira et al., 2014; Abdullah et al., 2009). Having such a problem indicates the presence of dissatisfaction and disloyalty problems among the restaurants' employees, which in turn, highlight the quality of the service offered by the restaurant sector in Malaysia and all other hidden costs of low satisfaction among the employees towards their company and jobs. The situation is compounded when the turnover Includes efficient skilled employees as the cost of recruiting, training, and maintaining desired level of service quality will be high (Brown & Mitchell, 1993). Moreover, the competition pressure faced by tourism sector and restaurants industry in the current time surges them to offer enhanced service as this counts as one of the main sources of competitive advantage (Barzoki & Ghujali, 2013). Consequently, giving more attention to the human resource and their needs has become the basic requirement for overall success, especially in terms of the service sector. In other words, restaurants need to achieve several targets including job satisfaction, employees' loyalty, and service quality to build up organizational capabilities that help maintain their competitive advantage in the market (Papasolomous-Doukakis, 2002).

Such conclusion raises up the importance of adopting Internal Marketing Orientation (IMO) approach to achieve the desired level of organizational capabilities within the organization (Al-Hawary et al., 2013; Mishra, 2010). According to this approach (i.e., internal market orientation), firms will be able to perform well in the customer market if their internal customers (i.e., human resources) are satisfied and, in turn, loyal to their firm. This approach emphasizes on human resource of the organization as one of the most important and valuable resources of the firm that relates to the ability to make or break competitive advantage. In fact, each company deals with more than one market and viability is a matter of the firm's ability to manage the interrelationships between these markets (Piercy, 1995; Gounaris, 2008). These markets, further, can be categorized into two wide markets (i.e., external and internal markets) (Gounaris, 2008). External market comprising of customers while internal market constituting of employees (Gounaris, 2008). Thus, aligning the companies' processes to meet the requirements of both internal and external market is the key issue (Gounaris, 2008). Traditionally, the customers' needs and desires in the external market have gained the attention of marketing scholar sever since the 1990s, when the concept of market-orientation was introduced by Kohli and Jaworski. Introducing market orientation emphasizes on the prominence of responding to customers' needs before the competitors (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990). To do so, establishing specific system that links the company to the market was considered as an antecedent of effective marketing practices (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990). Towards the same direction, Piercy (1995) introduced symmetric system by which the success of marketing strategies and business performance result in companies' responsiveness to both its markets (i.e., internal and external).

Despite the important role of internal marketing orientation in enhancing the organizational capabilities and competitive advantage of the companies, there is lack of empirical studies in the literature dedicated to internal market orientation (Gounaris, 2008). Further, most of the previous studies were normative studies, with only few rigid empirical studies conducted (Lings, 2000; Lings & Greenley, 2005; Gounaris, 2008). Therefore, there is a need to conduct more studies to cover several sectors by which the generalizability of the previous results will be supported.

Restaurant chains sector as a food service sector is one of the sectors that have been ignored by the researches in this area. Moreover, there are scant studies that have been conducted in Malaysian context. Thus, this study answers the call for more research by achieving several goals and minimizing gaps in literature: first, the literature differentiates between market orientation and internal market orientation. Such differentiation restricts the role of IMO in the organization to be limited to job satisfaction, while IMO processes within organization can play a significant role that goes beyond job satisfaction to cover several organizational aspects. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to reduce the existing gap by introducing the concept of IMO extensively to cover some of the important aspects in organization internally and externally. The second gap which the current study tries to explore is the potential role of IMO in building the organizational capabilities. Accordingly, the potential direct role of IMO in supporting competitive advantage of restaurant sector is highly expected (Fang et al., 2014), and is investigated as the third target of this study. Lastly, this research goes beyond the direct relationship to explain the influential relationship between IMO and competitive advantage through organizational capabilities, and to do so, the mediating role of organizational capabilities between IMO and competitive advantage is tested.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: the summary of the literature review is presented followed by the main hypotheses, and finally, the empirical parts are discussed along with the main results.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As previously noted, the performance of the service sector is relayed significantly through employees' performance. Thus, the attention of the researchers and practitioners should be directed more towards internal market to determine the needs of the internal customer as the first step to meet the needs of their external counterparts. In 1990, market orientation notion was introduced by Kohli and Jaworski where they defined several processes by which the company can be classified as market oriented company. Being labeled as a market-oriented company is indicated by the company's abilities to catch the future trends in the markets along with its ability to take the appropriate action. In other words, market oriented companies are better than non-marketed oriented companies in maintaining their customers' satisfaction and loyalty (Agarwal et al., 2003). As an analogous approach of market orientation, internal market orientation is a process of generating/gaining, disseminating, and applying knowledge related to the employees' needs and desires (Ling & Greenley, 2005). Internal market orientation processes help to establish necessary database related to the employees' need within the company. This processes, furthermore, lead to enhance the employment procedures of the companies. However, organizations need to own related capabilities to build up internal market orientation. In this regards, the abilities to acquire the knowledge related to what labor market offers to the employees, the market's need, and the knowledge about the employees' need and wants is the first capability the company needs to obtain (Ling & Greenley, 2005). Accordingly, there are two types of information within the company (i.e., formal and informal information) (Ling & Greenley, 2005). Each types of information comes from different sources, the formal information is generated through using questionnaires, job satisfaction survey, and written complaints, whereas the informal information results of face-to-face interaction through interview, meeting, and appraisal (Ling & Greenley, 2005).

Despite of the importance of the formal sources of information, the informal sources play a more critical role in helping the company to detect latent information. Informal information is generated through close proximity of managers and their employees – an opportunity for face-to-face and day-to-day interaction. Such interaction

will provide the needed information regarding the employees' satisfaction towards the organizations' incentive system, salary structure, obstacles to do their tasks, their suggestions to improve the work. Consequently, these kinds of information can assist the decision makers to redesign the organization's structure of recruitment, which eventually will motivate and retain staff. To do so, disseminating the gained information appears here to be as the second critical processes of internal market orientation that leads to achieve targeted level of employees' satisfaction. The communication process between the managers and their employees within the organization often leads to organizational identification (Ling & Greenley, 2005). In another words, both sides need to disseminate the latent and explicit knowledge to attain both organization and employees' goals.

Although it is important to acquire and disseminate knowledge, this must be followed by responsive processes to that knowledge. Moreover, one of the main outcomes of internal market orientation is enhancing the ability of the company to design and redesign the job products that can fulfill employees' wants and needs through which their motivation and satisfaction will reach the desired level. Undoubtedly, all these processes and the attached cost will be justified by decreasing some aspects of the cost like training programs, recruiting new employees, reworks, and employees' turnover, which leads to reduction of the defective outcomes due to lack of experience.

IMO AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES

It is evident from the thorough literature review that most of the studies focus has been placed on the concept of IMO in achieving job satisfaction. Fang et al. (2014), however, considered IMO's processes as unique resources that can generate unique organizational capabilities. However, narrowing down these processes to focus on gathering related information to meet the employees' needs and wants only hinders the organization of its full utilization of them to create and build up distinguished capabilities that can support the competitive advantage of the firm. Moreover, according to absorptive capacity theory, the ability of the organization to absorb knowledge and information either internally or externally is the main antecedent that leads to building capabilities (Cohen & Leventhal, 1990). Furthermore, the literature on Resource-Based View (RBV) theory differentiates between resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991; Teece et al., 1997), where resources build capabilities into a special type of resources that the company might own. Capabilities are considered as non-transferable and embedded resources in the firms that reinforces its productivity of other resources (Lu et al., 2010).

In this context, internal market orientation is a process that produces resources (i.e., knowledge) that help to enhance internal capabilities by which the performance of the firms in the external market will be reinforced. In essence, it helps the organization not only to have satisfied, motivated and loyal employees, it could also generate other capabilities including learning capabilities, Research and Development (R&D), resource allocation, manufacturing, organizing, skillful and well trained employees. This could be another outcome of applying internal market orientation. Keeping updated database regarding the new trends in the market allows the company to predict the needed future skills and determine the suitable training program to provide it. Consequently, several aspects of internal processes will be improved in line with the changes in the market. This is expected as whatever internal processes are performed by human resources - in other words, to improve internal processes, companies need to start with the human capital they own. Therefore, internal market orientation concept needs to be extended to include building internal capabilities of the organization and not confining it to merely satisfying employees. In accordance, this paper proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: IMO processes have positive effect on organizational capabilities.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

It was suggested by Teece et al. (1997) that firms need to focus more on building competitive resources that can support the competitive advantage of the company rather than possessing strategic resources only. Accordingly, having resources to create value is a part of the story; however, the most important part to compete and succeed in the market is the distinctive capabilities that the firms possess (Teece et al., 1997; Fang et al., 2014). In addition, Fang et al. (2014) clarified that the core differences between capabilities and resources is that capabilities help the firms to use resources more efficiently and effectively to create value. Consequently, how far the capabilities owned by our organization are distinctive will keep our firm ahead in the market compared to other competitors. As has been mentioned earlier, capabilities are the building blocks of the sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991), and the main reason behind this is the nature of the capabilities, which have been classified as intangible assets. Moreover, it is well-known that intangible assets are difficult to be imitated and copied by the competitors. In this regard, human beings have been classified as intellectual assets that discriminate certain company from others. Thus, in order to create special capabilities, companies need to pay more attention, among others, to their employees (i.e., internal customer). Especially considering employees who are motivated, satisfied, loyal, skillful, and service quality, learning capabilities and creative workforce are distinguished capabilities that can give competitive advantage to the companies. Beside the significant role of these capabilities in boosting the overall performance of the company, they are, undoubtedly, difficult to be imitated by competitors – making them more advantageous. Accordingly, having such capabilities is an antecedent of maintaining competitive advantage in any company. Therefore, this paper introduces the following hypothesis:

H2: Organizational capabilities have a positive effect on competitive advantage.

IMO AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Applying internal market orientation, therefore, establishes different kinds of resources that build up and maintain organizational internal capabilities. IMO targets internal and external environments to predict changes and take the right responsive action. As mentioned earlier, gathering the information regarding the employees' needs and wants is the core of the IMO processes. However, the companies should not focus only on the internal sources of information, rather, outside sources need to be included to keep the cutting edge of the company's internal processes and capabilities. So, getting the information from environment is the first step. Thus, competitors, customers, suppliers, government regulations, among others, can be critical sources of IMO to decide which strategies need to be formed to maintain and upgrade human resources capabilities. The second step is to provide the acquired information in a suitable form to be used in decision-making – in this regard, clarity, accuracy, and accessibility are the main characteristics of the acquired information to be useful. Lastly, providing all needed facilities to take an action is most critical step in IMO. In fact, IMO is considered as a failed process if this last stage is not achieved, and, all related cost of the two first steps will be unjustified. Therefore, taking effective and efficient action (Kumar et al., 2011) to adjust the internal rules and regulations regarding processes, promotions, bonuses systems, recruitment policy, training program to provide the necessary skills and capabilities to do all needed processes to survive and all ultimate goals to be achieved, is the core of IMO processes. Hence, it could be concluded that companies that apply IMO will have certain distinguished capabilities (i.e., learning, manufacturing, marketing, R&D capabilities) that play an important role in enhancing the sustainability of the competitive advantage. Building on the above discussion this paper formulates the following hypothesis:

H3: IMO processes have positive effect on competitive advantage.

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES

In addition to what has been discussed above, the influential role of IMO in enhancing competitive advantage could be explained more through the role of IMO in enhancing organizational capabilities. The main target of IMO is to provide the latest and updated knowledge regarding the external and internal environment. However, having such updated knowledge will not affect competitive advantage until the right action is taken. Such action leads to enhancing some aspects of organizations’ weakness and assist the company to grab opportunities. Strengthening the weakness of the organization is a process of building capabilities that keep the company advanced from competitors (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). This conclusion is supported by Baron and Kenny’s (1986) criteria, where statistically having established direct relationship among the three variables leads to introducing a mediating path (depending on the direction of the relationship). Accordingly, the present study postulates the following hypothesis:

H4: Organizational capabilities mediate the relationship between IMO and competitive advantage.

FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

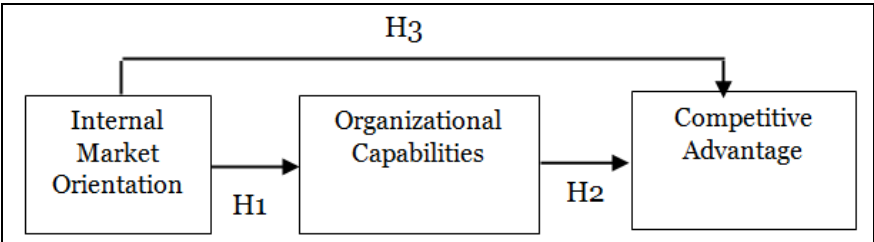


Figure 1. The Framework of the study



Figure 2. Location of the West Malaysia (Source: <http://himaustralia.org.au/malaysia-map-3/>)

Table 1. Result of Convergent Validity According to the Managers of the Restaurant Chains

Construct	Items	Factor Loading	Convergent validity		
			Internal reliability Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average Variance Extracted AVE
Internal Market Orientation	In our company, we meet with customers and employees at least once a year to find out what expectations they are looking for in the future.	0.773	0.932	0.941	0.501
	In our company, we have a system to regularly report back to our staff about issues that affect their working environment.	0.802	---	---	---
	In our company, when we find that there is need to modify a product, service, policy, procedures, etc., the departments involved make concerted efforts to do so	0.775	---	---	---
Organizational Capabilities	Our company considers employee learning capability as one of the key factors to improve the company's performance	0.703	0.884	0.910	0.591
	Our company has high sales-force efficiency	0.730	---	---	---
	Our company has good relationship with major customers	0.792	---	---	---
	Our company can flexibly adjust its structure in line with changing in the business environment	0.839	---	---	---
	Our company plans human resource in phases	0.744	---	---	---
	Our company has an effective communication among R&D staff	0.738	---	---	---
	Our company is highly adaptive to external environment	0.826	---	---	---
Competitive Advantage	Our company exploits all market opportunities that have been presented to our industry	0.811	0.887	0.917	0.688
	Our company fully exploits the market opportunities that have been presented to our industry	0.864	---	---	---
	Our company neutralizes all competitive threats from rival firms in our industry	0.858	---	---	---
	Our company fully neutralizes the competitive threats from rival firms in your industry	0.846	---	---	---

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The sampling frame of this study comprised of managers of the restaurant chains located in peninsular Malaysia (i.e., west Malaysia) as figure 2 shows. To test the proposed relationships, fourteen adapted items from past studies were the measurement tool (i.e., questionnaire) of the present study (Guan et al., 2006; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Lings & Greenley, 2005; Sigalas et al., 2013). Due to the nature of the study which relies on the perception of the respondents, likert-type scale

was used. Simple random sampling was the approach to collect that data. Out of 250 distributed questionnaires, only 120 were returned. After cleaning the obtained data and checking missing values only 116 questionnaires were found valid for final analysis. The obtained response rate was obviously low, therefore, as SmartPLS is software that is not affected by small sample size, this study used Partial Least Square PLS by running SmartPLS software to test the proposed hypotheses in the study (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009). Before testing the formulated hypotheses (i.e., structural model showed in figure 1) few steps were taken to confirm the validity and reliability of the measurement model. To achieve that, confirmatory factor analysis was run. This step entailed the examination of several measures such as Cronbach's alpha (above 70%), composite reliability (more than 70%), Average Variance Extracted AVE (more than 50%), and factor loading (minimum 60%), along with cross loading of the items (Hair et al., 2014). The gained results show that all indicators of validity and reliability of the measurement – all recommended values were met (Henseler et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2014). Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the results.

Table 2. Result of Cross Loading According to the Managers of the Restaurant Chains

	IMO	OC	CA
IMO-1	0.773	---	---
IMO-2	0.802	---	---
IMO-3	0.775	---	---
OC-1	---	0.703	---
OC-2	---	0.730	---
OC-3	---	0.792	---
OC-4	---	0.839	---
OC-5	---	0.744	---
OC-6	---	0.738	---
OC-7	---	0.826	---
CA-1	---	---	0.811
CA-2	---	---	0.864
CA-3	---	---	0.858
CA-4	---	---	0.846

By having valid and reliable measurement model, the next step involves the testing of the suggested hypotheses (i.e., structural model). Table 3 shows the values of the path coefficients.

Table 3. The Path Coefficients According to the data obtained from Manager of Restaurant Chains

	Path coefficients	SD	T-Value	P-Value	Decision
OC -> CA	0.439	0.120	3.65**	0.000	Accepted
IMO -> OC	0.778	0.041	18.92**	0.000	Accepted
IMO -> CA	0.241	0.113	2.13*	0.017	Accepted
IMO->OC->CA	0.619	0.094	3.62**	0.000	Accepted

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.001

RESULT AND CONCLUSION

As Table 1 indicates, all the hypotheses were accepted. The obtained result, furthermore, falls in line with literature (Teece et al., 1997; Barney, 1991; Fang et al., 2014). Building competitive advantage is one of the main targets of companies in the current high competitive market and this holds true in the service sector because of the

intangible nature of their products. On the basis of the result of this research, organizational capabilities of a company significantly enhance the competitive advantage. Accordingly, more attention needs to be paid to maintain the organizational capabilities. However, building capabilities is not an easy task, and, it is compounded by the accompanied cost. Therefore, the main question that arises here is the kinds of capabilities the company needs to own, improve and maintain. IMO processes appear as antecedent processes that help decision makers to answer this question. Thus, IMO needs to be established within the company, not only to satisfy the employees but also to enhance the overall internal processes and to adapt to all the changes in the environment. In fact, IMO and market orientation should be combined to a single process to reinforce the overall performance of the organization internally and externally. Furthermore, any changes in the external environment must be followed by some changes in the internal processes and even the objectives of the company must be adjusted to keep abreast of and adapt with the changes in the external environment.

Therefore, it is recommended that decision makers use IMO processes as a tool to form their strategies and goals, particularly to pinpoint the necessary distinguished capabilities. In addition, the output of the current study confirms the mediating role of organizational capabilities - further analysis of Variance Accounted For (VAF) demonstrates that 74% of the influence of IMO on competitive advantage comes through organizational capabilities. This result indicates the importance of building organizational capabilities as output of IMO processes application to achieve the desired level of competitive advantage. Similar to other studies, the present study possesses some limitations, which future studies can address. One of these limitations is the small sample size due to low rate of cooperation showed by the respondents. Therefore, it could be useful to extend the sample size to cover the service sector in general. This study depends on the perspective of the managers of the restaurant chains, thus, it is suggested that future studies be conducted based on the employees' perspective. Finally, the mediating effect of organizational capabilities was tested in this study and from this direction, it is suggested that future studies further examine the moderating effect of organizational capabilities by which the direct relationship between IMO and competitive advantage will be understood.

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TRAVELLERS ATTITUDE TOWARDS ONLINE PURCHASE OF TRAVEL PRODUCTS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF ONLINE TRAVEL PORTALS

Bivek DATTA*

Amity Institute of Travel and Tourism, Amity University Uttar Pradesh,
Sector-125, Noida, India, e-mail:bdatta@amity.edu

Manohar SAJNANI

Amity University Uttar Pradesh, Dean Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism,
Sector-125, Noida, India, e-mail:msajnani@amity.edu

Joby THOMAS

Christ University, Department of Tourism Studies, Hosur Road,
Bengaluru, India, e-mail:joby.thomas@christuniversity.in

Abstract: The exponential growth of the online purchases and a cyber war in the digital space among the service providers for grabbing the lion's share in the online space requires an understanding of the effect of demographic features on the online purchase behaviour of the travellers. Such valuable information will help the service providers to understand and eventually segment their markets and implement effective marketing instruments. The empirical study was carried out amongst 450 travelers who booked their travel online through Online Travel Portals in Delhi National Capital Region out of which 400 questionnaires were found to be complete in all respects and can be used for data analysis. The data was collected from the departure lounge of Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi. The study investigates the traveler's attitude towards online purchase of travel products and investigates the factors influencing the online purchase of travel products by the travelers. The findings denote that income and age group influence the online purchase attitude of travellers. It also identifies whether a gap existed between expectation and satisfaction of online purchase of travel products using Online Travel Portals in Delhi National Capital Region. The largest positive gap (positive disconfirmation) came from reliability in financial transactions, pertinent information, flexible packages and location while completeness in terms of services, integration on social media, usefulness, accuracy, flexible payment, information quality had a negative gap (negative disconfirmation) between the higher level of importance and lower levels of satisfaction. No significant mean differences were observed between expectations and experiences of proficient Grievance redressal system and timeliness in refund.

Key Words: Online purchase, travel products, expectation, satisfaction, Delhi NCR

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* Corresponding author

INTRODUCTION

Many of the economies have restructured and reconstructed themselves using the tourism potential to the fullest (National Tourism Policy, 2002, Government of India). The Information and Communication Technology i.e. sector in India is expected to grow by about 11.6% from 2015-19 which is majorly attributed to the burgeoning domestic market, emergence of start-up companies and plethora of techies (Swissnex, India, 2017). The market value of this booming industry is expected to be worth 38 trillion Indian Rupees by 2019 (Swissnex India, 2017). The technological outbreak and high speed internet has helped the travellers to book their flight tickets, hotel rooms online. The impact of internet is so much that it gives more information on the place we are going than ever before. It is a generation of do it yourself travellers who plan, manage and book travel online. Online travel agents are the clear winner of this digital revolution for the last fifteen years (How Technology has transformed the travel industry. The Guardian, 29th February, 2016). With a massive population of 1.25 billion people enthusiastic to participate in the technological advancements, India is all set to make the most of the digital developments transforming the payments ecosystem (Source: Digital Payments 2020, The making of a 500 billion USD ecosystem in India, BCG July, 2016). Online booking websites have carved a niche for themselves and have gained prominence. All these sites have helped us to plan our own trips by booking online directly with airlines and hotels. These websites have helped us to find out economical air fares and hotel rates. Millennials are the fastest growing segments who are using them (<http://www.nomadicmatt.com/travel-blogs/using-travel-agents/>).

Business Traveller Vs Leisure Traveller

Leisure travellers 66% use online search engines to research travel in comparison to 59% in case of business travelers. 40% of both travellers use Airline websites, 36% of both the travellers use hotel websites and 40% of leisure travellers and 32% of business travellers use destination sites for booking their last trip (TripAdvisor, 2013) 49% of business traveller and 47% of leisure traveller (TripAdvisor, 2013) booked accommodation at the same time as key segments. 33% of business traveller and 32% of leisure traveller booked insurance and 29% of business traveller and 21% of leisure traveller booked car rentals. Both the travellers are choosing to book online (TripAdvisor, 2013). 75% of the leisure travellers think that the online booking should be cost effective whereas 64% of business travellers feel that the online travel services should be cost effective. 61% of both leisure and business travellers want a simpler booking process while 58% of them want it to be faster. Both travellers want a variety of services at one place, easy booking process, reduce complexity and improve travel research (TripAdvisor, 2013). Both travellers want a secure payment system. Internet is transforming the travel industry for business and leisure travellers but it is not replacing other sources of information gathering such as getting information from friends, families and colleagues. Printed material, television and professional advice still have a role in the travellers sojourn. Websites such as Facebook, twitter, YouTube are transforming the idea of word of mouth and extending the influence of these social networking sites. Both the technology driven travellers demand updated information and services that facilitate a truly personalized travel experience (TripAdvisor, 2013).

Indian Perspective:

Indian passenger travel market is expected to grow at 11-11.5% to \$48 Billion by 2020 with the biggest contributor, air travel, expected to grow at 15% to \$30 billion (The Hindu Newspaper, India published on 2nd July, 2017). Hotels will grow at 13 per cent to \$13 billion by 2020 while railways will remain \$5 billion, according to Boston Consulting Group

(BCG) and Google India report (Demystifying the Indian Online Traveller, June, 2017). Additionally, as more people have adopted the online mode, smartphone penetration increases and use of digital payments goes up, the report estimates that India's online hotel market will grow to \$4 billion with 31 per cent penetration at a compounded annual growth rate of 25%. Demystifying the travel planning journey, a report on the typical Indian consumer displays that for many Indian consumers, a vacation is an event planned in advance as opposed to being an impulse purchase. Consumers typically spend 46 days on an average to plan their trip. They spend 49 minutes online on their travel research and visit as many as 17 touch points during their booking journey (Demystifying the Indian Online Traveller, June, 2017). However, the length of each online session is less than three minutes, due to the ubiquity of mobile. Through their journey, Indian travellers tend to move back and forth across different online channels, checking availability, comparing prices and assessing connectivity (Demystifying the Indian Online Traveller, June, 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Internet has become an important information source for end consumers in many industries. It has brought higher levels of market transparency, permitting consumers to observe information that previously was not available via other distribution channels. Review of literature indicates that in the framework of e-commerce there are many functional service qualities which are valued by customers during online purchase such as fast connectivity, security issues and user friendly network (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000). Prospective Customers think that the prices quoted on the internet are less than the prices quoted by traditional travel agencies and 66% of all buyers had used an online discount in the previous one year to buy travel online (Source: Joint Hospitality Industry Congress, 2000 and Forrester Research, 2001). Online Travel Portals have several unique competitive characteristics. Online Travel Portals can utilize and select only those which are offered by the airlines and do not have the ability to change the prices or other product features. Online travel portals helps customers to find the best available ticket according to their needs (Clemons et al., 2002).

Online Travel Portals offers multiple options for a given search. It can serve multiple customers simultaneously, electronic markets on the internet have made it easier for consumers to search for services from various electronic markets (O'Connor & Frew, 2002). E-Commerce has revolutionized many organizations and the evolution of ICT has spurred fierce competition between organizations and have to adapt technology in order to survive in the digital space. Online travel portals provide the first point of contact through the Internet to help the prospective customers to search for air fares and suitable flights and come to a decision and simultaneously book the ticket through the Internet (O'Connor & Murphy, 2004). Electronic medium has new horizons for travel related information, price comparison and availability which will assist customers to book travel products online. The advent of reservations online is the most striking discovery in the digital space and these online travel portals are likely to be used by individuals as well as business travel planners (Carroll & Siguaw, 2003). Online travel portals and suppliers of online travel products provide common array of travel products. The common elements include the content of information, structure, security aspects, ease of use (Kim et al., 2004). Online Travel Portals are facing fierce competition in the digital market place and they are feeling the heat to assess the efficiency of their websites (Park et al., 2007). Perceived value is built during the purchasing process whereas satisfaction is evaluated post purchase as revealed through various studies. Perceived value is related to the trade-off between benefits and sacrifices (Chang et al., 2009). Prior studies indicate that service quality is linked with

customer satisfaction (Hawari & Mouakket, 2012) and loyalty intention (Sadeh et al., 2012). Very few studies have been conducted to investigate the impact of service quality on perceived value and the ones who have conducted research does not differentiate between the functional and hedonic dimensions of service quality which leaves area for further research (Ravald & Gronroos, 1996) touched upon the value concept as the ability to provide superior quality to the customers and came to a conclusion that customer satisfaction was more than just a perception of the quality received. Consumers tend to buy familiar and well known products as they feel more confident with what they are actually buying (Chi et al., 2009). A positive image through word of mouth is essential for boosting brand awareness (Hong, 2004). Huang (2008) found that loyalty to an online travel agency resulted in an increased intention to purchase from that agency. Loyalty refers to the psychological commitment that a customer makes in the act of purchasing (Nam et al., 2011). This commitment may eventually result in the final intention to purchase or recommend. Brand loyalty has a strong impact on purchasing intention (Hawes & Lumpkin, 1984). Lang (2000) indicates that many travel consumers are surfing the web but are reluctant to book online, preferring more conventional and traditional travel networks. Internet is serving as a mode to extract information while very few users who surf the net book online. This makes the literature review indecisive on how to represent the online purchasing behaviour of consumers. Purchasing intention does not in any way represent a shortcoming as there is significant indication of the existence of a causal link between intention and buying behaviour (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study investigates attitude of travellers towards online purchase of travel products in Delhi National Capital Region through online travel portals. The study will provide solution to three research questions:

1. Does the online purchase of travel products vary among the demographic variables chosen i.e. Gender, Age, income?
2. Which are the factors influencing the online purchase of travel products?
3. Is there any difference between pre-trip expectations and post-trip expectations of online purchase of travel products using Online Travel Portals.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The first research question will be answered through three null hypotheses generated:

H1: There is no significant difference in the traveler's attitudes towards online purchase of travel products among both males and females.

H2: There is no significant difference in the traveler's attitudes towards online purchase of travel products among different age groups.

H3: There is no significant difference in the traveler's attitudes towards online purchase of travel products among different income groups.

The second research question will be answered through the statistical analysis of the data received through structured questionnaire.

The third research question will be answered through a paired t-test to investigate whether a gap existed between expectation and satisfaction of online purchase of travel products using Online Travel Portals.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the travellers attitude towards online purchase of travel products;
2. To study the impact of demographic variables on travellers attitude towards online purchase of travel products;

3. To identify the factors influencing purchase of travel products through online purchase;
4. To identify whether a gap existed between expectation and satisfaction of online purchase of travel products using Online Travel Portals.

Conceptual Framework: One of the earliest accepted theory pertaining to the factors that influence online purchase behaviour of consumers is the theory of reasoned action. Njite and Parsa (2005) emphasized the importance of trust in electronic business transaction. Technology acceptance model is the extension of the theory of reasoned action explained by the constructs of usefulness and ease of use of technology in the area of information systems.

Research Design: The data for the study was collected through structured questionnaire collected from 450 travellers at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi out of which 400 were complete in all respects. Demographic variables were first studied followed by the factors influencing the purchase of online travel products. The responses were measured with 5 point Likert Scale. The demographics of the travellers at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi are mentioned in Table 1. The below mentioned Figure 1 throws light on the gender of the respondents at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi. Figure 2 indicates the Age Group of the Respondents at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Travellers at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi
(Source: Primary Data collected at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi)

Variable	Number of Respondents		Percentage
Gender	Male	276	69%
	Female	124	31%
Age	18-25	110	27.5%
	26-35	206	51.5%
	36-50	64	16%
	51-65	20	5%
Income (Monthly) in Indian Rupees	Less than 15000	100	25%
	15001-20000	140	35%
	20001-25000	98	24.5%
	25001-30000	38	9.5%
	More than 30000	24	6%

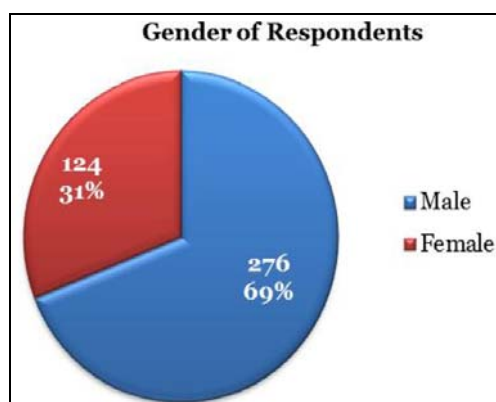


Figure 1. Gender of the Respondents at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi

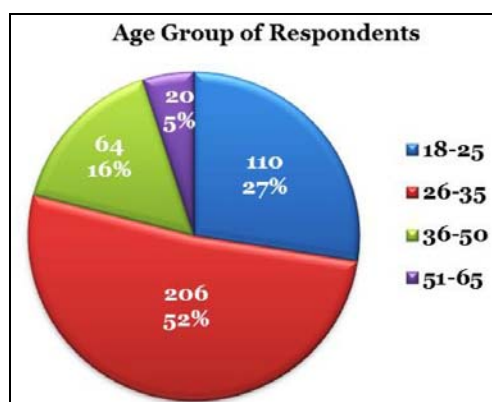


Figure 2. Age Group of the Respondents at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi

To test the three hypotheses generated data was collected from the first section i.e. the demographic profile of the travellers which contains pertinent information on the demographic variables of the respondents (gender, age and income) and the use of online travel booking on the basis of frequency, duration and the pattern of purchase. To understand the difference in travellers attitude towards online travel purchase due to demographic variables i.e. gender, age and income chi-square test was used. The information collected from the following section two of the questionnaire contains 12 statements measuring the purchase behaviour of travel products to study the factors affecting the online purchase of travel products. These 12 statements were drawn after extensive literature review and were measured on a five point Likert Scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The higher score reflects more favorable traveller's attitude. These 12 statements were further analyzed through factor analysis for identification of the key factors chosen by the travellers.

Factor Analysis identifies the common dimensional factors from the observed variables that have high degree of correlation with the observed variables and unrelated variables but no correlation among the 12 factors. The factors are extracted in such a manner that the first factor accounts for highest variance in the data, followed by the second factor and so on. Principal Component Analysis will be used in this case as our aim is to find the minimum number of factors that will describe maximum variance in data. Varimax Rotation is used to simplify the structure of the factors. In this case only factors with Eigen values more than 1 will be preferred. Eigen Value represents the amount of variance associated with the factors. The below mentioned Figure 3 provides insight into the income of the Respondents expressed in months collected at Indira Gandhi International Airport and represented in Indian Rupees.

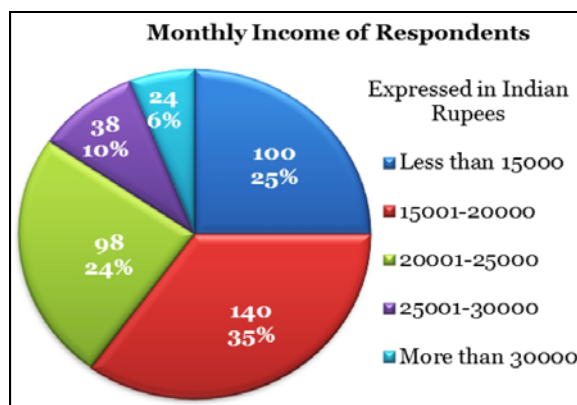


Figure 3. Income of the Respondents (in months) at Indira Gandhi International Airport and represented in Indian Rupees

Data Analysis: The chi square test values will help to understand the differences if any persist in traveller's attitude towards online purchase of travel products due to demographic variables of gender, age and income.

Gender: The first hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the traveller's attitudes towards online purchase of travel products among both males and females. To test this hypothesis chi square test was used to deduce if there is any association between travellers attitude towards online purchase of travel products and the gender of the respondents. The calculated value came out to be 0.079. The table value of

chi square at 1 df was 3.48. The calculated value is less than the critical value so the null hypothesis is accepted. It is further deduced that there is no significant difference in the traveler's attitude towards online purchase of travel products due to gender.

Age: The second hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the traveler's attitudes towards online purchase of travel products among different age groups. To test this hypothesis chi square test was used to deduce if there is any association between travellers attitude towards online purchase of travel products and the age of the respondents, The calculated value came out to be 16.826 (Analysis of the Primary Data collected from travellers at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi). The table value of chi square at 3df was 7.62. The calculated value is more than the critical value so we can reject the null hypothesis. It is further deduced that there exists a significant difference in the traveler's attitude towards online purchase of travel products due to age. This further demonstrates that different age groups travellers have different attitudes towards online purchase of travel products.

Income: The third hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the traveler's attitudes towards online purchase of travel products among different income groups. To test this hypothesis chi square test was used to deduce if there is any association between travellers attitude towards online purchase of travel products and the income of the respondents. The calculated value came out to be 32.797 (Analysis of the Primary Data collected from travellers at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi). The table value of chi square at 4 df was 9.82. The calculated value is more than the critical value so we can reject the null hypothesis. It is further deduced that there exists a significant difference in the traveler's attitude towards online purchase of travel products due to income. It is therefore deduced that income seems to have an impact on the traveler's attitude towards online purchase of travel products. The higher income group displays higher mean score. Therefore higher income group of travellers are likely to display more favourable attitude towards online purchase of travel products.

Table 2. Factors influencing the Online Purchase Behaviour for Travel related Products
(Source: Five factor solution with loading of items and having Eigen value greater than 1)

Factor	Percentage Variance Explained	Variables included in the Factor
F1	Convenience (19.14) Eigen Value-2.055	Purchase of online travel products online is very convenient (0.69) Purchasing travel products online is easy (0.71) Purchasing travel products online saves a lot of time (0.63) Purchasing online travel products is possible from any geographical corner (0.61)
F2	Trust (17.89) Eigen Value-2.087	I don't want to share my credit card details (0.58) I don't trust online transaction (0.59) I don't trust the payment safety gateway (0.76) I don't trust the online portals (0.61)
F3	Service (14.26) Eigen Value-1.651	I think the a wide array of services would induce travellers to purchase online travel products (0.67) I think a well mechanized online environment will help travellers to purchase online travel products (0.68)
F4	Awareness (12.23) Eigen Value-1.237	I think the social media should play a major role in creating awareness of the travel related products (0.71) I think online travel portals should have more digital presence on the social media (0.62)
F5	Network (9.6) Eigen Value-1.017	I believe that the online travel service provider should be a recognizable brand (0.59) The network should have a greater geographical reach (0.58)

Results of factor analysis answer the second research question. Table 2 displays a five factor solution with loading of items and having Eigen value greater than 1. These five factors are Convenience, Trust, service, Awareness, Network given in Table 3.

Table 3. Five Factors derived from Factor Analysis

Convenience	19.14
Trust	17.89
Service	14.26
Awareness	12.23
Network	9.6

The extracted factors explained 73% of the total variance and only 27% of the information content is lost after reducing the number of factors to five out of the 12 factors. 73% is retained by the five factors extracted out of the twelve variables.

Research Instrument for fulfilling Objective 4: A structured questionnaire was used as research instrument. The questions measured the expectations and satisfactions of travellers towards online travel Portal. Travellers expectations were measured in terms of 12 areas i.e. accuracy, reliability in financial transactions, proficient grievance redressal system, flexible packages, flexible payment, location, information quality, pertinent information, integration on social media, usefulness, completeness in terms of services, timeliness in refund based on Wixon and Todd Model (2005). The scores of expectations and experiences of travellers pertaining to their usage of online travel portals were collected on a five point Likert-scale. The constructs were all reliable as the Cronbach alpha coefficients for all the constructs were higher than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2006).

Paired t-test: A paired t-test was carried out to find out whether there is a gap between expectation and satisfaction of travellers towards online travel portal. The t-test is applied to find out the significant difference between travellers expectations and experiences (Hui et al., 2007).

Table 3. Paired t-test on Online Travel Portals attributes and services
(Source: Primary Data, Wixon and Todd Model, 2005)

Attributes	Expectations (pre-booking)	Experiences (post-booking)	Gap	t-value	p value
Accuracy	3.496	3.319	-0.177	-3.505	0.001 ***
Reliability in financial transactions	3.832	4.224	0.392	6.093	0.000 ***
Proficient Grievance redressal system	3.683	3.638	-0.045	-0.865	0.388
Flexible packages	3.862	4.078	0.216	3.556	0.000 ***
Flexible payment	3.902	3.746	-0.156	-2.862	0.004 ***
Location	3.787	3.823	0.036	0.650	0.516
Information Quality	3.281	3.547	0.266	-1.839	0.067 ***
Pertinent information	3.281	3.281	0.000	4.028	0.000 ***
Integration on social media	3.676	3.373	-0.303	-4.912	0.000 ***
Usefulness	3.264	3.036	-0.228	-3.902	0.000 ***
Completeness in terms of services	3.897	3.394	-0.503	-8.901	0.000 ***
Timeliness in refund	3.795	3.721	-0.074	-1.349	0.178

Note *** p<0.01 ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 (2-tailed)

Table 3 displays that in nine of the twelve attributes the gap between expectations and experiences was statistically significant. The largest positive gap (positive disconfirmation) came from reliability in financial transactions, pertinent information,

flexible packages and location while completeness in terms of services, integration on social media, usefulness, accuracy, flexible payment, information quality had a negative gap (negative disconfirmation) between the higher level of importance and lower levels of satisfaction. No significant mean differences were observed between expectations and experiences of proficient Grievance redressal system and timeliness in refund.

CONCLUSION

From the study it is deduced that travellers have a positive attitude towards the purchase of travel products online but the traveler's attitude towards online purchase of travel products is low. The second objective is fulfilled through analyzing the primary data obtained through structured questionnaire. It was meant to study the impact of demographic variables on traveler's attitude towards online purchase of travel products. The analysis deduced that gender did not affect traveler's attitude towards online purchase of travel products whereas age and income indicated a significant association with the traveler's attitude pertaining to purchase of travel products. The travellers in the higher income group indulge more in online travel product purchase. The travellers in different age groups display different attitude towards purchase of online travel products. The third objective was to identify the factors influencing purchase of travel products through online purchase. On the basis of findings trust, service and awareness seems to be major concerns for the travellers but convenience and network play a major role in online travel purchase. The fourth objective was to identify whether a gap existed between expectation and satisfaction of online purchase of travel products using Online Travel Portals. The largest positive gap (positive disconfirmation) came from reliability in financial transactions, pertinent information, flexible packages and location. The positive difference value indicates that these four attributes are all higher than what the travellers have expected from online travel portals.

The attributes of completeness in terms of services, integration on social media, usefulness, accuracy, flexible payment, information quality had a negative gap (negative disconfirmation) between the higher level of importance and lower levels of satisfaction. No significant mean differences were observed between expectations and experiences of proficient Grievance redressal system and timeliness in refund. The negative gap value throws light that the satisfaction of travellers towards the online travel portals is less than their expectations.

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GASTRONOMIC AND FOOD TOURISM AS AN ECONOMIC LOCAL RESOURCE: CASE STUDIES FROM ROMANIA AND ITALY

Donatella PRIVITERA

University of Catania, Department of Educational Sciences,
No. 4, via Biblioteca, Catania, 95124, Italy, e-mail: donatella.privitera@unict.it

Adrian NEDELCU*

Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti, Business Administration Department,
No. 39, Bucharest Avenue, Ploiesti, 100680, Romania, e-mail: nedelcuadrian@yahoo.com

Virgil NICULA

"Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu, Management, Marketing, Business Administration Department,
No. 10, Victoriei Boulevard, Sibiu, 550024, Romania, e-mail: niculavirgil@yahoo.com

Abstract: The aim of this study was to contribute to the literature on food tourism by proposing the concept of place and events linked to food, and to analyze the opportunity of gastronomic tourism for local development around Romania (Sibiu Region) and Italy (Sicily Region). The materials were 336 interviews with tourists. Specially designed questionnaire allowed fast data collection. The questions were of qualitative and quantitative type, useful to encode the expressed opinions of the tourists. The results highlight the need for destination marketing organizations to pay more attention to the link between destination image and food events. It concludes that tourism practices enable the continuity of local foods, reinterpreted in the light of urban consumption. Further research is needed to explain why, despite recommend a food tourism policy integrating upon the preservation and the development of the cultural and ethnic identity, in order to attract tourists.

Key words: cultural heritage, food involvement, culinary events, Sicily, Sibiu.

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INTRODUCTION

Culinary culture has been influenced by the structural changes that have taken place in our society. Globalization, urbanization, modernization, and migration have modeled and transformed the way in which modern civilization consumes food (UNWTO, 2017). Consumption of food and beverages is directly influenced by factors such as taste, cost, health care, satisfaction, convenience that generates a pattern of behavior and a manifestation of human identity. When new destinations are visited, this behavior pattern of tourists changes because food is, of course, an essential part of any travel experience (Scott & Duncan, 2017). Gastronomic tourism, also called culinary tourism, food tourism

* Corresponding author

or enogastronomic tourism, is a niche area of the fast-growing tourism market at the end of childhood, and has a brief history started somewhere in the early 2000s (Hjalager, 2002; Hall & Sharples, 2003; Hall & Mitchell, 2005). With the emergence of research that focused on food tourism as a separate entity, many researchers consider gastronomic tourism to be a key tourist activity involving a range of experiences (eg. cookery courses, food festivals). Food is often regarded as a supporting experience in tourism, in fact as Yeoman (2012) affirms, food is about new tastes, knowledge and concepts as a symbol in the experience economy. Discovering a destination through its kitchen is an experience not only interesting and satisfying, but also provocative for visitors in this era of globalization. This suggests that the motivation for traveling for gastronomic reasons, to enter the culture of the place in a deeper and more complex way, is an increasing argument to be taken into consideration. Gastronomic experiences can add value to any type of tourist activity, can also be appealing to a wide range of potential consumers. As confirmed in the II Report published by the World Tourism Organization on gastronomy tourism, this tourism segment in fact “offers enormous potential in stimulating local, regional and national economies and enhancing sustainability and inclusion” (World Tourism Organization, UNWTO, 2017), but also a new possibility to support and revive the primary sector, mostly represented by different producers, traders, chefs, etc. (Matlovičová & Pompura, 2013). The term “culinary tourism” is introduced for the first time by Lucy Long in 1998 (Long, 1998). For Long, culinary tourism is not only a food for tourists but rather intentional participation in exploring gourmet cultures by consuming, preparing and presenting a culinary product, traditional cuisine, eating style, all belonging to a different culinary system, other regions or countries (Long, 2004).

The forms of gastronomic tourism are numerous and are becoming more and more popular, year after year being invaded by curious tourists and eager to taste the gastronomic culture of other countries: visits to food producers, gourmet festivals, restaurants and special places related to some special foods, tasting special culinary products, observing its production and preparation processes, as well as seeing how to cook a specific dish, culinary touristic circuits, visits and tastings at beer and olive oil factories, distilleries and culinary products, visits to kitchens, vineyards, wine vaults, wine cellars or other culinary attractions (fairs, exhibitions, culinary tours) (Hall & Mitchell, 2005). In addition to this, gastronomy ranks third among the main reasons for tourists to visit a destination, after cultural motive and nature (UNWTO, 2017).

The purpose of this paper is to present a radiography of gastronomic tourism in the two regions of Sicily (Italy) and Sibiu (Romania), seen as a key factor for economic revitalization, for local and regional development. Many studies have identified and emphasized the role of food as image-makers for tourism destinations (Lin et al., 2011), as an important part of the branding, as a driving force for enhancing destination competitiveness (Presenza & Del Chiappa, 2013). Romania and Sicily are different destinations but gastronomic tourism is a local phenomenon of universal scope so it is possible to draw a set of general recommendations for tourism destinations promotion of food tourism. A survey of individuals in two countries, carried out during 2016, enables us to get insight into perspectives on gastronomic heritage as cultural value in all the countries, to formulate gastronomic cultural heritage marketing development paths in order to continue to increase the demand for the values and hence revitalize economic activity in the rural local communities. It was intended to differentiate tourists by regions, to determine their profile and present their main motivations in approaching gourmet tourism in terms of the cuisine of the two regions. For this purpose, the paper is structured in sections where in the first the theoretical backgrounds of the constructs and suggested hypotheses are presented. In the methods section, the sample, the data collection and the

survey instrument used are described. The forth section presents the main results and discussions of the research, followed by the analysis of the two case studies (Sicily and Sibiu) and the final section presents the main conclusions of the research.

DEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP AND IMPLICATIONS OF FOOD-TOURISM. LITERATURE REVIEW

Defined as “the art or science of eating well”, the gastronomy study is the understanding of the production and preparation of food and beverages, as well as the place, time and reason for which they are consumed (Gillespie, 2001).

Other authors define gourmet tourism as a type of tourism where a tourist buys or consumes regional products (including beverages) and pursues and participates in food production (ranging from agriculture to cooking schools) (Ignatov & Smith, 2006).

Specialized literature has analyzed gourmet tourism in numerous works since 2002, such as Hjalager & Richards (2002), the two works coordinated by Hall where wine tourism (Hall et al., 2000) and food tourism (Hall & Sharples, 2003) are analyzed based on a demand-side perspective, Boniface's study on tasting tourism (Boniface, 2003), Long's extensive exploration of culinary tourism (Long, 2004), Cohen and Avieli's study (2004), Kivela and Crofts investigations on the relationship between tourism and gastronomy (2006). Other studies investigate the relationship between food and tourism (Henderson, 2004; Quan & Wang, 2004; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006); identity gastronomic destinations or types of culinary tourism (Fox, 2007; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014; Jeroscenkova et al., 2016) or analyzes the ways in which the cultural heritage is redeemed through the Gourmet Culinary Heritage (Guzmán & Cañizare, 2011; Jiménez-Beltrán et al., 2016), through tourism or authenticity (Bessiere, 2004; Sims, 2009) either through schemes certifying origin or quality (Parrott et al., 2002; Matlovičová & Pompura, 2013) or the impact of how tourism develops in agricultural regions (Thompson et al., 2016).

In the specialized literature, there are also studies that analyze gastronomic tourism in various regions of the world, especially the Asian geographical area, which sets the current trend in the field (India, Thailand, Japan, Vietnam, Turkey) (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Okumus et al., 2007), the European area (Italy, Spain, Denmark, Finland, Slovenia) - Repnik & Divjak, 2015, and the Latin American area (Mexico, Peru) - Castano et al., 2014. In Romania, gastronomic tourism and its intimate ties with rural tourism, agritourism, cultural tourism or wine tourism have been in the attention of several researchers, such as: Tomescu & Botezat (2014), Soare & Costachie (2013). Local food markets serve the needs of a wide range of local stakeholders, including local inhabitants, retailers, farmers, producers, restaurants and, eventually, the entire community. However, the traditional strategies in the development of gastronomy tourism must evolve into strategic tools to articulate the quality, variety and uniqueness of local products and gastronomy of a territory. Specially how local food cultures evolve from the link between people and the food that is grown as an effect of particular regional conditions and people's culinary practice.

Food tourism provides the opportunity for job creation and the development of local economies, which in turn positively affects other sectors. It is also a major contributor to overcoming seasonality (UNWTO, 2017). Contemporary consumers are increasingly searching for locally produced ingredients and food, highlighting a business opportunity of interest for both local food producers and service providers (Long, 2004). Indeed, this fact is emphasized for peripheral tourism areas which, in lieu of flagship attractions and pristine nature, have to lean on other resources to build a destination brand identity, attract travelers, and, which benefits both hosts and guests. In essence,

local food can be used for differentiation in the context of marketing activities, and as a fundamental element in the process of sustainable tourism development (Sims, 2009).

In addition, local food markets serve the needs of incoming travelers. For them, local food provides a gateway into a destination's intangible heritage. This concerns, especially, those tourists who want to gain in-depth knowledge about the local cuisine and of a destination's culture (Diaconescu et al., 2016; Hjalager, 2003; Yurtseven & Kaya, 2011), and who perceive the food locality as a welcome ingredient in their overall holiday experiences. Research has found that a destination's food and eating habits may attract those tourists who search for extraordinary experiences, yet also those who search for authenticity and locality (Pesonen et al., 2011). Florek and Conejo (2007) stress that food can be part of a destination's flagship model, while Okumus et al., (2013) add that it is also an ingredient for brand-identity building. This is supported by Forristal and Lehto (2009) who found an influential link between personality, preferred food specialty and place, such as a specific destination.

Local food is essential from various perspectives. This appears to be true not only for those travelers who have a special interest in food and are extremely involved in gaining food experiences, but also for those who have a more casual attitude to food and eating. Hence, past findings supports that culinary-gastronomic food as experienced at travel destinations contributes to tourist satisfaction and behavior (López-Guzmán & Sánchez-Cañizares, 2012). Areas of management, the organization of events and innovation in channels of communication are fundamental in order to boost the professional development of the sector. Folklorists, food scholars, and food aficionados have long been fascinated by occasions of exploratory eating – instances of eating the new, the unfamiliar, the alien – and by the institutions and artifacts which enable those occasions. Such as ethnic restaurants, international cookbooks, and folklore festivals (Brown & Mussell, 1984).

Locating culinary tourism in the perspectives of individual consumers and producers addresses the question of why it occurs. Some scholars have interpreted the impulse to eat the other as a colonialist, hegemonic act, a taking over of another group by appropriating their cultural traditions, or as representing the capitalist inclinations to display superiority by mastery over ever expanding arenas, including new cuisines (Goody, 1982; Mintz, 1985; Montano, 1997). Culinary tourism can also be seen as a sign of prosperity, allowing producers and consumers to elevate food from being mere sustenance to the realms of art and recreation (Appaduray, 1981; 1986; Bourdieu, 1984). A more optimistic interpretation sees culinary tourism as the willingness of humans to experience the cultural worlds of other people (Long, 2004).

The motivations for culinary tourism are complex, but generally well-intentioned. People intentionally consume an “other” because they are curious, because they are bored with the familiar, because they do not want to be rude to a host, because they want to balance their nutritional intake, because they want to belong to a specific community of eaters, because they feel pride in the heritage represented by a foodways, or because they want to authenticate an experience by relishing it, so to speak (Hall & Mitchell, 2005). As both a social system and an aesthetic system, food is a powerful medium through which to enter another culture. As numerous scholars have demonstrated, through food we can communicate identity, relationships, ideologies, emotions, as well as the fulfillment of basic physical needs, but food also offers us an aesthetic experience. And like other aesthetic realms - music, dance, art - it allows an individual to experience another on a sensory level, not just an intellectual one. By consuming the foods of a group distinct from us, we may be acting out larger cultural impulses, but the aesthetic nature of food explains the pervasiveness of food in tourist

sites. The act of eating offers a way to share our basic humanity while also recognizing, even affirming, our differential identities and subsequently strengthen the economic development base at a regional level (Vittersø & Amilien, 2011).

METHODOLOGY NOTES

The study has been carried out with an explorative intention and the paper aims at describing and analyzing the development opportunity of food tourism for local development around Romania (Sibiu Region) and Italy (Sicily Region). The surveys were conducted in the establishments selected on two premises: food events visited by tourists and the selection of culinary products representing the actual gastronomy of the cities. The choice of Sibiu Region because it is designated as the European Gastronomy Region for the year 2019, after a successful success story, in 2007, when Sibiu, together with Luxembourg, held the title of European Capital of Culture. In 2007, culture was the engine that boosted the economy, tourism and the visibility of the city, while the “Gourmet Transylvania - Food Culture Festival” began in 2008 with the aim to support the development of rural areas in southern Transylvania. The Sicily Region, in Italy, with famous dishes is a location where gastronomy is a well-established and integral part of the tourism offer. Sibiu region and Sicily are two tourism areas with enormous potential in so-called food tourism because of their outstanding cuisine-related heritage. These selected regions are an interesting laboratory to study local food and traditional cuisine as they both have an enviable culinary tradition. Over the last few years, the regional government of Sibiu has been trying to leverage its local food heritage to create a new tourist experience to add to its traditional heritage tourism offer, thereby reaching a new target of consumers, increasing the consumer satisfaction of those who actually visit and extend tourism seasonality. Rather than being pushed by a formal strategic development plan, tourism in Sicily is promoted through a widespread system of authentic, typical and natural resources, and attract flows of tourists looking for that unique experience. Within this context, over recent years, the local food and wine movement has strengthened its role so much that several private initiatives, including a number of events and trade initiatives, now promote local food and typical cuisine.

Following the suggested techniques for organizing and conducting a case study research (Yin, 2004; Baxter & Jack, 2008) multiple sources of data were used. Furthermore, this study aims to identify whether the ratio between the above-mentioned dimensions of gastronomic tourism is mediated by the conversion of the territory into a culinary landscape is one of the challenges of tourism destination.

The research was done interviewing a sample of tourists coming from Sibiu, Brasov and Cluj counties (in Transylvania), Iasi, Suceava, Vrancea (in Moldova), respectively Muntenia region (Prahova, Dolj, Gorj, Ilfov and Bucharest) in Romania and Catania and Syracuse in Sicily; it has been preferred to conduct 336 interviews, supposing that the bigger number will cause an improvement of the sample's reliability, reducing the standard error and also because it was possible to exclude incomplete questionnaires or those filled out in a wrong way. The interviews were carried out from the 1st November 2016 to the 30th December 2016, also during the tourism fair of Romania, and in strategically tourist places of the cities in Sicily (parks, gardens etc.) and wine offer. The sampling applied is the random multistage type, by quotas of age, sex, and locality of residence. Participants completed the survey with complete independence, although the interviewers were present in case they had some kind of difficulty in filling it in. The survey was completely anonymous. For this purpose, data have been gathered from diverse sources as suggested by the grounded theory's conception as a more “objective” way of doing qualitative inquiry (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2008), and directly observing the

local reality by using personal experience and knowledge because being performative, grounded theory research invites researchers to engage sensually, morally, and politically with their world. For selecting the interviews, the purposive sampling technique (Gerrish & Lacey, 2010) has been chosen, thus individuating people who took part in the Romanian festival and who were being clearly interested to food.

A questionnaire was distributed to the tourists sample, which contained questions that required closed or restricted answers (two or more), which means that the interviewed could choose, between various codified options, those which they considered as the most suitable for their position, opinion or method of behavior. The questions were of a qualitative type, useful to encode the expressed opinions of the tourists, and of a quantitative type, with numerical answers to identify the frequencies and the method of consume, as well as to describe the socioeconomic characteristics of the interviewed subjects and their families. In some questions interviewees were asked to indicate the degree of involvement/importance using a Likert scale ranging from 1 = not at all involved/unimportant to 5 = extremely involved/important.

Study areas: Sibiu Region and Sicily

Sibiu and its surroundings are one of the most visited areas in Romania (Richards & Rotariu, 2011). Statistical data shows the continuous increase concerning the number of tourist arrivals in Sibiu County. Between 2014-2016 the number of tourist arrivals has increased from 355,698 persons in 2014 to 438,611 in 2015 and 503,620 tourists in 2016. The historic center is one of the best preserved historical sites in the country.

The geographical diversity of Sibiu Region is defined by the variety of types of rocks, mineral resources, soil and the current features of the relief, to which the social and economic development of local communities is added (Figure 1). The ongoing interaction between man and matter, based on craftsmanship, workmanship and cultural customs, has generated the specific, local tradition. Each of the five microregions of Sibiu Region is an entity characterized by specific landscapes, by the typical capitalization of the wealth generously provided by the natural space, by cultural and gastronomic interferences that have put their identity mark on places. Although well-individualized entities, these five microregions (Mărginimea Sibiului, Țara Oltului, Valea Hârtibaciului, Valea Târnavelor and Ținutul Secașelor) form a unitary one which individualizes Sibiu Region within the southern region of Transylvania even at a national level. Rural development strategies in Sibiu Region aim to bring a new concept of integrated and systemic approach to the role of promoting traditional activities where gastronomy plays an important role. Traditional gastronomy is very appreciated by tourists and the contact with the local, organic food can occur in the common food court at the accommodation, but also as a traditional rustic meal offered at a simple visit to a village, or as a tasting of traditional products at a fold or in a household (sausages, sheep milk cheese or buffalo cheese, “balmoș”, etc.). Sustainability is highlighted by market demand for specialized tourism products that integrate local traditions and professionally promote the originality of tourism products in the area.

Professional tourism associations (National Association of Tourism Agencies, Ecotourism Association of Romania, National Association of Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism in Romania, local tourism associations, such as: Sibiu County Tourism Association, Prahova Association for Promoting and Developing Tourism and others) are engaged in tourism development at the local level, with policy-makers as public and private operators. As the growing forms of tourism, such as rural tourism, agritourism, ecotourism, cultural and gastronomic tourism, are some of the most dynamic forms of travel, which offer a chance for local communities to develop economically, they represent

an alternative to the decline of the agricultural activity by harnessing local resources, better employing the workforce, encouraging entrepreneurship and increasing individual and collective income. The connection between the Sibiu restaurants and the county's network of producers is supported by the Sibiu European Gastronomy Program 2019.



Figure 1. Sibiu Region and its position within Romania



Figure 2. Sicily and its geographical location in Italy

The integration into the story of the gourmet product of tourist offers that go to the area of origin of the recipe or of the products is necessary.

Sicily is a region located in the South of Italy, an Italian island most famous for sea-side mass tourism (Figure 2). It has a rich and varied agricultural and food heritage, due to its wealth of natural resources, very important for its economy. Particularly Sicily is a destination that is not famous for its food offer and where the local gastronomy is not a primary motivation for tourist visits. In addition Italian cuisine is known internationally for various aspects such as its innovative nature or the quality of the raw material used. For some years, in Sicily, different initiatives have arisen in view of the promotion of local food and natural resources and, through them, of the territory. New tourism promotion strategies have been introduced in the last ten years (gastronomic events, etc.), in fact, the tourists choose the place for the desire to know more about the culture and food traditions and to know the historical and artistic heritage of the region. Wine, as others typical products with high added value, can be considered a resource that helps to attract tourists who are interested in places of origin, culture, and know-how that has developed and which has been handed down over time.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The analysis of the socioeconomic characteristics, of the interviews, which have been carried out and considered as valid, considers demographic, social and economic factors: gender, age class, marital status, academic qualification, profession, household unit and annual family income (Table 1).

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of survey respondents

Sociodemographic characteristics	Category	All the sample	Sibiu Region (%)	Sicily (%)
Gender	Female	212	65.4	57.8
	Male	124	34.6	42.2
Age	Under 30 years	161	56.0	29.4
	30-39 years old	64	19.2	18.6
	40-49 years old	57	13.2	25.5
	50-59 years old	34	7.3	16.7
	60 years old or more	20	4.3	9.8
Education	Low school	36	9.4	13.7
	High school Diploma	90	17.9	47.1
	University education	210	72.7	39.2
Income	Under € 350/€ 800	40 / 69	17.1	67.7
	From € 350 to € 800/€ 800 to € 1500	136 / 15	58.1	14.7
	Over € 800/€ 1500	58 / 18	24.8	17.6
Family status	Married with children	89	23.9	32.4
	Married without children	40	6.0	25.5
	Unmarried	207	70.1	42.1
Employment	Employee	222	65.4	67.6
	Student	72	22.2	19.7
	Pensioners	27	9.8	3.9
	Other categories	15	2.6	8.8

From the analysis of the sample it's possible to see that the majority is represented by the fair sex, with a percentage of 63.1% (65.4% in Sibiu Region and 57.8% in Sicily), while the male population are 36.9% (34.6% in Sibiu Region, respective 42.2%). As far as

the age is concerned, the data summarized show that the interviewed sample is represented prevalently by the age class between 20 and 29 years inclusive with 47.9%, while the age class “30-39 years” contains 19,0%, the class “40-49 years” (17,0%) and, finally, the age class “over 60 years” (5,9%). Moving on to analyze the social status of the sample (Table 1), it can be shown that 38.4% are “married” and 61.6% are “single”, “divorced” or “widower”. This data confirm that the majority of the sample lives in a family, which is important information to interpret the final results.

The results about the academic qualification possessed by the interviewed consumer and the profession allow outlining the reference frame of the sample. As far as the academic qualification is concerned, it can be shown that the sample has middle-elevated levels of education: 62.5% are post-graduated and 28.8% are graduated; only 10.7% of the interviewed population has an undergraduate school educational level. As far as the distribution of the interviewed persons by profession is concerned, a diversified socioeconomic reality can be seen, where all the considered categories are equally represented. The professions which show a bigger percentage are those of the employees with a percentage of 66.1%, followed by the students with 21.4%, the pensioners with 8.0% (Table 1). The author’s survey currently gives small insight into the respondent’s views on the reason for choosing a holiday destination.

The search for culinary authenticity in a local context, is an important topic related to motivation and helps explain food tourism experiences broadly and in event settings. In fact, one of the important factors stimulating the relationship between tourism and food experiences is the role of both these elements in local development. Both food and tourism have a wide range of linkages to other areas of the economy that tends to increase the value of these activities to the local economy. The local cuisine together with the novelty and the architecture of the location are the main experiences of tourists interviewed (Figure 3).

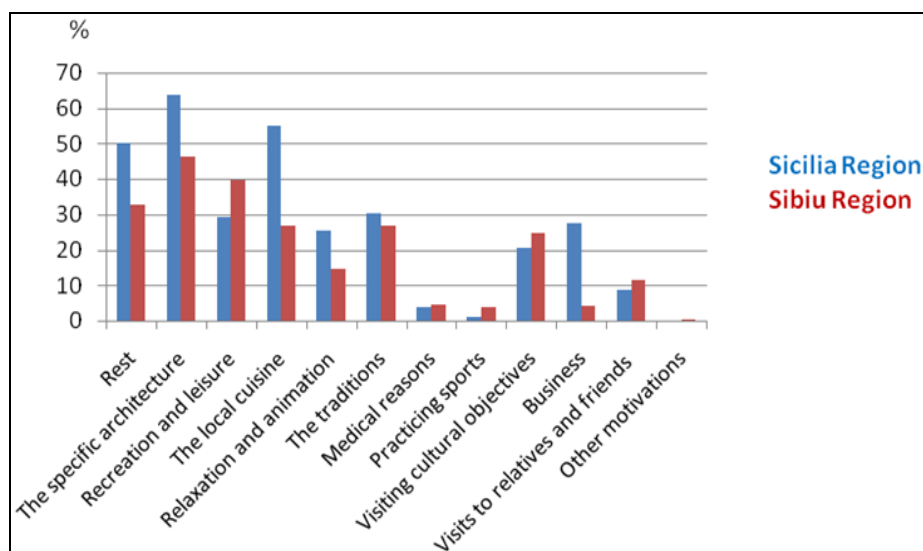


Figure 3. Sicily Region and Sibiu Region. The reason for choosing a holiday destination

Among those interested in culinary activities (Figure 4), the young adults were found to be more likely to participate than older ones (16%). The study identified chosen factors that made a next visit to a gastronomic events more enjoyable, as taking

part in traditional festivals and the traditional cuisine. The gastronomic experience is of greatest importance (Figure 5). Food festivals and events are seen as an important part of the marketing of food tourism. They offer the tourist additional reasons to visit a destination over and above the regular product offered.

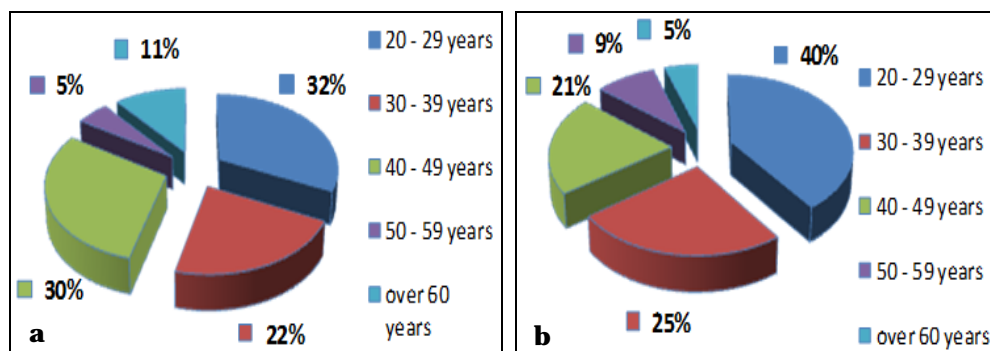


Figure 4. The reason for choosing a holiday destination for gastronomic tourists by age **(a)** Sicily Region; **(b)** Sibiu Region

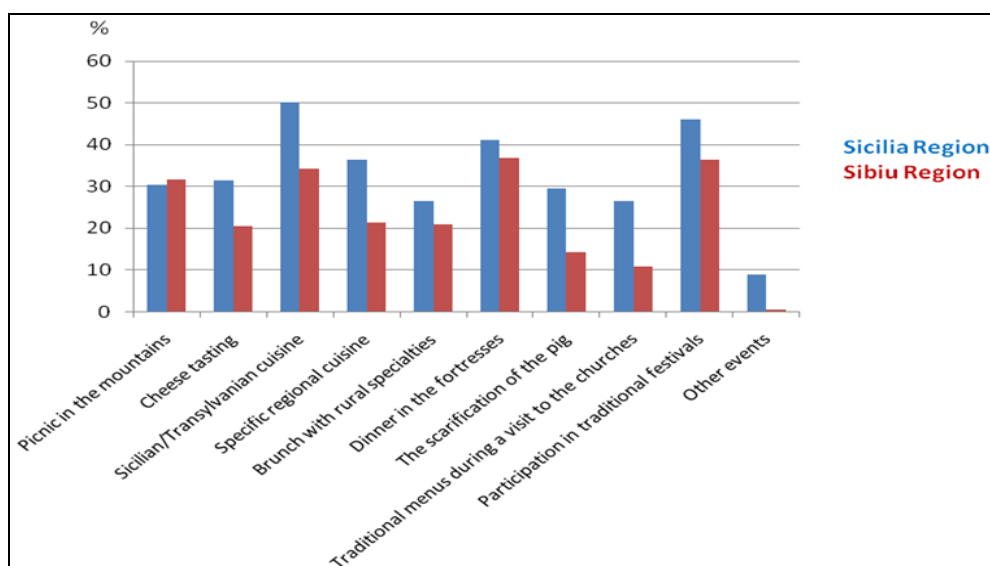


Figure 5. Sicily Region and Sibiu Region. Importance of gastronomic events to attend next time

Often because events are one-off and take place in a limited time frame and because festivals offer a concentrated and often unique offering in a limited time period. They can cause a place to rise on the short list of places the tourist has in his or her mind as attractive destinations. Festivals and events are both effective instruments in attracting first time visitors as well as repeated visitors due to the differential advantage they can offer. As an exploratory analysis, the results about the satisfactions of the interviewed Romanian tourists, the preferences for the gastronomic tourism indicate a share of 25.2%, these being attracted more by the beauty of the landscape (53.0%), the diversity of the cultural heritage (45.7%), the leisure and recreational activities and resting. The 71.36% of the respondents have visited the Sibiu Region at least three times

and 11.9% twice. The defining element for the gastronomy of the Sibiu Region, chosen by the interviewed tourists, confirms their preferences for the traditional gastronomy (80.3%). The Romanian tourists who have visited the Sibiu Region have been also impressed by the local services and hospitality (33.3%), the quality of the menus (11.9%) and the atmosphere in the public catering establishments. The types of gastronomic events preferred by tourists in the Sibiu Region refer to the dinners organized in the fortresses, the participation to the traditional festivals (the Cheese and Brandy Festivals, the Peony Festival, etc.) and the events dedicated to the Transylvanian cuisine, mountain picnics or brunches comprising rural specialties (Figure 5).

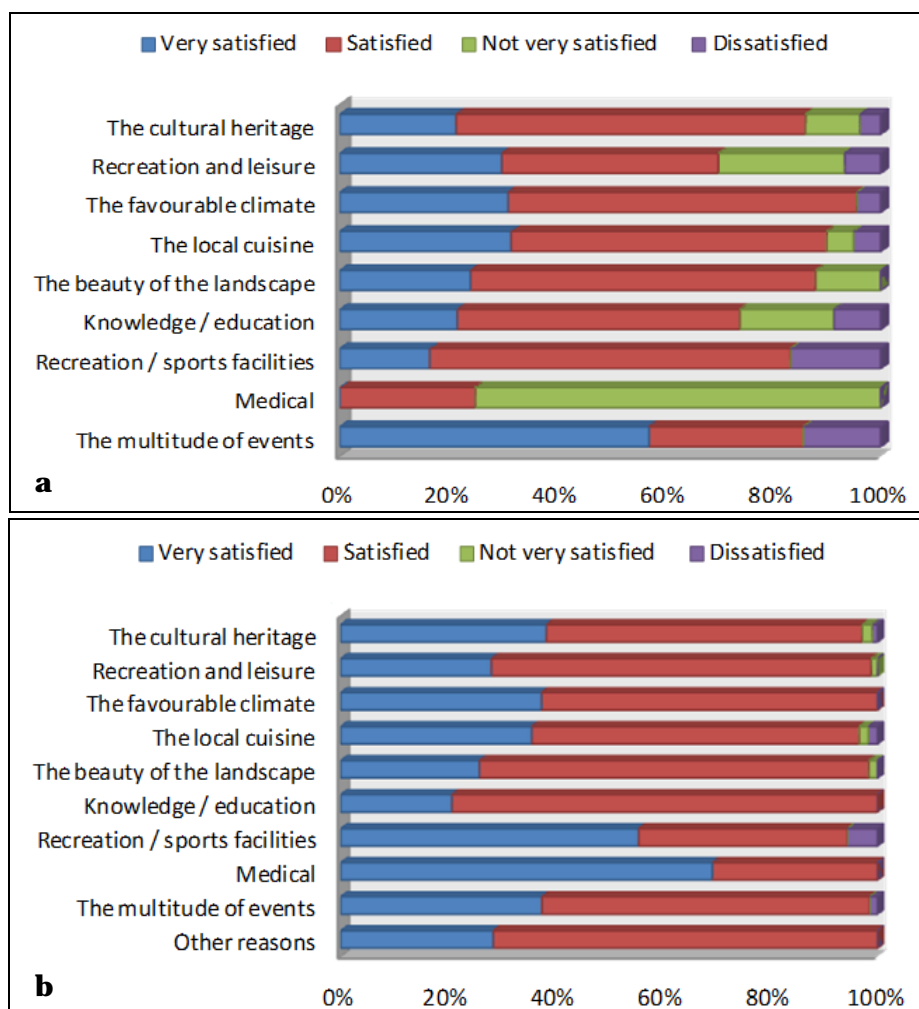


Figure 6. The reason for choosing a holiday destination by satisfaction **(a)** Sicily Region; **(b)** Sibiu Region

Regarding the degree of satisfaction with the gastronomy of the Sibiu Region (if we are referring to the quality of the catering services or the organization of gastronomic events), the results are generally high (36.0% declared to be very satisfied, while 59.0 % satisfied) (Figure 6b). The tourist interviewed (54.9%) in Sicily confirm

the preferences for the food experience, but the historic and archaeological sites are more attractive (88%), remaining the top choice for all. The tourists were also significantly inclined towards sea activities and the beauty of the landscape. Respondents were also asked how many times they had travelled to Sicily, and 34% of the respondents had done so twice. Since the present research focuses on gastronomic tourism included events, it is important to explain its degree of satisfaction by means of the organization of food events as the quality of regional cuisine in the local restaurant they are interested in. Plus of 73% of the interviewed mentioned to be very satisfied.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The analysis of the literature shows that the food-tourist's reasons are not exclusively related to the food product, but rather to the characteristics possessed by the territory (Boatto & Gennari, 2011). The food tourist has, in fact, the benefits linked to the beauty of the landscape, to the knowledge of habits and traditions, to the authenticity of local culture and to the aspects related to local gastronomy (Brunori & Rossi, 2000; Charters & Ali-Knight, 2000; Alant & Bruwer, 2004; Alebaki & Iakovidou, 2010). Food tourism involves heritage, farms, local products, cultural and recreational activities in an integrated process of sustainable development, which is a way of life enjoyed by tourists and useful to develop several linked activities (Hall & Mitchell, 2000). Any tourism experience is one in which one learns about, appreciates, and/or consumes food and drink that reflects the local, regional or national cuisine, heritage, culture, tradition or culinary techniques. The growth of food tourism worldwide is an obvious fact. It is one of the most dynamic segments within the tourism market.

The rich variety of local gastronomy can satisfy both frugal needs of tourists and those of visitors more interested in gourmandizing. The combination of food quality/territory is the winning strategy if the goal is to re-evaluate a territory. The results highlight the need for destination marketing organizations to pay more attention to the link between destination image and food consumption. Well-directed marketing efforts can turn low-value secondary experiences of sampling the local cuisine into more high-value "peak" experiences. Especially in Sicily it is still customary to consider Sicily as a land, albeit fascinating and rich, as backward and full of defects, to think about and implement strategies that will help to enhance the area is undoubtedly useful. The identification of the determinants that influence the choice and consumption of food products suggests that maybe then the best choice is to focus on tourists, on what they want and the internal pressures that influence them.

The model of culinary tourism that is suggested here provides a framework for seeing the varieties of interfaces in which adventurous eating occurs as instances of negotiating individual and social perceptions. As such, they represent a movement towards expanding the definitions of edibility and palatability and the horizons of the familiar. Furthermore, these instances are connected to a multitude of culinary experiences occurring throughout the culture, all characterized by the dynamic exploration and redefining of culinary universes. Local gastronomic cuisine was considered to be important by all the respondents. In fact local food/gastronomy can play a significant role in enhancing their competitiveness, as well as influencing tourists' choices about where to spend their holidays. Respondents from both regions surveyed stated that they were willing to increase their use of typical/local food in the near future. Therefore, one may assert that it is an important value in all the countries involved in the survey. The location of a country or the ethnicity of a population did not play a role. In all the countries, approximately three quarters of the population consumed them and at least half of them recommended their relatives, friends and acquaintances to consume such

products. One of the key values of food experiences is their link to the local, to specific landscapes, cultures, creative expressions, etc. It is therefore important to define and promote the local dimension of food, even where this is subsequently globalized. The concept of globalization is thus understood as an opportunity to widely publicize the types of tourism carried out in different areas, while preserving the personal footprint of each region. Through greater collaboration and involvement, and through rigorous control by tourism authorities and actors, gastronomy can become a profitable activity for both the rural community and the owners of rural or agrotouristic boarding houses, as well as for local governments that offer a propitious framework for tourism development in the area.

By promoting gastronomic culture, town and region will receive a new motivation to develop. The main purpose of the program is to encourage economic growth generated by producers in Sibiu. The benefits will also extend to tourism and the educational program promoting healthy eating and using food resources responsibly.

In order to organize and promote the gastronomic tourism in the rural areas of Sibiu, the establishment of partnerships among tourism providers (households/farmers in the rural community), local authorities, other economic providers of tourism related services, travel agencies, etc. is necessary. Only by working together the major problems of development and promotion of this form of tourism in the context of the socio-economic development of rural communities can be solved, with beneficial effects on local tourism. Without a general infrastructure development and tourist facilities, one cannot speak of a competitive tourism in either micro-regions or localities.

Managerial implications, at the destination level, seem to be rather clear regarding how to communicate with tourists highly involved in the gastronomic experience. Major national market segments, such as the tourists in Italy, have different preferences as described earlier, but in any case all interviewed demonstrated preferences for the local cuisine and gastronomic events. At the same time marketing activities should take this into consideration, especially in Sicily. An improved understanding is provided by the actual and the potential role of food in directly providing or indirectly supporting the tourism experience, especially in destinations where the local gastronomy is not a primary motivation to visit. This study contributes to the discussion by exploring the factors that contribute to the traveler's culinary-gastronomic experiences with a focus on the local food market. This study found that local food is an important tourist attraction and central to the tourist experience. In conclusion, although the results of our research cannot be generalized given the poor representation of the reference sample, some significant relationships between emotions and behavioral responses of food consumers have been identified, and we hope to deepen these in future research.

The future of gastronomic tourism in the two geographic areas analyzed may have a more solid basis if it relies upon the local and regional specific features, upon the preservation and the development of the cultural and ethnic identity, upon the cooperation through diversity and tolerance.

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IMPACTS OF THE MICRO ENVIRONMENT ON AIRLINE PERFORMANCES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES

Oswald MHLANGA*

University of Mpumalanga, Hospitality Department, Private Bag X11283,
Mbombela, South Africa, e-mail: oswald.mhlanga@ump.ac.za

Jacobus STEYN

University of Technology, Department of Tourism and Event Management,
Cape Peninsula PO Box 652, Cape Town, South Africa, e-mail: jnsteyn@webmail.co.za

John SPENCER

University of Technology, Department of Tourism and Event Management,
Cape Peninsula PO Box 652, Cape Town, South Africa, e-mail: jpsafron@mweb.co.za

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine the impacts of the micro environment on airline performances in southern Africa. A mixed method research design was followed. Questionnaires were distributed at selected airlines to 154 key airline personnel. Factor analysis was used to identify the dimensions of micro environmental factors impacting on airline performances. The results indicated that competitive rivalry, the bargaining power of suppliers and customers significantly impacted ($p < 0.05$) negatively on the aviation industry. Consequently, the high number of LCCs has created overcapacity and several suppliers can squeeze airlines, something that has stifled the region's tourism prospects.

Key words: Tourism, airline performances, LCCs, aviation industry, southern Africa

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INTRODUCTION

Air transport is a fundamental driver of the tourism industry (Bieger & Wittmer, 2006). It is a precondition for travel, since it facilitates mobility and the movement of tourists from their place of origin to their destination and back (Campbell, 2014). As such, air transport and tourism are interdependent (Roese & Smith, 2015). To illustrate this interdependency, Bodocan (2008) argues that when airlines terminate their services scheduled holidays and air travel arrangements are disrupted, thereby causing a multitude of problems for travellers. Eze (2016) affirms that if tourists get to their destinations faster and more cheaply, they tend to travel more frequently. Therefore, the reliability and dependability of airlines is important to the tourism industry (Oprea, 2010). However, operating airlines in southern Africa has proved to be fraught with challenges resulting in

* Corresponding author

several airlines terminating their services after short periods of operation (Steyn & Mhlanga, 2016). Despite air traffic growth, the failure rate for airlines in southern Africa is higher relative to other industries with private airlines operating for short periods whilst state carriers are traversing through turbulent times and fighting for survival. Consequently, various scholars (Ssamula, 2012; Roese & Smith, 2015; Eze, 2016) have long pondered the enigmatic question of why southern Africa has become an airline graveyard.

Some research endeavours (Doganis, 2013; Heinz & O'Connell, 2013; Barros & Wanke, 2015) argue that the micro environment significantly impacts on the financial performance of airlines. As such, Duvenage (2016) avers that identifying micro environmental factors impacting airline performances could be the starting point to unlock the industry's financial challenges. According to Porter (2008) the micro environment is made up of five factors, namely, the threat of new entrants, the bargaining power of buyers, the bargaining power of suppliers, the threat of substitutes and competitive rivalry which may positively or negatively impact on airline performances. Therefore, an understanding of the impacts of the micro-environment on airline performances could halt the industry's downward financial spiral. In spite of the growing international interest on the impacts of the micro environment on airline performances, limited research has been completed on this topic in southern Africa. International studies on the impacts of the micro environment on airline performances might not be applicable to the southern African context, since Heinz and O'Connell (2013) emphasise that the impacts of the micro environment on airline performances should be interpreted in the light of their geographical context and should not be generalised to other regions.

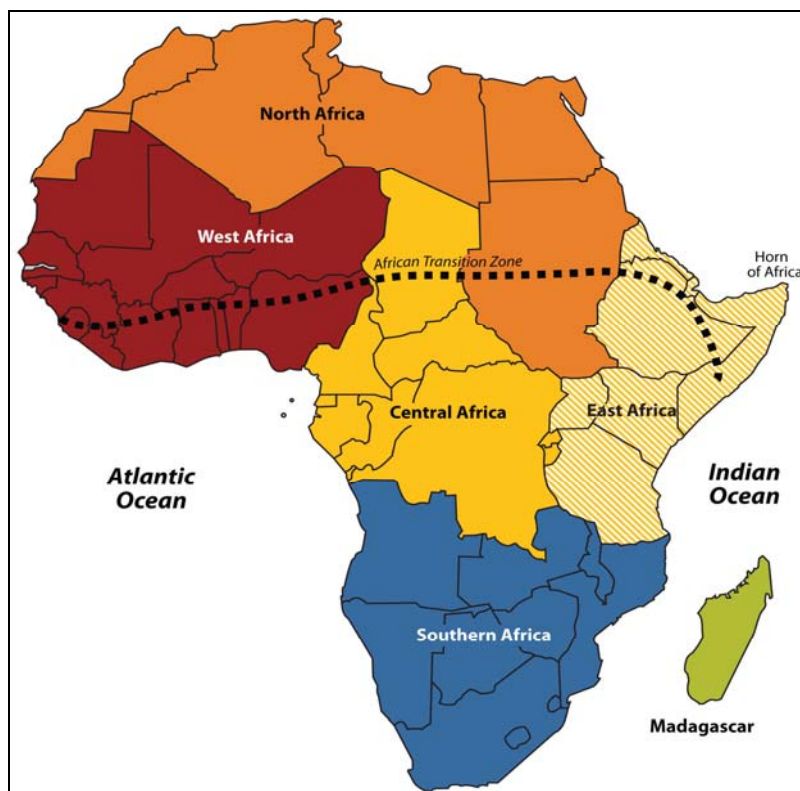


Figure 1. The geographical location of southern Africa (Source: Zimbabwe Tourism, 2016)

To the best of the researchers knowledge, this study is a first attempt to identify the impacts of the micro environment on airline performances in southern Africa. Southern Africa is geographically located on the southernmost region of the African continent (see Figure 1). Given the importance of air transport to tourism, research within this context is necessary. The theoretical contribution relates to critically articulating the impacts of the micro environment on airline performances from a developing context, where such findings could mirror similarities and differences and inform airline executives of strategic implications which could be useful for operational and management endeavours.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Air transport plays a vital role in global, regional and national economies (Campbell, 2014). The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2016) reports that air transport generates a total of 32 million jobs globally, through direct, indirect, induced and catalytic impacts. According to Price Waterhouse and Coopers (PWC, 2016) aviation's global economic impact (direct, indirect, induced and catalytic) is estimated at US\$ 3.560 billion, equivalent to 7.5% of world Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The airline industry therefore plays a significant role in the economy as a modern day engine of economic growth (WTTC, 2016). The airline industry is regarded as one of the largest sectors in Western economies. It is one of the largest private sector employers in the United States of America (USA), directly employing nearly 255 000 full- and part-time workers in 2015 (IATA, 2016). Including indirect, induced, and enabled impacts, general aviation, in total, supported 1.1 million jobs and US\$219 billion in output (IATA, 2016). The airline industry also generated US\$69 billion in labour income (including wages and salaries and benefits as well as proprietors' income) and contributed US\$109 billion to US GDP in 2015 (PWC, 2016). Overall, total GDP impact attributable to general aviation amounted to US\$346 per person in the United States in 2015 (IATA, 2016).



Figure 2. Route map of regional flights in southern Africa (Source: WTTC, 2016)

According to PWC (2016) air transport plays an important role in the growth of southern African countries, whose economies are geographically isolated and sometimes

landlocked. To illustrate this, in 2015 air transport contributed 3.5% to South Africa's GDP (Statistics South Africa, 2016), 2.6% to Zimbabwe's GDP (Zimbabwe Tourism, 2016) and 3.2 % to Botswana's GDP (Statistics Botswana, 2016). The tourism spin-off is even more significant because approximately 20% of all tourism-related jobs in southern Africa are supported by international visitors arriving by air (WTTC, 2016). As a consequence, in 2015 tourism (supported by air transport) contributed 9.4 % to South Africa's GDP (Statistics South Africa, 2016), 8.5% to Botswana's GDP (Statistics Botswana, 2016) and 5.2% to Zimbabwe's GDP (Zimbabwe Tourism, 2016). Therefore, air transport is indispensable for tourism. Figure 2 illustrates the route map of regional flights in southern Africa. However, although more than 40% of international tourists now travel by air, up from 35% in 1990, the profitability of airlines in southern Africa has plummeted to unprecedented low levels with most carriers struggling with colossal losses (The Herald, 2016). According to Indetie (2015), the major problem is the poor financial performances of airlines in southern Africa, which does not seem to match the growth in demand. The collapse of carriers such as Zambian Airways, Flitestar, Phoenix, 1Time and Fly Africa underscore the grim financial reality that the industry faces in southern Africa (Smith, 2015). Therefore, to improve airline performances there is a need to scan the impacts of the micro environment on airline performances in the region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Porter (2008) used the Five Forces model (the threats of new entry, the bargaining power of buyers, the bargaining power of suppliers, the threats of substitutes and competitive rivalry) to determine the performance of organisations and to gauge the attractiveness of the overall industry. According to Demydyuk (2011) the model has proved a veritable tool in analysing the impacts of the micro environment on organisations. As a consequence, various scholars (Oprea, 2010; Doganis, 2013; Heinz & O'Connell, 2013; Barros & Wanke, 2015) have since used Porter's (2008) model to analyse the impacts of the micro environment on organisational performances and to gauge industry attractiveness. Porter's (2008) Five Forces model is analysed below:

Competitive rivalry

Porter (2008) conceptualised rivalry within an industry as existing on a continuum from low to high. However, some research endeavours (Stonehouse & Campbell, 2004; Thompson & Martin, 2005; Oprea, 2010; Moiseiwitsch, 2014) argue that rivalry among existing competitors significantly impacts airline performances. For example, the deregulation of the South African airline industry in 1991 paved the way for the entry of a number of Low Cost Carriers (A LCC, also known as a no-frills, discount or budget carrier or airline, is an airline that offers generally low fares in exchange for eliminating many traditional passenger services) and intensified rivalry amongst existing competitors, thereby affecting airline performance (Eller & Moreira, 2014).

To illustrate this point, Ensor (2016) notes that the entry of LCCs (FlySafair and Fly Blue Crane) resulted in overcapacity in the South African domestic market because the South African market is not large enough to support three LCCs. Maqutu (2015) affirms that three LCCs are not sustainable in the long term—South Africa's domestic market is too small and too seasonal to provide the scale that an independent LCC would need to thrive over the long term in a lacklustre economic environment.

According to the Oxford Business Group (OBG, 2017) similar sized domestic airline markets to South Africa have two or fewer LCCs; for example, Vietnam has two LCCs, Saudi Arabia one and Chile does not have any. Even much larger Australia, which is about four times the size of South Africa, has only two LCCs (Maqutu, 2015). Maqutu (2015) cautions that approximately 17 million people fly in South Africa each year and the

market is served by nine domestic carriers, which is far more airlines-per-person than there are in the US, Europe or China. Mondliwa (2015) further argues that South Africa does not possess the requisite attributes of more developed markets that allow multiple LCCs to thrive. In Europe, competing LCCs such as EasyJet and Ryanair do not fly on the same routes or serve the same city pairings (Wood, 2016). However, in South Africa, LCCs cover the main domestic routes, since there are few commercially viable secondary routes to fly (Gernetzky, 2016). For instance, in South Africa, only Johannesburg has a secondary airport (Lanseria) (Wood, 2016). In Zimbabwe, the national carrier (Air Zimbabwe) faces intense rivalry after the Zimbabwean government opened the skies. According to Chipunza (2013), three South African airlines, namely SAA, Comair and Airlink, now control over 90% of the market share on the Harare to Johannesburg, Johannesburg to Victoria Falls and Johannesburg to Bulawayo routes, against Air Zimbabwe's 10% and this has significantly affected Air Zimbabwe's performance.

The threat of new entrants

Bryson (2012) claims that the threat of new entrants does not impact on airline performances. Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2010) concur that in the airline industry new entrants cannot enter and compete on the same level as long established airlines. The southern African airline industry is a case in point. According to Nolutshungu (2013), in southern Africa it is difficult for new entrants to acquire peak hour landing slots at major airports because established airlines fiercely guard their landing slots and gates, and with little spare capacity in the business, it is difficult for prospective entrants to gain a foothold. Jarvis (2016) opines that new entrants face the problem of accessing effective distribution channels that tend to favour established carriers. New entrants often have to bypass distributions channels and create their own, as gaining access to the same sales channels as those used by established airlines is often costly. For instance, in South Africa new entrants (such as FlySafair) tend to avoid using travel agents who often favour established higher fare carriers such as SAA because of the rates of sales commission received (McLennan, 2015). These barriers tend to reduce the threat of new entrants and according to Young (2015) this is one of the main reasons for the demise of new entrants such as Skywise.

Furthermore, established airlines often tend to exhibit arrogance in the face of newcomers, especially when the new entrant moves into untapped and undeveloped markets on the fringe of the existing market. This is the case in South Africa where, for instance, following Fly Go Air's entry into the Johannesburg to Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg to George routes, the entrant experienced substantial competition from SAA associates Airlink and Mango (Paelo, 2016). Airlink and Mango dropped prices on these routes, increased the frequency of their flights and moved their time slots to those close to Fly Go Air (Wood, 2016). The increased capacity and competition forced Fly Go Air to reduce its total number of weekly flights on these routes (Winsen, 2016).

According to Nolutshungu (2013), predatory pricing is a common retaliatory strategy used by airlines in South Africa to prevent new entrants from making profits. Predation is characterised by a drop in price to match that of the new entrant that is below average variable costs and increase capacity or flights on the route (Mahlaka, 2015). For instance, when 1Time entered the market in 2004, prices were reduced by as much as 35% (Spooner, 2015). Following the entry of Kulula and 1Time in 2001 and 2004 respectively, SAA retaliated by launching Mango as a fighting brand in an effort to undermine entry into the LCC market (Wood, 2016). New entrants also face a problem of competing with established brands such as Comair that have an alliance with British Airways (BA) (Speckman, 2015). Comair's passengers benefit in the form of improved service since all staff were retrained to comply with BA standards (Walters, 2010).

The threat of substitute products

Doganis (2010) posits that time, cost, personal preference and convenience determine the threat that substitute products pose to the airline industry. In some studies, Walters (2010) and Clark (2011) found that substitute products did not have any impact on airline performances because airlines outperform other forms of transportation because of convenience. In southern Africa, transportation by road and rail are forms of substitutes for air travel (Mondliwa, 2015). Potential travellers can choose other means of transportation such as cars, buses or trains to go to other destinations (Gernetzky, 2016).

Intercity train services in South Africa run between cities, for instance between Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and other towns (Travelstart, 2015). However, the major cost to switch is time. For instance, although travelling by train is cheaper, most journeys may go overnight (Gernetzky, 2016), whilst bus operators such as Greyhound, Translux and Intercape travel overnight and arrive at inconvenient times. In contrast, despite the time taken to reach the airport, the overall journey time by air is much shorter than other travel substitutes (Wood, 2016).

The bargaining power of suppliers

Porter (2008) argues that where suppliers have strong bargaining power, the relative position of businesses is relatively weak. However, according to Pandey (2010) suppliers in the airline industry tend to be in a relatively strong bargaining position because fleets to the industry are supplied by what is effectively a duopoly (Boeing and Airbus), while an oligopoly exists in the supply of engines (General Electric, Pratt and Whitney, and Rolls Royce). With so few suppliers in operation, manufacturers are able to unilaterally establish prices and set delivery times (Bryson, 2012). Nhuta (2012) argues that the suppliers of airline fuel have a higher bargaining power because airlines have little control over fuel prices. Eller and Moreira (2014) concur that since there is no substitute for jet fuel this further increases supplier power. In turn, this reflects a difficulty in finding substitutes for the airlines inputs (Campbell, 2014).

The bargaining power of customers

Clark (2011) found a significant difference between the bargaining power of customers and the performance of airlines. Ismael (2015) found that the bargaining power of customers significantly impacted on airline performances because airlines are very vulnerable to any price reduction measures introduced by their competitors due to the lack of brand loyalty associated with the airline industry. Therefore, customers enjoy high bargaining power because switching to another airline is simple and is not associated with additional expenses (Winsen, 2016). According to Nolutshungu (2013), there are a large number of airlines in southern Africa and hence passengers tend to be highly price-sensitive which increases buyer power. Mondliwa (2015) argues that since buyers have no switching costs when switching from one airline to another, as such they are free to compare prices at no cost, which further increases buyer power. Spooner (2015) opines that the bargaining power of consumers is marginally increased by the presence of online booking sites, allowing customers to compare prices. Furthermore, travel agencies are able to influence the travelling public not only on the mode of transport to use but also on the particular airline to use (Kamau & Stanley, 2015). Travel agents who operate a supermarket of services in the travel and transport field, have significant power to shift demand across carriers. Therefore, buyers are becoming more informed and this has given them power over the airlines (Mawson, 2015).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Southern Africa harbours eighteen airlines registered by the Airline Association of Southern Africa (AASA) of which eight were used for the study. These airlines complied

with the criteria set by AASA (2017:3) for classification as a commercial airline, namely, "an airline dedicated to the transport of passengers." The other airlines could not be classified as passenger airlines but as cargo airlines and were therefore excluded. A qualitative and quantitative mixed-methods research design was followed. An exploratory discussion meeting (qualitative) was held with six of the eight airline CEOs and several key airline personnel to explore their views on the study. According to O'Reilly and Parker (2012) there is no commonly accepted sample size in qualitative research since in qualitative research the sample size depends on the concept of saturation. Therefore, a sample size of at least six CEOs was deemed appropriate for this study. The group interview was followed by the development and completion of structured questionnaires (quantitative) by senior airline managers in order to collect data for the study.

The purpose and extent of the study were discussed with the airline CEOs during the scheduled meeting. They were also given the opportunity to raise their expectations and concerns about the study. Based on the outcomes of the meeting, the research design needed to be guided by two overriding concerns. Firstly, airline CEOs stipulated that the questions had to cover the micro environmental factors that impact on airline financial performance. Secondly, the CEOs prescribed that the data collection should not have a disruptive effect on the managers' work schedule. They required that the questionnaire should not exceed one page in length, should be self-explanatory and easy to read.

Although two standard surveys, namely the Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) (proposed by Charnes, Cooper & Rhodes, 1978 based on the earlier work of Farrell, 1957) and the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) (developed by Saaty in 1980) have been applied in previous airline research, they were deemed unsuitable for this study. The Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) was not able to address the objectives of this study since it is a non-parametric method that is used to estimate the production frontier of Decision Making Units (DMUs) with multiple inputs and multiple outputs (Rai, 2013). Although the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) questionnaire could address the objectives of the study, it required subjective data on airlines based on experience, knowledge and judgment of the researcher (Yusuff & Poh Yee, 2001) and hence it had an element of bias resulting from subjective data. Consequently, a self-administered questionnaire adopted from Surovitskikh and Lubbe (2015) was customised to address the objectives and setting of the study. Airline managers were requested to rate the impacts of micro environmental factors on airline performances. Porters' (2008) five forces (the threats of new entrants, the bargaining power of buyers, the bargaining power of suppliers, the threats of substitutes and competitive rivalry) were used as exogenous variables since the extensive literature review identified these micro factors as the most obvious that impact on airline performances (Doganis, 2013; Heinz & O'Connell, 2013; Barros & Wanke, 2015) whilst airline performances was treated as an independent variable. This method of testing the relationship between micro environmental factors and airline performances is comparable to the technique used by Tesfay and Solibakke (2015). These researchers used micro-environmental factors as exogenous variables whilst airline performances was treated as an independent variable. The independent variable (airline performances) was tested by requesting key airline personnel to rate the impacts of various micro factors on airline performances. A total of 32 micro factor attributes were included in the measurement instrument. As in the study by Tesfay and Solibakke (2015) a five-point Likert scale was used. Since each point in the Likert scale had a descriptor, a fully anchored rating scale (Johnson & Christensen, 2004) was applied. The five response alternatives for measuring the impacts of the micro environment on airline performances ranged from 'very negative - (1)', 'negatively - (2)', 'neither negative nor positive - (3)', 'positively - (4)' to 'and very positive - (5)'.

The clarity of the instructions, ease of completing the questionnaire and time taken to complete the questionnaire (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013) were piloted using eight airline managers in each of the targeted airlines. No changes were made to the questionnaire. The study was voluntary and verbal consent was obtained from all the airline managers whilst permission was obtained from the airlines. It was, however, agreed that the identity of all airlines be revealed but the names of respondents be kept anonymous. The population of the study was regarded as a key airline managers. Purposive sampling was therefore used (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Purposeful sampling is a non-probability sampling method whereby the researcher chooses the sample based on who they think would be appropriate for the study. It is used primarily when there is a limited number of people that have expertise in the area being researched. The sample size for the study was determined such that it achieved a 95% confidence level and was within a 5% sampling error (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Consequently, a sample size of at least 150 managers was deemed appropriate for this study.

A scanning question, on whether the respondent was a key airline manager was used to identify the target sample. In order to ensure content and face validity (Babbie & Mouton, 2001), a literature study was undertaken and the survey instrument was scrutinised by relevant academics at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and aviation experts before the instrument was finalised. As the research involved executives who were difficult to access, respondents were first contacted by email for consent and to schedule an appointment for data collection. Therefore, questionnaires were only distributed to those who agreed to participate in the study. The researchers explained the purpose of the survey, indicated that participation was voluntary, and requested the manager to complete the questionnaire voluntarily. Completed questionnaires were collected by the researchers, but the distribution of questionnaires continued until the number of fully completed questionnaires corresponded with the targeted sample size. Airlines were visited for data collection in June and July 2016. Factor analysis was used to identify the underlying dimensions of micro environmental factors impacting on airline performances. Further correlation coefficient and regression analysis was employed to determine the impacts of micro environmental factors (independent variables) on airline performances (dependent variable). The data was captured and analysed by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22.

FINDINGS

Accordingly, Table 1 shows the results and the variable mean scores and standard deviations for micro environmental factors impacting airline performances in southern Africa. Table 1 depicts the mean scores and standard deviations calculated for the impacts of the micro environment on the performance of airlines. An initial glance at the data reveals that the impacts of each factor varied from 1.07 for price wars (V3) to 4.56 for brand identity (V6), with five being the highest possible score. Standard deviations between 0.43 (customer concentration) and 1.32 (product similarities) were calculated.

Table 1 further depicts that price wars (V3) highly impacted negatively on the performances of Comair (1.07), Mango (1.13), SAX (1.36) and SAA (1.19) whilst the number of airlines (V13) highly impacted negatively on the performances of Air Zimbabwe (1.09), Air Namibia (1.40) and Air Botswana (1.35). High operating costs (V10) highly impacted negatively on the performance of Airlink (1.92). A possible reason for the highest negative impact of price wars on Comair, Mango, SAX and SAA might be the increase in the number of LCCs which has resulted in a reduction of airfares (Mondliwa, 2015). A possible reason for the highest negative impact of the number of airlines (V13) on Air Zimbabwe (1.09) might be the Zimbabwean Government's 'open skies' policy.

Table 1. Means (M) and standard deviations (SD) for the micro Environmental factors impacting on respective airlines

	MICRO FACTORS	Airlines															
		Comair		Mango		Airlink		SAX		Air Zim		Air Nam		Air Bots		SAA	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
V1	Economies of scale	3.94	0.67	3.68	0.79	3.73	0.89	3.18	0.73	2.87	0.92	2.69	0.79	2.90	0.93	4.18	0.83
V2	Capital requirements	3.73	0.81	4.04	0.95	3.58	0.43	3.81	0.91	3.83	1.07	4.01	1.03	3.89	1.03	4.02	0.76
V3	Price wars	1.07	1.06	1.13	1.26	4.18	0.70	1.36	0.69	1.91	0.83	1.52	0.56	1.76	0.82	1.19	0.94
V4	Partnerships by competitors	1.69	0.47	1.89	0.67	3.78	0.57	2.35	0.45	1.16	0.76	2.05	0.46	2.37	0.65	1.87	0.53
V5	Product differences	3.86	0.68	3.51	0.54	3.79	0.58	3.58	0.75	2.59	0.81	3.67	0.61	3.59	0.97	3.83	0.92
V6	Brand identity	4.56	0.71	4.24	1.14	4.07	1.03	4.04	0.99	2.97	1.29	3.29	0.68	3.42	0.62	4.36	0.62
V7	Technology	4.29	0.63	4.49	0.73	4.21	0.58	3.42	1.27	1.33	0.64	3.83	0.71	2.89	0.81	3.21	0.51
V8	Expected retaliation	2.63	0.51	3.96	0.88	4.39	0.66	3.84	0.60	3.72	0.52	3.57	0.58	3.41	0.53	4.28	0.87
V9	Government regulation	2.02	0.89	4.07	0.65	4.53	1.25	4.16	0.87	1.11	0.92	4.37	0.92	4.30	0.79	4.39	1.27
V10	High operating costs	1.78	0.96	1.53	0.68	1.92	0.64	2.07	0.61	1.67	1.31	2.13	1.21	2.39	0.88	1.63	0.58
V11	Industry growth	2.27	0.72	2.62	0.51	3.18	0.43	2.89	0.45	1.81	0.70	3.66	0.82	2.87	1.13	2.47	0.49
V12	Size of airlines	1.74	0.58	1.51	0.59	3.89	0.51	1.83	0.68	2.44	0.57	2.27	0.69	3.09	0.61	2.36	0.62
V13	Number of airlines	1.20	0.69	1.20	1.07	4.41	0.63	2.28	0.52	1.09	0.66	1.40	0.71	1.35	0.52	1.40	0.91
V14	Switching costs	3.22	0.89	3.36	0.63	3.33	0.76	3.13	1.27	3.43	0.41	3.07	0.92	3.87	0.85	3.90	0.65
V15	Exit barriers	3.71	1.03	3.86	1.31	3.31	0.83	3.50	0.61	3.17	0.92	3.19	1.23	3.39	0.45	3.58	0.76
V16	Customer volume	2.36	0.67	2.03	0.77	2.4	0.81	1.94	0.94	1.79	0.97	2.36	0.87	3.17	0.91	2.26	0.42
V17	Customer switching costs	1.94	0.86	1.62	0.58	2.56	0.74	2.31	0.65	1.81	1.21	3.01	0.53	3.25	0.56	2.61	0.68
V18	Customer information	2.25	0.52	2.78	0.71	3.74	0.96	3.58	0.42	2.66	0.61	3.88	0.62	3.59	1.33	3.44	0.89
V19	Product similarities	2.15	0.83	2.07	0.51	2.69	0.54	1.92	0.92	1.61	0.87	2.47	0.91	2.91	0.84	2.86	1.32
V20	Customer concentration	2.19	0.43	2.83	0.63	3.07	0.46	3.77	0.81	3.29	0.89	3.81	0.61	3.41	0.79	3.30	0.71
V21	Substitute products	4.29	0.71	4.28	0.48	4.36	0.65	4.25	0.47	4.31	0.75	4.28	0.49	3.85	0.53	4.12	0.55
V22	Product differences	3.84	0.87	3.92	0.91	3.58	0.52	2.17	0.68	3.27	0.91	3.39	0.69	3.82	0.56	2.09	0.93
V23	Supplier concentration	2.42	0.81	3.38	0.52	3.46	1.11	3.44	0.51	2.83	0.59	3.03	0.46	2.91	0.48	2.54	0.71
V24	Supplier differences	4.06	1.24	3.43	0.76	4.08	0.81	3.93	1.21	4.23	0.84	4.13	0.91	4.17	0.83	4.14	0.86
V25	Impact of supplies on costs	3.58	0.62	3.52	1.11	3.09	0.89	3.60	0.52	3.86	1.15	3.56	0.50	3.90	1.13	3.76	0.53
V26	Supplier switching costs	3.89	0.67	3.81	0.55	2.83	0.62	3.44	0.69	4.26	0.93	3.99	0.65	3.72	0.59	3.44	0.97
V27	Substitute suppliers	3.17	1.03	3.26	0.82	2.75	0.71	2.65	0.98	2.44	0.80	2.40	0.83	3.51	0.73	2.83	1.06
V28	Relative price of substitutes	3.24	0.92	2.09	0.60	3.61	1.07	3.72	0.64	2.87	0.45	1.86	0.77	3.18	0.64	2.50	1.10
V29	Customer switching costs	2.01	0.52	2.82	0.52	2.67	0.64	2.91	0.73	2.68	0.53	2.91	0.71	2.46	0.82	2.99	0.79
V30	Brand equity	3.68	0.47	3.90	0.93	3.83	0.76	3.96	0.56	3.50	0.59	3.05	0.91	3.87	0.97	3.47	0.72
V31	Diverse competitors	1.28	0.76	2.55	0.80	2.97	0.85	2.55	0.66	2.64	0.70	2.67	0.56	2.68	0.61	2.88	0.68
V32	Propensity to substitute	3.49	0.61	3.74	0.66	3.73	0.46	3.68	1.12	3.94	0.91	3.90	0.88	3.66	0.70	3.75	0.56
	Overall	2.86	0.75	3.04	0.76	3.49	0.72	3.10	0.75	2.72	0.81	3.11	0.74	3.24	0.77	3.11	0.77

*SD: Standard deviation p<0.05; 1- Very negative; 2- Negatively; 3- neither negative nor positive; 4- Positively; 5- Very positive

As a result, the national carrier (Air Zimbabwe) has faced intense competition from foreign airlines such as SAA, Ethiopian Airlines and Kenya Airways (Chipunza, 2013). Table 1 further depicts that brand identity (V6) highly impacted positively on the performance of Comair (4.56) whilst government regulation highly impacted positively on the performance of Airlink (4.41) and SAA (4.39). A possible reason for the highest positive impact of brand identity on the performance of Comair might be attributed to the alliance that Comair has British Airways (BA) that allows Comair a 'seamless' transfer for passengers arriving on international BA flights to South Africa (Speckman, 2015). Comair's passengers also benefit in the form of improved service since all staff were retrained to comply with BA standards (Walters, 2010). Through Comair's participation in the One World Alliance, customers have access to 15 of the world's leading airlines and approximately 30 affiliates, all of which have reputations for quality service (Speckman, 2015).

Table 2. Factor and reliability analysis results of the micro environmental factors impacting on airline performances

ITEMS	FACTORS					COMMUNALITIES
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	
V1	0.86					0.692
V2	0.685					0.788
V3	0.885					0.613
V4	0.770					0.669
V5	0.801					0.805
V6	0.706					0.592
V7	0.835					0.724
V8	0.795					0.709
V9	0.838					0.540
V10	0.707					0.791
V11		0.807				0.665
V12		0.660				0.509
V13		0.626				0.793
V14		0.819				0.518
V15		0.595				0.754
V16			0.578			0.476
V17			0.730			0.714
V18			0.691			0.640
V19			0.802			0.716
V20			0.748			0.601
V21			0.699			0.579
V22			0.883			0.733
V23				0.568		0.526
V24				0.607		0.636
V25				0.711		0.618
V26				0.778		0.530
V27				0.543		0.712
V28					0.786	0.584
V29					0.558	0.719
V30					0.713	0.553
V31					0.603	0.610
V32					0.789	0.657
Eigenvalue	6.109	6.347	5.374	4.586	3.905	26.321
% of variance	26.959	21.701	16.835	9.987	6.863	82.345
Cronbach alpha	0.8738	0.8320	0.7641	0.7452	0.8096	0.8049
Number of items	10	5	7	5	5	

In order to determine whether the micro environment significantly impacted on airline performances, the 32 micro environmental factors were factor-analysed, using principal component analysis with orthogonal VARIMAX rotation, to identify underlying

factors. The extraction of the factors and the variables were based on the eigenvalues and the factor loadings of the variables. Only factors with an eigenvalue larger than one and attributes with loading > 0.50 were considered. The exploratory factor analysis extracted five factors, which accounted for 83 per cent of variance in the data. Table 2 illustrates the results of this VARIMAX process. Reliability analysis (Cronbach Alpha) was calculated to test the reliability and internal consistency of each factor. The results of the reliability analysis showed that Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the extracted factors ranged from 0.7452 to 0.8738. That is well above the minimum value of 0.60, which is considered acceptable as an indication of scale reliability (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). These values suggest good internal consistency of the factors. Finally, Cronbach's alpha value for the overall airline performance scale is 0.8049 and indicates its high reliability. Most of the factor loadings were greater than 0.60, implying a reasonably high correlation between extracted factors and their individual items. The communalities of 32 items ranged from 0.476 to 0.805 indicating that a large amount of variance has been extracted by the factor solution. The five micro environmental factors identified by VARIMAX as reliable and consistent with an Eigenvalue greater than one are as follows.

Factor 1: The threats of new entrants had ten attributes which accounted for 26.96% of the variance, with an Eigenvalue of 6.11 and an alpha coefficient of 0.8738. This factor included the following attributes 'Economies of scale,' 'Capital requirements,' 'Price wars,' 'Existing partnerships by competitors,' 'Product differences,' 'Brand identity,' 'Technology,' 'Expected retaliation,' 'Government regulation' and 'High operating costs'.

Factor 2: Competitive rivalry had five attributes which accounted for 21.70% of the variance, with an Eigenvalue of 6.35 and an alpha coefficient of 0.8320. This factor included the following attributes 'Industry growth,' 'Number of airlines,' 'Size of airlines,' 'Switching costs,' and 'Exit barriers'.

Factor 3: The bargaining power of customers had seven attributes which accounted for 16.84% of the variance, with an Eigenvalue of 5.37 and an alpha coefficient of 0.7641. This factor included the following attributes 'Customer volume,' 'Customer switching costs,' 'Customer information,' 'Product similarities,' 'Customer concentration,' 'Substitute products,' and 'Product differences'.

Factor 4: The bargaining power of suppliers had five attributes which accounted for 9.99% of the variance, with an Eigenvalue of 4.59 and an alpha coefficient of 0.7452. This factor included the following attributes 'Supplier concentration,' 'Supplier differences,' 'Impact of supplies on costs,' and 'Switching costs of suppliers' and 'Presence of substitute supplies'.

Factor 5: The threats of substitute products had five attributes which accounted for 6.86 % of the variance, with an Eigenvalue of 3.91 and an alpha coefficient of 0.8096. This factor included the following attributes 'Relative price of substitutes,' 'Switching costs by customers,' 'Brand equity,' 'Diverse competitors,' and 'Customer propensity to substitute'. The five orthogonal factors (the threats of new entrants, the bargaining power of buyers, the bargaining power of suppliers, the threats of substitutes and competitive rivalry) were used in Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient and regression analysis to investigate the relationship of overall airline performances (dependent variable) with the five micro environmental factors (independent variables). The results of the correlation analysis are depicted in Table 3. The data revealed that three factors namely, competitive rivalry, the bargaining power of customers and the bargaining power of suppliers significantly impacted ($p < 0.05$) negatively on airline performances whilst the threat of new entrants and substitute products did not have any impact ($p < 0.05$) on airline performances. The factor with the highest negative impact on overall airline performances was competitive rivalry ($r = -0.86$), followed by the bargaining power of customers ($r = -0.67$) and the bargaining power of suppliers ($r = -0.59$). The negative impact of competitive

rivalry on airline performances could be generalized to extant literature as confirmed by previous researchers (Stonehouse & Campbell, 2004; Thompson & Martin, 2005; Moiseiwitsch, 2014). However, a possible reason for the significant negative impact of competitive rivalry on airline performances in a southern African context might be due to the high number of LCCs which has resulted in overcapacity in the South African domestic market (Ensor, 2016). The results suggest that southern Africa's domestic market (for example, South Africa) is too small to support three LCCs (Maqutu, 2015).

Table 3. Correlation results of micro environmental factors and overall airline performances

Micro environmental factors	Overall airline performances	
	Correlation coefficient (r)	Significance (p-value)
Competitive rivalry	-0.86	<.0001*
The threat of new entrants	0.62	0.2317
The threat of substitute products	0.55	0.1604
Bargaining power of suppliers	-0.59	<.0001*
Bargaining power of customers	-0.67	<.0001*

Another possible reason for the significant negative impact of competitive rivalry on airline performances might be that Air Zimbabwe faces intense rivalry after the Zimbabwean government opened the skies. Consequently, competitors now control over 90% of market share against Air Zimbabwe's 10% and this has significantly affected Air Zimbabwe's performance (Chipunza, 2013). The findings on the bargaining power of suppliers significantly impacting negatively on airline performances could be generalized to previous research scholars (see works by Pandey, 2010; Bryson, 2012; Eller & Moreira, 2014) who also found the same results. However, in a southern African context this might be attributed to the limited number of suppliers of airline fuel rendering fuel expensive locally (Nhuta, 2012). Furthermore, the findings on the bargaining power of customers significantly impacting negatively on airline performances could be generalized to previous literature (Clark, 2011; Ismael, 2015; Spooner, 2015; Winsen, 2016) who have also found the same results. However, in southern Africa this might be attributed to the lack of a strong brand in the domestic airline industry hence there is no brand loyalty. This is further exacerbated by the absence of switching costs in southern Africa which increases buyer power as customers can easily switch between airlines as argued by Mondliwa (2015).

A possible reason for the significant negative impact of the bargaining power of customers on airline performances in southern Africa might be an increase in the number of travel agencies in supermarkets that are able to influence the travelling public not only on the mode of transport to use but also on the particular airline to use (Kamau & Stanley, 2015). Therefore, buyers are becoming more informed and this has given them power over the airlines. The findings on new entrants not impacting on airline performances are corroborated by Hitt et al. (2010) and Bryson (2012) who claim that new entrants do not impact on the performance of existing airlines because new entrants cannot enter and compete on the same level as established airlines. In a southern African context this might be attributed to the fact that it is difficult for new entrants to acquire prime time or peak hour landing slots at major airports (Nolutshungu, 2013). In the same vein, the low threat posed by new entrants to established carriers in southern Africa might be attributed to predatory pricing which is normally used as a retaliatory strategy by established airlines to counter-off competition particularly from new entrants (Nolutshungu, 2013). The findings on the substitute products not impacting on airline performances could be generalized to previous research scholars (see works by Walters, 2010; Clark, 2011) who also found that substitute products did not impact on airline performances. In southern Africa this might be attributed to the inconvenience caused by other travel substitutes compared to using air

transport (Gernetzky, 2016). For instance, although travelling by train is cheaper in southern Africa, most journeys often go overnight, whilst bus operators often travel overnight and arrive at inconvenient times. In contrast, despite the time taken to reach the airport, the overall journey time by air is much shorter than other travel substitutes (Wood, 2016). A full regression model was run for the dependent variable (airline performances). The model regressed the five micro environmental factors against overall airline performances. The regression model is depicted in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression results of micro environmental factors and overall airline performances

Independent variables	Model : Overall airline performances	
	t-value	p-value (p)
Competitive rivalry	-15.02	0.0001*
The threat of new entrants	5.30	0.4227
The threat of substitute products	3.41	0.3056
Bargaining power of suppliers	-9.37	0.0268*
Bargaining power of customers	-11.49	0.0129*

* indicates significant relation ($p < 0.05$)

The regression model depicted in Table 4 shows that three factors, namely, competitive rivalry ($p < 0.0001$), the bargaining power of customers ($p = 0.0129$) and the bargaining power of suppliers ($p < 0.0268$) significantly impacted ($p < 0.05$) negatively on airline performances. The t-values in Table 4 indicate the relative impact of each factor on airline performances. Competitive rivalry ($t = -15.02$) was rated by respondents as the micro environmental factor highly impacting negatively on airline performances, followed by the bargaining power of customers ($t = -11.49$) and the bargaining power of suppliers ($t = -9.37$). The research findings in this study where competitive rivalry highly ranked amongst the factors that negatively impacted on airlines performances deviates from previous research scholars (Doganis, 2013; Heinz & O'Connell, 2013; Barros & Wanke, 2015) who found the bargaining power of customers as the highest factor negatively impacting airline performances. A possible reason for the difference in results in this study and previous research scholars might be due to the small market in southern Africa where LCCs compete on the same routes unlike research from other scholars which was conducted in large markets (such as Europe) where competing LCCs do not fly on the same routes. The model F-value was calculated at 26.32 ($p < 0.0001$). The five micro environmental factors had a coefficient determination (R^2) of 0.8235 (Table 3) and thus explained more than 82 per cent of the variability in overall airline performances. This explanation of the variability in overall airline performances is high when compared to other studies. For example, the regression results of a study performed by Cederholm (2014), identified competitive rivalry, the threat of substitutes, the bargaining power of customers and the bargaining power of suppliers as significant factors ($p < 0.05$) impacting on airline performances, which explained only 68 per cent of airlines' performances.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research endeavour was to determine the impacts of the micro environment on airline performances. As the literature review and the study findings have shown, competitive rivalry, the bargaining power of suppliers and customers significantly impacted negatively on airline performances thereby hindering tourism growth in southern Africa. Therefore, the only opportunities for the airline industry in southern Africa are the low threat of substitutes and new entrants, which are not enough to mitigate intense rivalry and the high bargaining power of customers and suppliers. Several suppliers can squeeze airlines, and even though the threat of new entrants is low, wherever there is potential, there

will be new entrants, creating overcapacity and reducing yields (as was the case in South Africa). It is for this reason that the potential of tourism has not been fully realised in southern Africa. Since competitive rivalry significantly impacted on airline performances it is recommended that southern African countries reduce the number of LCCs in the domestic market to avoid overcapacity something that has negatively impacted on tourism. At most two LCCs will suffice since the southern African domestic market is not large enough to support three LCCs or more. To improve tourism, policy makers should further ensure that competing LCCs do not fly on the same routes. In another vein, since the bargaining power of customers significantly impacted negatively on airline performances it is recommended that airlines form alliances, which are strong, with other international airlines to improve brand loyalty and thereby reduce the bargaining power of customers. In most parts of the world, airlines have entered into alliance agreements to strengthen and extend the scope of their business and enhance their competitive position and thereby improve tourism development. Similarly, to reduce the bargaining power of customers the researchers recommend that airlines improve the service they deliver to tourists. Satisfied tourists have a very positive effect on tourism. If tourists are satisfied they are encouraged to travel frequently. If the airline industry is to have an even greater beneficial effect on tourism growth, airlines should identify key areas of importance to tourists. Various types of tourists, ranging from leisure to business tourists, have different ideas about what constitutes a satisfying flying experience. By studying the needs of different types of tourists, airlines will be able to rank product and service features, identify additional opportunities for improvement, create brand loyalty and increase return patronage and thereby reduce the bargaining power of customers.

LIMITATIONS

Although the researchers took great effort to enhance the trustworthiness and the validity and reliability of the research processes, as with any study, there remained certain limitations. These limitations expose weaknesses of this study, which could help researchers in future to design and conduct their research on critical success factors and challenges in the airline sector more effectively. Firstly, obtaining permission from the airlines was time-consuming and some airline executives/managers refused to participate in this study. The viewpoints of airline executives/managers who refused to participate in the study are lacking. Secondly, the research was based on the micro environmental factors impacting airline performances in southern Africa. Caution is therefore required when generalising the findings of this study to other airlines in other geographic areas. The impacts of micro environmental on airline performances on airlines from other geographic locations might be different. Thirdly, the study is limited in sample size (eight airlines) as a result of the scope. A larger sample size of a greater variety of airlines could also possibly generate other insights. Fourthly, the assessment of the impact of the micro environment on airline performances was limited to 32 factor attributes. Even though these attributes were included in other studies and the content validity of these attributes tested, there could be other relevant factor attributes of the micro environment that are likely to impact on airline performances. Last, the regression model failed to explain 18 per cent of the variation in airline performances.

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GEOTOURISM MAPPING FOR SUSTAINABILITY: A BASIN ORIENTED APPROACH

Premangshu CHAKRABARTY *

Visva-Bharati University, Faculty of Geography, Department of Geography,
Santiniketan, Bolpur, West Bengal, India, e-mail: drpremangshuindia@gmail.com

Rahul MANDAL

Visva-Bharati University, Department of Geography,
Santiniketan, Bolpur, West Bengal, India, e-mail: rahulskbu1992@gmail.com

Abstract: Visit to geosites as geotourists constitutes a distinct subsector of natural area tourism, a specialized form of tourism concentrating on economic utilization of the geological resources under the umbrella of tourism industry. Subarnarekha basin, of India with its various hierarchies of geosites provides immense possibilities for geotourism development. Diversified topographic features, both multi-cyclic and polygenic landforms are geotourism resources of the regions. This paper is an attempt to classify the geosites of the Subarnarekha basin from geotourism mapping perspectives with wider goal of assuring sustainability in the field of geoheritage management.

Key words: geosites, geoheritage, geotourism, multi-cyclic, polygenic, sustainability, management

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INTRODUCTION

The great diversity of landscapes and geological materials in association with the domain of knowledge on the evolution of earth and geological processes provides immense scope of geotourism, which could be dealt with river basin oriented approach from the standpoint of assuring sustainable development. Subarnarekha basin (latitudes 21°40' N and 23°30' N and longitudes 85°05' E and 87°30' E), which is located in the Indian state of Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha (Figure 1) is taken as a case study with respect to mapping of its geotourism resources using various techniques of geoinformatics. The concepts of geodiversity, geoheritage, geosites, geoconservation, geotourism and geoparks are found closely related and have significantly evolved in the last decade with the understanding that if the geoheritage sites are preserved, the geodiversity will be sustained (Wang et al., 2015). For conserving geoheritages, geotourism has been evolved as a policy instrument worldwide. Sectoral linkage is vital in this context in order to achieve inclusive development in the newly emerging tourism sub-field named geotourism. Tourism is actually an umbrella industry incorporating

* Corresponding author

various sectors like transport, food and beverages, construction etc., linkages among which not only makes tourism the backbone of destination economy but also assures their individual growths. Such overall advancement of various sectors within the umbrella of geotourism is referred to as inclusive from conceptual standpoint.

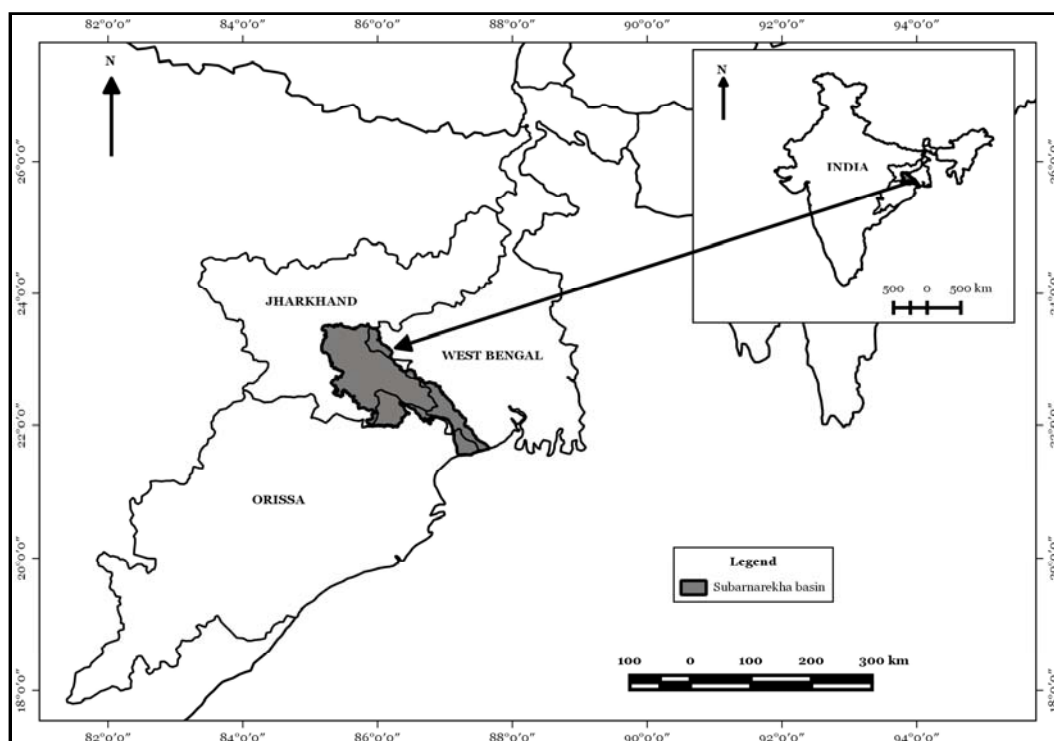


Figure 1. Location map of the study area (Source: Prepared by authors, 2017)

Geotourism may be defined as a specialized form of tourism centring the geosites (Newsome & Dowling, 2006). To be very specific, geosite as a landform represents the particular aspects of relief being determined by the morphogenetic processes and the geographic sublayer (Ilieş & Josan, 2009). The geosites include macro, meso and micro landforms available on the landscape attracting the attention due to their peculiarities and recreational uses. Being a mosaic of geological entities of special scientific importance, rarity or beauty, these features are representative of the region's geological history and of the events and processes that formed it (Zouros, 2007). They are either exposed on the earth surface naturally or appear due to cuttings or quarrying of the surface for the fulfillment of economic needs like road construction or mineral extraction. Such geosites are also called geomorphosites consisting of two components: a landform and a scientific value (Neches, 2013). Geotourism adds the third component i.e. a recreational value of the landscape.

Geomorphosites worldwide like the waterfalls, residual hills, gorges etc. possess not only an immense scientific value but also gain a considerably high economic value in terms of tourism return. Such return is manifested in the form of percolation of money from visitors to the local economy. Geotourism will be special relevance in such natural places where geology and geomorphology are the main attractions (Hose, 2000). In view of huge potentiality of geotourism development in Subarnarekha basin, it is essential to

assure sustainability from the initial stage of developing tourism infrastructure and superstructure. Environmental impact of the above-mentioned activities may cross the threshold limits of tolerance, if not regulated appropriately from the beginning. So, special care of these valuable geomorphosites are really required. The 'Do's' and 'Don't' of sustainable tourism should apply to geotourism, because these valuable geomorphosites must be preserved so that future generations will also utilize them (Haj Aliloo & Nekooei Sadr, 2011). However, in the management of geomorphosites, the research questions arise on the principles of identification of landforms to be protected and conserved (Bini, 2009). As it is not possible to conserve all geomorphosites, concentration should be on to conserve those geoheritages, which are rare and unique in terms of aesthetics and significance while interpreting the evolution of landscapes. Conservation of such geomorphosites can make a significant contribution to regional and environmental education (Bruno & Perrotta, 2011). The aspects of regional education are particularly important because geomorphosites are the outstanding expressions of regional geomorphologies, essential for understanding the evolution of the landscape. With the decay of those valuable geomorphosites, there is simultaneous loss of information about the earth's history and at the same time, it would result into enormous deprivation to future generations from geotourism perspectives. Under such circumstance, dynamic mapping of geomorphosites with reference to their vulnerability status is very important.

Due to lack of knowledge of geomorphological processes and formations as well as the diverse value of geomorphosites, appropriate educational measures are also urgently required for proper conservation and management of these natural landscapes (Giusti, 2010). A better understanding of the earth with reference to its geological attraction is the goal of geotourism which arises from the motivation of enjoying unique features amidst of landscape (Adriansyah et al., 2015). Human resource development, such as the trained guide force is vital involving local youth in this context. The importance and significance of geosites could also be imparted in the host society because of them, while the guests are naturally keen in understanding the geomorphological treasures. An increased awareness of general public arising from a better understanding of geomorphosites is necessary for geoconservation. The high degree of damage of attractive geomorphosites worldwide could be reduced by enhancing visitor awareness (Megerle, 2012). It may incorporate in situ notification as well as awareness campaign involving media. The knowledge of the complex geomorphosites should be made available very widely, especially to all in regional and local communities, rather than remaining within the preserve of scientists only (Bruno & Perrotta, 2011). Geotourism therefore may be initiated in any region as educational tourism so that it can be one of the most powerful tools for protecting the environment (Hassan et al., 2012). Geotourism mapping may contribute to the field of sustainable tourism by primarily focusing on the earth's geological features in such a way that fosters environment and cultural understandings and appreciation, simultaneously raising the awareness on conservation requirements. In case of Subarnarekha basin, the spectacular ranges and riverine tracts attract the visitors at the landscape scale. Meso landforms as gorges and residual hills and the impressive rock structures as micro landforms together develop geotourism attractions of Subarnarekha basin. The most attractive among the geosites in the region is however the series of waterfalls, concentrated particularly in the northwestern part of the basin. The famous waterfalls like Hundru, Johna, Dassam etc. are attracting visitors all over the year. Geotourism in India is addressed so far in administrative district level or concentrating on individual sites but basin oriented study is rare which is none but the research gap. In functional contexts, geological aspect of natural history is often not appreciated (Dahl et al., 2011). The geotourism research database and literature are also scant because of the lack of

qualitative and quantitative studies (Allan et al., 2015). The purpose of the study is to explore the geosites of a river basin for appreciation and learning in order to promote a holistic approach instead of considering administrative units which divides a natural region into parts. From the educational perspective of geotourism, a river basin is taken as the study area for better interpretation of geomorphic processes and human activities centring the geosites. The rivers are not only the lifeline of the concerned basins but also the mother of the landscape. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), i.e. the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a set of seventeen goals (UNWTO, 2016) to be taken into account for basin development through project initiatives concerning geotourism from the following perspectives:

a) The goal number 1 is aiming to eliminate poverty in all its forms everywhere. The role of geotourism in poverty alleviation is already found remarkable in case of rural area of southern Africa (Reimold et al., 2006). The multiplier effects of geotourism in terms of income and employment serve this goal. It is generally accepted as a thumb rule in admiring the advantages of geotourism that the attractive geomorphosites are usually located in remote backward areas. The fulfillment of goal number from 2 to 5 which are associated with eradication of hunger and achieving health, education status and gender empowerment may be subsequent progress in such backward areas with geotourism development.

b) The goal number 6 to 9 are dedicated to water, sanitation, energy, employment and resilient infrastructure development for which geotourism promotion may play a critical role.

c) Geotourism generates revenues, particularly foreign exchange for backward areas, vital for achieving goal number 10, i.e. reducing inequality within and among countries. A successfully developed geotourism site exerts such a positive influence that an inclusive safe, resilient and sustainable settlement can grow in its vicinity fulfilling goal number 11 in serving the purpose to accommodate the international visitors also. Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (goal number 12) is a process supported by continuous assessment of geotourism project outcomes.

d) It is out of the interest of the beneficiaries obtaining income and employment from geotourism, the host communities of geotourism areas will be voluntarily engaged to combat climate change as well as to adopt terrestrial ecosystem restoration campaigns which help to achieve goal number 13 and 15 respectively. The subsequent goals like peaceful and inclusive societies (goal 16) or global partnership for sustainable development (goal 17) are also attached to the monitoring of performance level in site management. From the perspectives of attaining success in the management of natural heritages, the concept of geoconservation has further strengthened the sustainable model of geotourism (Rodrigues et al., 2011).

When a geosite is promoted for geotourism purposes, it may become a 'geopark' if sustainable management and planning have been undertaken for its designing (Raharimahefa, 2012). Upper Subarnarekha basin has a number of sites having potentiality to be converted into geoparks. The followings are the values for which a network of geoparks is appreciated in geotourism planning:

- Earth heritage values since geosites, which may vary in size from a square meter to thousands of square kilometers, are undoubtedly appraised as outstanding landscapes.

- Aesthetic values added based on extent of beauties of concerned geoheritages.

- Ecological values as the landscape supports its natural ecosystem otherwise become extinct.

- Educational and scientific values in understanding the earth science through appreciation and learning.

- Economic values since geotourism in geoparks earn income, thereby appreciated for achieving community empowerment as well as betterment of living conditions.

Recognizing such cross sectional nature of geotourism, the following objectives have been undertaken for the present study:

1. Identification and classification of major geoheritages of Subarnarekha basin.
2. Zonation and mapping of geosites of Subarnarekha basin from the perspective of geotourism.
3. Evaluate the scope of introducing additional recreational measures to make geosites much more attractive.

Tourism maps available are mostly based on administrative or political boundaries. Appropriate mapping representing landscape in different levels is vital to satisfy a geotourist for which basin oriented approach is to be advocated. A geotourists' map may be defined as a map that is used to communicate with a public of non-specialist and that visualizes geoscientific information as well as tourist information (Regolini-Bissig, 2010). It is essential to create attractive and efficient maps, which may serve for the purpose of geoconservation and education imparting to geotourists (Serrano & González Trueba, 2011). The purpose of the study is to address the research gap of sustainability studies on the spatial context for which Subarnarekha basin, a backward area well endowed with valuable geotourism resources is taken into consideration.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A Geographical Information System (GIS) approach is undertaken for conducting the present study. The Subarnarekha basin, which is selected as study area with its versatile geotourism resources, is digitally demarcated following the boundary demarcated by renowned Indian geomorphologist Prof. S. C. Mukhopadhyay in his thesis entitled "Geomorphology of the Subarnarekha Basin" (1980). The geomorphic features of the basin are vectorized and a number of layers for each and every geosites have been prepared for mapping and analysis purpose. For representing the macro landforms in landscape level, Digital Elevation Model (DEM) has been taken into account (Figure 2) to fulfill the prime objective of identifying the riverine tracts and the ranges for geotourism purpose. Extensive survey has been conducted with Global Positioning System (GPS) for monitoring anthropogenic changes of the geosites in the region as well as for studying their sustainability status. The recreational use of the geomorphosites is the main concern and the perception study involving local people and the tourists have also been made in this context.

The tectonic history and multi-cyclic as well as polygenic nature of landform development of Subarnarekha basin is so unique that this particular basin is found conducive for mapping of its geotourism resources. The unequal uplifts or tilts in the different parts of the basin have caused the developments of striking differences in the topographic expressions within the basin (Saha, 2015). The geography of the Subarnarekha basin incorporates undulating plateaus, uplands consisting of gorges and waterfalls with exposed rocks of granite, gneiss, pegmatite and also some flat plains with deposits of red and laterite soil (Gupta & Mitra, 2004). The complexities of geomorphological processes operated on the Subarnarekha basin is manifested from various evidences of erosional, structural or geomorphic surfaces contributing to geomorphosites. Escarpments, gorges, lateritic-capped plateaus, waterfalls, superimposed drainage, badlands, residual hills and some other topographical expressions are among its valuable geotourism resources subjected to multilayered mapping. Mapping has been done in this study separately for the waterfalls, residual hills and gorges in GIS environment to serve the purpose of identification and classification of most outstanding geoheritages. Further, their zonation is studied with the application of techniques like Nearest neighbour analysis and overlay under the GIS

domain. The feasibility of introduction of a number of recreational activities involving the geosites have also been highlighted in consideration with their economic and environmental viabilities as revealed from the primary surveys.

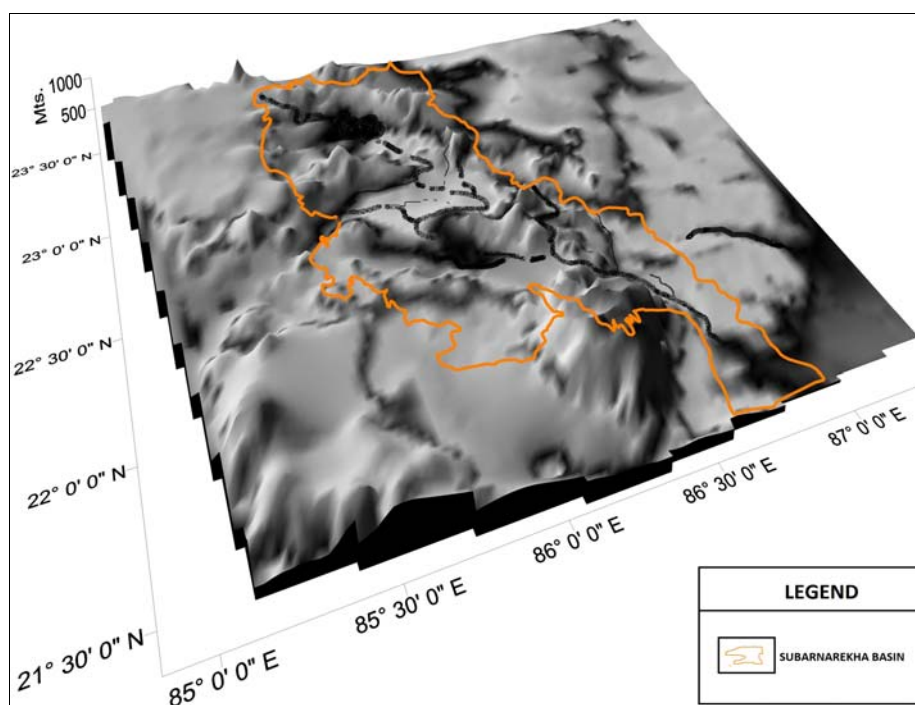


Figure 2. Macro landscape represented by DEM (Source: Prepared by authors, 2017)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The geomorphic history of the Subarnarekha basin is associated largely with regional uplift in late Tertiary period accompanied with warping or faulting which results into a number of attractive sites involving waterfalls and gorges. As the Himalayas experienced three major uplifts during Oligocene, middle-Miocene and Pleistocene so the Subarnarekha basin a part of the Chota Nagpur Plateau, bears the evidences of such three upheavals (Mukhopadhyay, 1980). The late-Tertiary uplift was in the form of a block movement with sharp warping resulting into conspicuous landscape diversities although the basin area is originally a part of Precambrian metamorphic terrain. The Quaternary and Recent ornamentation on the initial basement actually transforms the Subarnarekha basin as a geotourism paradise. It is a polycyclic area, which presents an attractive landscape evolving out of the spatial erosional processes with structural, topographic, geotectonic and lithological characteristics, being subject matter of educational tourism with geological and geomorphological base. Among the geosites available in Subarnarekha basin as revealed from the tourist perception survey, waterfalls ranks first. These waterfalls are the result of the breaks in the thalwegs of the river Subarnarekha as well as its tributaries flowing over the concerned erosion surfaces and particularly the scraps manifesting a number of knick points related to the history of late Tertiary and Pleistocene uplifts. A number of waterfalls like Hundru, Jonha, Hirni actually represent the line of block uplift of the late Tertiary period. The following waterfalls (Figure 3) of Subarnarekha basin are very popular:

1) Hundru falls: Hundru falls is the most famous and picturesque waterfall, created on the course of the Subarnarekha river, which falls from a height of 98 m. The fall is about 45 km. away from Ranchi town on Ranchi-Purulia road. A beautiful plunge-pool is created at the base of the falls, resulting from the erosion by the constantly falling of water. The diverse rocky formation around the falls also adds additional attraction to the geotourists. It is also known as one of the most popular trekking destinations in the region and a spot for recreational bathing.

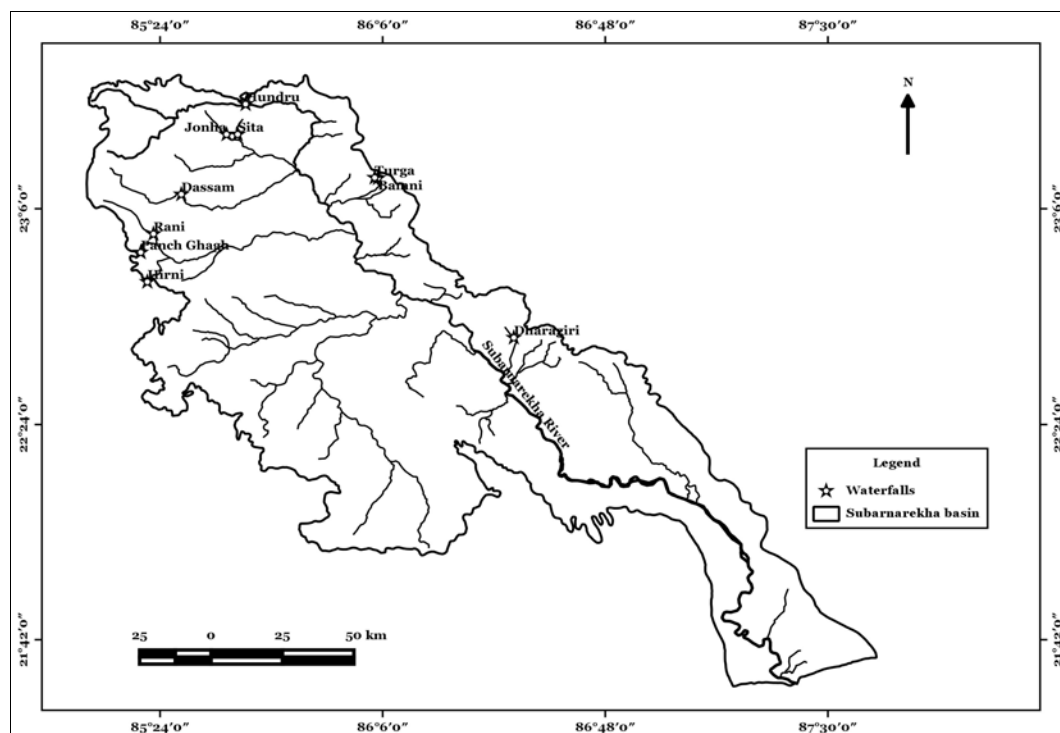


Figure 3. Regional concentration of Waterfalls in Subarnarekha basin (Source: Prepared by authors, 2017)

2) Johna falls: Johna falls named after the nearest village Johna, 40 km away from Ranchi is an example of hanging valley falls with a height of 43 m where the Gunga river hangs over its master stream called Raru river. It is also known as Gautam Dhara because it is believed that Lard Buddha once bathed here.

3) Dassam falls: Dassam falls is about 40 km away from Ranchi on Tata road near Taimara village of Jharkhand. It is a natural cascade across the Kanchi river, a tributary of Subarnarekha river. It falls from a height of 44m. The falls is surrounded by gorgeous landscape.

4) Hirni falls: Hirni falls created on the course of the Ramgarth river plunges down 37 metres in a broad torrent. This beautiful scenic falls is located in West Singhbhum on Ranchi-Chaibasa road, 75 km away from Ranchi.

5) Panch Ghagh falls: Panch Ghagh is the collective name for a group of five waterfalls formed in a row due to breaking up of the Banai river falls from a good height. It is situated on Ranch-Chakradharpur about 6 km from Khunti.

Apart from these popular waterfalls there are other falls based on which a waterfalls tourism circuit can be developed. Circuit planning on geotourism resources

largely depends on their locational status. In order to evaluate the locational status of the waterfalls from geotourism perspectives, a Nearest neighbor analysis has been attempted. The result (0.806) computed with the help of QGIS software clearly indicates their regional concentration, that is very much suitable for separate waterfall circuit development. The spectacular other geomorphosites such as residual hills have brought about great diversity in the wide undulating plains at different altitudes. Geomorphosites are considered as geotourism resources not only because of their intrinsic value (e.g. aesthetic, scientific) but also due to their extrinsic values like ecological, economical, historical or cultural (Gavrila et al., 2011). Being originated through multifaceted past and present geomorphological processes, these residual hills of polycyclic landscape are locally known as 'buru' or 'dungri' having a number of distinct breaks in their slopes. A number of 'dungris' are made up of large boulders exhibiting the form of dome-on-dome residuals (Pugh, 1967). They are the result of unequal rate of weathering and erosion of softer rocks such as mica-schist and phyllites and harder rocks such as granophyres, quartzites and chlorite schists etc (Mukhopadhyay, 1980). These residuals hills are mostly spread in the northern and eastern portions of the Subarnarekha basin illustrating the expression of the geological structure and characters of these rocks in the formation of an erosional landscape. Lithology is of dominant importance in its genesis as exhibited in the formation of deeply incised valleys and picturesque landscapes over which the residual hills are scattered.

The important residual hills of the study area, which are already attracting the visitors, include Ajodhya hills, Ranchi hills, Bhoram hills, Tagore hills, Dalma hills, Raisindri hills and Lota pahar. The erosion surfaces found are warped and much dissected resulting from rejuvenation of the drainage systems consistent with uplift under fluvial cycle of erosion. Such a great number of residual hills with picturesque appearances represent the uniqueness and beauty of the Subarnarekha basin. Most of the monadnocks are conical shaped but due to lateritic capping, a number of flat-topped 'burus' are also found. The morphological features (shape, size, slope angles, nature of peaks and altitude) of these residual hills are deeply related to their potentialities on geotourism development. There are numerous opportunities for developing rock climbing, paragliding, hiking, ropeways etc. on specific sites, which can attract visitors especially inclined to adventure tourism. Transformation of them as geotourists by imparting scientific knowledge and interests for understanding the landscape ecology is the challenge, which in the long run may fulfill the objective of geoconservation.

Gorges represent one of the most attractive geotourism resources of the study area. Gorges impresses through their extremely diverse morphology, narrow cross section, the spectacular steep slopes, level difference from the valley thalweg etc. Gorges are often the result of erosion by antecedent rivers. The word gorge means a narrow passage, with precipitous, rocky sides, enclosed among the mountains, smaller than a canyon and more steep-sided than a ravine (Peyrowan & Jafari Ardekani, 2014). In the geographical layout of large gorges, the roles of structural control by large-scale regional joints and fault systems have been found significant (Scheidegger, 1994). They are resulting from any of the following geomorphic events (Goudie, 2004):

- a. Incision of a river against an uplifting landmass
- b. The superimposition of a channel across resistant rock
- c. The outburst of floodwaters across a landscape
- d. The headward retreat of a knick point or waterfall

An antecedent river can erode its bed rapid enough through valley incision to maintain its present course against the rising landmass. As long as the uplifting continues, the river constantly deepens its valley through active downcutting. In this way,

the river develops very deep and narrow gorges across the uplifted land as found in Dalma area. A number of gorges including Barabinda, Ghoralang, Manikui, Kandraberia are the outcome of such geomorphic process (Figure 4).

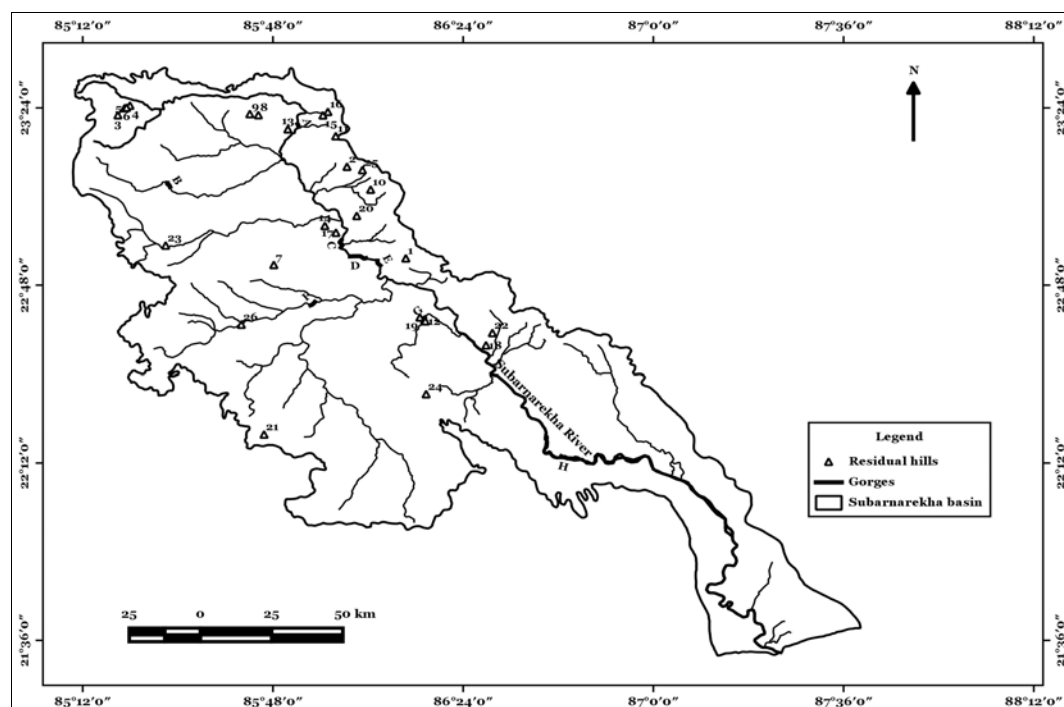


Figure 4. Residual hills and Gorges as geotourism resources (Source: Prepared by authors, 2017)

List of Residual hills - 1.Dalma hill 2.Ajodhya hill 3.Ranchi hill 4.Bhoram hill 5.Morabadi hill 6.Tagore hill 7.Raisindri pahar 8.Lota pahar 9.Holong pahar 10.Pakhi hill 11. Ashra hill 12.Rangamati hill 13.Kocho hill 14.Jamda buru 15.Sikra hill 16.Kopla hill 17.Barabinda hill 18.Phul Dungri 19.Narwa hill 20. Anda Dungri 21. Bicha Buru 22. Burudih hill 23. Marangburu 24. Turliga Parbat 25. Red hill 26. Lukud Buru

Name of Gorges - A. Silli gorge B. Pansakam gorge C. Barabinda gorge D. Manikui gorge E. Kandarberia gorge F. Ghoralang gorge G. Rangamati gorge H. Jamsola gorge.

The steep and narrow gorges developed by the Subarnarekha river are manifestation of tectonic upliftment (Mukhopadhyay, 1980). Being part of geological and geomorphological heritages, the presence of waterfalls initiates enormous geotourism potentials, which not only comes from their beauties but also from the pattern of the exposure of rocks (Adriansyah et al., 2015). The headward retreat resulting the recession of waterfalls forms the Hundru ghagh gorge (Subarnarekha river), the gorge below Jonha falls (Raru river) and the gorge below Dassam fall (Kanchi river) which are very attractive geomorphosites from geotourism context (Singh, 2006).

For the actual development of geotourism, it is essential to offer a number of additional options that visitors can choose from a variety of geotourism-based products (Lima et al., 2013). The spectacular ranges, particularly the Dalma ranges have extensive geotourism potentials. The individual hills and hillocks are the sites of alternative tourism planning, possible with the introduction of one or more of the following recreational activities:

1. Airplane Over flight: If introduced for the zone after viability assessments, the airplane over flight may become popular because of the beauty of the natural landscape, consisting of the escarpments and the mighty river.

2. Paragliding: A number of suitable paragliding sites can also be identified with extensive surveys aiming to secure the safety of the consumers. After making EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) on the proposed projects, necessary security measures should also be adopted.

3. Ropeway: Ropeways connecting the hills are essential to popularize geotourism in the region. Most of the hilltops are gifted with religious shrines and the ropeway connectivity to reach such shrines may serve both pilgrimage and tourism simultaneously. Ropeway infrastructure needs huge investment. The fund diversion for ropeway construction would be economically viable if pilgrimage tourism and geotourism advance hand in hand in the study area.

4. Rock Climbing: Rock climbing is becoming increasingly popular for the youths of new generation. The selection of practical field sites for learning rock climbing is vital and there are several sites in Subarnarekha basin, which are already designated as ideal in this context by the experts practicing in this field.

Trekking along the river from any point of its lower course to discover its source is among other potential geotourism activities in the region. Canyoning can be introduced as a seasonal adventure tourism activity on selected parts of the river. Angling is another recreational option, very much suitable in some of the locations on the river. It is noteworthy to mention that geotourism has common benefits for local people of the area by improving their economy (Akbari & Moradpoor, 2014). Value additions to the geotourism landscape with utilization of further mapping options, e.g. thematic maps on individual resource and facilities are essential in this context.

CONCLUSIONS

The great diversity of landscapes provides immense scope of geotourism promotion in Subarnarekha basin. Geotourism is like an interactive industry, where every component needs to go hand in hand in order to encourage conservation of geomorphosites and also promote recreational activities for the general public (Swarna et al., 2013). Economically Subarnarekha basin is a backward area and the common people residing in the region are suffering from extreme poverty. Some parts of the region have also earned the bad name as disturbed area due to Communism influenced extremist activities. It is alleged that poverty has driven the tribal people to join with the extremists. Tourism can contribute positively in the economy of the region by its multiplier effects on income and employment. The efforts in this context have already been made through promoting nature tourism, wildlife tourism and cultural tourism by governmental and non-governmental agencies, which are found partly successful in some isolated pockets. It is noteworthy to mention that in many developing countries where millions of people are still living in poverty, governments are directed to integrate sustainability as a new paradigm for development aiming to poverty eradication.

Geotourism is a relatively new concept to be implemented, which probably has the maximum potentialities in the context due to availability of a number of geosites in different scales throughout a region like the study area concerned. Since the conservation objects are very much fragile, a high level of maintenances is required for two main reasons:

- a) Preservation of the value of geoheritages
- b) To cope with the threats increasing with human activities

A model approach is however prescribed in the transition from the geomorphosite evaluation to the geotourism interpretation to achieve sustainable development of

geotourism (Neches, 2013). Initially understanding geology and geomorphology was key (Hose, 2006) which has further extended to landscape interpretation approach (Newsome & Dowling, 2010). Focus on community involvement (Boley, et al., 2011) relates it with sustainable development contributing to the alleviation of poverty in geotourism areas (Reimold et al., 2006). The space in geotourism context set up a working landscape, where nature and people come together for geoconservation perspective (Yolal, 2012). Collaboration between governmental agencies and private sector is advocated for achieving sustainability in geotourism development (Adriansyah et al., 2015). It ensures the better addressing of vulnerability issues since geomorphological processes and human activities are leading to geomorphosites degradation (Irimus et al., 2011). Analysis of carrying capacity for each and every geosites, optimization of environmentally friendly tourism infrastructure, effective management with a thrust on high maintenance and designing intense collaboration with local communities to ensure geoconservation are necessary to achieve this goal. Long-term sustainable tourism is only possible through intensive actions and collaboration between the stakeholders to minimize the conflict caused by different interests in order to gain support for responsible tourism (Ghanem & Saad, 2015). Mapping is pre-requisite for any of such discussions in order to assess the existing resource base and their potentialities with reference to different levels of planning. With the subsequent monitoring of the promotional activities concerning geotourism from its initial phase, the case study reveals how a GIS based basin oriented mapping approach may contribute to a paradigm shift in managing geosites under the umbrella of sustainable tourism.

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THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD: EVIDENCE FROM CULLINAN, SOUTH AFRICA

Clinton D. VAN DER MERWE*

University of the Witwatersrand, School of Education, Johannesburg, 27 St Andrews Road,
Parktown, (South Africa), email: clinton.vandermerwe@wits.ac.za

Christian M. ROGERSON

University of Johannesburg, School of Tourism & Hospitality, College of Business & Economics,
Bunting Road, Johannesburg (South Africa), email: crogerson@uj.ac.za

Abstract: Industrial heritage is attracting a growing focus within the international expansion of research around heritage tourism. The largest share of literature relates to industrial heritage in developed economies. The aim in this paper is to examine industrial heritage tourism in a developing economy context and specifically the challenges of maximising heritage tourism for local development in South Africa. The analysis focuses on the diamond-mining village of Cullinan in Gauteng Province, South Africa. In terms of methods and sources the analysis combines material from policy documents from the provincial and local government, local tourism data, and visitor trends to the heritage site, a visitor survey and key stakeholder interviews. Overall, the results reveal that the assets of industrial heritage tourism are underperforming in terms of growing the local economy at Cullinan. In interpreting this finding the study shows that the key explanations relate to the capacity constraints on local governments in tourism development, planning and management. The analysis shows that capacity constraints at the level of local government must be addressed if the potential of industrial heritage tourism in South Africa is to be maximised for the future benefit of local economies.

Key words: industrial heritage; local economic development; Cullinan; South Africa

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INTRODUCTION

Heritage tourism continues to attract a substantial scholarly interest particularly in developed countries (Ashworth & Larkham, 1994; Cercleux et al., 2011; Garrod & Fyall, 2000; Poria et al., 2001; Timothy & Boyd, 2006; Timothy, 2007; Waterton & Watson, 2015; Alvarez et al., 2016). According to Light (2015) heritage tourism is not, however, a recent international phenomenon. Instead, it is stated that the earliest “examples of this activity can be identified in the visits made by affluent Romans to the ruins of ancient Greece” (Light, 2015: 145). Nevertheless, many heritage tourism scholars often refer to it as a new market niche of tourism (Jansen-Verbeke &

* Corresponding author

McKercher, 2010; Sun et al., 2011; Park, 2014). Among several different segments of heritage tourism one of the most distinctive is that of industrial heritage tourism. A number of definitions are offered for industrial heritage tourism. Edwards and Coit (1996) refer to it as “the development of touristic activities and industries on a man-made (sic) site, buildings and landscapes that originated with industrial processes of earlier periods” (Edwards & Coit, 1996). For other observers, industrial heritage tourism “is a practice where old buildings and cultural assets are reinterpreted within a tourism framework” (Cassel & Pashkevich, 2014). Xie (2005) considers that the term “refers to housing, industrial settlements, industrial landscapes, products and processes and documentation of the industrial society”. In a recent international review, Vargas-Sanchez (2015) maintains that industrial heritage tourism is not homogenous. It includes a broad spectrum of types of heritage which relate to industrial and mining centres. Arguably, industrial heritage tourism “is being promoted with ever greater intensity in several destinations” (Vargas-Sanchez, 2015: 220). Indeed, across much of Europe, Cassel and Pashkevich (2011) argue that “efforts to develop heritage tourism are often part of strategies in peripheral regions” to revalue the local culture and find new uses for old buildings and industrial landscapes. One illustration is provided by Bujok et al., (2015) who review the context and revival of industrial heritage in the Czech Republic.

As a whole it is observed that “industrial heritage tourism forms a distinctive, but under-researched, subset of the wider field of heritage tourism” (Edwards & Coit, 1996: 343). Among the most notable academic investigations are works which look at the interpretation of mining heritage (Gouthro & Palmer, 2011; Reeves et al., 2011); the transformation of mines into heritage attractions (Che, 2011; Frew, 2011; Legget, 2011; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2016); and, questions of authenticity in industrial heritage practices (Alonso et al., 2009). Using the case of the United Kingdom, Jansen-Verbeke (2007) explores the nexus between industrial heritage and sustainable tourism development, tracing the history of industrial heritage tourism and asserting the merits and benefits of industrial heritage for tourism purposes. In the international context, it is evident that industrial heritage enjoys considerable appeal as part of promoting urban tourism (Ashworth & Page, 2011; Law, 1992; Firth, 2011; Swensen & Stenbro, 2013; Otgaar et al., 2016). Many cities in developed countries turn to industrial heritage in order to stimulate their local economies, as they endeavour to reinvent themselves in a post-productivist era and sustainably utilise their local resources and heritage assets (Kosmala & Sebastyanski, 2013; Kruczek & Kruczek, 2016; Lee, 2016).

Industrial heritage tourism activities contribute to preserving “a region’s identity and to stimulate the formation of local service activities and employment” (Hospers, 2010: 398). Most scholars concur that the global rise of industrial heritage tourism is associated with deindustrialisation as well as the growth and development in the leisure industry since the 1970s. Together these encouraged the ‘heritagization’ of formerly industrial places (Lee, 2016; Otgaar et al., 2016). Beyond the remodelling of factories or docklands, much industrial heritage tourism relates to the use of former mining operations (Conlin & Jolliffe, 2011; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2016; Kruczek & Kruczek, 2016). Accordingly, it is forwarded that research “that seeks to further our understanding of the relationship between mining heritage; mining communities and tourism should be of paramount importance” (Wilson, 2011). The international trend is towards “the conversion of mining valued for industrial purposes to mining valued for its heritage and tourism aspects” (Conlin & Jolliffe, 2011). Preservation, interpretation, environmental impact, attraction development, sustainable management and future growth are all critical planning issues that impact industrial heritage projects (Conlin & Jolliffe, 2011). Further, as various stakeholders and institutions

have complex and vested interests in these heritage sites, power relations and questions of identity remain critical issues. Indeed, it is stressed that “defining different heritages is not only a matter of telling the right story but also of determining whose story should be told and to what audience” (Cassel & Pashkevich, 2011).

Strong research foci of industrial heritage research are found in the United Kingdom, USA, Scandinavia and post-communist Eastern Europe (Alonso et al., 2009; Bujok et al., 2015; Cassel & Pashkevich, 2011, 2014; Che, 2011; Iancu & Stoica, 2010; Jones & Munday, 2001; Kruczek & Kruczek, 2016; Tatar et al., 2008). In the global context whilst industrial heritage tourism “is gaining momentum in the developed world (where former industrial facilities are being reused, and therefore preserved, for leisure and tourism purposes”, its presence is now also beginning to be recognised in parts of the developing world or global South (Vargas-Sanchez, 2015). Outside of the global North there is a smaller cluster of research activity around industrial heritage tourism in developing countries (e.g. Otgaar et al., 2016). With its long mining history, recent experience of mine closures as well as de-industrialization, South Africa exhibits considerable potential for the growth of industrial heritage tourism. This theme has so far, however, been minimally explored within existing tourism scholarship about the country (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2011; Visser & Hoogendoorn, 2011; van der Merwe & Rogerson, 2013; Hoogendoorn & Rogerson, 2015; van der Merwe, 2016b; Visser, 2016). The practice and challenges of developing industrial heritage tourism for purposes of local economic development form the focus of this investigation.

TOURISM AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: A PLACE FOR HERITAGE TOURISM

Following South Africa’s democratic transition in 1994 there emerged a consolidated research and policy focus around questions of local economic development (Nel & Rogerson, 2005, 2016a; Rogerson, 2014a). In one recent analysis, it was argued that the activity of local economic development represents “an explicitly social and territorial approach to development including not only economic aspects but also employment creation, poverty reduction, quality of life and environmental sustainability” (Hadjimichalis, 2017: 1). In South Africa, the importance of promoting local development “is increasingly being identified as the strategic enabler for national economic and development objectives” especially of the country’s National Development Plan (Department of Cooperative Governance, 2016). Since 1998 the planning of initiatives for Local Economic Development (LED) has been isolated as one of the core responsibilities of local governments across South Africa (Nel & Rogerson, 2005, 2016b; Nel et al., 2009; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2010). Arguably, in the first decade after democratic transition, much LED promotional activity in South Africa concentrated upon expanding the role of localities as centres of production whether of industry, agriculture or mining (Nel et al., 2009; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2010). Throughout the post-2000 period, however, there occurred a marked upturn in policy attention which is centred on the role of tourism as an alternative driver for LED in South Africa and of the making of ‘post-productivist’ places (Rogerson, 2002; Hoogendoorn & Visser, 2011; Irvine et al., 2016). The rise of policy interest around tourism as a strategic driver for local development is partly the result of the boost in the national importance of international tourism for South African economic development following the ending of global sanctions which dramatically limited foreign tourism arrivals in the country during the late apartheid period (Rogerson & Visser, 2004). In addition, the continued expansion of domestic tourism offered further opportunities for stimulating tourism-led LED in many parts of the country (Rogerson,

2015a). Finally, for many economically declining localities faced with the downturn of resource-based activities (particularly in mining and agriculture), tourism has become a 'last resort' for regenerating these marginalized areas (Nel & Rogerson, 2007; Rogerson, 2014b, 2015b). In a 2015, national survey of the local development activities across South Africa's 278 local governments it was revealed almost 80 percent of all the country's local authorities were engaged in various forms of activities to stimulate tourism as a major force for local economic improvement (Nel & Rogerson, 2016b). Of note is the special significance of tourism for catalysing economic development opportunities in South Africa's leading cities (Naicker & Rogerson, 2017; Rogerson, 2013; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2014a, 2017; Rogerson & Visser, 2007). The uneven success of these existing initiatives to boost tourism development has been highlighted in a stream of scholarly investigations over recent years (Binns & Nel, 2002; Butler & Rogerson, 2016; Ferreira, 2007; Hoogendoorn & Rogerson, 2015; Hoogendoorn & Visser, 2011; Irvine et al., 2016; Rogerson, 2002; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2011, 2014b).

One notable dimension of tourism-led LED planning across South Africa has been the growing attention to what would be regarded as niche forms of tourism. Many localities have sought to build their competitiveness for tourism development around specific niche types of tourism, including for example adventure activities, agritourism, bird watching, creative tourism, food, wine or youth festivals, fly fishing, sports events, voluntourism or weddings (see e.g. Booyens & Rogerson, 2015; Ferreira & Hunter, 2017; Hoogendoorn, 2014; Rogerson & Slater, 2014; Rogerson & Collins, 2015; Rogerson & Harmer, 2015; Rogerson & Wolvaardt, 2015). One additional highly significant niche for development in South Africa concerns the promotion of heritage and heritage tourism. Heritage was identified early in post-apartheid planning as an important segment for tourism promotion and diversification of product mix beyond the country's iconic nature tourism attractions (Masilo & van der Merwe, 2016; van der Merwe, 2016a, 2016b).

In contemporary South Africa, there is marked recognition of the potential for developing the country's heritage tourism economy (Galla, 1998; van der Merwe, 2016b). During the mid-1990s the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) acknowledged the potential for tourism in South Africa's development. The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) recognised the importance of heritage for national economic development promotion (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1996). Only recently, however, has the specific potential of heritage tourism been acknowledged as meeting the strategic goals of the 2011 National Tourism Sector Strategy (RSA, 2012a). Arguably, critical recognition of the national importance of heritage tourism for South Africa is evidenced most clearly by the preparation and launch in 2013 by the National Department of Tourism (NDT) of its *National Heritage and Cultural Tourism Strategy (NHCTS)* (RSA, 2012b). In the NHCTS, it is stated explicitly that the country wishes "to realise the global competitiveness of the South African heritage and cultural resources through product development for sustainable tourism and economic development" (RSA, 2012b: 10). The central objective of this strategy is to give strategic direction for the development and promotion of heritage and cultural tourism in South Africa, and furnish a framework for the coordination and integration of heritage and culture into mainstream tourism (van der Merwe, 2016b).

It is observed that recognition of the significance of heritage tourism extends across the different tiers of government in South Africa from national to provincial to local. At the local scale of government, it is striking that several South African cities and small towns sought to capitalise on aspects of heritage tourism as components of strategies for tourism development, and of broader local economic development planning (Rogerson & Visser,

2007; Rogerson, 2013, 2016; van der Merwe & Rogerson, 2013; Rogerson & van der Merwe, 2016; van der Merwe, 2013, 2014, 2016b). This said, the developmental challenges of heritage tourism so far occupy only a minor position in the growing academic literature on tourism in South Africa (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2011; Visser, 2016; van der Merwe, 2016b). Existing studies mainly focus on how to repackage heritage for tourism development in South Africa (Shackley, 2001; Magnussen & Visser, 2003; Witz et al., 2005; Marschall, 2006, 2010); the experience and impacts of heritage tourism projects in the country's cities (Marschall, 2012; van der Merwe, 2013); public-private partnerships in heritage projects (Rogerson, 2016), tourist perceptions of heritage sites (Khumalo et al., 2014; Masilo & van der Merwe, 2016; van der Merwe, 2016a, 2016b); and, the opportunities for developing heritage tourism routes in peripheral areas (Bialostocka, 2014). It is against this backdrop that the objective in this article is to analyse the challenges that confront local heritage tourism development in South Africa through investigating one case study of industrial heritage tourism. The evidence and experience of heritage tourism development at the diamond-mining village of Cullinan contributes to international scholarship on industrial heritage tourism. The material examines the re-use of mining heritage around the diamond-mining village of Cullinan, which is now part of the Tshwane Metropolitan area of Gauteng province, the economic heartland of South Africa.

RESEARCH METHODS

The analysis draws upon a combination of a number of different sources and research methods. Policy documents from the provincial and local government are scrutinised for the context of local economic development. Data on visitor numbers to the mining heritage site was obtained from the mine owners. The research draws critically upon primary interviews with heritage tourists and local heritage stakeholders, including local accommodation providers and guides. Field research was undertaken to profile and characterise visitors to the Cullinan Diamond Mine using demographic indicators to understand the heritage tourism market and explore tourist perceptions of industrial heritage and heritage tourism. Through an examination of the interplay between various public and private sector role-players and stakeholders associated with the specific heritage site the local impacts on tourism of the heritage site were analysed. The study also uses data on local tourism extracted from a national database termed the IHS Global Insight Regional eXplorer. This database includes tourism and provides "accurate and up-to-date economic, marketing and development information for each magisterial district and province in South Africa" (IHS Global Insight, 2015).

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE TOURISM AT CULLINAN

Cullinan is a small town situated 30km east of Pretoria, South Africa's national capital and 107km northeast of Johannesburg, the country's major commercial centre. This 'mining village' forms part of Dinokeng ("a place of rivers"), a region in north-eastern Gauteng province. From the humble beginnings of a farm (Elandsfontein) which belonged to the Minnaar family in 1859, it grew into a diamond-mining village from the early 1900s. Cullinan is renowned for the Kimberlite that makes up the diamond-bearing rock in the area (Lincoln, n.d). The Cullinan diamond pipe is one of the oldest diamond pipes in the world. Mining commenced in 1903. Under the ownership of Sir Thomas Major Cullinan, prospecting pits were dug on the site of the mine. According to legend Cullinan is said to have "promised his wife (Lady Cullinan) that one day he would bring her the biggest diamond in the World" (Lincoln, no date: 15). In 1905, the Cullinan Diamond was discovered by the surface manager of Premier Diamond Company and named after its

owner. The Cullinan Diamond weighed $3024\frac{3}{4}$ South African carats, equivalent to 3106 metric carats, and was 4 by $2\frac{1}{2}$ by 2 inches in size (Lincoln, no date). The colonial Transvaal government, which had bought the stone from Sir Cullinan, presented it to King Edward VII of England for his 66th birthday. Much of the Cullinan diamond makes up the British Crown Jewels and now is housed at the Tower of London on display for tourists to view. Following its discovery, the settlement of Cullinan experienced a chequered history with the mine closing during the period of World War I, subsequently re-opening, experiencing the ravages of a Spanish Flu epidemic and further economic despair when the mine closed once again in 1932 because of the Great Depression. Diamond mining continued at Cullinan under the ownership of De Beers and the mine has yielded other significant stones which have given the village an international reputation especially for rare blue diamonds. The life of the mine is anticipated to last until 2030. The Cullinan Diamond mine (previously known as the Premier (Transvaal) Mining Company) owns much of the land in Cullinan and continues the heritage of diamond exploration and discovery. The town of Cullinan retains a late-Victorian identity and today it is a tourist and mining town. In 1992 based on an initiative of De Beers, underground tours began at the mine site. The Friends of the Rail (a private train company) operate monthly train trips by steam train to Cullinan from Pretoria station. The train offers a popular outing bringing hundreds of visitors to Cullinan each month.

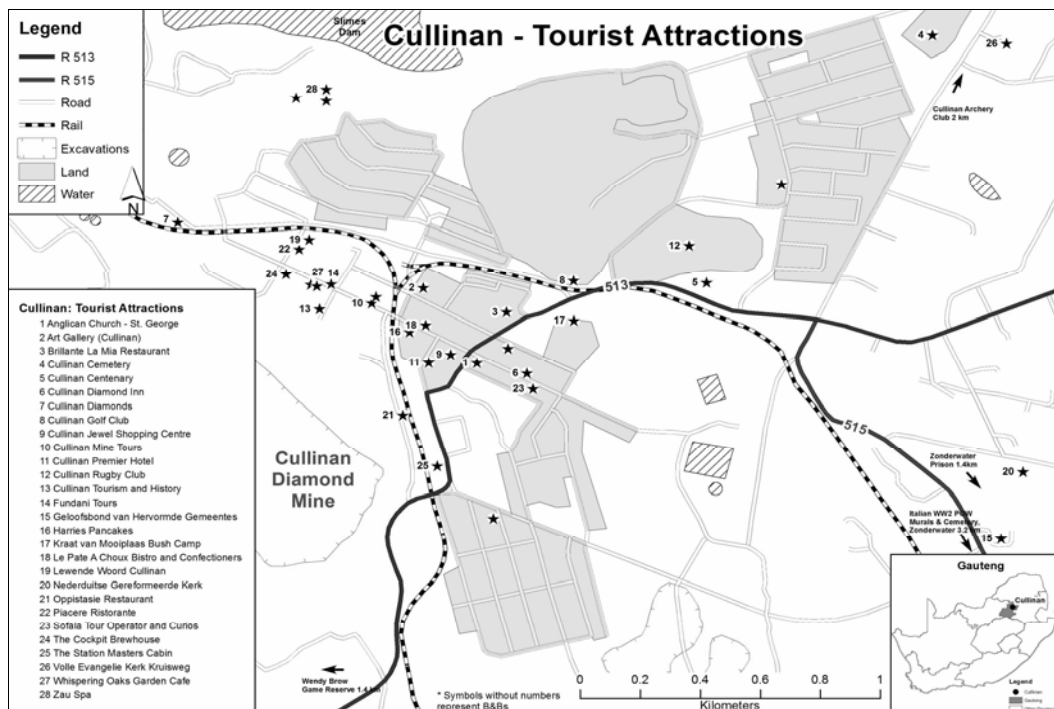


Figure 1. Cullinan and Location of the Cullinan Diamond Mine

Alongside its heritage of mining, Cullinan (Figure 1) offers many attractions to potential visitors. These include the town's many boutiques, antique stores, art galleries, a theatre, and a range of shops and restaurants along the main road (Oak Avenue), which leads to Cullinan Diamond mine. Among the heritage and cultural attractions of interest

in the town are surface or below-ground diamond mine tours; a village tractor-driving tour; the St George's Anglican Church (built in 1908 and designed by Sir Herbert Baker); murals painted by Italian Prisoners of war (during World War II); the Mc Hardy House Museum; and, the Cullinan Station. Cullinan also offers nearby game ranches; outdoor sports and adventure tourism (abseiling, horse-riding and zip-lining activities); as well as hosting the Groot Gat Festival in March which comprises live shows, music, street parades, a large variety of food stalls, entertainment, a beer garden and many exhibitions. In May, the Mampoer (a traditional Afrikaans spirit akin to moonshine) Festival is hosted at Rayton (9,5km away from Cullinan) to celebrate Afrikaans heritage. At the core of tourism is, however, mining heritage tourism and a range of above ground and below ground tours of the operational mine (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Walking tour of The Cullinan Diamond Mine
(Source: Photograph by Clinton D. van der Merwe)

RESULTS AND INTERPREATION

The importance of tourism and of tourism promotion for Cullinan is evidenced by policy documents, which are produced by local and provincial tourism bodies. The Gauteng province's tourism vision for 2014 and beyond speaks of Cullinan as part of "the 240 000 hectare Dinokeng 'Africa in one day' destination. The Gauteng Development Strategy, however, makes no mention to either heritage or heritage tourism. Although the local Integrated Development Plan acknowledges the potential of tourism in the area related to the history of Cullinan it accords minimal attention to heritage and fails to indicate how industrial heritage could be tapped to grow the local economy (City of Tshwane, 2014).

Figure 3 shows the estimated number of tourist trips to Cullinan for different purposes over the period 2001 to 2015. The data on leisure trips reveals the uneven performance of Cullinan as it shows a modest increase in the number of tourism trips for leisure purposes over the 15-year period since 2001, with a downturn recorded after 2010. The picture in terms of business tourism is very weak with only limited growth from 2001 to 2013, and then a steady decline to 2015. The pattern of Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) is much less significant than leisure visits in Cullinan. Because of these local tourism

trends, tourism spending in Cullinan has become, in relative terms, of reduced significance to the regional economy. This is demonstrated on Table 1. The data indicates that in a period when South Africa as a whole has considerably been boosting the contribution of tourism to the national economy, in the case of Cullinan, tourism spend as a proportion of local Gross Domestic Product (GDP) exhibits signs of decline, particularly from 2001.

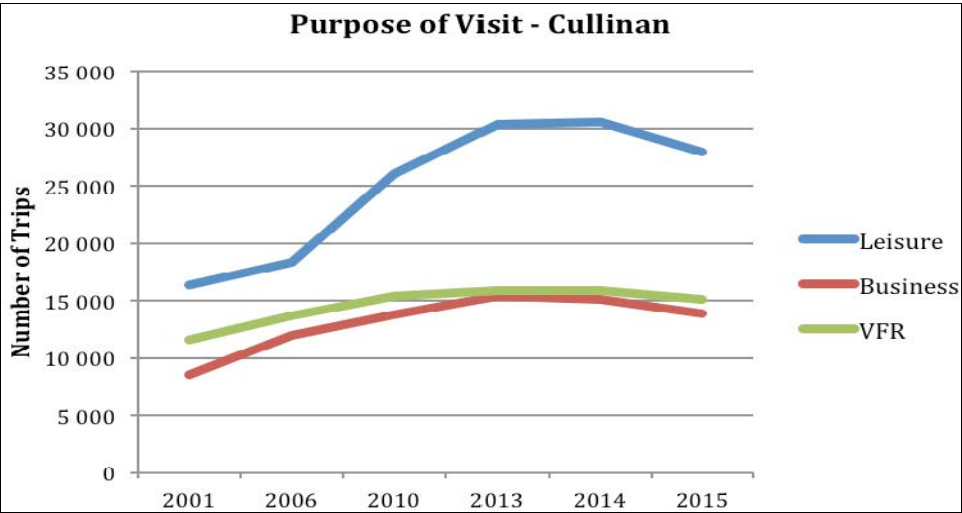


Figure 3. Number of Tourist trips to Cullinan (Region 5) from 2001-2015
(Source: Unpublished IHS Global Insight data)

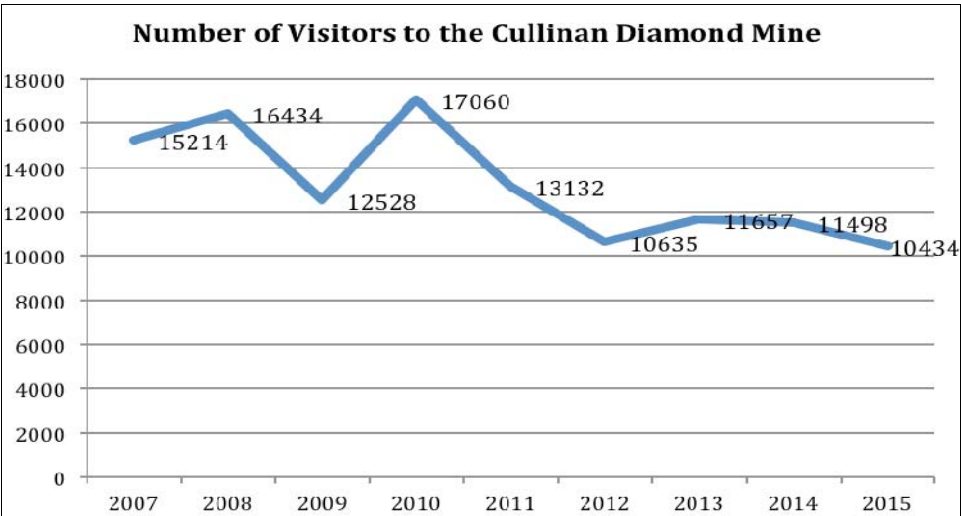


Figure 4. Visitor numbers to the Cullinan Mine from 2007-2015
(Source: Cullinan Diamonds Marketing Department, 2016)

The profile of visitor numbers and patterns of stay of visitors to Cullinan points to the limited impacts of new heritage tourism projects upon the local tourism economy. Figure 4 records the trend of visitor numbers to Cullinan Diamond Mine from 2007 to 2015. It is evident that visitor numbers have decreased with the exception of 2010, the

year of South Africa's hosting of the FIFA Soccer World Cup. It is important to acknowledge that these visitor numbers include day visitors as well as tourists who stay at least one night in Cullinan. The net revenue accruing to the local economy from day visitors is obviously much less in local spend than for tourists who stay overnight.

Table 1. Cullinan: Contribution of Tourism to Local Economy, 2001-2015
(Source: Unpublished Global Insight Data, 2015)

	Total Tourism Spend (R1000) Current Prices	Total Tourism Spend as % of Local GDP
2001	267 351	17.3
2006	445 956	15.6
2010	590 410	13.4
2013	801 788	13.8
2014	899 876	14.1
2015	867 193	13.0

Interviews with local stakeholders in tourism as well as accommodation owners confirms this situation and points to the need to encourage attracting heritage tourists to Cullinan who stay in the town for two to three nights, so as to enjoy other cultural and heritage attractions and increase tourism expenditure in the town. In explaining the poor record of tourism, stakeholders argued as follows: *"There is not enough advertising for our town... and tourism business is slow... we should be part of a massive advertising strategy for small towns that fall just outside of the Metropolitan area. Cullinan has a poor budget and underdeveloped infrastructure for tourism"*. Eight local accommodation providers in Cullinan were surveyed. It was estimated by these establishments that heritage visitors comprised at most 25 percent of their overnight stays; the largest share of tourists were in Cullinan for business or conferencing purposes.

Table 2. Socio-demographics of cultural and heritage tourists at Cullinan

Individual Characteristics	Cullinan
Gender	
Male	46.9%
Female	53.1%
Race	
African	4.2%
Coloured	4.2%
White	85.4%
Indian	2.1%
Other	4.1%
Age	
20 years old or less	2%
21-30	8.2%
31-40	16.3%
41-60	32.4%
Over 60	41.1%
Highest Level of Education	
Primary Education	6.3%
High School Education	14.6%
Post High School Education	79.1%

The results of the visitor survey reveal the characteristics of heritage tourists who visit Cullinan (Table 2). It is disclosed that most visitors to Cullinan were domestic

visitors, whites, over 60 years of age and well-educated. In total 40.8% of survey respondents at Cullinan indicated that heritage was 'very important' to them and more than half of respondents defined heritage as "a part of our history that needs to be preserved for future generations".

A significant finding in terms of local economic development was that only 43% of visitors to Cullinan stayed over in the town for one-night; the remainder were 'simply passing through' choosing to visit the industrial heritage site on a day trip. Moreover, of the group of tourists who stayed over, it was recorded that 39% of respondents stayed with friends and relatives whilst in Cullinan. This finding has significant implications for tourism spend as well as for the local accommodation sector in Cullinan and indicates the weak state of the local tourism economy in the town.

In terms of the stakeholder interviews, most respondents were highly critical of the role of local government in its minimal tourism promotion. It was argued that the local municipality spends only limited funds for the promotion of tourism in Cullinan. Of particular concern were highlighted recent cuts in budget allocations for tourism marketing. One local tourist guide argued that "*the private-sector has had to take on the marketing and promotion of tourism in Cullinan; we simply don't get the support from the local tourism authorities*". Further, local tourism stakeholders in Cullinan also expressed a lack of confidence and trust in the local and provincial authorities with respect to the management and maintenance of tourism. Among the highlighted shortcomings were a lack of strategic direction; duplication and wastage of resources; poor budgeting; poor or non-existent marketing strategies; and, lack of capacity. This litany of problems appears to confirm more broadly the capacity shortcomings of many local governments in South Africa with respect to tourism planning, management and development (van der Merwe, 2016b). The local municipality is thus typical of most local governments across South Africa which struggle with the multiple challenges in planning for sustainable tourism development (van der Merwe & Rogerson, 2013).

Table 3. Attributes of importance to heritage tourists, ranked on a Likert Scale, in percentages at Cullinan

Attribute	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Signage within the Site	10.9	26.1	39.1	13.0	10.9
Parking	11.1	26.7	40.0	15.6	6.6
Safety	16.3	40.8	22.4	18.4	2.1
Food	21.3	31.9	34.0	12.8	0
Service Amenities (Toilets)	8.7	15.2	52.2	13.0	10.9
Staff Friendliness & Courtesy	25.5	23.4	34.0	14.9	2.2
Quality & Accuracy of the Information Presented	21.3	31.9	31.9	10.6	4.3
Guide's Knowledge & Abilities	24.4	22.0	43.9	4.9	4.8
Variety of Activities or Range of Information Provided	14.9	21.3	40.4	19.1	4.3
Marketing & Publicity of the Site	11.1	13.3	40.0	20.0	15.6
Disabled Access	9.1	15.9	25.0	22.7	27.3
General maintenance and cleanliness of the site	14.3	36.7	28.6	12.2	8.2

The visitor survey offers an analysis on the perceptions of amenities in Cullinan and of the mining heritage site. Table 3 shows the majority of visitors/tourists were satisfied with the tour experience. Positive issues that emerged were of sufficient parking and of adequate safety and security to ensure visitor comfort and wellbeing throughout the visit. Most respondents complimented the staff on their friendliness and high levels of professionalism. Many interviewees (35.6%) indicated, however, that Cullinan needs to be better promoted and more extensively marketed as a tourist destination (van der Merwe, 2016b).

CONCLUSION

Industrial heritage tourism is emerging as a distinctive sub-field of heritage tourism scholarship (Vargas-Sanchez, 2015). The global South is under-represented in industrial heritage research and it is this knowledge gap that the present paper has made an original contribution. South Africa is a relatively recent entrant within the international heritage tourism economy. Arguably, heritage tourism has the potential to become an important driver for tourism growth and economic development in South Africa (van der Merwe, 2016b). Opportunities exist for growing the segment of industrial heritage tourism as exemplified by the Cullinan case study. This said, the results of this investigation underline that the local tourism economy is under-performing in terms of attracting heritage tourists; instead the town is viewed as mainly a countryside escape for day trippers from Pretoria or Johannesburg. Notwithstanding Cullinan's rich cultural and industrial heritage assets, the evidence points to a tourism economy that is in a state of stagnation. In order to maximise and leverage the opportunities of heritage tourism for local economic development it is evident that a number of challenges be confronted. The capacity shortcomings of local governments in South Africa must be addressed in terms of local economic development planning in general and planning for tourism-led development in particular. The analysis of Cullinan highlights shortcomings in tourism marketing, poor budgeting, lack of leadership, and little or no strategic planning for tourism. As a whole, these issues confirm more broadly the capacity shortcomings of many local governments in South Africa with respect to tourism development, planning and management. In the final analysis, it is stressed that these capacity constraints at the level of local government must be tackled if the potential of industrial heritage tourism in South Africa is to be maximised for the future benefit of local economies (van der Merwe, 2016b).

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NATURAL POTENTIAL FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN ALTAI (KAZAKHSTAN)

Nazgul Zh. ZHENSIKBAYEVA

L.N.Gumilyev Eurasian National University, Department of Physical and
Economical Geography, 2 Satpaevast, 010008, Astana, Kazakhstan, e-mail: naz_zanibek@mail.ru

Kuat T. SAPAROV

L.N. Gumilyev Eurasian National University, Department of Physical and Economical Geography,
2 Satpaevast., 010008, Astana, Kazakhstan, e-mail: k.sapar67@yandex.ru

Jiri CHLACHULA*

Institute of Geoecology and Geoinformation, Adam Mickiewicz University,
B. Krygowskiego 10, Poznań, Poland / Laboratory for Palaeoecology,
Tomas Bata University in Zlin.TGM 5555, 762 01 Zlin, CzechRepublic; e-mail: Altay@seznam.cz

Anna V. YEGORINA

Sarsen Amanzholov East Kazakhstan State University, 34 Tridtsatoy Gvardeiskoy Diviziist.,
070 000, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Kazakhstan, e-mail: av_egorina@mail.ru

Nazym A. URUZBAYEVA

L.N.Gumilyev Eurasian National University, Department of Tourism,
2 Satpaeva st., 010008, Astana, Kazakhstan, e-mail: nazym_amen@mail.ru

Jan A. WENDT*

Gdańsk University, Faculty of Oceanography and Geography, Institute of Geography,
Bażyńskiego Str. 4, 80-309 Gdańsk, Poland, e-mail: jan.wendt@ug.edu.pl

Abstract: The mountain regions incorporate some of the major ecosystems of the Earth. They also include most significant mineral, natural, agricultural and tourist-recreational resources. A complex regionally-specific geographic evaluation is prerequisite for assessment of a perspective tourism development in a particular mountain area. The Southern Altai mountain system, being a part of the East Kazakhstan administrative district, is known worldwide for its unique natural as well as cultural heritage found across all the geographic and geomorphic zones of the territory. Its unquestionable touristic-recreational attractiveness reflects the unique natural – both geomorphic and biodiversity – characteristics, including orographic, hydrological, climatic, mineral and soil cover features, and endemic plants and wildlife, respectively, completed by many prehistoric archaeological monuments. In spite of the major biotic and geosites potential the introduction of a vital and sustainable tourism to the area is impeded by the insufficient, mostly unpaved road network, insufficient local accommodation facilities as well as the special boarder-zone entry regulations.

Keywords: Southern Altai, mountain ecosystems, natural potential, tourism and recreation, geosites, environmental management

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* Corresponding author

INTRODUCTION

Tourism represents one of the most vital and profitable sector of modern industry. With the progressing globalization even formerly geographically marginal and less-accessible places are now subject of organized tourism providing the pre-requisite facilities and logistics, including roads. This is particularly true for environmentally-oriented tourism and its natural impacts (e.g., Jenner & Smith, 1992; Mihalič, 2000; Goessling & Hall, 2005; Mason, 2015; Ilieș et al., 2017). The Southern Altai found in the extreme Eastern part of the Republic of Kazakhstan offers major tourism opportunities, particularly in respect to geotourism and eco-tourism that can compete with other places stressing the local geosites individuality (Dowling, 2011; Brilha, 2016). Due to the limited infrastructure as well as the border-zone regulations, this area still represents one of the most pristine, yet attractive places for sustainable tourism and recreation.

The broader Altai is known for its unique natural and cultural heritage found across all eographic and geomorphic zones of the territory (Chlachula, 2011, 2017b). The East Kazakhstan region, which is the administrative district enclosing the Southern Altai Mountains, has been occupied from the earliest stages of the prehistory (Chlachula, 2010) with the most famous archaeological sites associated with the Iron-Age Scythian civilization (Polosmak, 2001; Samashev, 2001, 2011; Gorbunov et al., 2005; Chlachula, 2017a). The Southern Altai experienced a complex geological history linked to the regional orogenesis and neotectonic activity. This, in conjunction with the past climate shifts, being most pronounced during the last glaciation (Galakhov & Mukhametov, 1999), sculptured the present relief and generated a number of geomorphologically unique places (geosites), such as deep canyons, mountain ravines, exposed bedrock formations, prominent glacio-fluvial terraces formed by periodic catastrophic glacial-water releases at the end of the Last Ice Age (Rudoy & Baker, 1993; Herget, 2005) among many others. These geomorphically highly interesting geosites are the subject of the present mapping and evaluation in terms of the national geo-heritage documentation and tourism development that is still both on the national and international level highly underused (Deviatkin, 1965, 1981). This study outlines some of the principal physio-geographic characteristics and the spatial distribution of significant geo-sites of the Southern Altai in respect to the modern tourism development taking into account all the natural and economic peculiarities of the territory.

AIMS AND BACKGROUND (METHODS AND APPROACHES)

The foundation of the tourist potential of Southern Altai is a vast area with the monuments of nature, history and culture which is the basis for the development of the tourism industry, in its traditional forms and new modern trends, particularly eco-tourism (Zhensikbayeva et al., 2017; Saparov et al., 2016). The combination of natural conditions and resources is seen as a 'natural potential of the territory'. Its proper evaluation is one of important conditions for the development of any region. The proper basis the evaluation of the territorial combinations of natural conditions and resources are units of physic-geographical or economic and geographical demarcation (Zhakupov et al., 2014, 2015, 2016). The most important natural characteristics always include the area and the capacity of recreational territory, climate comfort, the presence of water bodies, especially with balneological properties, aesthetic features of the landscape, etc. The appropriate combination of such characteristics creates the necessary foundation for the development of various types of tourism and recreation (Insceep, 1994). Evaluation of recreational resources was carried out on the basis of by-factored evaluation methodology of each constituent of the territory: terrain, climate, water bodies, flora and fauna, hydro

and therapeutic resources. The evaluation of the existing tourism and recreational potential appeared to be a more complicated aspect. It was supposed to consider the following factors:

- uniqueness of the objects;
- differences in the availability of the objects;
- differences in density of the objects location within the region;
- diversity and complexity of the existing objects;
- physical state of the objects (Yegorina, 2012, 2015).

The Southern (Kazakh) Altai, divided into several main mountain ranges, is connected through the Tarbagatai Range (2992 m) and the Dzhundarskiy Alatau (4464 m) to the Tian-Shan Mountains. It is structured by the E-W oriented Southern Altai, Sarymsakty, Narym and Kurchum Ranges characterized by steep erosional Northern slopes, representing uplifted relics of old plateaus (>3000 m asl) with a decreasing topographic gradient (3900-2300 m asl).

The evaluation of the natural potential of the area for the purpose of tourism development has been studied by many domestic and foreign scholars. The academic publications of S. Erdavletova, N. Mironenko, L. Mukhina, I. Tverdokhlebova (Kuskov, 2005) one can learn about different methodological approaches to the evaluation of natural and recreational potential of the territory. The Altai trans boundary mountain region lies within the boundaries of eight physiographic regions located in the Altai and Mongolian-Altai physical-geographical regions of the Altai-Sayan mountainous country. Altai Region: Charyshsko-Bashchelak, Bukhtarminsko-Ubinskaya, Markakol, Katun-Terektinskaya, Chulyshmanskaya, Ukoksko-Chuyskaya; Mongolian-Altai: Tabyn-Bogdo-Ulinsko-Khovdinskaya, Achitnursko-Ulgianphysico-geographical province.

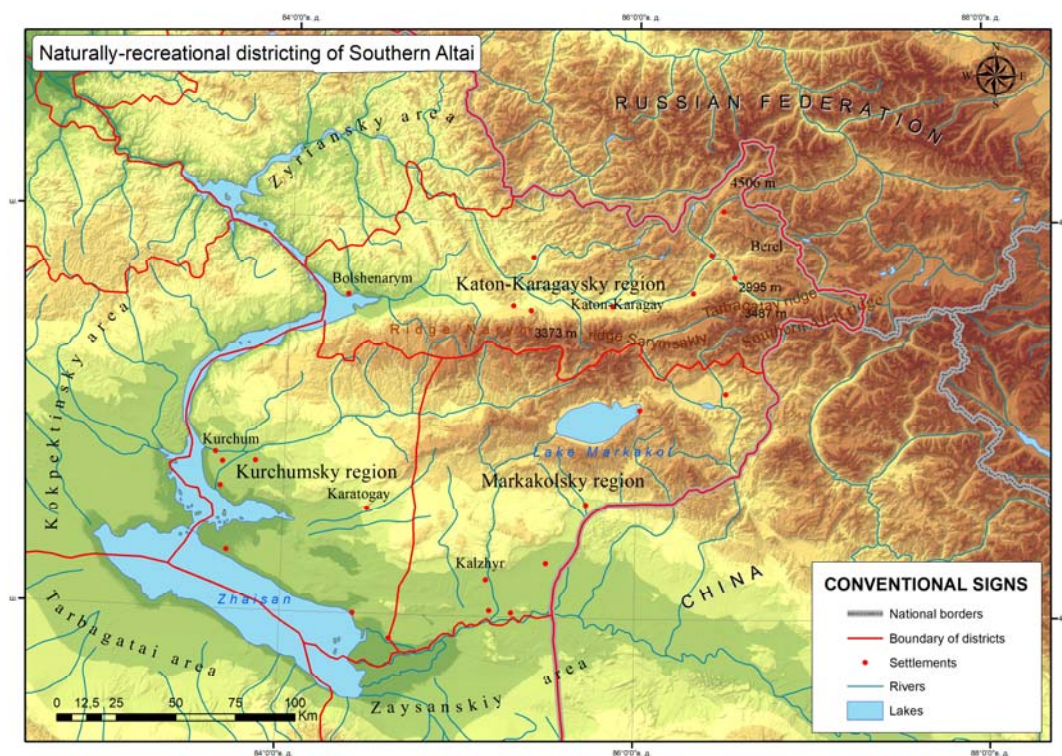


Figure 1. Naturally-recreational districting of Southern Altai

Within the provinces, according to the principle of an orcoclimate community, three natural-recreational areas have been identified. Katon-Karagay, Kurchumsky, Markakolnatural and recreational areas (Figure 1). In this study, natural-recreational areas are territorial formations with a homogeneous degree of bio-climate favorable for recreation and located within the boundaries of natural and territorial complexes. One of the commonly used methods is the index and scoring evaluation of natural resources and natural resource potential (Insceep, 1994). Such evaluation enables to compare different physical indicators: volume, power and other. Thereby it gives an opportunity to determine the total natural resource potential (Wendt, 2011; Ilieș & Wendt, 2015). Natural resources, economic and environmental factors, such as the limitations and renewability, substitutability, qualitative characteristics, fertility, the content of nutrients, etc., affect the evaluation of the environment. Therefore, various kinds of resources need to be evaluated differently (Richter, 2003). For Southern Altai, one of the most important indicators, adversely affecting the development of the tourism is seasonality. To solve the problem related to the seasonality of tourism services, it is necessary to predict it and take it into account during the process of planning. For the evaluation of natural and recreational potential of the Southern Altai we used the total quality score (in points). According to this method evaluation was carried out in five bands where the score up to 20 corresponds to the variation of attractiveness coefficient: best, good, satisfactory, quite bad or unsatisfactory. The amount of points reflects the degree of differences in typical landscapes, biodiversity, natural monuments, favorability of the climate and the water bodies for recreation (Harms et al., 2016).

EXPERIMENTAL

The by-factored evaluation of natural recreational potential of the Southern Altai made it possible to calculate the total value of all administrative districts within its territory boundaries (table 1). The priory prerequisites (relief, climate, water resources, flora and fauna) and the definition of the tourist attraction of the natural landscapes of the Southern Altai were used as the basis for the method of scoring the territory proposed by M. Mileska (Mileska, 1963). Taking a four-level scale of values from 0 to 3 points, we identified four types of territories with different degrees of tourist attraction:

- 3 points - very favorable;
- 2 points - favorable;
- 1 point - low-level;
- 0 points - unfavorable;

Table 1. Tourist attractiveness of natural recreational resources of Southern Altai Mountains

Natural and recreational areas	Types of landscapes	Natural monuments	Reserves	Sanctuary	National parks	Denoparks	Botanical Gardens	Zoos	Water bodies having a state value	Mineral water deposits	Beasts	Birds	Fish	Other	Total
Katon-Karagaysky region	8	15	-	-	1	2	1	1	1	2	68	275	9	15	421
Kurchumsky region	9	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	35	155	12	9	224
Markakolsky region	6	1	1	4	-	1	1	1	2	2	55	255	15	12	356

Very favorable are landscapes that have conditions for long and all types of short-term rest, i. These are landscapes where all components of the natural complex are present. Favorable are landscapes where one of the components of the complex (for example, mountains) is missing. Low-acceptable - where there are 1-2 components of the complex. Unfavorable landscapes are those where the components attractive for recreation and tourism are completely absent. Attractiveness of natural recreational resources:

- over 90 - very favorable;
- from 60 to 90 - favorable;
- from 30 to 60 - low-level;
- less than 30 - unfavorable;

The analysis of the results of the assessment of natural conditions and resources allowed us to identify areas for the development of tourism with the best coefficient of attractiveness. All areas with the best coefficient of attractiveness for the sum of points are marked, and extremely diverse forms of relief are combined with environmentally friendly climate features. These regions received high scores for the successful development of tourism. Now consider each region separately. Katon-Karagaysky region was assigned to the areas with best attractiveness coefficient by the sum of points, where the most diverse forms of relief are combined with environmentally-favorable climate features. According to agro-climatic conditions Katon-Karagaysky region is located in the mountainous, foothill and alpine zones of extreme continental climate, characterized by severe long winters, short hot summers and short fleeting springs and autumns. Summers are warm, but a hot summer day in the mountains gives way to the cold night. The annual rainfall is 432 mm. The average annual air temperature is +1.6°C., with an absolute maximum of 34°C and an absolute minimum -44°C. The number of days with strong wind over the year is 7, those with dust storms are 10 (Yegorina et al., 2015).

Soils. Within the area there are four natural vertical areas which include six zones (Yegorina, 2002). Soil surface temperature parameters are given in table 2.

Table 2. The average monthly maximum and minimum soil temperature of the South Altay territory (Yegorina, 2002)

Temperature (°C)/soil	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	Year
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Katon-Karagaysky (loamy soil, black earth)													
Middle	-16	-15	-9	2	12	19	21	18	11	2	-9	-15	2
Average maximum	-9	-5	2	15	33	40	41	40	31	15	-1	-9	16
Absolute maximum	7	13	21	40	50	61	61	60	52	40	19	11	61
Average minimum	-24	-22	-16	-5	2	7	9	7	1	-4	-16	-2	-7
Absolute maximum	-43	-48	-38	-26	-16	-5	-1	-6	-11	-28	-48	-45	-48
Village Orlovsky(soil - humus mountain)													
Middle	-28	-25	-15	0	14	21	22	18	11	1	-14	-25	-2
Average maximum	-16	-8	2	14	39	45	43	43	35	20	-2	-15	17
Absolute maximum	3	8	15	45	59	64	65	64	54	42	21	5	65
Average minimum	-37	-34	-27	-11	-2	3	6	4	-2	-8	-23	-34	-14
Absolute maximum	-58	-56	-51	-37	-16	-7	-4	-9	-14	-36	-57	-56	-58
Kurchumsky (soil - silty loam)													
Middle	-21	-19	-10	6	17	24	27	23	15	5	-7	-18	4
Average maximum	-10	-6	3	21	38	46	49	46	38	21	2	-9	20
Absolute maximum	6	12	26	48	60	67	67	63	56	41	23	8	67
Average minimum	-30	-28	-20	-5	3	9	12	9	3	-4	-14	-25	-8
Absolute maximum	-51	-51	-44	-26	-14	-1	2	-3	-11	-21	-48	-47	51

The alpine nival area at altitudes of 2800 m comprises two zones: nival and subnival. The alpine tundra-meadow area is located at the altitudes of 2000-2800 m above the sea level. It comprises three zones: the mountain-tundra zone, the alpine mountain-meadow zone and the mountain-meadow subalpine zone (Mazbaev, 2010). In the researched areas warming and cooling of the soil occur gradually in the direction from the surface to the deep. Important indicators of soil condition are the average temperatures of the arable layer (Table 3). In the steppe and forest steppe zones, the transition of the average daily temperature of 0°C in the arable layer occurs in April and October (Yegorina, 2015). Kurchumsky region has 224 points, and has good attractiveness coefficient. The nature of the area is various: Zaisan deserts, the passes of the Mramornaya mountain, mountain ranges, taiga forests with the eternal snow on the tops of the mountains, swift mountain streams – all these attract to the development of many types of tourism. The area is rich in water resources, forests and arrays of farmland. In Markakol cavity with the lake in its centre, surrounded by the mountains of Kurchum range and Uzutau range, a nature reserve land stretches. The highland Markakollake (1449 m) is one of the most beautiful lakes in Altai. Every year, Markakollake and the Kalzhyr river territories are visited by 2 or 3 thousand recreants (during the summer and the autumn seasons) (Zhensikbayeva et al., 2017; Saparov et al., 2016). The natural conditions of the region make it possible to grow excellent crops of melons and vegetables, and feather grass steppes, sub-alpine meadows, mountain pastures enable to constantly increase the population of all types of cattle and to successfully breed fat-tailed sheep.

Table 3. The average monthly soil temperature according to the crank thermometers of the South Altay territory (Yegorina, 2002)

Depth (m)	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
Katon-Karagaysky					
0.05	10.6	17.3	19.5	18.1	11.7
0.10	10.0	16.6	18.8	17.7	12.0
0.15	9.1	15.8	18.1	17.4	12.0
0.20	8.2	15.0	17.4	16.9	11.9

Markakolsky natural-recreational area. The allocation of this province is based on the location of Lake Markakol in it. In Kazakhstan, this is the largest high mountain lake. To the north of the lake is the high mountain range Sarym-Sakty, whose maximum height is 3373 m. Along the northern coast of the lake there is the mid-altitude Kurchumsky range, in its middle part an array of 2645 m high rises. Along the southern shore of the lake is the Azutau ridge with an absolute height of 1800-2300 m. Lake of tectonic origin. The southern shore is steep, formed by the edges of the ridge that fall directly into the lake. The northern coast is low, formed by the newest deposits. The length of the lake is 38 km, the width is 18 km, the maximum depth is 27 m. The catchment area is 1180 km². The mirror of the lake is at an altitude of 1485 m. The landscapes of the area are picturesque. Larch forests predominate, on the northern slopes there are cedar-fir-aspen taiga, and on the southern slopes there are many rocks, between which are steppe lawns. Tourism here should be of an ecological nature (Zhensikbayeva et al., 2017; Saparov et al., 2016).

In the Kurchumsky region, we investigated the salt marshes – ‘salty mud pits’ Mynshunkyr (Saparov et al., 2016). Mynshunkyr is 7 km from the village in the floodplain of the Kalzhyr River. In Southern Altai, this area is sacred and honorable, it was anciently called ‘Mynshunkyr’ which is ‘a thousand of pits’. Here, on the area of about 1 square kilometer there are more than 60 pits. The locals call this place ‘salt marshes’ or ‘salty

mud pits". The mud in the 'pits' has unique therapeutic and healing properties. Every summer the locals (from June to August) heal themselves with these muds, completely submerging their bodies into the salt marshes. Mud in these pits heals joint cancer, skin diseases, limb spasms and many other diseases (Zhensikbayeva et al., 2017; Saparov et al., 2016). In each of such 'pits' in the centre of the salt marsh there is clear water. Locals use this water for drinking as mineral water. They drink it to cure stomach diseases, kidneys diseases, liver disorders. The edges of salt marshes and mires are white as they are covered with salt. Earlier, salt from these places was used by the locals (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The South Altay - the Mynshunkyr area satellite image (Landsat 8TM)

There are 41 from 60 and more ground cavities marked on the image. To determine the properties of the salt marsh and the water from the pits we took samples, which have been studied in the engineering laboratory of 'Scientific Centre of Radio-ecological Researches' of Shakarim State University of Semey. For an exact description of the marsh and the water there were conducted modern studies. Samples of the salt marsh and the water were studied by means of scanning electronic microscope JSM-6390, produced by the Japanese company JEOL TechnicsLtd. The scanning electronic microscope is a tool which gives a high accuracy picture of a sample. First, we dried the salt marsh and water (for 2 h) at a temperature of 90-100°C on thermostatic setting SNOL (Lithuania). Drained quagmire was grinded into homogeneous mass. After that all the elements of the salt marsh were analysed (Table 4). All the conclusions are given in percentage (%). All the detected elements are very useful for the human body and thus tourism-promotion attractive. For example: calcium (Ca) is the basis of bones, it activates a number of enzymes and contributes to the normal operation of the human nervous system, the cardiovascular system; silicon (Si), which is 20.75%, improves eyesight; magnesium (Mg), (17,2%), participates in formation of the protein and nucleic acid in the regulation of enzymes involved in carbohydrate metabolism. Sulphur (S), (2.77%) is of a great importance in medicine. Sulphur, which we know from ancient times, is used in everyday life, is also an important element nowadays. Iron (Fe), which is part of this quagmire in

the amount of 2.70% a very important element. It is involved in the formation of blood and constitutes a part of the respiratory enzymes. The lack of iron in the body leads to anemia. It is difficult to find a process which does not involve the iron.

Table 4. Results of the South Altai Mynshunkyr territory's saline investigation

Source: (Zhensikbayeva et al., 2017; Saparov et al., 2016)

Spectrum	Na	Mg	Al	Si	S	Cl	K	Ca	Fe	Result
Spectrum 5	2.81	17.20	5.53	20.75	2.77	1.22	2.52	44.51	2.70	100
Average	2.81	17.20	5.53	20.75	2.77	1.22	2.52	44.51	2.70	100
Satisfactory condition	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.0
Maximum	2.81	17.20	5.53	20.75	2.77	1.22	2.52	44.51	2.70	100
Minimum	2.81	17.20	5.53	20.75	2.77	1.22	2.52	44.51	2.70	100

Therefore, the role of iron and its functions are very important. As for potassium (K), which constitutes 2.5%, it plays an important role in improving the function of the cardiovascular system of the human body. By regulating salt and water excretion, potassium improves heart muscle contraction. The composition of water, sampled in Mynshunkyr for the analysis contained the following elements (table 5).

Table 5. Results of the South Altai Mynshunkyr territory's water analysis

Source: (Zhensikbayeva et al., 2017; Saparov et al., 2016)

Spectrum	O	Na	Mg	Al	Si	S	Cl	K	Ca	Result
Spectrum 1	54.08	14.11	1.96	0.94	13.34	0.71	9.01	4.55	1.30	100.00
Average	54.08	14.11	1.96	0.94	13.34	0.71	9.01	4.55	1.30	100.00
Satisfactory condition	0.00	0.00	0.0	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00
Maximum	54.08	14.11	1.96	0.94	13.34	0.71	9.01	4.55	1.30	100.00
Minimum	54.08	14.11	1.96	0.94	13.34	0.71	9.01	4.55	1.30	100.00

All the results are given in percentage (%). A brief analysis: water contains: 54% of oxygen (O). In the second place there is sodium (Na) - 14.11%. Sodium participates in the exchange of minerals in the human body and can be found in the digestive juices and regulates the acid in the body. Chlorine (Cl) which constitutes 9.01%, is a component of hydrochloric acid and a part of the digestive juices. It kills pathogenic bacteria in water. Thus dirt in 'salt marsh pits' in Mynshunkyr areas is an important source of mud treatment and its resources will be developed in the coming years. The Southern Altai is rich in natural recreational resources. Special attention should be paid to the attractive mountain, water, excursion zones located in the area, which can be used for the organisation of different tours. The Southern Altai rivers, confluences of the Irtysh Kurchum, Bukhtarma are not only sources of energy but also reas of extreme tourism (Geta et al., 2015). Southern Altai is the main supplier of the most valuable medicinal plants for the pharmaceutical Golden root, Maralroot. The fauna of Southern Altai is rich and diverse. It is home to over 400 species of birds, 60 species of mammals (Zhensikbayeva et al., 2017; Saparov et al., 2016). The region is also the famous for the attractive landscapes, archaeological monuments and climatic conditions (Figures 3-4). A variety of natural conditions and resources confirms the uniqueness of Southern Altai for the development of various kinds of recreation and tourism (Yerdavletov, 2010). On the example of Kurchumsky administrative region, we tried to show the opportunities of natural resources potential for tourism development.

Using recreational potential of Southern Altai we developed a number of one-day tourist routes projects in the most attractive places of the region. There were systematized recommended tourist routes for different categories of tourists (table 6).



Figure 3. The early Cenozoic site at Kiin-Kerish with unique landscape shaped by geomorphic erosional processes and palaeontological records



Figure 4. The Iron-Age Scythian burial complex at Berel ("the Golden Valley") dated to 5-4th century BC in the Bukhtarma basin representing archaeologically the most significant site of the Southern Altai area

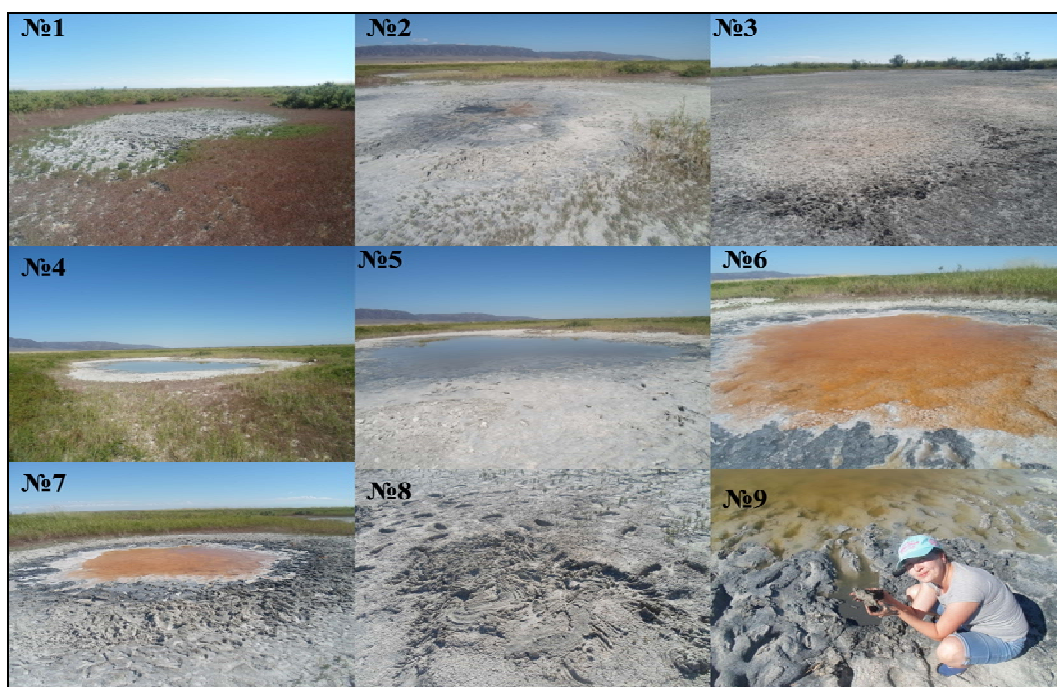


Figure 5. The salt and mud Mynshunkyr cavities

Overall, the Southern Altai has very good preconditions and prospects for the development of the tourism industry (Swarbrooke et al., 2003). Its unique nature and tourist sites (Figures 6, 7, 8) should be treated as a single natural and historic monument of not only regional, but of global significance as well (Dunets, 2003).

Table 6. Recommended schedule for various tourists' types in the South Altay region

Name	Description
1	2
The recommended tour schedule for the guests of the region	
Kiin-Kerish	Kiin-Kerish is a monument of nature created to preserve paleontological objects of the early Cenozoic. Deposits of variegated, mainly red, clays, which look like flames in the wind from afar (Yegorina, 2015)
The Ashutas mountain	Geological paleobotanical natural monument 'Ashutas' is a state protected deposits of the Tertiary, a unique burial of turgai deciduous flora, the monument is of a great scientific importance (Yegorina, 2012)
Mynshunkyr – 'salt marsh pits'	Mynshunkyr is located 7 km from the village Kalzhyr, in the floodplain of the river Kalzhyr (Kurchumsky region) The area is referred to as sacred and noble, from ancient times it was called Mynshunkyr – 'a thousand of pits'
Lake Markakol	Lake Markakol. This is a wonderful lake in the mountains of Southern Altai, at the altitude of 1449 m. Its beauty surprises even seen-it-all travelers. The lake is surrounded by mountain taiga. The water in the lake changes colour depending on the weather, on a clear day it is a blue-green surface, shining in the bright sun
Old Austrian road	Austrian road is a monument to the history and architecture. It connects the village Terekty (earlier the village Alekseevka) and Urunhayka, pass Burhat, valley of the river Bukhtarma. With a length of almost 150y km, the Austrian road is known for its beauty
Rakhmanov sky springs	Mineral springs are located in amazing by its beauty basin of the Rakhmanovsky lake on its north-east coast, on the starboard side of the Arasan river valley. The Rakhmanovsky springs water is colourless, very clean, practically free of suspensions and does not have any noticeable flavor. It is pleasant to drink
The Arasan waterfall	One of the largest in Eastern Kazakhstan. Represents an aesthetic value and interest as an example of natural formations created by the rivers geological activity. It is the object of educational, ecological tourism
The Belukha mountain	The mountain is a cross-border object, at the junction of the bordersbetween the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. The two-headed mountain Belukha ismajestically beautiful. Its peaksreach 4506 m. It is the highest mountain of the Altai and Siberia, its slopes are covered with eternal snows and glaciers
The Yazovoy waterfall	It is a not large cascade-type waterfall on the river Yazovaya. It is formedby theRiver Yazovaya, which is the right tributary of the river Belaya Berel. About 2 km south of the lake Yazevoye, the river cuts into the rock massif of granite
Moinak petroglyphs	Not far from the village of Kurchum the biggest gallery of petroglyphs in East Kazakhstan stretches. A set of images of people, animals, hunting scenes and battles await us in the open-air museum
Kokkol mine	A unique mining monument, founded in 1938 on the pass Kokkol, at the altitude of 3000 m above the sea level. Here there are located: Kokkol mine (Upper Camp), Lower Camp, the road between the villages, the bridge across the river Belaya Berel.
Berelsky valley burial -grounds	The monument has about 70 mounds with rocky burial hills of various sizes. Scythian and Saxon time unique nomadic elite finds (IV century BC) preserved due to the phenomenon of permafrost were found in these mounds
Recommended tour schedule for schoolchildren	
Oralkhan Bokey House Museum	Oralkhan Bokey is amaster of the magic word. He is the pride of Kazakh literature. In 2003, to the 60th anniversary of the writer the solemn ceremonyof the opening of Oralkhan Bokey House-Museum in his native village Chingistay of Katon-karagay district was held. The museum was opened in the house where the writer spent his childhood
Children Health Camp 'Sunkar'	One of the oldest children health facilities in East Kazakhstan. Every year about 200 children from needy families of Katon-karagay district are resting in the summer camp
Lake Markakol	Markakollake. This is a wonderful lake in the mountains of Southern Altai, at the altitude of 1449 m. Its beauty surprises even seen-it-all travelers. The lake is surrounded by mountain taiga. The water in the lake changes colour depending on

	the weather, on a clear day it is a blue-green surface, shining in the bright sun
Kiin-Kerish	Kiin-Kerish is a monument of nature created to preserve paleontological objects of the early Cenozoic. Deposits of variegated, mainly red, clays, which look like flames in the wind from afar
Katon-Karagay State National Park	National Park in Katonkaragay District of East Kazakhstan region within Central Altai and Southern Altai physiographic provinces. The territory of the national park became part of the Kazakhstan territory of Altai-Sayan ecoregion
Markakolsky Nature Reserve	In the valley at the altitude of 1449 m Markakollake is located. The reserve area is 102.979 ha, 43.9 of which are occupied by the lake. The reserve was created to preserve natural landscapes



Figure 6. Old Austrian road



Figure 7. Geological paleobotanical natural monument 'Ashutas'

CONCLUSIONS

Natural and recreational resources are seen as one of the main factors of tourism development. In order to develop commercial forms of tourism and offer a variety of travel services to national and foreign tourists a full evaluation of natural recreational potential of the territory is essential.

The recommendations for the Southern Altai tourism development include:

- Modernization of the existing national East Kazakhstan tourism according to the World / EU standards, especially from the alpine regions;
- Establishment of the territorial inter-departmental tourism council promoting and assisting with the regional tourism development integrating a common strategy;

- Establishment of the shared-transport and accommodation facility network (night lodging, food bases, transportation base, additional services);
- Providing a special status with higher protection rules to some unique places, such as «the salt and mud Mynshunkyr cavities»;
- Inclusion of some selected natural and anthropogenic geo-sites into the UNESCO list, such as the „Austrian road“ being a part of the local history, architecture and human work;
- Detailed documentation of some most prominent geo-relief locations and their inclusion into the primary touristic attractions (e.g., PylaushyeAdyry. Ashutas, Kiyn-Kerish, Kyzyl-Kerish sites);
- Resort development at the naturally unique places (spa at the salt and mud cavities of Mynshunkyr, the radon-spa resort at Lake Yazovoye, medical centers at red-deer farms, etc.)

The specific issues related to the regional recreational activities and tourism in the Southern Altai should become the subject of discussion between the government bodies and tour-operators. The territory of the Kazakhstan Southern Altai is included into the 200 global ecological regions priority defined by the international organization «WWF Living Planet» due to its supreme landscape and biological diversity. Further research with practical results and implementations will contribute to the effectiveness of sustainable development based on recreational activities in this unique eco-region.

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THE EFFECTS OF MAJOR SPORT EVENT LEVERAGING FOR TOURISM AND DESTINATION BRANDING: THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA AS AN EMERGING DESTINATION

Janice HEMMONSBY

University of Johannesburg, School of Tourism and Hospitality,
College of Business and Economics, South Africa, e-mail: janicehemmonsby@yahoo.com

Tembi Maloney TICHAAWA*

University of Johannesburg, School of Tourism and Hospitality,
College of Business and Economics, South Africa, e-mail: tembit@uj.ac.za

Abstract: Emerging nations with transitioning or newly transformed brands are increasingly using sport as a branding platform to generate and communicate strong and coherent brands. This is done in acknowledgement of sport as a powerful agent for destination branding. While many studies on sport mega-events leveraging exist, few have addressed the effects of major sport on tourism and destination branding. Regrettably, the theory underpinning emerging economies and destinations of the Global South has been neglected. This paper, therefore, addresses the gap by investigating the major event and its effects on the emerging South African brand. The study followed a qualitative design featuring semi-structured in-depth interviews with key industry stakeholders involved in sport, nation and tourism brands. The findings clearly revealed positive effects of major events for a developing destination, in line with socio-economic development and brand exposure. Furthermore, strong emphasis on the importance of strategic partnerships for effective brand development is evident. The paper contributes to the developing country's perspective on topics investigated largely in the developed contexts. It also holds practical significance for stakeholders of other developing nations, providing them with guidance on how to achieve branding benefits through major sport event leveraging.

Key words: Major sport, event leveraging, tourism, destination branding, emerging nations, South Africa

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INTRODUCTION

The branding theory has recently been extended and applied beyond the product and service industry to a number of different environments, including places encompassing nations, destinations, cities, regions, and towns (Hanna & Rowley, 2008). Pike (2009) recognises the first publication related to destination branding emerging half a century after the development of the generic branding theory in 1940. In relation to leisure tourism, Blain

* Corresponding author

et al. (2005) suggest that branding theories within the context concerned have gained visibility, since 1998, as a focal research theme. Subsequent to the emergence of the destination branding literature, relatively little research has been reported in relation to analysing the long-term effectiveness of destination brands (Pike, 2010). However, following the emergence of destination branding as a concept, the importance of branding as a strategic marketing activity has been considered increasingly significant to both academia and industry. The phenomenon of globalisation has significantly influenced destination branding, in that destinations are increasingly competing for their share of domestic and global tourism, events and business markets. Anholt (2007) argues that such competition is fierce for emerging destinations, especially those in the sub-Saharan African context, where scant differentiation exists between individual countries in terms of tourism product offerings, with destination branding, therefore, becoming essential in such regard. Elsewhere in the extant studies, sport has become increasingly recognised as a powerful agent for destination branding and economic development (Getz, 2003; Higham & Hinch, 2009; Kozma, 2010). Sport has particularly been noted to act as a branding platform for emerging, transition, negatively viewed, or newly industrialised, destinations (Rein & Shields, 2007). Interestingly, the globalisation of sport, specifically as linked to mega-events, is argued potentially to alleviate the branding challenges that destinations might face in terms of the advanced globalisation of places, which, consequently, greatly influences the sport tourism experience involved (Weed & Bull, 2004). For the above reason, sport has become an important leveraging tool by means of which the host tourism destination can achieve destination branding benefits (Chen & Funk, 2010, Tichaawa & Bob, 2015).

Prime examples of emerging destinations that have hosted a series of sporting events to lure their fair share of tourism and destination branding benefits include: Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, and their hosting of the 2007 Pan-American Games; the 2011 Military Games (Bienenstein et al., 2012); the final match of the 2014 FIFA World Cup; and, most recently, the 2016 Olympic Games. In the context of Africa, South Africa has been at the forefront of hosting numerous major international sporting events (the 1995 Rugby World Cup; the 20th Africa Cup of Nations in 1996 and 2013; the 2003 Cricket World Cup; the Indian Premier League (IPL) in 2009; and the 2010 FIFA World Cup) that are noted as having contributed towards enhancing the host country's brand (Knott et al., 2013). Despite such prominent examples as Brazil and South Africa, event leveraging studies, to date, have failed to recognise the significant rise in the amount of sport event hosting undertaken in the emerging destinations, as well as the influence of sport on the developing nation's brand development. Using South Africa as a case study, the current paper provides findings based on an investigation into the effects of sport event leveraging for tourism and destination branding, from an emerging destination context. The paper is organised in the following manner: the literature review puts destination branding in context for the study concerned, while it discusses key concepts on major sport event leveraging within a developing context. The study's qualitative methodological framework is highlighted in the subsequent section, and, thereafter, a thematic presentation of the study's findings is presented and discussed, based on in-depth analysis of the data. Lastly, the study's implications are outlined, before the study concludes with final remarks and recommendations for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination Branding in Context

In the available research foci on destination branding, destinations are traditionally regarded as well-defined geographical areas (Hall, 2008; Ilies & Ilies, 2015; Shafiei et al., 2017; Sziva et al., 2017). A general supposition that a destination brand denotes the

tourism aspect of a place is widely supported (Buhalis, 2000, Anholt, 2005, Hanna & Rowley, 2008). However, a degree of complexity exists in identifying a single destination, especially as destinations can comprise several towns, cities, other government provinces, islands, or entire countries (Morgan et al., 2004). Fittingly, Hanna and Rowley (2008, p. 64) explain that “the type of geographical entity does not limit the scope of destination branding, provided a direct association with tourism is established”. Anholt (2005, p. 118) notes that destination branding is “the term often used to indicate the modern form of tourism promotion”, but that it has often been conflated with the concept of nation branding. However, nation branding is “concerned with a country’s whole image on the international stage, covering political, economic and cultural dimensions” (Fan, 2010, p. 98). Within the aforementioned context, Anholt (2005) explains that tourism is merely one component of the nation and, unlike the nation as a whole, tourism is the ‘product’ that needs to be ‘sold’ in the global marketplace. Certainly, the same holds for other products that comprise the nation, such as agriculture, sport and entertainment. However, by definition, nations are unlikely to have a single target market or offering. Consequently, Hanna and Rowley (2008, p. 64) affirm that, “when referring to nation brands in relation to countries, the reference is in the context of country ‘outputs’ within which the context of tourism is a destination brand”. For the current study, it is with the above-mentioned interpretation of nation and destination brands that the South African brand is contextualised, in terms of its geographical area, and, consequently, in terms of its tourism- or destination-brand-related inputs and/or outputs.

Destination branding is most commonly defined according to the definition of J.R. Ritchie and R.J.B. Ritchie (1998, p. 17), 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”.

The above definition not only highlights the strategic marketing activity through such brand communicators as the destination name or descriptive insignias, but, more notably, it also highlights the imperative of underpinning a ‘pleasurable and memorable travel experience’. Moreover, it is increasingly recognised that a destination can be regarded as a perceptual concept as “[destination brands are] interpreted subjectively by consumers, depending on their travel itinerary, cultural background, purpose of visit, educational level and` past experience” (Buhalis, 2000, p. 97). Perceptions are generally formed as a result of, or they are reflective of the destination’s brand image, and how it is perceived among visitors prior, during, or after their visits. Due to the perceptual construal of destination brands, Cai (2002) and Nelson (2005) advocate the importance of adopting the appropriate destination marketing strategies, so as to communicate specific selected destination images, as a critical stimulus to motivating and influencing the travel decisions of potential visitors. In terms of its conceptual framework, however, Hankinson (2004) conceptualises destination branding as ‘relational brand networks’ that act as: (1) communication devices, in the form of logos, slogans and trademarks; (2) perceptual entities that appeal to the visitors’ senses and emotions; (3) value enhancers that lead to brand equity; and (4) relationships that communicate the brand personalities concerned. The framework involved is believed to underpin the concept of destination branding.

Sport Event Leveraging

The essence of leveraging events to improve destination image, which is known as co-branding (Brown et al., 2004; Chalip & Costa, 2005), is believed to benefit the brand image concept. However, according to Chalip (2002, p. 7), “leveraging recognises [that

the event] is an opportunity to implement particular tactics which may foster and nurture the impacts that are desired". O'Brien and Chalip (2008) state that many major sport event stakeholders are now increasingly approaching events more strategically than in the past, with them looking beyond the immediate visitation-related impacts. Instead, they plan for such longer-term outcomes as: encouraging repeat visitation; reimagining host communities in key markets (Egresi & Kara, 2014); fostering business relationships; and encouraging inward trade, investment and employment. Chalip (2004) and O'Brien and Chalip (2008, p. 297) refer to the phenomenon as the 'strategic leveraging' of events to maximise their long-term benefits from events.

Chalip (2002) considers Australia as the first nation to have employed leveraging strategies successfully around the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, so as to achieve the desired branding benefits, such as: brand repositioning through media coverage; the creating of convention business opportunities; minimising of the diversion effect of the Games; and the promoting of pre- and post-Games touring. Subsequently, Grix (2012) reports on Germany, which employed similar strategies during their hosting of the 2006 FIFA World Cup, so as to improve the national brand image among international tourists. Other successful studies linked to sport event leveraging are those conducted by Kellett et al. (2008), on leveraging relationships with sport teams for community benefits, and by Taks et al. (2013), on leveraging sport events for sport participation.

From a developing destination's perspective, Pillay and Bass (2008) postulate on the leveraging of sport tourism events for attaining the South African brand. The authors emphasise that a key objective of the 2010 FIFA World Cup for South Africa was to capitalise on tourism, as well as to establish the nation as a powerful tourism destination, as a way of improving upon its international brand image and tourism promotion.

The Influence of Major Events

Major sport events have become a key component of destination branding. "Many destinations throughout the world have developed event portfolios as a strategic initiative to attract tourists and to reinforce their brand" (Trošt et al., 2012). Sport events tend to generate substantial benefits for the host city, region, and country involved. Tourism is one of the key industries to benefit from the hosting of sport events, which have the ability to attract enormous investment to a destination (Trošt et al., 2012). Event visitors (participants and spectators) pay for accommodation, food, souvenirs, and tickets and, therefore, through sport events, the extension of visitor stays at a destination, and the facilitation of enhanced promotion of a destination, are stimulated (Xing & Chalip, 2006). The sport event media coverage concerned tends to increase the brand awareness of the host as a tourism destination (Jago et al., 2003, Brown et al., 2004, Higham & Hinch, 2009). Knott et al. (2012) reveal that the impact of social media coverage around the first day of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was significant to the exposure that the country received overall. As with the mega-event, South Africa also plays host to a series of numerous major sporting events that have proven to yield similar socio-economic and destination branding benefits. Prevalent examples include: The Cape Town Cycle Tour; the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon; the ABSA Cape Epic mountain bike stage race (held in Cape Town); the Comrades Marathon (held in Durban); the annual Super Rugby, Currie Cup (rugby) and ABSA Premier League (soccer) games (held in various South African cities); the Soweto Marathon (held in Johannesburg); and the Ironman African Championship (held in Port Elizabeth). Other major local sport tournaments hosted in South Africa include the South African Open (golf tournament), and most of the Sunshine Tour golf events. Moreover, in November 2018, South Africa will host a new cricket league, namely the #T20 Global Destination

League. The local league will, in part, directly promote South Africa as a leading destination for sport tourism. The above-mentioned events have proven that, as is the case with large-scale international mega-events, the major event tends to contribute associated socio-economic and destination branding benefits equally for the host destination concerned (Dimanche, 2003). Other major events that are seen to influence tourism and destination brands similarly, as a result of their annual, recurring nature are, for example, the Oktoberfest (held in Germany); the Rio Carnival (held in Brazil); and the Wimbledon Tournament (held in England) (Kotler & Gertner, 2004).

Despite the aforesaid contribution of sport to destination brands, scant extant studies have explicitly explored the major event as a means of leveraging brand-related benefits. More importantly, none has examined the emerging Global South context as a case study for sport event leveraging by means of which to achieve brand-related benefits. Instead, most studies have focused on international sport mega-events and on the leveraging opportunities provided for host destinations, particularly from a developed, Global North perspective (Chalip, 2002; Kellett et al., 2008; Karadakis et al., 2010; Karadakis & Kaplanidou, 2012; Grix, 2012). Consequently, the theory of sport event leveraging is skewed toward the developed context, and special theories that inform developing destinations research are scant.

To provide an informed context of sport event leveraging for the developing destinations, the current research extends the scope of the sport mega-event to unearthing the opportunities for leveraging major sporting events, and to exploring the effects of such events on emerging destination brands. The context of an African destination brand, in the present case South Africa, enhances the unique contribution of the study beyond the developed context. The study contributes to the practices and policies of stakeholders of the developing contexts who wish to augment tourism and destination branding through major sport event leveraging.

THE RESEARCH STUDY

The methodology adopted for the study followed the adoption of a qualitative approach, using in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with key industry stakeholders representing South African sport and destination branding organisations. More specifically, 20 stakeholders were chosen from within South Africa's major sporting metros (i.e. Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban, and Bloemfontein). By adopting a qualitative approach to the study, the researchers involved considered it appropriate to gain a comprehensive overview of stakeholder perspectives, and to gather rich and meaningful data on the topic at hand. Accordingly, the stakeholders were purposefully selected by virtue of their characteristics, which had some bearing on their perceptions and experiences of branding South Africa through major sporting events. The stakeholders interviewed, who each held a management-related position, included both national and local tourism destination brand stakeholders, national and local sport federation stakeholders, and local home-grown event stakeholders.

All the interviews were conducted with the prior consent of the respondents concerned. Each interview was conducted at a location chosen by the respondents, with it usually being their workplace. The semi-structured interviews were guided by a set of questions relating to the topics identified through the literature review, although the interview protocol consisted of open-ended questions that allowed the interviewer to probe, or clarify, the issues raised, and to explore the particular areas of experience, or expertise, of the respondents involved. The focus of the interview questions largely centred on the effects of major events on developing destination brands, with a specific

focus on sport event leveraging for the obtaining of South African destination branding benefits. A typical interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. Additionally, the researchers used primary documentary sources to trace trends in sport tourism event leveraging and its influence on the destination branding outcomes in South Africa, which subsequently supplement the key interviews within the discussion section.

The interviews were digitally recorded and manually transcribed verbatim, after which the data was coded and analysed with the assistance of a software programme, Atlas.ti. Every effort was made to ensure the validity and reliability of the data, by means of constantly checking the interview transcripts, as well as continuously comparing them to the interview voice recordings and field notes made during the interview. A thematic presentation of the results is outlined in the following sections.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The South African brand image

The respondents clearly described the South African brand as ‘exciting’, ‘intriguing’, ‘genuine’, and ‘authentic’, with a brand image clearly distinguishable from that of many European nations. Their views were captured succinctly by the director of a regional major cycle tour, who noted: “South Africa offers a unique experience of having major cities like Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town that can offer world-class conferencing facilities, and yet, within an hour, you can be in the bush experiencing the big five, which you simply can’t do anywhere else in the world.”

In addition to the perceived ‘soft’ image descriptions linked to the destination brand name, the respondents mentioned important ‘experience factors’ in terms of the iconic tourist attractions that South Africa has on offer. For example, the ‘beaches in Durban and Cape Town’, ‘wildlife havens, like the Kruger National Park and other places’ (Chief Director of the Provincial Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport [DCAS]). The respondents also mentioned the factors describing the so-called ‘hard’ features, such as Table Mountain (which is one of the world’s top ten iconic landmarks), as a key element of the South African brand. Linked to the brand images is the iconic event hosting and sport event leveraging that can be attained through major events. For instance, the beaches become important “because that is where you have surfing, wind surfing and kite surfing taking place” (Chief Director, DCAS). Moreover, using the Cape Town Cycle Tour as an example, the Director of a regional cycle tour stated that the above is about leveraging opportunities granted in terms of what the rest of South Africa has to offer. His response reads: “It isn’t just coming to a bicycle race in Cape Town. It’s [more like] going to Cape Town, and stopping over in Johannesburg on our way back, and spend[ing] a week at [the] Kruger National Park.”

A previous study revealed that the respondents involved compared the brand images of what are considered the major metropolitan cities in South Africa, namely Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban, and Port Elizabeth (Hemmonsbeey & Knott, 2015). In connection with the city of Durban in the KwaZulu-Natal Province, the CEO of regional cricket stated, “Durban has somehow managed to be much better positioned in terms of how the city supports sport...there is a whole sporting precept there...most importantly, the city invests in sport.” Another respondent said that, while the city of Johannesburg in the Gauteng Province is a budding city for sport, compared to the city of Cape Town, “people live in suburbs, and there is concrete and highways” (communications manager in the field of regional rugby). He continued, “In Cape Town you can go up on[to] Chapmans Peak running and cycling. So, Cape Town is a massive sporting destination for serious people” (communications manager in the field of regional rugby).

Furthermore, while the findings of Hemmonsbey and Knott (2015) revealed that the city of Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape was a less conspicuous destination brand for major events at the time of their study, the present researchers found that the stakeholder sentiments tended to include Port Elizabeth as a key host city for major events, which greatly promotes the competitiveness of various South African city brands through the hosting of major sport events. One respondent argued: "By and large, most of the big cities get the value that events have. Port Elizabeth, the tiny little city of Port Elizabeth, hosts one of the best Ironman events in the world, and that is a global event that is televised internationally. So we [as South Africa] are a great destination, we have a hell of a lot to offer" (director of a regional cycle tour).

Destination branding through co-branding

Brown et al. (2004) and Chalip and Costa (2005) postulate that the essence of leveraging events to improve destination image is known as co-branding. According to the researchers concerned, co-branding is believed to benefit the brand image concept by means of offering two brands (event and destination) of mutual branding benefits through brand association. The respondents all agreed as to the importance of co-branding for the South African brand. All the respondents clearly expressed the imperative to "attract people to the destination and the event". The respondents believed that major events tend to enhance the destination brand through their association with the brand identity and image. Through his interpretation of destination branding, the Chief Director at DCAS referred to the importance of co-branding destinations with associated major sport event brands. Exemplifying Cape Town and the Western Cape province, he explained, "Destination branding will always have ... Cape Town or the Western Cape attached to the event. So even if the event is a basketball event, you are going to say 'basketball Cape Town'."

Other examples reveal that the Cape Town Cycle Tour and the Durban July (horseracing event) incorporate the destination name (identity), consequently augmenting the destination image. An event stakeholder emphasised largely how the destination brand enhances the promotion of the event itself, and, subsequently, attracts people to the event, given that the destination brand name is attached to the event:

"Many people may not have heard of the Cape Town [Cycle] Tour or what was the Argus [Cycle Tour], but certainly a lot more have heard of Cape Town, and even more of South Africa. So, [destination branding] is about using that as the drawcard, or the hook, to promoting our event, both regionally and internationally" (director, regional cycling tour). From the above excerpts in relation to destination branding through major sport events, it is evident that co-branding, which is a form of leveraging events to improve destination image (Brown et al., 2004; Chalip & Costa, 2005), has been extensively considered by stakeholders. Such branding, thus, provides a framework for the effective destination branding of South African branding stakeholders.

Strategic destination branding through sport event leveraging

The literature makes clear that the leveraging concept extends beyond enhancing the brand image through co-branding, towards particular tactics that might foster and nurture desired impacts (Chalip, 2002). As a result, many major sport event stakeholders are now increasingly approaching events more strategically than in the past. They are looking beyond the immediate visitation-related impacts, and planning for longer-term outcomes, such as encouraging repeat visitation, reimagining host communities in the key markets, fostering business relationships, and encouraging inward trade, investment and employment (O'Brien & Chalip, 2008). Similarly, the respondents expressed the belief that "leveraging comes in different formats and modes" (Chief Director, DCAS). In terms

of the South African brand, the respondents perceived the economic factors and business relationships involved to be imperative to the long-term effects of the country's tourism and destination brand, and, as a result, regarding major events more strategically than they might otherwise have done. The Chief Director at DCAS stated in the above regard:

"[For South Africa] other economic factors come into play with leveraging, your upstream economy. People coming earlier to your event and stay[ing] in your hotels, your catering, [the] hospitality industry, your tourism activities, your museums would be enhanced, your shopping malls, restaurants."

The role of media and, more notably, social media, has become apparent for purposes of strategic leveraging. Although not explicitly asked, the respondents raised the point of the effect of media around the major event for purposes of attaining branding benefits. For example, "A lot of events have got a wide media and social media following. Therefore, immediately [with] your destination brand, people will be photographing themselves at the Waterfront, Table Mountain, Robben Island, or the wine farms, and that would be ... promoting destination branding" (Chief Director, DCAS).

The above-mentioned new finding certainly substantiates the findings of Knott et al. (2012) on the significant impact of social media around the 2010 FIFA World Cup, which contributed to the brand exposure that South Africa received, especially around the opening and the first day of the event. However, one respondent expressed the belief that not all major events have completely successfully positioned the destination effectively, despite its large media following. For instance, "The ABSA [Cape] Epic, which has also got a big media following, has not yet positioned itself geographically, because it called itself the ABSA Cape Epic. I think [that], at this stage, the home-grown (major) events have promoted itself [i.e. themselves] for a specific destination within the South African geographical setup" (Chief Director, DCAS). Unlike with such mega-events as the various tournaments of the FIFA World Cup, major events tend to gain the image of permanent residence in the host country or city involved. The image is rooted within the destination, and, therefore, requires effective positioning through geographic association.

Destination branding challenges of emerging nations

Certainly, while the media contribute to the positive destination brand through the hosting of both mega-events and major sporting events, the portrayal of the country's less attractive features, such as that which is most commonly mentioned, namely the issue of safety and security (in relation to crime), both on the personal and the political front, remains a matter of contention. Other challenging areas noted across the respondents were linked to education, housing and health, which, compared to European counterparts, have been known to impede the bidding for, and the hosting of, sport events considerably. Accordingly, one stakeholder noted the need for a high level of cognisance and understanding that, "[t]he national imperative in South Africa is slightly different to that of Germany", and, therefore, "the billions of Rands [that are spent on] pitching for events [is taken] out of housing, education and health" (director, regional cycle tour).

The comprehensive challenges of the South African brand are believed to be a long-standing societal problem holding very real implications for the brand. Some studies have enunciated the country's much-publicised social problems, including crime, political instability, unemployment, the lack of basic education and housing services, as well as the high national HIV infection rate (Donaldson & Ferreira (2009), leading to related remarks by the various stakeholders. Subsequently, such challenges, as have been noted in the literature and by the respondents alike, tend to take precedence over the bidding, hosting and marketing around sport events, which might impede the competitive position of the South African brand. The respondents not only recognised the aforesaid nationwide

societal problems, but noted that they assisted with alleviating the challenges arising around the hosting of community events by creating alternative sport and recreation opportunities in the associated communities. Such opportunities enabled the people, more specifically the youth, to occupy their time with positive engagement. However, in terms of the above, the director of a regional cycle tour recognised the importance of establishing public and private partnerships to execute the related activities effectively.

One important challenge facing emerging nations is their weaker currency compared to the US Dollar, especially when bidding for global events. As a result of such currency differential, the respondents expressed the belief that “eventing is critical and the ability you get out of leveraging the event is sometimes three, four, five, six times what you really put into it” (Director of Place and Destination Branding). However, another finding suggests that the weak South African currency might present potential benefits for tourism, regardless of the aforementioned’s status. The director of a regional cycle tour stated, in the above regard, “the volatility of the Rand works in our favour, because it makes tourism most affordable for international visitors”. Corroborating the finding, the Branding Manager of Sponsorship and Investment stated: “A big advantage is our exchange rate. It is very cheap for people to visit, and, once they are here, they stay here.”

Simultaneously, the weakness of the South African currency impedes the international marketing activities of emerging destinations. One respondent reported as follows: “Marketing South Africa internationally is a very difficult task, because you are up against a lot of countries with very powerful (a) marketing arms, and (b) currency (they are a lot stronger than ours). So, if we are competing for an outbound destination tourism market from Europe, America, Australia, and the Far East, they are all able to market their countries with a particular strong currency. Our currency is shockingly weak” (director of a regional cycle tour). According to the above-mentioned respondent, one way to tap into the international market is to niche market where people will travel. Notably, major events with some degree of global awareness are believed to encourage people to travel to destinations, and can help relieve some of the associated marketing demands. The Ironman (triathlon) event in Port Elizabeth, the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon, as well as the Cape Town Cycle Tour, are of the examples mentioned by the globally aware respondents who held by creative leverage of such. So as to realise the importance of destination branding through the hosting of major events, the imperative of obtaining funding and support through national and international strategic partnerships is highlighted.

Effective brand messages of South Africa obtained through major event hosting

The respondents were asked what they thought the main brand messages were that the South African brand conveys during their hosting of major events. In addition to the element of ‘diversity’, it was apparent that there was universal agreement on South Africa’s ‘professionalism’ and ‘reputation’ when hosting either major sport events, or other business events, such as conferencing. The Chief Director at DCAS said:

“I believe that the home-grown (major) events contribute to the reputation. It contributes to the understanding that we are multidisciplinary in our codes and [in] our approach, so, when people think South Africa, they don’t only have to think rugby, or soccer, or cricket [alone].” In comparing the importance of the mega-event over the major event, the respondents perceived both to be important for very different strategic reasons. The importance of sport mega-events was emphasised on the global scale, as well as were the infrastructural developments around the hosting of mega-events. However, “one can argue that hosting mega-events may generate billions of

international revenue” for the country (according to the director of a regional cycle tour). Mega-events are held to be important, “because it shows that we have the organisational ability and that South Africa ‘can’” (Director, DCAS).

Major sport is believed to draw mainly on the effects that are linked to the nation’s reputation and professionalism around major event hosting. Certainly, major sporting events tend to occur more frequently (usually annually), as well as to attract mass participation to their host destinations. Compared to mega-events, major events tend to place a destination competitively, due to the recurring tourism- and brand-related benefits that are thereby attained through visitor spending. Thus, the respondents urged the relevant destinations to adopt an annual event portfolio, which, from the literature, can be seen as an important strategic initiative for attracting tourists, and for reinforcing the destination brand (Trošt et al., 2012). The above is especially significant as seen from an emerging destination context, in terms of which bidding for mega-events can become an expensive exercise. When referring to the importance of major events over mega-events, one respondent, in a previous study by Hemmonsby and Knott (2015), explicitly stated: “I think it [the major event] is very, very, very important. You say Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup, I would say no, the Argus (Cape Town Cycle Tour), the Two Oceans (marathon) – those are massive events, those are good for the city and country, and contribute significantly to the brand” (communications manager involved in regional rugby). The present study also revealed that the City of Cape Town has adopted an events strategy to position both the city and the country as a leading destination or ‘gateway’ for events in Africa (Director of Place and Destination Branding). Cape Town has, subsequently, adopted a number of annual, recurring major sporting events that will essentially act as catalysts to brand the city and nation alike. The City is striving to achieve its strategic vision through their events portfolio strategy by 2023.

STUDY IMPLICATIONS

The current study should hold significant implications for South African stakeholders and for stakeholders within the broader developing context, alike. The destination brand of South Africa is one that holds enormous potential for not only major event hosting, but also for business and leisure tourism. The brand image of South Africa offers diversity in terms of its unique tourist offerings, from its soft factors linked to the brand name (which are described as exciting, intriguing, genuine and authentic), to its experiences in terms of its wildlife, beaches, and open spaces. In addition, there are the ‘hard’ components that are linked to such iconic landmarks as Table Mountain, which is the most prominently perceived. Certainly, the aforementioned brand components contribute to major event hosting, as they lend themselves to the outdoor nature of events in South Africa (such as the cycling and marathon events that occur around the South African coastline). Moreover, the explicit marketing practices that are involved in co-branding (in terms of which the event image is associated with the destination image), for instance, the Cape Town Cycle Tour, and the Durban July, which serve mutually to enhance the related destination and event brand image. The co-branding exercise, consequently, sets a framework for the effective leveraging of major events for the gaining of destination branding benefits. The stakeholders concerned, therefore, are encouraged to consider the use of co-branding to inform their branding practices.

In the context of major sport event leveraging, as postulated by Chalip (2002), in that leveraging involves adopting particular tactics that foster and nurture the desired impacts, the current paper has revealed that such leveraging offers significant

opportunities for both tourism and destination branding. For the South African destination brand, however, the strategic effects of the hosting of major sport events extend beyond such typical benefits as encouraging repeat visitation, reimagining host communities in key markets, fostering business relationships, and encouraging inward trade, investment and employment, as proposed by O'Brien & Chalip (2008). The hosting includes enhancing the social development of South African communities, especially as general perceptions frequently centre on the comprehensive social challenges that are linked to crime, education, housing, and basic health services. While such challenges are relatively long-standing, the stakeholders interviewed considered that some of the challenges could be alleviated through creating opportunities for community sport engagement, and, more importantly, through forming strategic partnerships with local, provincial and national government, as well as with private entities, so as to support alternative youth development programmes. For the developing nations, combatting the challenges involved is key, with it perhaps seeming to take priority over other marketing and destination branding imperatives, which essentially impede the competitive global brand positioning of South Africa.

The influence of both the traditional and social media around major events presents significant branding challenges and opportunities for South Africa. A key challenge is linked to broadcasting the perceived social challenges to the rest of the world, which might negatively affect the destination's branding. However, where media impacts positively is through showcasing and promoting the nation's brand characteristics via national and global broadcasting. The new finding made in terms of social media revealed opportunities for brand enhancement through numerous postings and subsequent viewings on various social media platforms. The social media theme was especially significant, in terms of the arousing of global awareness of the South African destination brand. Furthermore, the brand messages that South Africa conveys during its hosting of major events have come to be recognised as being both professional and reputable. Such brand messaging certainly applies to mega-event hosting. However, it is in terms of the debate around the high cost of bidding for, and hosting of, sport mega-events as opposed to major sporting events, as well as around the socio-economic benefits that are frequently offered through major event hosting, that major home-grown events are deemed critical for effective sport event leveraging.

CONCLUSION

Through an in-depth qualitative analysis of key industry stakeholder perceptions, the current researchers have come to recognise the significant effects of major sport event leveraging for tourism and destination branding. The researchers further acknowledge that, in particular to emerging destinations such as South Africa, sport event leveraging holds various short- and long-term strategic benefits for the nation's developing brand. The benefits are mainly linked to the enhancing emerging economic development and brand exposure, as well as to the addressing of unique socio-economic challenges. Although destination branding and sport event studies remain skewed towards the developing context, the present study contributes to the body of knowledge regarding the developing Global South context, by means of providing the stakeholders concerned with empirically based recommendations regarding major sport event leveraging. While the current researchers purposed to contextualise sport event leveraging in relation to the South African destination brand, they recognise the limitation of their research in terms of them having adopted a single case study approach, at least as far as the study's findings may be applied to other emerging destination

contexts. It is, therefore, urged that further related research should investigate other emerging destination brands as the way forward to draw on more conclusive similarities and contrasts in relation to the effects of major events on the developing of destination brands. Empirically, such research studies will aid in producing a generalised sport event leveraging model that can be applied within a developing destination context.

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GEOMORPHOSITES ASSESSMENT OF LORESTAN PROVINCE IN IRAN BY COMPARING OF ZOUROS AND COMANESCU'S METHODS (CASE STUDY: POLDOKHTAR AREA, IRAN)

Mehran MAGHSOUDI*

University of Tehran, Faculty of Geography,
Enghelab Avenue, Tehran, Iran, e-mail: maghsoud@ut.ac.ir

Maryam RAHMATI

University of Tarbiat Modares, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Physical Geography,
Jalal Al-Ahmad Avenue, Nasr, Tehran, Iran, e-mail: maryam.rahmati@modares.ac.ir

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Abstract: With complex geology and different geomorphology structure, climatic diversity, numerous islands and spiral coastline, Iran offers great variety of natural landscapes. This paper discusses a comparative assessment of geomorphosites located within the Poldokhtar area using Zouros and Comanescu methods. In this study based on field trips, Geomorphological values were evaluated and compared using six criteria in Zouros method and five criteria in Comanescu method. After identifying 37 geomorphosites in the region, 13 were selected based on the principal characteristics and added value. The assessment results showed that geomorphosites of this region can be divided into two main groups. The first groups are based on Comanescu method which consisted of five sites with high total value and the second group consists of eight sites with average value. In Zouros method the first group consisted of four sites with high value and the second groups are nine sites with average value. In order to protect identified geomorphosites and ensure appropriate management, the establishment of Seymare protected area is proposed. This proposal consists of a collection of diverse and spectacular geomorphosites.

Key words: Geomorphosites, Zouros and Comanescu's Methods, Compare Methods, Lorestan Province

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, academic community has focused on geotourism more than ever (Maghsoudi et al., 2013). In fact geotourism is viewed as promoting tourism to geosites (geomorphosites), the conservation of geodiversity, and an understanding of Earth sciences through appreciation and learning (Dowling, 2013). Geotourism particular importance today is that many government programmes aim to conserve the most valuable sites (geoconservation) and raise societal awareness about the importance of

* Corresponding author

geodiversity (Newsome & Dowling, 2017). Geotourism is now being practised all around the world. It has been promulgated for a whole range of places from specific sites and landscapes (e.g., Derbyshire, UK; Cope, 2016); urban areas (e.g., Hong Kong; Ng et al., 2010; Jeli District, Kelantan, Malaysia; Adriansyah et al., 2015); to regions (e.g., Bojnourd County, Iran; Kharazian, 2015; Faiyum Oasis, Egypt; Sallam et al., 2018, Kurkur–Dungul, Egypt; Sallam et al., 2018); and countries (e.g., European Union; Komossa et al., 2018).

Geomorphosites are defined “Geomorphological landforms and processes that have acquired aesthetic, scientific, cultural- historical and social- economic values due to human perception of geological, geomorphological, historical and social factors” (Pralong, 2005, Panizza, 2001, Reynard & Panizza, 2005). Geomorphosites play an important role in perception the paleo geomorphology evolution of an area (Comanescu et al., 2011). In recent decades, the vulnerability of the geoheritage that includes geological and geomorphological natural elements have been less considered in comparison with the biological and cultural heritage and thus its situation is constantly blurred in the conservation actions (Reynard & Coratza, 2007). These geomorphological sites in the literature have been introduced with titles such as geomorphological assets (Panizza & Piacente, 1993), geomorphological goods (Cartoon, 1994), geomorphological places (Hooke, 1994), geomorphological geotopes (Grandgirard, 1997). Places with geomorphological appeal (Panizza, 2001; Reynard et al., 2007). Geomorphological sites are important from special aspects. Some people like Grandgirard (1997) know its importance in identifying the chronicle and reconstruction of the Earth' history and some others like Panizza (2001) Panizza and Piacente (1993) consider these places not only from the scientific point of view, but also from other points that are related to ecology, economy and culture. However, these scientific values must be prioritized and other important values be placed in the next level.

During the last two decades, the quality of geomorphological heritage has been considered in terms of topics such as environmental impact assessment (Rivas et al., 1997; Coratza & Giusti, 2005, Geneletti & Dawa, 2009), natural heritage sites (Serrano & Gonzalez Trueba, 2005), the promotion of tourism (Pralong, 2005), the management of natural parks and geoparks (Pereira et al., 2007, Zouros, 2007), scientific evaluation and understanding of the tourist (Comanescu et al, 2011) and the geological heritage (Rocha et al., 2014). Certainly, the used geomorphologic methods should be adapted to the system, process and geomorphological phenomena of the desired location and have features that could explain geomorphic characteristics. The link between anthropogenic activities and use of geological values should enhance the sustainable development of planning policies based on geoconservation and geointerpretation concept (Henriques et al., 2011).

Lorestan province offers a unique collection of attractive natural landforms owing to its geological and geomorphological diversity and its multiplicity of morphoclimatic zones due to difference in altitude (220 - 4150 m). This diversity has caused that Lorestan has been known as one of the choices of geotourism spot of Iran in 2014 according to Department Tourism and Cultural Heritage of Iran (General department cultural heritage of Lorestan province) and its tourism areas has been identified more than before for special protection. Since most of the geotourism attractions of Lorestan province are concentrated in southwestern part, so its different geomorphosites are known as tourist destinations of the region. To date, the conservation and management value of the geomorphosites has been less considered in the management and education; especially in this context has not been a comprehensive research in the form of articles and books.

So reliable geomorphosites assessment methods in this area can help to emphasize their value and their importance as locations with potential for conservation, research and management. These initiatives schemes based on geomorphological sites assessment in

this region allow the local communities to gain experience and have active participation in geoconservation and geoheritage management. The aim of this study is comparison of geotourism development potential of geomorphological sites in Poldokhtar country, based on education and tourism potential, through evaluation of them and providing appropriate solutions for protection and promoting of this place as a tourism destination.

STUDY AREA

Study area with $47^{\circ} 57' - 48^{\circ} 28' E$ and $33^{\circ} 03' - 33^{\circ} 46' S$ is located in Lorestan province in the southwestern of Iran, which forms part of the central Zagros mountains with northwest – southeast direction (Figure 1).

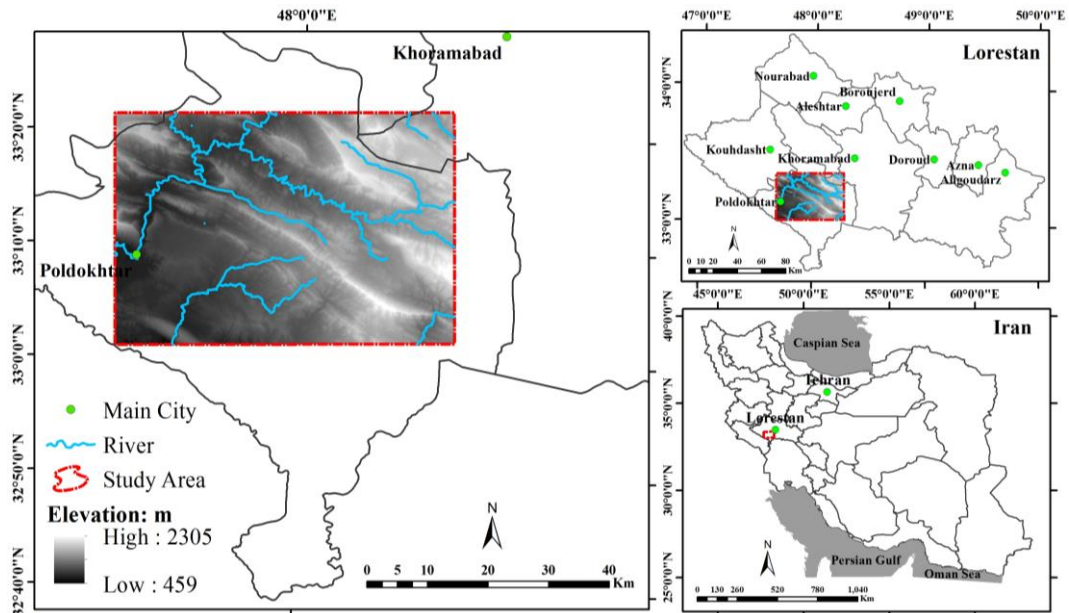


Figure 1. Geographical location of study area

Based on figure 2 and table 1 more landforms of region have been formed on Gachsaran formations with chalk marl and anhydrite and clay, Asmari - Shahbazan formation with dolomitic limestone and midlayers of marl and clay and Quaternary recent alluvium and debris (Ahmadabadi & Rahmati, 2016). Volcanic and metamorphic activities have not been observed in the study area. Overall, in study area three typical topographic units can be seen. Mountain unit, which matches to the anticlines that caves such as Kowgan and Kalmakare have located on them; hill unit that are seen in erosion valleys and the syncline, typical example in this forms are erosional hogback near Afrine waterfall and Jaydar lake terraces. Typical Plain and flat lands unit in this area are located in the south and southwest, near 11 ponds and Pol Tang. 13 geomorphosites in the study area (Seymare landslide, Fanni – Laylomcluse (gorge-like features), 11 ponds of Poldokhtar, canyons and valleys of Pol Tang, Jaydar and Saymare lake terraces, the Kowgan man made cave, the Klmakare cave (the sixth world great treasures), the Vashian and Afrine waterfalls, typical Afrine Hogbacks, the Kashkan river meanders, the Takht e Narm rocky village, the Gavmishan geomorphosites collection (historical/ ancient bridges, karstic forms, sandstone Precipices) are geotourism locations that have been selected for this study.

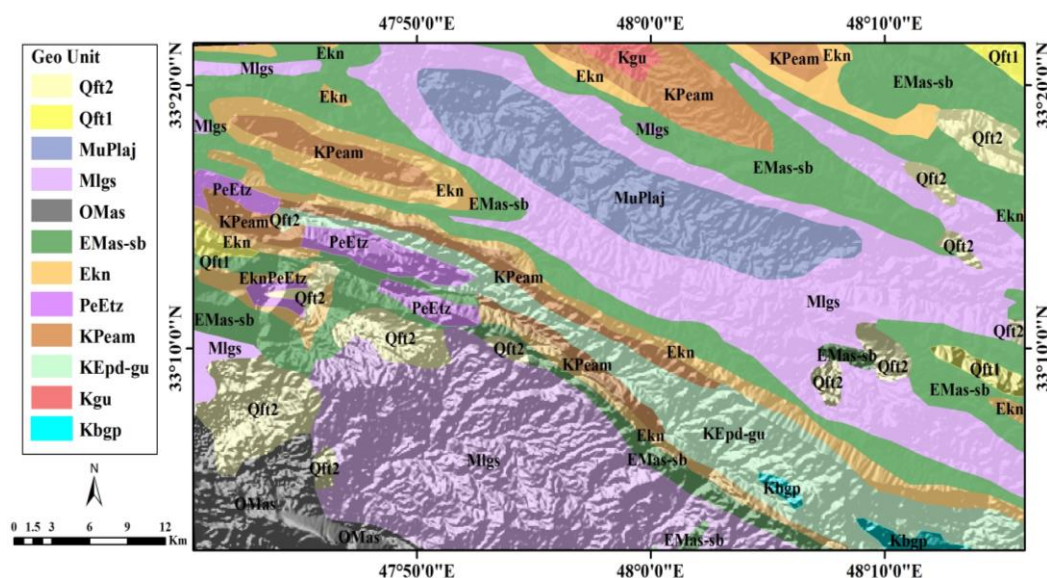


Figure 2. Geological unit's map in the study area provided from geological survey of Iran (1:100,000 scale)

Table 1. Geological units table of the study area

Num	Geo Unit	Description
1	Qft2	Low level piedmont fan and valley terraces deposit
2	Qft1	High level piedmont fan and valley terraces deposits
3	MuPlaj	Calcareous, sandstone, gypsum - veined, marl and siltstone
4	Mlgs	Anhydrite, salt, marl alternating with anhydrite, argillaceous limestone and limestone
5	OMas	Limestone with intercalations of shale
6	EMas-sb	Limestone
7	Ekn	Conglomerate, sandstone and siltstone
8	PeEtz	Massive fossiliferous limestone
9	KPeam	Siltstone and sandstone with local development of chert conglomerate and shelly limestone
10	KEpd-gu	Marl and shale
11	Kgu	Marl and shale with subordinate thin - bedded argillaceous -limestone
12	Kbgp	Limestone and shale

Figures 3 to 7 shows the view of some geomorphosites of the study area. Some geomorphosites of this region have a special important; for example, Seymare landslide has been known "as the largest known landslide" (Bloom, 1978; Bargrizan, 1996) and "the biggest eastern hemisphere landslide" (Fisher, 1968) because of its extent and specific characteristics. Klmakare historical cave due to having a large number of antique objects dating to the Elamite civilization in the 1000 BC, has been called as "the sixth great world treasures" (Mahboubian et al., 2003, Khosravi & Mousavi, 2014; Bashash, 2000; Parhan, 2014). Kowgan two-store cave is one of the few man-made caves related to the Parthian civilization (250 BC) that has been carved in the Zagros Mountains (Administration Cultural Heritage Handicrafts and Tourism OF the Lorestan Province, 2010).



Figure 3. The view from the twin ponds (Lefone), part of the ponds Poldokhtar



Figure 4. The view from Afrine waterfall (Source: Bahman Ebrahimi, 2013)



Figure 5. The view from Saymare landslide (Source: Mojtaba Yamani, 2014)



Figure 6. The view from Hogbacks (Source: Alirez AmriKazemi, 2011)



Figure 7. The view from Kowgan cave to the outside



Figure 8. The view from Kashkanriver meanders, (Source: Bahman Ebrahimi, 2013)

METHODOLOGY

For this research based on a documentary study, initial data were collected and classified that was related to the research literature (the method was selected based on geographic conditions and geotourism attractions of the region). Then the locations of 37 geomorphosites and their topographic and geological information were derived from 1:50 000 topographic maps (1976) of Poldokhtar, Mamoulan and Bidrubeh and 1:100 000 geological maps (1972) of Poldokhtar and Khorramabad and field work. Finally, after selecting 13 geomorphosites, based on inherent value and additional value, inventory sheet was prepared for each of them. Then during the field observations, pictures were taken of each geomorphosite and their locations were marked using GPS device and their distributions were drawn in Arc GIS software (Figure 9).

Then the evaluation of each criterion was done using special questionnaires for each method that had been completed and ranked by experts (experts in geomorphology, geology, environment, tourism management and natives). Figure 9 shows flow chart of the research process in study area.

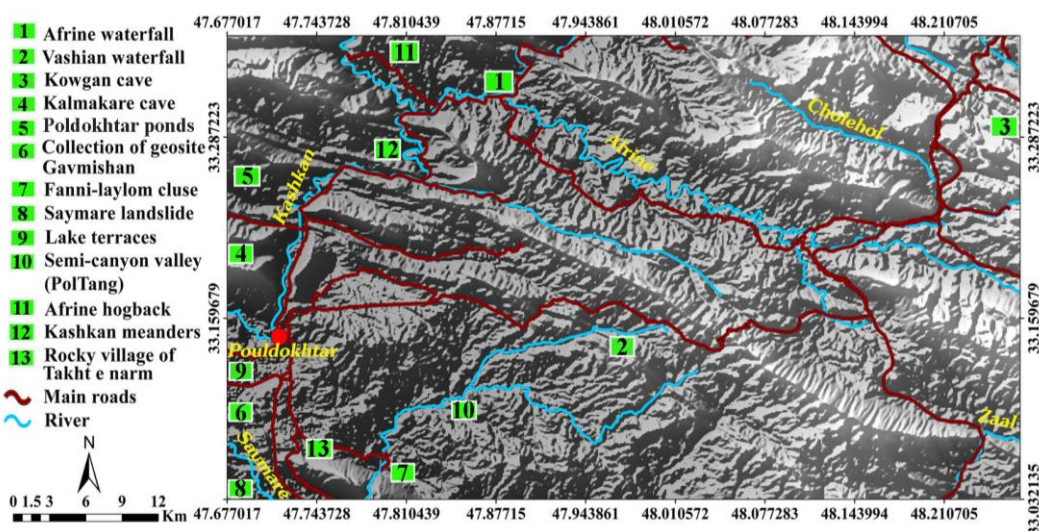


Figure 9. Geomorphosites distribution map in study area based on produced hill shade by Shuttle Radar Topographic Mission (SRTM)

COMANESCU MODEL

Generally, Comanescu model is based on 5 criteria; scientific, aesthetic, cultural, economic and management (table 2). In fact, quality assessment of perspective, scientific, cultural and or economic benefits of geomorphological sites and their tourism value for people, determines the capabilities application (Pralong, 2005) of geomorphosite.

The evaluation of geomorphosites according to criteria proposed in table 1; the total value is calculated following the formula (Comanescu et al, 2012: 57).

Equation 1:

$$V_{tot} = (V_{sci} + V_{sce} + V_{cult} + V_{eco} + V_{mg}) / 100$$

For each of the criteria mentioned above, a score between 0 and the maximum value given to the criterion is considered, the sum for each criterion is calculated, and also the sum for all criteria, according to the above formula.

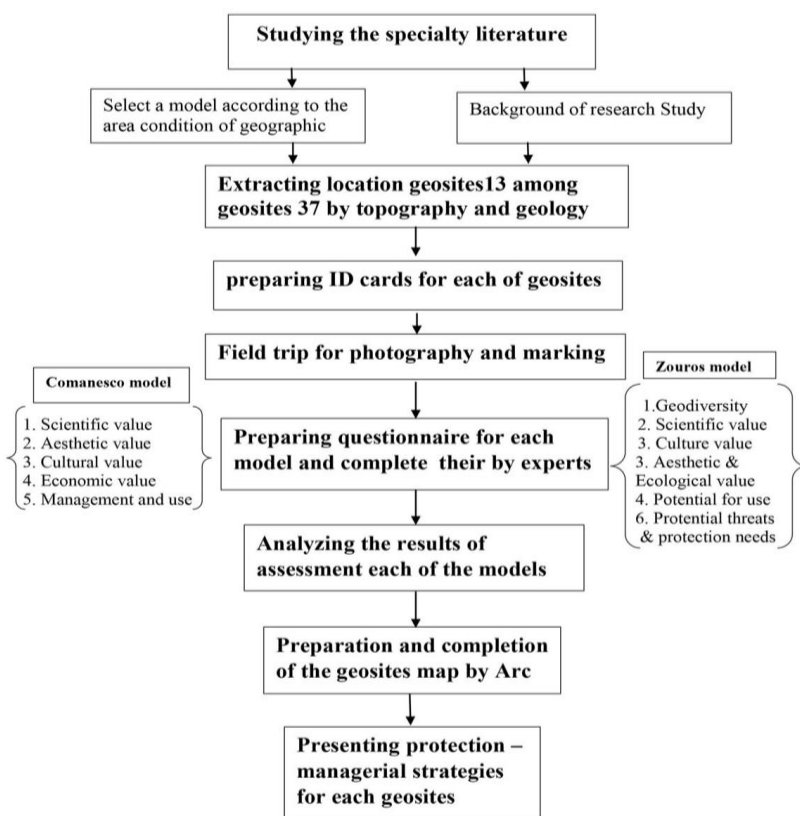


Figure 10. Flowchart of the methodological approach in study area

As we mentioned, the appreciation criteria stay the same, but the scale will differ depending on the concrete situation in the field and on the purpose and objectives of the evaluation. Thus, whether the evaluation aims firstly the scientific value, its results being used for the specialist, a higher weight will be given to paleogeographic interest, the degree of knowledge/ recognition or the ecological value. If the evaluation purpose regards educational activity, then the use in this purpose will be better measured.

In geotourism mapping, which is more interest for tourists, cultural and aesthetic values are more considered. In dedicated studies for the environmental pressure, the highest values allocated to management and economic benefit (Comanescu et al., 2012: 58).

ZOUROS METHOD

In Zouros (2007) method, several indicators have been defined for each criterion and were selected as a quantitative approach to assessment. As shown in Table 3 each indicator is given a value between 0-10 and 0-5, with the highest score representing the highest value. The total score of each criterion is thus the sum of its indicators (Equation 2). The total number of criteria can therefore express the quality of a geomorphosite, with 100 being the highest attainable score (Table 3).

Equation 2 (Zouros, 2007):

Geomorphosite value = Scientific + Geodiversity + Ecological & aesthetic + Cultural + Potential threats & protection needs + Potential for use

Table. 2 The criteria and scores provided for evaluating geomorphosites in Comanescu method et al. (2012, 58)

Scientific value 20 points	Aesthetic value 20 points	Cultural value 20 points	Economic value 20 points	Management and use 20 points
Paleo geographic interest 3 point	Visibility 4 point	Cultural Characteristics 4 point	Accessibility 4 point	Preservation Degree 4 point
Representativeness 2 point	Space structuring 4 point	Historical Characteristics 4 point	Infrastructure 4 point	Protected sites 3 point
Rareness 2 point	Color contrast 4 point	Religious Characteristics 4 point	Yearly visitors Number 4 point	Vulnerability/ Natural risks 3 point
Integrity 2 point	Level difference 4 point	Iconographic/ Literary representations 2 point	Number of types and forms of use (inclusively touristic) 4 point	Intensity of use 4 point
Degree of scientific knowledge 3 point	Landscape framing 4 point	Festivals/cultural manifestations	Economic potential (incomes) 4 point	Use of aesthetic, cultural and economic value 3 point
Use in educational Purposes 3 point		Symbolic value 4 point		Relationship with Planning policies 3 point
Ecologic value 3 point				
Diversity 2 point				

Table 3. The criteria and scores provided for evaluating geomorphosites in Zouros method

Num	Criteria and Indicators	Assessment	Ranking
1	Scientific & educational value		40-0
1-1	Integrity	Depends on the degree to which a geomorphological structure or process blends into the site and on its level of preservation	10-0
1-2	Rarity	Depends on the number of similar sites at different levels (unique, international, national, regional, local)	10-0
1-3	Representativeness	Depends on the degree to which the site is typical of a certain geomorphological process	10-0
1-4	Exemplarity	Depends on the usefulness of the site for helping the general public to understand a geomorphological structure or process	10-0
2	Geodiversity	Number of geological and geomorphological phenomena that appear at each site	10-0
3	Ecological & aesthetic value	Characterization by international designation or by national or regional legislation (WHS - natural world heritage site or MAB- biosphere reserve, national park or national natural monument, natural park, regional park, locally protected site)	10-0
4	Cultural value	Characterization by international designation or by national or regional legislation (WHS - natural world heritage site, national cultural monument, cultural landscape or landscape of outstanding aesthetic beauty, regional monument, local monument)	10-0
5	Potential threats & protection needs		10-0
5-1	Legal protection	The existing level of legal protection (international designation, national park or monument, protected by national legislation, regional protection, poor protection, no protection)	5-0
5-2	Vulnerability	Presence and magnitude of potential threats (uncontrollable risk, strong pressure, moderate risk, controlled risk, poor risk, no risk)	5-0
6	Potential for use		20-0
6-1	Recognizability	The level of recognition (international, national, regional, local, known only by scientific community, unknown)	5-0
6-2	Geographical distribution	The percentage of the space occupied by the geomorphosites in relation to the total surface of the protected area	5-0
6-3	Accessibility	The level of accessibility (by a road of regional or national importance, by local road, by unsurfaced road, by foot path, with permission only, no access)	5-0
6-4	Economic potential	Number of visitors per year (more than 75.000 visitors, more than 50.000 visitors, more than 20.000 visitors, more than 5.000 visitors, less than 5.000 visitors, no visitors)	5-0

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The assessment results of 13 geomorphosite values in Poldokhtar area are shown in Tables 4 and 5 as shown in Comanescu method according to the equal values (20 points for all geomorphosites), the highest value has been allocated to scientific criteria, and the lowest score is related to cultural criteria. Also among geomorphosites, Kalmakare cave has the highest score (13.2 points) and Afrine hogback have achieved the lowest score (7.95). Valuations of each indicator in the Zouros method due to differences in each indicator values have been in a different way, so that the protection criterion had the lowest scores. As you can see the highest score is related to scientific criteria that certainly according to the highest Points were given to this indicator, is not surprising and the result is similar to the result of Comanescu method. It is worth mentioning that Seymare landslide geomorphosite with 78.5 points ranks the highest and rocky village of Takht e Narm with 53.25 score, had the lowest rank among other geomorphosites.

Table. 4 Results of selected geomorphosites assessment
based on Comanescu method (2012) in study area

Geomorphosite value	Kashkan meanders	Rocky village of Takht e Narm	Afrine hogback	Semi-canyon valleys (PolTang)	Lake terraces	Saymare landslide	Fanni- Laylomcluse	Collection of geomorphosites Gavmishan	Poldokhtar ponds	Kalmakare cave	Kowgan cave	Vashian waterfall	Afrine waterfall
Scientific	14/5	12/5	13	13/5	17/25	16/5	10/75	15/5	17/25	17/5	13/75	9/5	13/5
Aesthetic	14/75	12/5	13/25	13/75	13/5	14/5	12/5	14	14/5	11	11/75	12/75	15/5
Cultural	3/25	12/25	1/75	7/75	5/25	7/5	5	13/75	5/5	16/25	13/75	4	4/5
Economic	7	5/25	6/75	6/75	9	8	7/75	10/5	11	8	8	6/25	10/5
Management and use	4/75	8/25	5	7/25	6/75	5/75	7/25	11/25	12/25	13/25	12/25	7/5	9/5
Average	8/85	10/15	7/95	9/8	10/35	10/45	8/65	13	12/1	13/2	11/9	8	10/7

Table 5. Results of selected geomorphosites assessment
based on Zouros method (2007) in study area

Geomorphosite value	Kashkan meanders	Rocky village of Takht e Narm	Afrine hogback	Semi-canyon valleys (PolTang)	Lake terraces	Saymare landslide	Fanni- Laylomcluse	Collection of geomorphosites Gavmishan	Poldokhtar ponds	Kalmakare cave	Kowgan cave	Vashian waterfall	Afrine waterfall
Scientific	22	20/25	25/5	25/5	25/5	33	26/75	24	29	28/25	25/75	24/75	26/75
Geodiversity	6	4/25	6/75	7/5	8	9/5	8	8	6/5	5/25	4/75	5/25	6/5
Ecological & aesthetic value	6	6/5	7/5	6/5	6/5	7	7/5	5/5	8/25	5/25	4/25	5/5	4/5
Cultural	5/25	8/25	5	5/75	6/5	7	6	7/5	6/75	8/25	6	4/5	5
Potential threats & protection needs	4/5	5/75	5	5/5	5/75	6	6	8/75	6/75	5/25	5	4/75	7/5
Potential for use	13/25	8/5	7/5	10/25	12/25	16	9	14/75	14/75	10/75	11/5	10	15/75
TOTAL	57	53/25	57/25	61	64/5	78/5	63/25	68/5	72	64	57/25	54/75	66

Despite having a high level of scientific point in geomorphosites, it seems that the Southwest of Lorestan province had the lowest number of visitors and therefore little development in this context is observed. Although a high scientific value for these

geomorphosites is considered, but have had little cultural or protection values. It is possible that due to the little promotion for geotourism development in this region, less infrastructure and services have been prepared for visitors. However, the low number of visitors despite its high potential for tourism and education may also be due to poor access to some geomorphosites. Based on these results, geomorphosites of this region can be divided into two main groups. The first group based on Comanescu method consisted of five sites with total value of high (1, 3, 4, 5, 6) and the second group consists of eight sites with medium values. Also in Zouros method, the first group consists of four sites with the total value of high (1, 5, 6, 8) and the second group are 9 sites with medium values. It should be noted that the results are in accordance with Zouros study (2007) on 8 selected Lesvos Island – coastal are a geomorphosites. This study emphasis on high scientific value of geomorphosites and low value for Potential application and cultural indicator. Comanescu (Comanescu et al., 2011, 2012) assess the geotourism potential of 8 geomorphosites in Pono are protected area and 16 geomorphosites in Romania Vista valley. The results of these two studies showed that cultural indicator have low value and more attention needs to be focused to these criteria it in these areas. In addition, Shayan (Shayan et al., 2014) assessed 6 geomorphosites in Karaj – Chalous road and they concluded that the cultural and management indicators had the lowest points than the other indicators in this area and they are need for more attention of the authorities to these indicators in the region. A notable point in all of these studies is the high level scientific - education value of geomorphosites.

For geomorphosites management in the Poldokhtar area, some specific management actions are done for supporting and enhancing the existing sites. Comprehensive plan has been carried for identify the geotourism capabilities of Lorestan Waterfalls by Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organization .For waterfalls like Afrine necessary protection acts have been described (Lorestan Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organization, 2008). Among the 13 geomorphosite, only four sites (3, 4, 5 and 6) were in the national registration. However, efforts must be taken for further registration of other sites such as 1, 8 and 13. Remarkable negative environmental consequences of tourist attraction and their increasing number in the region caused direct increasing abrasion due to continuous walking until now. Educational programs should be provide for visitors, especially students for understanding the importance of the region's geomorphosites and to further influence their insights on geological and geomorphological processes of the region.

Several management proposals are presented in order to protect and identify the geomorphosites are as:

- Reviews and revision of the laws relating to exploitation of natural resources with a conservation approach of Landform;
- Formation and strengthening the expert advocacy groups protecting landforms;
- Comprehensive monitoring and strict action against offenders;
- Continuous and effective cultural actions (especially for natives) in order to change their attitudes towards the landforms and involvement of local community for protection of geomorphosites;
- Identification of landform, based on global standard scientific methods to maintain the integrity and collection of rare samples to restoration and validity;
- Limiting and in certain cases prohibiting the as signment of natural resources to the peoples that has typical and valuable landforms (especially Poldokhtar 11 ponds);
- Assigning some geomorphosites as geographylab (geomorphology), to a large and independent organization in the country, such as the ministry of science, research and technology.

CONCLUSIONS

Geomorphosites have the potential to be considered as natural and tourism resources with remarkable economic benefits, especially if they are located in protected areas. Lorestan province has been known as one of the choices of geotourism hub of Iran in 2014 according to Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organization. Poldokhtar is one of the county of Lorestan provinces with high potential for geotourism development. Aim of this research was the identification and ranking of geomorphosites in this region. Two methods were used for assessment and comparing the value of geomorphosites located in the Poldokhtar area of Iran. The results showed that using two methods for comparison of areas with similar geographical conditions in order to classify the sites value is useful and can be used for better assessment of the geomorphosites. This comparison provided the design context methods with a more comprehensive indicator for similar areas. Both methods emphasize on more attention to protecting aspects of geomorphosites. In addition, the results of this study propose assigning a protected area in Saymare area. This area provides a possible of setting up a network of geomorphosites protection and monitoring activities. Additionally, promotion of local identity, the importance of tourism build infrastructure, development of new products and services locally, there by the creation of new employment opportunities, encouraging of the local economy growth and thus local sustainable development will expand.

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TOURISM SECTOR IN TRANSITION ECONOMY ON EXAMPLE OF UKRAINE: DETERMINANTS OF COMPETITIVENESS

Mariana KOLOSINSKA*

Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Department of Economics and Security of the Enterprise, 2 Kotsyubynsky Str. Chernivtsi 58012, Ukraine, e-mail: m.kolosinska@chnu.edu.ua

Oksana PETRASHCHAK

Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Department of Business, Trade and Stock Activity, 2 Kotsyubynsky Str. Chernivtsi 58012, Ukraine, e-mail: petrashchak.oksana@gmail.com

Ievgen KOLOSINSKYI

Chernivtsi Institute of Trade and Economics of KNTEU, Department of Finance, Banking and Entrepreneurship, 7 Tsentralna Square, Chernivtsi 58002, Ukraine, e-mail: safe_cv@ukr.net

Albina KATANA

Chernivtsi Institute of Trade and Economics of KNTEU, Department of Finance, Banking and Entrepreneurship, 7 Tsentralna Square, Chernivtsi 58002, Ukraine, e-mail: albinakatana1@gmail.com

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Abstract: The aim of the research is to justify the possibility of using and benefits of Porter Diamond Model to improve the competitiveness of the tourism industry in transition economy. Porter Diamond Model was a tool applied for the competitiveness level evaluation of the tourism sector in transition economy on example of Ukraine. This article expands the scope of the “rhomb” model of Porter (1990) to identify the braking and stimulating factors of competitiveness, which will increase the competitiveness of the tourism sector in the transition countries by enhancing the stimulating factors and removing the braking ones. This approach allowed defining the present competitiveness level and the potential ways of its improvement. Specific suggestions were developed on removing the inhibition factors and strengthening the stimulating ones to increase the competitiveness of the tourism sector of Ukraine.

Key words: tourism sector, competitiveness of tourism sector, Porter Diamond Model, factors of competitiveness, transition economy, Ukraine

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of economy modernization and enhancing national competitiveness are among the main priorities of the social-economic reform in transition economies. The purpose of structural modernization should be the construction of a highly effective

* Corresponding author

competitive dynamic socially oriented economic system in which development is ensured primarily through expanding the use of innovative technologies, rational use of human potential, increasing and improving the quality level of export potential and integration into world economic relations, expansion of capacity and balance of the internal market. The changes in the structure of the modern world economy are characterized by a decrease in the specific weight of the productive sectors and the growing share of services. On the other hand, the increase of public incomes and needs of the citizens determines the demand for specific services associated with leisure activities, travelling, cultural and educational queries, rehabilitation and recreation, etc. This leads to the accelerated development of the tourism sector at the present stage of social development. So, tourism industry is the largest service industry and largest employment generator in the world (Tuzunkan, 2018). But in the current situation in the tourism sector of countries with transitional economies it is noted that the formation of a competitive tourism industry with its further integration into the world market of tourist services is connected with the necessity for effective measures to intensify the production of a competitive tourist product of appropriate quality and to identify and overcome the problems that hamper its development. That is why the development of alternative tools for studying the competitiveness of the tourism industry in order to strengthen it is relevant and timely.

A look at recent literature shows that there have been a number of significant studies with regard to competitiveness in the tourism sector. Gooroochurn and Sugiyarto (2004) have worked a model for assessing the competitiveness of tourist destinations, whose units of analysis were: (I) prices; (II) economic openness; (III) technological developments; (IV) structure; (V) human development in the tourism sphere; (VI) social development; (VII) environment, and (VIII) human resources.

Melián-González and García-Falcón (2003) have also drawn up a model for the evaluation of competitiveness, and have applied it empirically to a segment of fishing tourism in the Canary Islands, in Spain. According to these authors, the resources of tourist destinations can be described as consisting of natural resources (beaches and mountains) or cultural resources (museums, festivals, local traditions etc.).

Enright and Newton (2004) has proposed a comprehensive approach that adds industry-level competitiveness attributes to more conventional tourism destination attributes. This study builds on these ideas by generating sets of both attributes, developing a methodology for assessing their relative importance and examining the degree to which their relative importance varies across locations.

Barbosa et al., (2010) presented the methodology of the 'Study of competitiveness of 65 key destinations for the development of regional tourism' prepared by the Tourism Ministry, the Brazilian Support Service to Micro and Small Enterprises (Sebrae) and Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV). It was structured into 13 different aspects, which we have called dimensions, subdivided into 60 variables guided by ex-ante evaluation criteria (efficiency), the units of analysis of which are of a systemic or structural nature, depending on the nature of each variable. This combination of components was the base for the construction of a model for the measurement of competitiveness of the 65 key destinations, which also included rigorous control over the collection and analysis of data, seeking to capture the reality of each of the tourist destinations as accurately as possible.

The model of Ritchie and Crouch (2010) is the most well-known conceptual model of destination competitiveness and sustainability in tourism literature. In the last interpretation, it contains 7 elements, which according to the authors' opinion, provide the competitiveness of the tourism industry. These components are: The global (macro)

environment; The competitive (micro) environment; Core resources and attractors; Supporting factors and resources; Destination policy, planning and development; Destination management; Qualifying and amplifying determinants.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) published a significant study on competitiveness first in 2007, based on the Tourism and Travel Competitiveness Index (TTCI) developed by the World Economic Forum experts in cooperation with Booz and Company, Deloitte, International Air Transport Association, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, World Tourism Organization UNWTO and the World Travel and Tourism Council. TTCI allows to identify the barriers to the successful development of the tourist industry at the national level and to develop specific measures to improve the competitiveness of countries in the world market of tourist services.

Today (WEF, 2015), structurally, TTCI consists of four subindexes, which in turn contain 14 groups of indexes (pillars) that combine factors characterizing the multi-vector sides of the development of the tourism sector. The Enabling Environment subindex, which captures the general settings necessary for operating in a country: 1. Business Environment 2. Safety and Security 3. Health and Hygiene 4. Human Resources and Labour Market 5. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Readiness. The Travel & Tourism (T&T) Policy and Enabling Conditions subindex, which captures specific policies or strategic aspects that impact the T&T industry more directly: 6. Prioritization of T&T 7. International Openness 8. Price Competitiveness 9. Environmental Sustainability. The Infrastructure subindex, which captures the availability and quality of physical infrastructure of each economy: 10. Air Transport Infrastructure 11. Ground and Port Infrastructure 12. Tourist Service Infrastructure. And the Natural and Cultural Resources subindex, which captures the principal "reasons to travel": 13. Natural Resources 14. Cultural Resources and Business Travel.

Among the Ukrainian scientists, it is worth noting the work: (Mihuschenko, 2013), in which, in order to increase the tourism sector's competitiveness was proposed a comprehensive multilevel methodology for assessing the competitiveness of the tourism industry of Ukraine at different levels of the management hierarchy.

To summarize, it is worthwhile to note that the research and evaluation of competitiveness of the tourism sector is the main topic in the works of such Ukrainian scientists as: (Bejdyk, 2001; Hrynkevych & Biel, 2009; Tkachenko, 2010). It should be noted that despite the extensive theoretical and methodological study of tourism competitiveness, a unified methodology is still not created for the evaluation of this phenomenon for the country. First of all, this is because the majority of scientists, including (Hrynkevych & Biel, 2009; Bezugla, 2004), focus their attention on assessing the competitiveness of a tourism product of the region, or consider in their research methods for assessing certain aspects affecting the development of tourism competitiveness of a country or contiguous processes within the limits of investment attractiveness, etc. That is why, with the increasing influence of the tourist services sphere on the world economy, there is a justified necessity in the comprehensive study of the competitive advantages of the country's tourism industry.

Since the most significant contribution to the study of problems of countries' competitiveness was made by Porter (1990), the author of the competitive advantage theory, according to which a country achieves high competitiveness not in all sectors of the economy, but only in those in which it has competitive advantages, he proposed the concept of "international competitiveness of Nations".

According to M. Porter, the country's competitiveness in international exchange is determined by the influence and interconnection of the following four main components: factor conditions; demand conditions; the state of servicing and related industries; firm's

strategy in a particular competitive environment. We believe that in order to formulate proposals for ensuring the competitiveness of the tourism sector in the country it is expedient to use the M. Porter's "rhombus" model of the country's competitiveness in order to determine the inhibitory and stimulating factors of competitiveness, which will allow to increase the competitiveness of the tourism sector of countries with economies in transition by strengthening incentive factors and eliminating the braking ones.

This model was used in research project report by Wahogo (2006) to apply the Porter Diamond model in analysing the competitiveness of Kenya's tourism industry. Curta (2016) have done a summary of the analysis made using the model of "diamond" designed by Michael Porter, about the Romania's situation in tourism sector. Koskovetskaya and Skorobogatova (2016) substantiated the expediency of using M.Porter's model for assessing the industry's competitiveness in the context of integration processes, proving the need for the inclusion of an additional determinant - "the activity of international business". On the other hand, some experts have accused M. Porter failing elements in its model, such as national culture, considered to be essential for the competitive advantage of European nations (Bosch & Prooijen, 1992). The purpose of our paper in the theoretical part is to substantiate the feasibility of using Porter's diamond model in order to assess the competitiveness of the tourism sector in transition economies and to identify the main ways of enhancing it by the application of this model. In the further part (empirical) of this article we will apply Diamond model to the Ukrainian practice in order to determine the conditions of competitiveness of the tourism sector in transition economies, outlining the factors influencing them and finding ways to solve the main problems of the tourism sector.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Taking into account that the purpose of this article is to use the Porter Diamond Model as a tool for studying the competitiveness of the tourism sector in transition economies, it is advisable to consider this method in more detail. M. Porter conducted a four-year study of ten countries that occupy an important place in world trade in order to find out why countries are gaining competitive advantage in one or another field, and to find initial positions of the policy of enterprises and of the national economy.

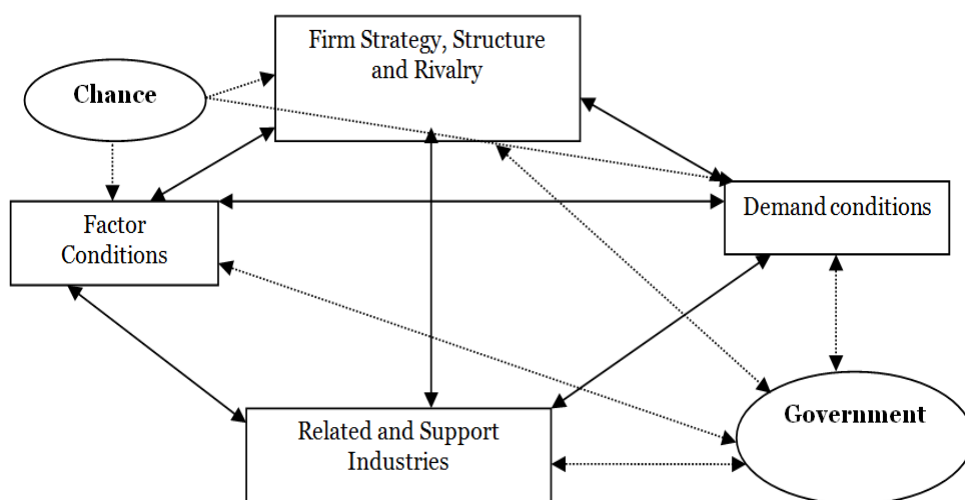


Figure 1. Determinants of the competitive advantage of the country (Source: Porter, 1998, p. 127)

Developed as a result of the study, a comprehensive theory of competitive advantage of countries, which is supported by a sufficient number of facts, is considered in his fundamental work, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, by M. E. Porter (1990). M. Porter defines four main elements of national competitiveness (determinants) (Figure 1).

It should be considered in detail each of the elements, as well as their features in terms of tourism Factor conditions are characterized by the following features: the availability of factors, their hierarchy and creation. The second determinant is the demand conditions, i.e. the demand in the internal market for the products or services offered by the industry. Demand conditions are characterized by: structure; the volume and nature of growth; internationalization. The third determinant of national competitive advantage is the availability of related and support industries in the country that are competitive in the international market. Related are those industries in which firms can interact with each other in the process of forming a chain of values and the industries that produce complementary goods (substitutes). The access to information exchange and technical cooperation is provided by the presence in the country of related industries capable of competing in the world market.

And geographical proximity and cultural affinity contribute to a more active and a quick exchange than with foreign firms. Concerning the tourism industry such can be considered light, food, transport and hotel industry. The fourth determinant is firm strategy, structure and rivalry, that is, the conditions in a country that determine how firms are formed and managed, and the nature of competition in the internal market. These national characteristics have a significant impact on the position of enterprises when targeting on global competition.

In addition to the mentioned determinants, Porter adds two more factors to his model: chance and government. Under chance, he understands those circumstances that were not foreseen as those that will affect the determinants of the "diamond" model. For the tourist market they can include the following factors, for example: the latest technological advances in the tourism sector; significant fluctuations in exchange rates (for example, the revaluation of the national currency contributes the reduction of incoming tourist flows); changes in visa legislation of foreign countries and etc.

The government's role in the formation of national advantages lies in the fact that is that it has the ability to influence each of the determinants:

- on the factor conditions - through subsidies, grants, preferential credit terms for tourism enterprises, aimed at inbound tourism, the use of preferential taxation, etc.;
- on the demand conditions - by setting conditions for standardization and certification of tourist services; promotion of social and rural tourism; increase of real wages of the population as the basis for further payment of rest and tourist services;
- on the conditions of development of related and supporting industries - by supporting industries and productions - suppliers of goods and services for tourism enterprises;
- on the firm strategy, structure and rivalry of travel agencies - through tax policy, antimonopoly legislation, through regulation and stimulation of investments, the introduction of visa-free regime, etc.

Thus, the determinants of national competitiveness in the tourism sector are a set of interrelated factors that affect a country's competitiveness in the tourism sector. Therefore, in order to outline the level of competitiveness of the country's tourist sector, it is necessary to determine where the components of the national "rhomb" ("diamond") are mutually reinforcing. It is important that the advantages of each determinant do not ensure the country's absolute competitiveness in the tourism sector, but the interaction of the advantages of all determinants creates conditions for the development of a competitive tourist market of the country on a global scale.

METHODOLOGY

This research has been based on the following steps. Firstly, we determined the competitiveness of the tourism industry in a country with a transition economy applying the Porter Diamond Model. Thereby, using the Porter Diamond Model for a separate country with a transition economy, we will be able to analyze the stimulating and braking factors of the competitiveness of Ukraine's tourism sector in the international tourism market by assessing four determinants defined in the Porter's model. The stimulating factors are those that shape the country's competitiveness for each of the four determinants. The braking factors of competitiveness of the country's tourist industry will include those that are available but need to be revised to achieve the country's competitiveness on the international tourist market. Secondly, two additional factors of the model were evaluated: chance and government, and, thirdly, we identified ways to enhance influence of stimulating factors and eliminate braking factors.

Such comprehensive analysis will ensure the maximum predictability of development after the proposed solutions application.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

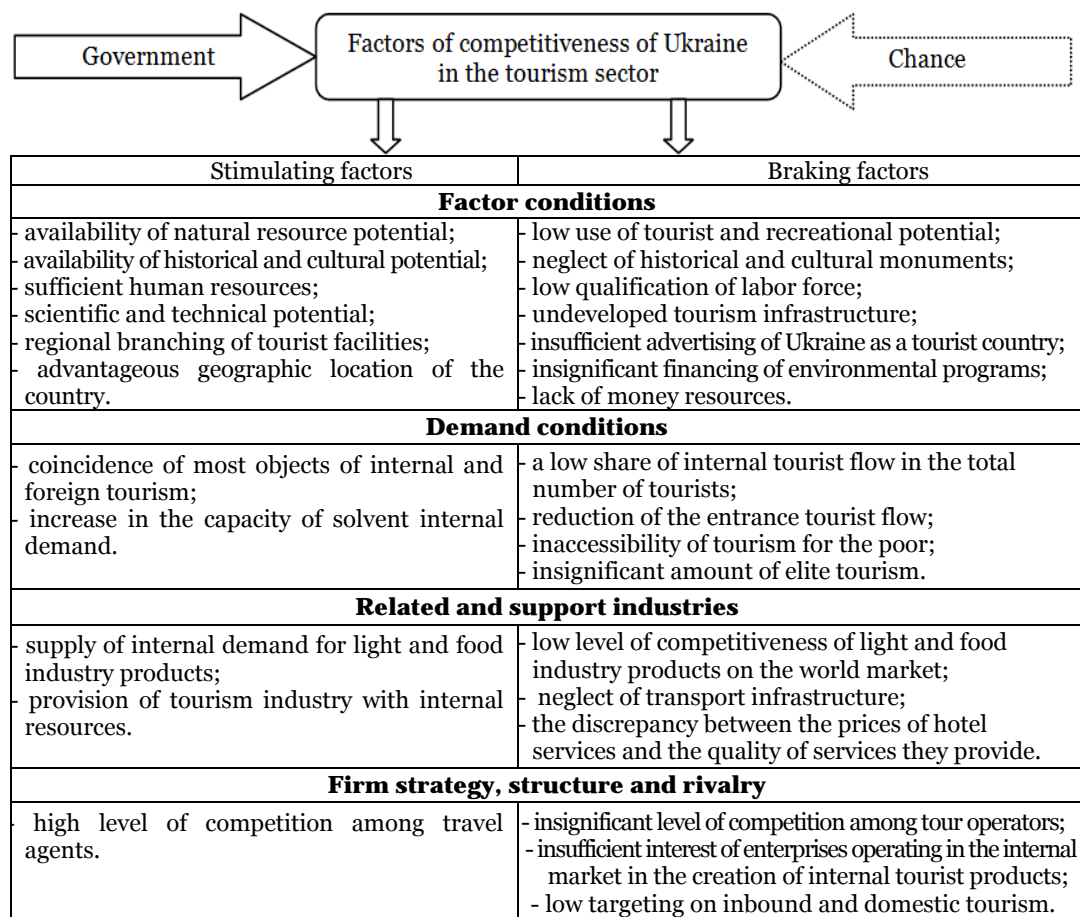


Figure 2. Stimulating and braking factors of Ukraine's competitiveness in the tourism sector
(Source: Porter's - 1998 competitiveness theory)

Porter's "diamond" model of competitiveness (Porter, 1998) is considered and applied to the Ukrainian practice in order to determine the conditions of competitiveness of the tourism sector in transition economies, outlining the factors influencing them and finding ways to solve the main problems of the tourism sphere.

On the basis of this model, we determined the stimulating and braking factors of the competitiveness of Ukraine's tourism sector in the international tourism market by assessing four determinants defined in the Porter's model. The system of stimulating factors for increasing the competitiveness of national tourism products and factors that slow down Ukraine's exit on the world tourist market are shown in Figure 2. It is necessary to consider the determinants shown in the picture in more detail.

Factor conditions in the tourism sector of Ukraine there is a saturation of the labor market, but the qualification level of the involved specialists in tourism still does not meet the world standards. It is important that Ukraine has a significant tourist and recreational potential, which includes the natural-resource potential (climatic, marine, balneological, recreational and other resources) and the existence of a historical and cultural heritage, but this potential is used in Ukraine only by 7 - 9% (Shulgina, 2005, p.24). Recreational resources of Ukraine make up 9.5% of the total natural resource potential of the country, but their use is considered as a source in economic development of the state for the future. The presence of historical and cultural potential is important because the vast majority of foreign tourists want to get new impressions and cognitive information from the trip. After gaining independence, more than 140 thousand immovable monuments of history and culture have been transferred to state protection. But the conservation and rational use of such an inheritance requires systematic and purposeful actions by the state and the public.

In our opinion, solving the problem of rational use of cultural-historical heritage is possible after the following actions:

1. The increase and rational allocation of budgetary expenditures on culture to 2% of the state budget, and 3-4% of the local level budget, according to the justified European experience.

2. The transfer of comprehensive state management of the protection, use and restoration of the cultural heritage to a separate body of public administration. This could be State Committee for the protection of historical and cultural heritage or the Department of cultural heritage protection within the Government. This possibility is provided by Article 3 of the Law of Ukraine "On the Protection of the Cultural Heritage".

3. Harmonization of legal norms between the legal documents concerning the protection of monuments and those which regulate the relations of ownership.

4. Introduction of incentives from the state to attract private funds. Based on international experience, we propose the introduction of a system of tax incentives for property owners who are registered in the national register on a permanent basis. In particular, we propose to introduce a tax allowance of 25% on investment in restoring historic buildings. Also, to transfer the expendable objects of cultural-historical heritage in long-term lease (up to 50 years) to private owners for their profit from tourism business. But at the same time outlining the strict observance of a number of important conditions, in case of non-fulfillment of which the state reserves the right to immediately return the monument and to recover from the former tenant significant penalties.

5. Take measures to reduce the number of so-called "black archaeologists" in Ukraine. Uncontrolled tourism can bring damage to both nature and culture (Cappucci, 2016). An effective solution of this problem may be the development of archaeological tourism, involvement in the excavation of amateurs under the leadership of specialists, cooperation in this field of academic institutions.

There is also a lack of information resources, that is, a set of scientific, technical and popular information that influences the formation of a tourism product of the country. This is confirmed by the fact, that in 2013 the brand of Ukraine as a tourist country was on the 109th spot, according to the WEF (2013, p. 347). This factor is also characterized by insufficient number of printed and electronic literature of an advertising character. There is no publication in our country that would promote the tourist product of Ukraine inside the country and abroad. The editions "International tourism", "World of tourism", "Ukrainian tourism" focuses their attention first of all on advertising field trips. The exception is the magazine "Carpathians Tourism Rest", which is highly specialized and introduces attractive places in Transcarpathia, as well as the periodical "Welcome to Ukraine", which meets the needs of the market and is published simultaneously in two languages (Ukrainian and English). Prospects for the effective development of the tourism industry in Ukraine are related with the formation of appropriate information, scientific and technical support of this area, which at the national and regional levels should be associated with the activation of the following areas:

- development of application programs for the development of the nature management, promotion and realization of tourist product;
- development of inventory of tourist resources;
- development of a complex of scientific knowledge in the field of tourismology and tourism management;
- development and publication of manuals and directories (tourist routes, places of rest, food, etc.);
- creation of rating of all travel companies of Ukraine on the quality indicator of fulfilled obligations;
- development of automated booking and reservation systems.

In Ukraine, the advantageous geographical location of the country is not supported by the infrastructure on the corresponding level. The main obstacles to the development of Ukraine's tourist infrastructure are poor road quality and unjustified price policy in the hotel industry. In our opinion, the following measures will have priority for infrastructure development:

- integration of Ukraine into a single European railway network, which involves the country's inclusion in the European program for the construction of high-speed railways (speed - 200-300 km / h);
- participation of our country in the network of strategic transport corridors of Central and Eastern Europe;
- attraction of funds by international credit programs at a rate of 5-7% per annum;
- ensuring the possibility of free treatment of insured tourists in city hospitals and clinics;
- introduction of innovations in the development of tourism infrastructure;
- organization of tenders and targeted investment competitions for the right to reconstruct and build new tourism objects.

The most problematic for ensuring the competitiveness of tourism in Ukraine, both on the internal and foreign markets is insufficient amount of money resources that are involved in the development of tourism. In our opinion, the main source of funds for tourism should be external and internal investment resources. Nowadays, according to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, in 2016 the amount of capital investment by tourism enterprises made up UAH 2447.8mln. which was 0.68% of the total volume of the country; in 2015 – UAH 2466.7mln. (0.9% of the total volume) (Table 1).

In the end, during 2010-2015, the weight of capital investments developed by enterprises of the tourism industry in Ukraine amounted to an average of 1.18% of the total volume in the country. It is clear that this level is insufficient, taking into account global indicators according to the World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC) (2016)

tourism accounts for 4.3% of total investment. That is why it is currently relevant to apply tax incentives for the development of the tourist industry, which are used in most European countries. In our opinion, all the instruments of tax incentives can be divided into 3 groups, the characteristics of which are given in Table 2.

Table 1. Capital investment developed by enterprises of the tourism sector in 2010-2016 (Source: calculated by authors based on data from State Statistics Service of Ukraine (Capital investment in Ukraine, 2010-2016))

Indicator	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
1. Capital investment, all in Ukraine, mln.USD	22571.9	30160.8	34157	31234.2	18284.9	12414.4	13816
2. Capital investment in tourism, mln.USD	251.2	376.25	607.9	510.4	168.5	112.1	94.1
2.1. Temporary placement and organization of food, mln.USD	129.2	196.6	283.1	184.6	123.5	63.3	56.8
Temporary placement, mln.USD	84.9	126.4	191.8	109	72.3	40.5	29.1
Providing food and drink, mln.USD	44.3	70.2	91.3	75.6	51.2	22.9	27.8
2.2. Arts, sports, entertainment and recreation, mln.USD	122.1	179.7	324.8	318.1	42.4	47.5	37.3
2.3. Activities of travel agencies, tourist operators, mln.USD	n/d	n/d	n/d	7.7	2.6	1.33	n/d
3. Share of capital investments developed by tourism enterprises in Ukraine to the total volume of investments in the country, %	1.11	1.25	1.78	1.63	0.92	0.9	0.68
5.1. Share of capital investments, which were developed by enterprises from temporary placement and organization of food to the total volume of investments in the country, %	0.57	0.65	0.83	0.59	0.68	0.51	0.41
5.1. Share of capital investments, developed by the enterprises of the sphere of art, sports, entertainment and recreation to total volume of investments in the country, %	0.54	0.6	0.95	1.02	0.23	0.38	0.27
5.1. Share of capital investments, developed by travel agents and tour operators to the total volume of investments in the country, %	n/d	n/d	n/d	0.02	0.01	0.01	n/d

The result of the introduction of the tax incentives in Table no. 2 for Ukraine is the increase of tourism development indicators, significant amounts of attracted foreign investment, as well as integration into the world community and the admission of Ukraine to the leading tourist countries. Summing up this part of the study, we note that the factors considered differ, depending on whether they are naturally or artificially created. In Ukraine the basis of the competitiveness of the tourism sector form most naturally created factors, and according to M. Porter, the factors contributing to the achievement of competitive advantages of a higher level are artificial. That is why for our country is actual the development of tourism infrastructure by attracting both internal and foreign investment money resources.

The next determinant of national competitive advantage is the demand on the internal market for tourist services. According to the WTTC (2016), over the past three years, the number of foreign tourists who visited Ukraine has decreased by five times. According to the Statistics Service of Ukraine for 2013-2016, the analysis of recent trends indicates a decrease in interest in domestic tourist trips and a decrease in the number of foreign tourists. The sharp decline occurred in 2013, which is explained by the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. The downward trend of inbound tourist flow is preserved until today.

Table 2. Characteristics of tax incentives for tourism industry in Ukraine
(Source: made by authors based on Dovbenko, 2007)

Types of incentives	Characteristic	World experience of application
1	2	3
Reduced VAT rates	Exemption from VAT in the field of inland and outbound tourism; Application of a reduced rate of VAT for hotels and other accommodation establishments that have been certified for compliance with a particular category.	In Poland the tax rate is 7%; In Croatia, the value added tax (VAT) for most goods and services is 22%, but travel services (hotel accommodation) are exempt from paying this tax; Germany and Luxembourg set the average VAT rate of 15%; In Greece, VAT on the accommodation of tourists and their food is 8%.
Tax privileges	Providing "tax holidays" to business entities engaged in the reconstruction of tourist facilities for the period of these works; Development of state guarantees of return on investment; Measures to reduce the percentage of the loan up to 5-7%; The practice of free (preferential) connection of tourist institutions to all types of communications; Introduction of long-term lease of land with preferential payment for tourist objects; Customs privileges for the import of equipment for hotels and tourist vehicles; The absence of tax penalties for entities that start establishing green tourism for the first 5 years.	In Hungarian legislation, the regulation of "green-tourism" relations is not subject to regulatory acts that regulate business relations; The government of Cyprus leases land for 99 years with the possibility of further extension of the lease for the same term for the construction of new tourist facilities; In Spain and Greece, investors are granted preferential tax treatment and depreciation rate, reduced turnover tax; In Greece is developed a system of discounts for travel agencies that receive reception in the off-season period; Slovakia implements the Tourism Development Support Program, which provides for partial state subsidies for the restructuring of tourist infrastructure and the Credit Support Program for the implementation of tourism infrastructure development projects.
Creation of special economic zones of tourist-recreational type (SEZ TR)	Foreign trade privileges: preferential customs regime, exemption from import duties, free movement of foreign currency abroad; Fiscal privileges: lower tax rates on import of raw materials and income tax, partial exemption from corporate taxation; Financial privileges: granting of preferential long-term loans, delayed payment of VAT when importing new equipment, components and materials, that are not produced in Ukraine; Administrative privileges: minimizing bureaucratic procedures, permission to buy land by foreign citizens.	The Government of Tunisia has allowed foreign investment in tourism without any restrictions; The OAU has been given the opportunity for foreign citizens to have 100% ownership of the existing company in the SEZ, and simplified the procedure of obtaining visas for owners and employees of the company; In Antalya (Turkey) is granted a preferential corporate taxation is (30-100%), the income tax is granted from 30 to 100%, and the government provides 50% of preferential loans from the total investment of firms in marketing, research and development of tourism, environmental protection.

Instead, the share of domestic tourists to the total number of tourists served by the subjects of tourist activity of Ukraine has started to increase, but has not reached the number of 2013 and is equal to 17.7% in 2015; 2013-20.3% (Tourist Streams, 2000-2015). The low proportion of domestic tourism flows is a deterrent, as demand in the domestic tourism market outlines the prospect of introducing innovations and the development of inbound tourism. The main directions of demand structure in the domestic market are West Ukrainian and Kyiv directions. Positive is that the structure of the inbound tourist flow is almost identical, which should stimulate the direction of the investment resource in the tourism sector. Today, domestic tourist flows do not influence the formation of elite tourism in Ukraine, as a solvent consumer in most cases prefers foreign tours. A positive characteristic of the internal tourist market is the increase in the number of tour operators and travel agents, which increases the competition, stimulates the introduction of innovations and entry into foreign markets. In order to stimulate domestic demand for Ukrainian tourist products, the following measures are necessary:

- development of social tourism at the expense of Union funds;
- tracking changes taking place in the structure of foreign tourist demand, and adapting the offer on the internal market to these and expected subsequent changes;
- returning the existing rules on the application of the zero VAT rate to the export of tourist services;
- granting enterprises the right to include to the expenses the amounts paid by them to rest and rehabilitate their employees in domestic sanatoriums and rest homes when determining the object of taxation.

The third determinant is the presence in the country of supporting and related industries that are competitive in the global market. Thus, the sectors that directly or indirectly are engaged in the creation of a tourism product of Ukraine are the food and light industry, as well as the sphere of transport and hotel services. It is worthwhile to note that the food industry is on the 2nd and light - on 8th place by the contribution of the branches of Ukrainian industry to the total industrial production in Ukraine (Radeke, 2014). Mining, food industry and machine building are the dominant industries, the total contribution of which to the total gross value added in industry is almost 60%. Structure of economic activities can be managed, especially in transition countries. The article (Vykylyuk et al., 2016) provides evidence about determining the future dynamics of the economic activities with increasing value added. It is worth noting that the overall negative trend of industrial decline in Ukraine in 2015 also affected related industries. If the production of food in 2014 showed an increase of 2.5%, then in 2015 this industry showed a drop of 11.2% (Okrimen, 2016). In 2014, the fall in the production of light industry amounted to 1.4%, and already in 2015, the fall was 8.4% (Okhrimen, 2016). The latter happened, first of all, because of the decline in exports. Instead, the supply of the internal market by products of light and food industries is reported by the State Statistics Service as sufficient. This creates additional opportunities for the development of the main, that is, the studied sphere of tourism.

Transport and hotel services are characterized by a low level of competitiveness. The prices for services in hotels of Ukraine do not correspond to world standards and quality of the provided service. That is, the basic condition for the successful existence of the sphere of economy "price-quality" is not fulfilled. By the end of 2015 288 hotels have received the "Star" category (Informational and analytical materials to parliamentary hearings, 2016). The analysis of the transport sector concluded that it is one of the most monopolized spheres of the Ukrainian economy, which objectively reduces the quality of services; outdated transport infrastructure; unsatisfactory quality of roads.

In order to overcome the existing disadvantages, in addition to the already mentioned changes that need to be made for the establishment of tourism infrastructure, modernization of the transport system requires:

- construction of new roads, repair and reconstruction of already existing road surface;
- to equip the transport infrastructure with all the necessary tourist objects (roadside parking places, road signs, which should inform about tourist objects, routes, attractions and other elements of the tourist infrastructure of the region);
- to update the country's rail and bus fleet.

The fourth important determinant is the firm strategy, structure and rivalry, that is, the conditions prevailing in a certain sphere. The Ukrainian tourist market should be investigated in the following directions: the market of tour operators and the market of travel agents. As of 2016, 552 legal entities have a license for tour operator activities (Tourist activity in Ukraine, 2016). Today, the market of tour operators can be described as oligopolistic, since the main part is taken by several large enterprises ("Anex Tour", "Green Tour", "TUI Ukraine", "Travel Professional Group" and some others), forming the national tourist product, dictate prices for it and interact with foreign partners in the field of outsourcing. Meanwhile, the current situation on the market of travel agents is fundamentally different and characterized by harsh conditions of competition, since it is represented by a large number of enterprises engaged in the promotion and sale of tourism products formed by tour operators. By 2016, there are 2803 travel agents in Ukraine (Tourist activity in Ukraine, 2016). The main inhibiting factor is the low targeting on the creation and promotion of an internal tourist product.

In these conditions, the role of the chance in the realities of the tourism industry of our country and determining its competitiveness is manifested in the following:

- there is no initiative in developing new tourist products;
- low level of application of the latest technological advances in the maintenance and infrastructure for tourists;
- political conflict with Russia;
- the political and economic instability that exists in Ukraine hinders the development of internal and inbound tourism flows.

As to the role of government in shaping national advantages, it has the ability to influence each of the determinants. We can outline the positive impact on the tourism sector in Ukraine, which has already taken place:

- on factor conditions - through preferential terms of taxation of hotel complexes that were put into operation in the framework of Euro-2012;
- on demand conditions - since 2010 the real wage rate of the populations is constantly increasing;
- on the development of related and supporting industries - the government influenced by the policy of control over the establishment of prices for transportation and gasoline, as well as by abolishing the mandatory certification of hotel and catering services provided by tourists enterprises. This will reduce the financial pressure on business entities operating in the field of tourism services. However, the abolition of one of the methods of control and influence by the government can lead to a significant deterioration in the quality of domestic services, which today does not meet the established standards. Therefore, other levers of influence on the quality of tourist services should be developed and implemented: first of all, promotion of voluntary certification, increase of interest in conscious maintenance of the proper quality of services and the image of own trademark, introduction of accessible and efficient system of placement by users and consideration of reviews, complaints and recommendations;
- on the firm strategy, structure and rivalry - the government of our country

practically did not have a positive impact through tax policy, antimonopoly legislation, stimulating investments for the development of the tourism sector of the country.

CONCLUSIONS

The application of the Porter Diamond Model for the analysis of the competitiveness of the Ukrainian tourism sector has made it possible to confirm the viability of the proposed method of studying the competitiveness of the tourism sector of countries in transition on the basis of the determination of braking and stimulating factors by four determinants of Porter diamond model offered in our work. We also managed to assess the current position of Ukraine in the international tourist services market and to identify measures to eliminate the braking factors.

Thus, today the tourism sector of Ukraine is only at the stage of formation, which determines the low degree of its competitiveness on the world market. However, the assessment of the competitiveness of the national tourist product of Ukraine, according to the proposed methodology, indicates a significant number of available factors, the skillful use of which will enable Ukraine to take its rightful place in the world market of tourist services in accordance with its potential. A positive point is the significant level of competition among firms-travel agents, the presence of major segments of the tourist market, the provision of tourism with national resources. But the effect of these factors is almost eliminated by the lack of financial resources that would lead to the formation of a group of factors - a modern tourist infrastructure with a high level of information and automation, as well as with a greater orientation of subjects of the tourist market of Ukraine to the internal and inbound tourists.

That is why we need to develop and detail the conceptual strategic directions for the development of the domestic tourism sector at a high level of competitiveness, and our further researches will be devoted to this.

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TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT: LAND ACQUISITION, ACHIEVEMENT OF INVESTMENT AND CULTURAL CHANGE (CASE STUDY TOURISM INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT IN BATU CITY, INDONESIA)

Abdul KODIR*

Universitas Negeri Malang, Faculty of Social Science, Sociology Department,
Bd, I1 Jalan Semarang No 5 Malang, Indonesia, e-mail: abdul.kodir.fis@um.ac.id

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to explain the impact of tourism development in Batu city, Indonesia. This study used qualitative research method. In collecting the data, the researcher conducted observation and in-depth interviews with some stakeholders in Batu City. This research found that the achievement of investment in Batu City exceeded the target from the targeted Medium Term Plan (RPJMD). Moreover, the regional economic growth reached 8.3%. However, the development of tourism has had an effect on extensive land acquisition. In addition, the spatial planning taking place in Batu city depends on the investors. Consequently, the changes of spatial planning that accommodate the interests of capital influence the changes in the cultural value and mindset of Batu's society.

Key words: tourism, development, investment, land acquisition, cultural change

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INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is a strategic sector because it contributes to economic growth and create jobs in times of financial crisis in Europe and the uncertainty of the world economy, encourages and creates jobs, investment developments, increases public revenues and state financial revenues (Thompson, 2011; Kim et al., 2016; Du et al., 2016). Furthermore, the contribution of the tourism sector to both the world GDP and the provision of employment is increasingly high (Eugenio-Martin et al., 2008). In addition, the tourism sectors have also contributed to reduce the amount of poverty as it did in Costa Rica and Nicaragua (Vanegas et al., 2015). Further, on a more micro scale, tourism has contributed to engage the indigenous peoples in the search for development options (Capucci, 2016). As a sector of development that can spur the economic growth of a region (Cárdenas-García et al., 2015), tourism is considered as a strategic asset to encourage the development in certain areas that have the potential tourist attraction (Cárdenas-García et al., 2015). By the development of tourism industry in a region, urbanization that flows to

* Corresponding author

big cities can be more suppressed. This case is because tourism has three aspects of influence namely the economic, social and cultural aspects. The tourism sector should be supported by all sectors such as local governments as managers, people who are in the location of tourism objects and the participation of private sectors as developers. The tourism sector also contributes greatly to the social and economic field in the community.

Batu City has the opportunity to be more developed as a more attractive tourism area; it is based on the very supportive natural conditions and geographical location. The tourism attractions in Batu city are made different from one to another, so there is no significant competition. Tourism resources owned by Batu City are quite diverse and can be easily found because of its relatively close location. This was further strengthened after Batu city government intensively launched Batu as a tourism city. In recent time, there is an increasing number of tourists who visit the city of Batu. Here of the number of foreign tourists who visit Batu City that were collected from 2011 to 2016 (Figure 1).

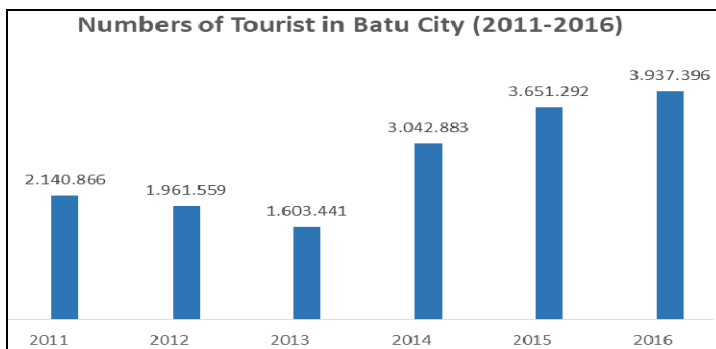


Figure 1. Number of Tourists Source: (Statistical Central Agency of Batu City, 2016)

It is also supported by the availability of adequate infrastructure, ranging from basic facilities (hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies), complementary facilities (recreational facilities and sports facilities), and supporting facilities (massage parlors). In addition, the existence of such infrastructure is well distributed (Muzha, 2013).

Tourism attractions in Batu City include *Air Panas* (Hot Water) *Cangar*, *Selecta*, *Jawa Timur Park*, *Agro Kusuma* and *Songgoriti Park*. The tourism attraction in Batu City are always full tourists because the location of Batu is on the highlands with beautiful scenery and a cool atmosphere so that the tourists feel comfortable in Batu City. In addition, within a period of about 10 years, Batu City is a city of tourism that is visited by many tourists both from within and outside the country. The development to attract tourists and also investors in the industry and tourism sector is intensively conducted (Yonanda, 2013). In addition, the increasing number of tourist sites also give an impact on the increasing number of tourism supporting facilities such as hotels and restaurants (Figure 2). However, there is a fundamental issue that observed by the researchers or the other social scientists related to the expansion of tourism in \Batu City. Almost all research, which makes Batu City as a research site, is limited to the positivist paradigm where the research concluded that Batu city tourism has had a very positive effect especially on the improvement of Batu City original incomes and community involvement in the tourism industry. This research is to fill the vacancy of tourism development study of Batu city which tends to be pro *status quo*. Various researches conducted in Batu City only discussed the competitiveness of Apple commodities (Agustina, 2008), Tourism and Community Empowerment (Sukmana, 2012a; Muzha,

2013), the effectiveness of licensing in increased investment (Yonanda, 2013), city tourism development model (Sukmana, 2012b; Maulida et al., 2012; Rahayu et al., 2013), tourism and city branding (Intyaswono et al., 2016). Almost no research that discusses the problems arising from the impact of tourism development in Batu City. Further, the studies on the impact of tourism and development on land acquisition and cultural change in Batu City are very rarely conducted among the researchers.



Figure 2. The Numbers of Hotel and Restaurant in Batu City
(Source: Statistical Central Agency of Batu City, 2015)

METHODOLOGY

This research used qualitative research method. The qualitative research method is a multiple method in focus, which involves the interpretative and reasonable approach to each subject matter studied. This case means that qualitative research works in a natural setting and seeks to understand and interpret the phenomena seen from the meanings that people give to the phenomenon (Salim, 2006). The process of data collection was done by observation and in-depth interview. The techniques used to determine the informants was purposive sampling. Some informants who have been interviewed in depth were such as legislative members from National Mandate Party (PAN – *Partai Amanat Nasional*), Environmental Agency (BLH – *Badan Lingkungan Hidup*), Investment Agency (BPM – *Badan Penanaman Modal*), Tourism and Cultural Agency (*Dinas Pariwisata dan Kebudayaan*), National Land Agency (BPN – *Badan Pertanahan Nasional*), Humanist (*Budayawan*), Community Forum Care Springs (FMPMA – *Forum Masyarakat Peduli Mata Air*), Nawakalam Organization, Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA – *Badan Perencanaan dan Pembangunan*), and Villages Supervisory Agency (BPD – *Badan Pengawas Desa*).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Land and development are the inspirable. Simply put that here is no landless development. In today's Indonesia, there is no such influential understanding as development. The implementation of this understanding gives a very significant change to the whole aspects of the land. The development always requires a site for the realization of projects, whether there are run by government agencies and companies, or privately owned by the companies (Rachman, 1997). In short, development forces for the procurement of an almost unlimited land. Not only in Indonesia, the increasing need for land for development also take place in India which started since neo liberal reform in 1991. It caused at least 10 million people lost their land (Karmakar, 2017). Although in

some cases the land acquisition process also includes considerable compensation costs for land owners. However, market-based compensation is not sufficient to satisfy all heterogeneous landowners with different preferences (Dinda, 2016). Parwez and Sen (2016) added that the process of land acquisition for development always provides benefits to large companies and disadvantage to small peasants, agricultural laborers and indigenous people. The need for land to support development or which is subsequently presented in the term of land procurement for the public interest is inevitable (Pujiriyani et al., 2014). In this context, of course, the common welfare remains the estuary that is expected to be the breath of any land procurement activities undertaken. The need for land for development on the one hand and the need for land as the support and livelihood of the community on the other does require a wise management and attitude considering the presence of land and population pressure which from year to year also increasingly shows how the land becomes an increasingly expensive asset. Land acquisition is theoretically comprised of voluntary land acquisition and compulsory land acquisition. Broadly speaking, in Indonesia there are two types of land procurement namely land clearing for government purposes and land procurement for private purposes. Land procurement by the government is divided into land procurement for public interest and not public interest (Pujiriyani et al., 2014). Meanwhile, the procurement of land for private interests can also be classified into commercial and non-commercial interests, which are support the public interest or are included in the development of public facilities and social facilities.

However, in the process of land acquisition there is always a conflict which then hampers the development process (Wirabrata & Surya, 2011). On the one hand, development requires land as the main means, while on the other hand, most people need the land as a settlement or agricultural productive land. If the land is taken for granted and used for government purposes, it means that the government sacrifice the human rights of the community that contains the rule of law.

To prevent such problems, the enactment of Law No. 12 of 2012 on Land Procurement and Government Regulation No. 71 of 2012 is an effort to protect the law in the procurement of land for the public interest of the community. This cae is to as far as possible avert or reduce the disputes in the form of preventive legal protection, and advice that should take precedence over repressive law protection facilities (Wangke, 2016). However in some articles, the Government Regulation collides with the Act thereon. As one example in Article 1, Point, 2 of Presidential Regulation No. 71 of 2012 determines that "Land procurement is the provision of land by providing fair and equitable compensation to the entitled Party" (Kristian et al., 2014). Judging from the meaning of the provision, it can be said that there is an element of coercion from the government to get the land of property right. Whereas, the Constitutional Law of 1945 prohibits the acts of arbitrariness, as set forth in the provisions of article 28 letter h paragraph (4) which stipulates that "every person has the right to own the right of private property and the right of property shall not be taken arbitrarily by people". Moreover, such legal status of ownership poses ambiguity in public opinion, and negatively affects local livelihood status and also leads to land use conflicts (Assembe-Mvondo et al., 2014).

Through the local governance policy, the central government empowers the local governments to undertake the development planning and control; planning, utilization, and control of spatial planning; organizing and public order; provision of public facilities and infrastructure. The authority given in its implementation is always misused by the local government (Langgeroni, 2015). The development involving individual land rights is taken over and controlled by the local government without the permission and even the legal knowledge of the landowner. Individual land ownership rights are taken over

and controlled by the local government not for the public interest, but the local governments are concerned only with the interests of business actors in developing their economies. The local governments provide pressure and threats to the small communities who do not understand the law regarding the process of land procurement for the public interest to hand over their land. The land has an important meaning in human life because it has a dual function, namely as social assets and capital assets. As a social asset, land bind social unity among Indonesian society to live. Meanwhile, as a capital asset, land is a capital in development. In one side, land should be used and utilized for the greatest welfare of the people maximally, physically, fairly and evenly ditributed, while on another side the land must also be preserved (Senduk, 2015). The arrangement of land tenure and utilization for large-scale development supporting national or regional development efforts is implemented with due regard to political, social, defense and security aspects as well as environmental conservation. Meanwhile, the arrangement of land through land redistribution supports and accelerates regional development, poverty alleviation, and prevents land ownership gaps.

The public interest is the interest of all levels of society. The public interest is an activity that concerns the interests of the nation and the state, the wider community, the many people/ together, and/or the interests of development. Sometimes, this concept often creates ambiguity (Chettiparamb, 2016). Moreover, the definition of public interest as a rival private property (Ginosar, 2014; Lennon, 2017). The meaning of public interest in the procurement of land, among others, is the meaning that adopts local cultures, meaning that it involves the process of decision-making, has a focus on matters relating to the welfare of society, and treats society as a reason for formulating policy (Hasanah, 2012). Basically, the construction of land procurement for development for the public interest will depend on four things (Hamidah, 2014):

- 1) The legal status of the available land (in respect of the land to which the state lands or land belonging to the community with certain rights);
- 2) Legal status requiring land (government / certain government agencies or private sectors);
- 3) Allotment of controlled land (to build for the public interest or private enterprise);
- 4) The landowners' presence or absence of ownership.

The process of land acquisition for development for the public interest, based on the rule of law established by the authorized state institution is based on the legal aspect of the law respect and protect the interests of the community as much as possible (Hamidah, 2014). Legal politics in land procurement for the development of public interest has an important value to prevent land conflicts. The long series of conflicts over land are possible because land is one of the most valuable commodities if it is traded.

The land including assets other than having high economic value is also an item for the continuity of investment business activities. The land does not directly give welfare to the people the thing which gives prosperity is the activity of human beings on it manifested in its utilization. The availability of land for investors (investment) becomes a fundamental pre-requisite. Since the mid-1980s, the land supply arrangements have been made. One of them is the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation number 12 of 1984 concerning Procedures for Land Acquisition and Land Rights Grant, Building Permit and Business License for Distributing Companies. Regulation of the minister of the interior makes the foreign investment as well as domestic investment easy to obtain the land. This case observes the global capital behavior phenomenon, which since the early 1980s it has been an industrial relocation from developed countries to developing countries. Relocation is meant in addition to seeking abundant natural resources, cheap labor, a conducive political climate

as well as ease in the provision of land. Recently, the linkage between investment and land-keeping for both public and private interests are inseparable. It is because Indonesia is doing the main development of city which is not only financed through state funds budgeting (*APBN*) but also from the investment of both foreign and domestic investors. One of the developments at this time is often done by investment tourism. This case indicates that tourism is one sector of the economy that contributes greatly to the economic development of a country. Based on the data from the Central Bureau of Statistics in 2012, the share of national tourism was 13.9 percent of total Gross Domestic Product and of course with the large contribution of the sector, it is useful for the national economic growth, through the acceptance of foreign exchange received from the amount of consumption of the tourists to the product and national services (Singagerda et al., 2013).

Land Acquisition and Achievement of Investment

The widespread of land acquisition in Batu City coincides with global land acquisitions relating to global market demands, domestic growth targets and poverty alleviation that are ultimately resolved by the acceleration and optimization strategy of land for development. Land acquisition is considered a solution. Some literature that found some scenarios behind the land acquisition are others Zoomers (2012), White (2012) and Bollin (2011). Some researchers mentioned that the main factors driving the global land acquisition are the threat of food crisis, energy crisis, and the provision of an exclusive economic zone. However, Zoomers (2012) added that one of the causes is also among the tourism business. What is in Batu city theoretically reinforces what Zoomers (2012) mentioned that tourism development has a role in the effort of mass land acquisition. The demand for land for tourism development or anything that supports tourism increases every year. This case is based on the number of tourists in Batu City which increases in each year (Figure 1). In addition to the tourism business, the land acquisition is also caused by the private purchase of land where Pujiriyani et al., (2014) refers to it as land laundering. Land laundering or the purchase of land privately became one of the triggers of the massive land acquisitions, because when land becomes a private ownership, landowners can directly divert their lands when an agreement between the two parties has occurred (Pujiriyani et al., 2014). There are at least two reasons behind the occurrence of private purchase of land in Batu city. First, they want to develop a good business in the form of trade or build a villa that they can rent. Second, they buy land or houses in Batu with the intention of a shelter house while in holiday to cut the cost of accommodation.

Globally, the main actor who plays a significant role in land acquisition is the government (Quizon, 2012). In this case, it can be seen from the effort of either the national government or regional government which was the incentive to offer investment to the investors. Not only to the hunters seeking to invest, the governments tempted with the benefits of each investment value also encourage the hunters to package attractive investment packages, such as those found in the case of real estate deals and tourism towns that are government policies in Costa Rica (Van Noorloos, 2011).

Investment in tourism basically overlaps the investment in the general sense; the difference lies solely in the formation of fixed capital (Fixed Capital Information) which is directly related to the development of infrastructure and facilities that can enhance the growth of tourism (Snyman & Saayman, 2009). Concerning the issue of tourism financing aimed at tourism infrastructure and facilities such as roads, communications networks, utilities, ports, and the others generally financed by the government through the state budget revenues or Regional Revenue Budget also called Tourism Social Investment (Fauzel et al., 2016). Meanwhile, the infrastructure and facilities such as hotels, recreational parks, tourist transport, and the others are conducted by private sectors called tourism-

direct investment (Singagerda et al., 2013). In the context of tourism development in Batu City, the investments made in the framework of tourism development are mostly conducted by private sectors. Currently, almost most of Batu tourism objects are owned by private sector, especially tourism destinations categorized as artificial tourism location such are *Jawa Timur Park I & II*, *BNS (Batu Night Spectacular)*, *Eco Green Park*, *Batu Wonderland*, *Museum Angkut & D'Topeng Kingdom*, *Predator Fun Park*, *Museum Tubuh* etc. And even the location of the tourism destination is owned by *Jatim Park Group*. In general, The achievements regarding investments in Batu city always exceed the targets of what has been determined by the Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) proclaimed by the Regional Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA) of Batu city. The investment in Batu City reached 400 billion in a year. However, the investment data recap was done by Investment Agency (BPM) Batu city until May 2017 in the value of incoming investment reached 900 Billion. In addition, the form of investment is not always in the form of cash money but assets that can move or build the assets.

However, the value of incoming investment in each year is not fully realized. This case is because the funds are not fully absorbed in every development in one year. Hence, the realization of the investment takes place multi years. Nevertheless, obstacle often found in the field is the accountability of investment development reports. In its provisions, the investors should give online report on the progress of how the absorption of funds and allocations is wherever the funds are used. However, in fact, the Investment Agency (BPM) found that such information is difficult to obtain from the investors. Aside from the government, the actors who play a role in the widespread seizure of land in Batu City are caused by the emergence of the land brokers.

These brokers deeply understand the areas to be developed into tourism development projects. They also know the strategic locations that have the best views, so it has great potential for the investors. These brokers work certainly and have a fairly systematic way of working. The first way that they do is through the online land sale by taking pictures of the land location and usually through social media. Furthermore, they also have a broker network in Batu city. They give information each other if there are buyers who want to find the land location. Moreover, they also agreed to the rules of the profits to be shared from the land sale. This way of working is described by Cook (2015) as a 'link-work'. In addition, the way they work is to build relationships with village apparatus to track ownership status and land area in the village. In some cases, village officials are supposedly responsible for the realization of land ownership disposal in their villages because they also provide information of the strategic location of the existing land in the village. Even it has become a common conversation that the village head gets a fee of 1% of the profits of land selling in his village. Such conditions can be concluded that the real actor who liberalizes the land is not the community but the government itself because the government has never seriously protected the land either owned by the community or village.

Moreover, the mechanism of land acquisition occurs in a variety of ways. White (2012) explained that during the colonial period land acquisition occurred by manipulating the 'empty' land (though it obviously had been mastered and used traditionally) into 'no-man' land (no owner) and making it 'official' state property. At the end of the colonial or post-independence period many countries and civil society were attempting to correct the historical distortions with land reform and so on, to end a broad pattern of private ownership and to distribute the land to poor people. In the mid-20th century, the World Bank also did the same thing as a strategy of agricultural development. Today, many governments and international organizations support the

land acquisition executed by giant corporations (both domestic and foreign corporation), usually in the form of long-term concessions as well as compensation, in the name of 'development'. The dynamics of land acquisition grows more than the desire for agribusiness accumulation rather than development needs. However, theoretically, Taylor and Bending (2009) categorized the mechanism of land acquisition in two forms, namely illegal and legal. The illegal mechanism is the process of land grabbing through a land transaction agreement that intercepts formal procedures or also the use of military violence, while the legal mechanism is the process of land acquisition through formal procedures. The forms of investment that can be found are the sale and purchase (lease) of both long term lease and short term lease. The two most common forms of investment made in Asia are leases which are conducted in two ways; 1) the government leases large state lands to foreign corporations and 2) foreign investors use a joint venture scheme or partnership with corporations or domestic landowners. Referring to the categorization of Taylor and Bending (2009), land Acquisition in Batu City is more likely to be legal. Even Batu city government tends to provide convenience to the investors who want land investment in Batu City. Various efforts or facilitating are done to keep the investor willing to invest the land. Firstly, the effort is to collect Local Government Work Unit (*SKPD*) with investors to form a team to accelerate the investment. Secondly, the Mayor also provides a mandate to the village apparatus (village head) to find information of the land ownership status.

However, some of the conveniences provided by Batu city government triggered a gap and in some cases violated formal jurisdiction. German (2011) explained that there are at least five gaps in the implementation of legislation, (1) many projects are implemented without approval (either investment permit, land certificate, or environmental permit). In the absence of an application that is considered legally valid and supervisory in implementation, government action has ignored the consultation procedures with customary rights holders); (2) it is found an attempt to establish an agroecological zone; (3) the restrictions of duration in leasing alot of land are violated; (4) failure of agreement in the consultation process to place the community on the free, prior and informed principles. The consultation process is weak despite legally mandated procedures; (5) the absence of investment supervision and sanctions for offenders. At least, the categorized gaps described by German (2011) have occurred in Batu City.

Some cases that occur among others are: *First*, the development of Predator Park in *Junredjo* district does not have Building Permit (IMB). In addition, the location as used the tourism area is a productive land. Secondly, the existence of the Jambuluwuk resort that violates the rules of the environment that is the location of the resort is built on the location of the land with a slope of 45 degrees. Furthermore, the area is a water catchment area building on it could reduce the absorption potential so that is possibly cause landslides. Thirdly, the thing which is still a polemic is the development plan of Rayja Hotel located in Gemulo springs area. In this case, the government deliberately hits a predetermined rule. From the recommendation made by Development Planning Agency (*BAPPEDA*) the area is not allowed for the building of hotel but it is recommended for development of cottages or bungalows. However, the licensing that comes out in the integrated licensing office is the building of hotel. Furthermore, the main way that the Batu City government did to make communities relinquish their land to investors under the pretext of their underground is 'unproductive land' or marginal soils that need to be utilized for development. White (2012) explained that the government always strives to initiate policies and administration around the concept of 'marginal soils' and facilitate land investment that involves invention / justification, definition, reclassification,

quantification, identification, acquisition/takeover and reallocation or disposition. All these things are used to transform resources (largely in state control) into productive factors of production to renew large-scale land-based investments. In addition to this identification, land acquisition is also referred to as an answer or solution to the crisis.

However, in fact, there is a lot of land acquisition of land lots of land that have a negative impact. The general effect is the eviction of small peasants (Quizon, 2012; Kodir & Mushoffa, 2017). Moreover, the land acquisitions contribute to rise the food prices, make the poor and food shortages more vulnerable, exacerbate the instability and inequalities, create conflicts among stakeholders (especially ethnic groups) as a result of less control over natural resources, as well as related to the usual dark practices (Arduino, 2012). In the context of this research, the land acquisition in Batu City caused the increase in land prices. This case is because in accordance with the economic principle when there is a scarcity of commodities, the direct selling price of these commodities will rise as demand in the market is also quite high. The amount of land in Batu City is limited. It is because administratively Batu city only consists of 3 districts and 19 villages. On the other hand, the need for the tourism industry and trade will continue to increase. Furthermore, the land acquisition happened in Batu City caused the decline in the number of crop production and reduced the agricultural land area (Table 1).

Table 1. Statistics of Food Crops (Source: Statistical Central Agency of Batu City, 2015)

	2012	2013	2014
Rice			
wide of harvest (ha)	1157	863	741
Production (ton)	7405	5523	4607
Corn			
wide of harvest (ha)	1030	497	488
Production (ton)	4120	1938	1838
Cassava			
wide of harvest (ha)	100	52	27
Production (ton)	1700	1667	864

One of the main factors causing the decline in the number of food crop production and the reduction of agricultural land area is the impact of tourism industry development that rises significantly every year. Almost all of the major tourism sites and their supporting facilities (hotels, villas and restaurants) are built on agricultural land. Although the land acquisition in Batu City is significant, there is no movement from the community to reject or resist. This is different in the other parts of Indonesia where the procurement of land for development always creates protests by peasants, local communities or indigenous peoples. Despite it all, the movement is not a common issue at the national level. It is different from some areas in India and China. The results of research of Ren (2017) showed that the land acquisition in the region of India and China triggered protests from peasants and met at the national level.

Tourism Design, Spatial Reorganization and Cultural Change

The establishment of Batu city as a tourism city was originally established by the first mayor of Batu city, Imam Kabul, where the concept of tourism is based on agriculture (Yunanto, 2015) by emphasizing the production of agricultural products. However, the concept of tourism city development became massive in the era of the Mayor after him, namely Edy Rumpoko, precisely in 2007 then in the branding into Batu Tourism City (*KWB*). In the early period, the vision of Batu Tourism City was to be the main destination of tourism destinations in East Java, Indonesia. In that era, the Batu city

has succeeded in increasing the local revenue (*PAD*) derived from tourism destination tickets, hotel and restaurant taxes. In period 2, the vision of Batu Tourism City was developed into 'a center of organic agriculture based on the international tourism'. This concept is then implemented through the regulation of Regions Development of Organic Farming. The existence of this regulation first encourages certification of organic agricultural areas and agricultural products. In addition, the existence of the Regulation of Regions Development of Organic Agriculture can be a tool of coercion to all stakeholders to participate in the success of this organic farming program.

However, the existence of organic farming has not had a big contribution for regional income like artificial tourism. Moreover, to achieve the sustainability with regional development, Batu city government provides clear legal payments. The act certainly is designed through the Regional Regulation of Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (*RIPPARDA*). This regulation is intended as an integrated regulation and regulatory system in the development of tourism in Batu city, which includes: tourism destinations, tourism industry, tourism marketing and tourism institutions. Furthermore, the existence of the regulation aims to provide legal certainty to the stakeholders of tourism in doing tourism development in the city of Batu. The existence of the Regional Regulation of Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (*RIPPARDA*) supports Lefebvre's (1992) statement that capitalism is maintained by conquest and integration of space. Space has ceased to be a passive geographical environment or an empty geometric space for along time. Spaces becomes the instrumental and the media of the development of capitalism. That is, space is a system seen as a scarce, homogeneous resource, has quantitative commodities and exchange rates traded like any other commodity in the market.

Through the Regional Regulation of Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (*RIPPARDA*), the spatial planning of Batu city depends on the needs of the investors to invest their capital for the development of the tourism industry. It is because after all, spatial planning is never free from the alignment of actors who make spatial arrangements. The alignment or non-neutrality of actors in exercising their power is reflected in the policies made by the regulator (the government) (Aminah, 2015). Such conditions reinforce what Zoomers (2010) calls 'Foreignisation of Space' where the ownership of space over local communities is then controlled by foreigners. Although the acquisition or possession by foreigners is not new, the current trend is increasing massively with a scale of intensity that increases significantly. Governments in developing countries tend to indulge foreign investors with the appeal of capital provided. This case is because the development or underdevelopment of an area or urban area is measured by the presence or absence of capitalist investment flows (Harvey, 1985, 2001). Tourism as a product of capitalism (Mosedale, 2011) requires a special spatial reorganization so that the capitalistic patterned production system can expand geographically (Harvey, 1985, 2001). The term here is more broadly meaningful than the term the government calls "spatial planning" (Rachman, 2015). Generally, what is meant by the term space in "spatial reorganization" here includes: (a) imagination and depiction spaces, including technocratic designs termed master plan, grand design, and so on; (b) material space, the place where we live; and (c) spatial practices of various parties in the making of space, utilization of space, modification of space, and the elimination of space, in the context of various efforts to meet the needs, including those in positions of state, corporation, or the people (Lefebvre, 1992).

The reorganization of space is perpetuated by companies that intend to continue to double profits and avoid losses. In the context of Batu reorganization of space conducted by investors through the construction of artificial tourism location which is also then followed by facilities of hotel development, restaurant becomes a supporter of tourism.

The benefits gained through the tourism industry and its supporting sectors (hotels, restaurants, etc.) are essentially derived from the privatization of land and natural resources, the separation between the producer and the owner of the goods produced, and the exploitation of labor to produce value-added merchandise. The commodities or merchandise produced by the capitalist system of production are transported in such a way from where they are produced to commerce and consumption of the people, both to meet the necessities of life and to serve the shopping habits (Rachman, 2015).

The reorganization of space as a result of the opening of new spaces for capitalism often influences on the changes and values of cultural elements that have previously been socially bound in those places (Rachman, 2012). The development of Batu tourism that tends to the modern direction has a substantial contribution to the cultural change of society in Batu city. This case also happens in some areas in Africa, especially in small-scale society (Mansperger, 1995). Woods (1980) called it a cultural institution. Tourism is a truly powerful and unique force for change in community (Macleod, 2004). Moreover, this is since the development of promoted tourism is a mass product that anyone can make. So, it does not become a differentiator with the other tourism in Indonesia. Although in every year Batu city organizes cultural festivals by displaying various cultural activities, it is just a routine. It is not the real meaning of culture unearthed from the values of the social traditions. In general, the design of tourism development adopts many of the existing tourism models in Singapore, which emphasizes artificial tourism products with a variety of rides and games. The development of Batu city tends to move away from the cultural artefacts owned by Batu city community. Such conditions explicitly have an impact on the changing mentality of Batu city society. For example, Batu city community currently tend to be more interested in working in non-agrarian sectors that expect results so quickly. Consequently many of them left the agricultural sector that had been cultivated previously.

CONCLUSION

Land acquisition for development plans by both state and private institutions is inevitable. Of course, the expected development goal is to have an impact on national economic growth to the region. In addition to the effect on the development of economic growth, the achievement of development should make a significant influence on the welfare of the community. As a new city, Batu city also contributes to the development efforts. The realization of the development effort is certainly with any potential capital owned. Currently, the great potential of the Batu city is tourism. Even, through the development of Batu city tourism, the regional income reached around 100 billion and regional economic growth achieved 8.03% (Statistical Central Agency, 2016). In addition, the achievement of investment value always exceeds the targets set in the Medium Term Plan (RPJMD). However, the great successes have the consequences of triggering land acquisition process. The land acquisition process is triggered by the high demand for land in Batu city to serve as a tourism location. Aside from tourism, the acquisition process is also influenced by the expansion of business and trade, especially the development of hotels, villas, restaurants or any facilities that support tourism potential. The process of land acquisition in Batu city involves several factors such as investors, government, village government apparatus and brokers. Those actors have relations, especially the land brokers with the village apparatus who have a lot of information of the status of land ownership in Batu city area. Moreover, this study also shows that Batu City spatial planning change depends on capital investment in the tourism sector. It can be proved through what has been stipulated the Regional Regulation of Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (*RIPPARDA*) by the government because as a product of capitalism, tourism requires a

reorganization of space for a capitalist-patterned production system to extend geographically. The spatial reorganization is perpetuated by private sectors that intend to continue to double profits and avoid losses. Consequently, the spatial reorganization affects the changes of cultural elements value that have previously been socially bound.

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ANALYSIS OF INDUSTRY PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF TOURISM STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY IN TURKEY

Fatma Gül TURANLIĞİL

Freelance Academician, Izmir, Turkey
e-mail: fcetinelakalin@gmail.com

Volkan ALTINTAŞ*

Izmir Katip Celebi University, Faculty of Tourism, Izmir,
Turkey, e-mail: volkan_altintas@hotmail.com

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Abstract: Tourism and Hospitality Management Schools' students must complete their internship before graduation in four or five stars hotels or travel agencies in Turkey. Some students may have negative perceptions of tourism education and working conditions in the industry, after they have worked as trainees in the industry. The aim of the study is to compare the perceptions and expectations of students in relation to tourism industry who have done their internship with those who have not and is to explore the differences in their future expectations and any changes in their career plans. For the purpose of the study a questionnaire was prepared, based on relevant literature, and the survey was conducted in the School of Tourism and Hotel Management at Anadolu University in Turkey. 204 students were selected by the use of stratified sampling as the study sample from the first, second, third and the fourth year. Half of the questionnaires were distributed to students who had done their internship and the rest to the students who had not undertaken internship yet. Results indicate that the respondents' perceptions and expectations of the industry were not significant according to their experience. Finally, the differences between respondents are summarized and implications are drawn for the educational institutions and further studies.

Key words: Tourism education, tourism students, internship, student's perceptions

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INTRODUCTION

By its very nature, tourism is a labour-intensive service industry. The growth of tourism and related employment is seen as part of the broad shift from a manufacturing to a service economy in many developed and developing countries around the world (Roney & Öztin, 2007). Most services in tourism are based on human (employee) performance,

* Corresponding author

services are produced and consumed simultaneously in a face-to-face exchange situation and employees and customers are physically and psychologically close enough to influence each other (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000). The success of the hotel industry heavily depends on the social and technical skills of its personnel, their ingenuity and hard work, their commitment and attitude (Nolan, 2002). Employee attitudes, performance and behaviour are a key determinant of service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty (Heskett et al., 1994). Although people in many countries are encouraged to regard tourism as a very large industry with huge opportunities for jobs and careers (Leiper, 1999), tourism industry is often criticised as generating low-skilled and low-paying jobs that offer little job satisfaction. Market entry barriers for non-tourism trained employees are low (Peters, 2005) and consequently, the tourism industry has a reputation for high staff turnover and a waste of trained personnel (Roney & Öztin, 2007). Since competitive advantage is gained through employees, the education, skills, training and motivations of employees as well as their commitment to the industry or firms become important. Besides other problems, the most important problem appeared to be the continuous supply and retention of a well-educated, well-trained, skilled, enthusiastic and committed work-force for the tourism industry (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000).

A professional competitive industry attempting to deliver international standards of service depends on the subsequent education and training of such personnel (O'Mahony & Sillitoe, 2001). Since the continued prosperity of tourism depends, to a large extent, on the employment of well educated, motivated and committed people, who are satisfied with their jobs, it is important to provide qualified tourism students with a positive attitude towards work in the tourism industry (Roney & Öztin, 2007). In the service industries, without employees' positive attitude toward their jobs, it is impossible to achieve customer satisfaction and loyalty. Besides the negative perceptions of industry, career opportunities have been shown to prevent talented individuals to entry into the industry's workforce (Pizam & Tesone, 2005). If today's students are to become the effective practitioners of tomorrow, it is fundamental to understand their perceptions of tourism employment (Roney & Öztin, 2007). The aim of the study is to analyze the perceptions and future expectations of bachelors students about tourism industry. It also aims to compare the perceptions and expectations of students who have done their internship and with those who have not and, to find out the differences in their future expectations and any changes in their career plans. For the purpose of the study, tourism education literature was reviewed and the study results were analyzed.

Tourism education

The boom in tourism education came after the birth of mass tourism, and the rapidly increasing demand for employees in the tourism industry during the decades following the Second World War. Another vital factor in the increasing importance of tourism education was the growing international recognition of the value of the tourism industry (Munar, 2007). In 1960s, several key changes in tourism, in higher education and in society. One outcome of this change in tourism has been a phenomenal rate of growth. This growth, combined with the increasing professionalization of the tourism suppliers, has played its part in prompting educational institutions to meet the demands and opportunities created by tourism employers. Also, this level of tourism growth has brought with it a complex array of issues from economic benefits to social and environmental problems. These challenges presented by tourism have enhanced the sustained interest by scholars, particularly in higher education, in their attempts to understand and explain aspects of an important worldwide phenomenon (Airey, 2005).

The development of tourism in higher education was not accidental. Airey (2005) has identified three growth factors that lie behind the emergence of tourism after the mid-

1960s. The first was the growth of tourism itself and its recognition, especially by governments, as an increasingly important economic activity. The second was the growth of higher education generally as the link between an educated workforce and economic development was increasingly recognised. Linked to this, the third factor was the creation of new universities. These, free from the traditions of the older universities, provided homes for new and often more vocational areas of study. With its potential to attract new students, tourism proved popular programme to include in the offerings of the new universities. The result was a huge increase in the numbers of programmes, students and subsequently the research and literature related to tourism (Airey, 2016). A number of key changes in tourism, in higher education and in society were needed for tourism to become established as a defined area of study and as a subject for study to diploma and degree level. Degrees developed in higher education institutions first in Europe, later in the United States and Canada, and then Australia and New Zealand (Jenkins, 1997 cited in Munar, 2007). During the last three decades there has been a steady increase in the number of universities offering tourism and/or hospitality degree programmes, especially after the 1980s (Jafari, 1997 cited in Munar, 2007). At the beginning of twentieth century, many countries offered higher education degrees in tourism at both undergraduate and graduate levels; and master-level degrees and doctoral programmes in other disciplines have expanded to include tourism as an area of study (Jafari, 1990). Studies concerned with the global expansion in tourism education identified three main responsible drivers of this phenomenon: a set of structural changes in higher education in general (Ayres, 2006), a perceived need of increasing qualified human resources for tourism industry, and a common perception of tourism as a major source of jobs and careers (Padurean & Maggi, 2014).

Gaining competitive advantage through employees who provide better service quality, and making the customers happy and loyal in the tourism industry and firms depends on the supply and retention of educated, well trained, skilled, highly motivated and committed work-force for the travel and tourism industry (Christou, 1999). Tourism education accomplish an important mission in terms of supporting the improvement of tourism and providing quality human resources permanently (Akıncı, 2016) and it has been developed to balance the tourism development demand for fulfilling the broader perspective of managing tourism. The industry needs more comprehensive analysis than just providing the skilled graduates to be able to work in the tourism business (Malihah & Diyah Setiyorini, 2014). As the tourism industry evolved, tourism educators started to redefine tourism education to include the skills necessary for employability in the industry (Jameson-Charles, 2012).

The responsibility for developing service-oriented human resources regards not only with the hospitality organisations but also with the system of a country's hospitality management education and an effective hospitality education system will provide organisations with employees who have the potential to become quality leaders. The role of hospitality educational institutions must be to produce graduates who can think, lead, and solve problems (Christou, 1999). Directly, the role of institutions of higher education is to recruit and educate potential hospitality managers (Barron & Maxwell, 1993). Christou & Sigala (2002)'s research findings provided empirical evidence of the, to some extent overlooked, need to take into consideration the characteristics and needs of hospitality students in designing and developing hospitality educational material, learning methods and teaching environment. The responsibility of the hospitality educators according to Stutts (1995) is to combine industry priorities with student needs and significant contributions to research into socially responsive programmes of study. Ongoing partnerships between higher education institutions and the tourism sector at all levels are needed to transfer knowledge into practical use (Hawkins, 2006). In addition,

tertiary hospitality education should assist the student to develop communications and interpersonal “soft” skills and learn how to lead others (Goodman & Sprague, 1991). The development of students’ interpersonal skills is considered to be very important according to views of the hospitality industry (Tas, 1988). A common distinction between education and training is that education is mainly provided by establishments like universities while training is usually provided by employers (organisations). The education and training of professionals, in whatever discipline, is a continuing and lifelong process. Therefore, it is not realistic to impose an absolute distinction between education and training because they are not exactly two independent processes. Both the educational establishments and employers seriously need to consider this development of lifelong learning. The most popular of the experiential learning models are the internships (Christou, 1999). It is suggested that some skills are essential for employment and, arguably, the internship is the most appropriate vehicle for their acquisition. Certainly, for the development of practical skills, the internship is crucial (Busby, 2003). However, research on internship programs has shown significant gaps in expectations between industry and hospitality educators (Downey & De Veau, 1988).

Internship programmes are academic programmes that encourage students to apply theory in work settings and gain greater work competencies. Furthermore, students might be able to evaluate their professional growth based on the results of their work experience. The authors argue that if organisations recognise students’ needs and wants and support their enquiries during an internship, students will more effectively and efficiently learn and work (Kim, 2008). Student interns are expected to try their best to obtain the employment-required techniques, knowledge, and interpersonal relationship in order to get a better job after graduation. Since real work environment is taken as a part of school learning, students are able to get a practical understanding of the condition and development of their future work from daily work experiences and observations (Lee et al., 2006). Internship programs provide students with needed tools and educate them to take responsibility in their future work life. They felt that the faculty should assist them and became bridges between students and industry professionals (Ko, 2008). One common form of experiential learning in tourism and hospitality management is the internship programme (Austin & Rust, 2015). Internship students learn to make connections between what they are learning in their courses and their training experiences. Internships provide opportunity for students to decide if their previous career choice is appropriate for their passions and personalities. Without industry experience, they have troubles in understanding how all elements of the operation and all courses, form an integrated whole (Başaran, 2016). On the other hand, if organisations give students the opportunity to experience several departments during their internship programme, they will concentrate more on their study and they will be better prepared for higher-level positions (Kim, 2008). Through internships students have more chances to explore future careers, to gain deeper knowledge of details, and to start thinking about their future careers based on their internship experiences. If the students do not have successful internship experiences, they are less likely to consider the hospitality industry for possible future careers (Ko, 2008).

As a result, hospitality companies will also benefit. Hospitality companies may be better able to hold their employees and encourage high performance (Kim, 2008). Internship not only provides them with technicians of high quality on production lines, but also enables them to employ students with work experiences as perpetual employees. Also, internship, employers can hold knowledge and technique trainings fit for their companies (Lee et al., 2006). Most of industry professionals agree that hospitality students who participate in internship programs are more marketable (Ko, 2008).

Tourism education in Turkey

Tourism education in Turkey has started with the vocational tourism courses opened in Ankara and Izmir Business High School, in 1953 and developed by tour guidance and interpreting courses in some tourism related associations. Following, tour guidance courses were opened in Istanbul in 1955. Tourism was accepted as a scientific specialty in 1960 by the regulation on the Law on Academia of Economic and Business Sciences. As in the same manner, establishment of Ankara Hospitality School in 1961 and previous efforts are all improvements realized prior to planned period (Boylu, 2002). The supreme authority for the regulation of higher education is the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), which comprises a fully autonomous national board of trustees. There are three other upper administrative bodies in the field of higher education: The Inter University Council (UAK), the Turkish University Rectors' Committee (TURC), and the Higher Education Supervisory Board. The Turkish higher education system has a centralized structure. All universities (both state and private, or in a true sense, foundation universities) are subject to the same laws and regulations/rules. The universities are founded by law; and their affiliated faculties, institutes, and four-year vocational/professional high schools are founded by a decision of the Parliament; while the two-year vocational high schools and the departments affiliated to the universities are established by YÖK. The opening of a program at any level needs to be approved by YÖK (Okumus & Yagci, 2005) and it is responsible for the implementation, organization and coordination of these. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism, TUREM (Tourism Education Center), and MEB (Ministry of Education) organize and implement diffused education, while the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) is responsible for the higher tourism education system (Çakar & Çizel, 2015).

Tourism education in Turkey is carried out in two ways as formal and informal. Educational institutions providing formal education consist of schools offering vocational tourism education at secondary and tertiary level. Informal tourism education includes short-term vocational courses offered by both official and private institutions. Vocational tourism education offered in secondary schools providing formal tourism education (Akıncı et al., 2017) and those schools termed the Anatolian Hotel and Tourism Vocational School, which is organized and coordinated by the MEB. These vocational schools offer tourism education at a basic level and include learning a foreign language. Overall, the length of the period of education at the Anatolian Hotel and Tourism Vocational Schools is four years. The first year consists of preparatory classes in which the students are obliged to learn a foreign language. The remaining three years provide these students with an education in tourism which is combined with practical work experience within the tourism industry. According to the National Education Statistics for the educational year 2013/14, the number of Anatolian Vocational High Schools for Hotel Management and Tourism consisted of 135 (Çakar & Çizel, 2015). Associate degree education is provided for two years at higher education institutions and students are placed according to their diploma grades from the secondary schools providing vocational tourism education in Turkey, primarily from district schools among the secondary schools where tourism education is offered without examination. Undergraduate degree education at higher education institutions covers a total of four years, including eight semesters. According to the central examination system, these institutions admit students from all secondary schools. It is getting very difficult for students studying in secondary schools that provide tourism education based on the vocational curriculum to get a place in schools providing 4 years of undergraduate degree tourism education due to the central examination system (Akıncı et al., 2017). In addition, additional higher level educational opportunities are offered in the form of a two-year master program and a three-year PhD program. In some universities, the duration of the PhD is four years, rather than the three

years in the field of tourism management. There are 37 programs at the master level and 17 programs at the PhD level that currently offer at postgraduate level tourism education in Turkey (Çakar & Çizel, 2015). Anadolu University also offers two- and four-year programs through distance education (Okumus & Yagci, 2005).

Industry perceptions, career expectations and employment positions after graduation

If an educational institution does not determine the expectation level of its students, it is also impossible for it to identify exactly why their perceptions and expectations do not match. Determining the relation between the pre-formed expectations of the students who come to school to receive tourism education, their perceptions occurring through experience, and satisfaction emerging after perception is of great importance in terms of schools aiming to offer sustainable quality tourism education. For the perception of tourism education that is offered to be high, firstly there should be efforts to make the conscious students who have a high level of expectation from tourism education and information about tourism sector for various reasons (like having a career in tourism sector) to prefer the school (Akıncı, 2016). If graduates know and understand employment conditions prevailing in the hospitality industry, they will have realistic expectations of what work entails (Sibanyoni et al., 2015). Students of hospitality management tended to have high ambitions for their future working career when they began their studies, but their ambitions changed after recognising the actual circumstances of the industry. As a result, some students tended to change their goal, which has serious implications for students, education providers, and the hospitality industry. For example, if many people view the working environment of the hospitality industry negatively, then potential students may choose not to study hospitality and education providers will find it difficult to recruit students and provide high quality courses. Furthermore, the hospitality industry will find it difficult to select employees who have good quality qualifications, which also will affect customers (Kim, 2008).

Previous literature on the students focuses on: industry perceptions of students; their career expectations; and, employment positions after graduation. Barron and Maxwell (1993) conducted a survey at Scottish universities to determine the beliefs and thoughts, and perceptions of students related to tourism industry. In their study, it is evident that new students generally hold positive views, whereas the more experienced students generally hold negative views; demonstrably there is a disparity between students' expectations and experience of the industry. Similarly, in their survey held in three universities with tourism programmes in Turkey, Roney and Öztin (2007, p.13) concluded that: "even if new students start with a more optimistic view of the industry, after the internship period and (for some students) part-time work experience, they develop a less favourable perception". Results of Kozak and Kızılırmak (2001)'s survey have indicated that having an internship in the industry was an important determinant on the students' industry-related attitudes. The results of Aksu and Köksal (2005)'s study generally show negative perceptions and attitudes towards the tourism industry, but some positive perceptions and attitudes are also emerged. The negative impressions resulting from placement experiences identified in Kelley-Patterson, and George (2001)'s study, suggest that the image of the sector is seriously damaged in the eyes of many potential employees. Students can be regarded as the future employees of the tourism and hospitality industry so it is inevitable to understand their employment intentions. Some surveys show that students and graduates of tourism and hospitality programs have little or no intention of entering the industry upon graduation (King et al., 2003). While tourism sector is encouraging many people to join the sector with its wide job and career opportunities, on the other hand it is a sector that majority of the people who studied or still studying tourism are not willing to work in (Yılmazdogan et al.,

2015). If hospitality graduates are entering the industry without an accurate understanding of the industry, this could be the cause of many leaving the hospitality industry. A disparity between what employees' prospect and what they experience has been suggested as one of the reasons hospitality employees leave the industry (Blomme et al., 2009). It is important to determine where gaps exist so educators and practitioners can make a difference (Anandhwanlert & Wattanasan, 2016).

To attract and retain talents in the tourism and hospitality industry, career expectations of graduates need to be better understood. In any event, understanding and meeting workers' career expectations is an important step in recruiting, retaining and motivating young employees (Grobelna, 2017). Wellings and Bibbings (2004)'s study aims to identify the motivations, perceptions and expectations of tourism undergraduates in relation to their programme of study, the student experience, and future career prospects. The majority of respondents have some relevant prior work experience. In all subjects this was predominantly in the hospitality sector (restaurants, hotels and bars) but also in public sector tourism, holiday parks, leisure centres, travel agents, events management etc. Most respondents enjoyed their experience of working in the industry, and in many cases, this inspired them to take on a higher-level qualification to increase their prospects of higher level management careers. In a survey on English and Dutch hospitality students, Jenkins (2001) found that as their degree progressed, the students' perception of the industry deteriorated and the desire to work there was diminished considerably, less than half of the students intending to enter the sector. Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000)'s study revealed that there was not a strong commitment to the tourism industry among undergraduate students. Casado (1992)'s study can be given as an example of analyses on the students' career expectations following graduation and their intention to work in the industry. The results of this survey show that these students have fairly realistic expectations before they graduate.

Ross (1994) found that most respondents were highly interested in employment and perhaps a career in the tourism/hospitality industry. Airey and Frontistis (1997) have examined the attitudes of UK and Greek students towards tourism careers. Although the differences between the students in the two countries are less pronounced, these tend to confirm the generally more favourable attitude of the Greek students toward tourism and tourism careers. Pavesic and Brymer (1990) found that after about three years of work in the industry, a substantial number of these graduates have moved to another occupation. Their statistics showed a jump in the third year after graduation in the number of persons reporting that they were out of the industry. Purcell and Quinn (1996)'s research suggest that there are substantial overlaps in the motivations and orientations of diplomats and graduates, but their responses have a distinct tendency to polarize, especially with reference to the reasons they provide for studying hospitality and for entering the hospitality industry. Negative perceptions of industry career opportunities have been shown to prevent talented individuals from entering the industry's workforce (Pizam & Tesone, 2005).

Tourism schools also have an important effect on the formation of students' career expectations and perceptions of the industry. Ayres (2006)'s study indicates that higher education is becoming increasingly important for employees in the tourism industry. Participants in the study endorsed the value of higher education for employees, but suggested the acquisition of more generalised skills and knowledge, rather than a narrow specialisation. The findings of this study suggest a close link between career development strategies and education. Garavan and Morley (1997) suggest that universities are vital in "structuring the experiences of graduates in terms of the kind of work they can expect to perform, their pay and promotion prospects and degree of freedom and discretion they

may have within an organization.” It is alarming to note that education may actually discourage hospitality graduates from entering the industry, as highlighted by Jenkins (2001). Industry has charged educationalists with producing poorly prepared graduates with unrealistic expectations, while educationalists have accused hospitality employers of outdated approaches towards recruitment and management in general (O’Leary & Deegan, 2005). Critically, work experience appears to be the key source of this disenchantment with the industry. Previous studies have found that hospitality students are much less committed to the hospitality industry when they have more experience within the profession (Purcell & Quinn, 1996; Getz, 1994). Researches revealed that important part of students who take tourism education after a while start to work in a sector, not prefer to work in the tourism industry (Menemenci Bahçelerli & Sucuoğlu, 2015). Research has also shown that internship experience negatively affects the hospitality students’ attitudes toward the industry and their intentions in terms of getting hospitality jobs (Anandhwanlert & Wattanasan, 2016). Many students recognise that they work just like front line employees during the whole period of their internship programme. Students might feel that organisations treat students as a source of cheap labour. Students expect that an internship offer opportunities to participate in meetings with managers and the opportunity to learn more specific management skills.

Therefore, students might be unsatisfied with their experience of internship. Experience from the internship will be a significant factor for students in making decisions about whether they want to work in the hospitality industry or not (Kim, 2008). Students who had positive attitudes towards their internship experiences and training had greater job satisfaction and confidence once in a career (Brown et al., 2014). Richardson (2008) found hospitality and tourism students who experience the hospitality and tourism industries, such as through an internship, are less likely to enter their respective industries. The hospitality graduates who stayed in the industry indicated they continued to remain in the industry due to the experiences, challenges, enjoyment, and to use their degrees. Perhaps with a balance between diverse internship experiences and career specific courses, students will be adequately prepared to enter the hospitality industry with more accurate expectations (Brown et al., 2014).

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study is to determine students’ perceptions regarding tourism industry and analyse their perceptions according to their internship experiences. The study population is composed of all students in the academic year of 2007-2008, in the School of Tourism and Hotel Management at Anadolu University, Turkey. 204 bachelor students were selected by using stratified sampling as the study sample from the first, second, third and the fourth year. Questionnaire was distributed in October 2007. All the questionnaires were collected and the results then analyzed. The questionnaire form was developed on the basis of previous studies (Roney & Öztin, 2007; Aksu & Köksal, 2005; Kozak & Kızıllırmak, 2001; Birdir, 2002). The questionnaire form included two sections. In the first section demographics of the students were questioned; the second section contained a set of 24 statements about the students’ industry perceptions. A 5-point Likert Scale (strongly agree=5, agree=4, neither agree nor disagree=3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1) was used to measure the students’ degree of agreement or disagreement with various statements about tourism industry perceptions.

The questionnaire form was first distributed to 30 students and a reliability test was conducted on the pilot survey (Cronbach’s alpha) and the reliability was calculated to be 73 %. Besides, the number of statements in the second section of the questionnaire was reduced from 29 to 24 according to students’ feedback.

FINDINGS

Profiles of Respondents

Table 1 depicts the profiles of the respondents. 67.6 % of the respondents are male, and 32.4 % are female. Respondents are mostly (63.7 %) between 21-23 years old. 38.2 % of the students were in the first, 21.1 % were in the second, 23.5 % in the third and 17.2 % were in the fourth classes in the academic year of 2007-2008. 25.5 % of the respondents were graduated from vocational tourism high schools.

Table 1: Profiles of the student

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	138	67.6
Female	66	32.4
Ages		
Between 18-20	57	28.4
Between 21-23	128	63.7
Between 24-27	16	8
Class of the students		
First class	78	38.2
Second class	43	21.1
Third class	48	23.5
Fourth class	35	17.2
The high schools they were graduated from		
High school	74	36.3
Vocational high school	7	3.4
Vocational tourism school	52	25.5
Colleges (High Schools where the focus is to educate students in foreign languages)	42	20.6
Other	29	14.2
Their willingness to study tourism at the university		
Yes	138	68.0
No	65	32.0
Internship experience in the industry		
Yes	107	52.5
No	97	47.5
Tourism businesses where students have internship		
Hotels	84	79.2
Holiday village	9	8.5
Travel agency/Tour Operator	10	9.4
F&B outlets	2	1.9
Other	1	0.9

The students who graduated from vocational tourism high schools had the chance to have an internship in their high school days, so they entered to higher education institutions with certain experience and perceptions. However, since most of the respondents have indicated that they graduated from other high schools, their industry perceptions were structured during their university years. 68 % of the respondents have indicated that they willingly chose to study tourism. From the respondents, 52.5 % had participated to an internship in the industry. And they mostly had their internship at hotels (79.2 %).

Students' Perceptions towards Tourism Industry

Table 2 shows details of the degrees of agreement with each one of the 24 statements provided in the second part of the questionnaire. For simplicity, perceptions are summarised in group percentages as "strongly agree and agree" and "strongly disagree and disagree".

Table 2: Perceptions of students concerning tourism industry

Degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement	Strongly agree/ agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree/ disagree	Mean	Standard deviation
1. Bosses who are not educated or trained in tourism prefer unskilled, low-paid employees for the purpose of making much profit.	%91.1	%6.0	%3.0	4.48	.80
2. Participation of unskilled and non-educated people in the industry diminishes job opportunities.	%90.7	%4.9	%4.4	4.47	.82
3. An internship is necessary to work in the industry.	%82.2	%8.4	%9.4	4.19	1.03
4. Working hours in tourism are very long and irregular.	%77	%14.2	%8.9	4.06	1.00
5. Wage levels in the industry are insufficient.	%74.7	%17.8	%7.4	4.06	.93
6. There is no job security in the industry.	%71.5	%19.6	%8.9	4.00	1.02
7. Bosses who are unaware about the industry do not want to employ educated and trained, quality personnel.	%69.3	%21.8	%8.9	3.96	1.05
8. Tourism graduates were not considered.	%74	%14.7	%11.2	3.93	1.05
9. A regular remuneration is difficult to gain because of the seasonality of the industry.	%71.4	%17.7	%10.9	3.92	1.01
10. It is necessary to have a university degree to work in the tourism industry.	%69.4	%10.8	%19.7	3.90	1.28
11. Owner/managers are not conscious about tourism.	%66.8	%26.2	%6.9	3.89	.92
12. Working conditions in the industry affects the private life negatively.	%71.1	%14.2	%14.8	3.85	1.07
13. Personnel in the industry are not appreciated much.	%68.1	%21.6	%10.3	3.85	.97
14. There is no future warranty in tourism.	%56.9	%18.3	%24.7	3.54	1.31
15. I believe working in tourism suits me much.	%49.5	%33.7	%16.8	3.47	1.18
16. Career development in tourism is very slow.	%51.2	%27.4	%21.4	3.45	1.10
17. Career development in tourism is un-planned.	%49.7	%29.9	%20.4	3.42	1.07
18. The advantages of working in the tourism industry are much more than its disadvantages.	%35.4	%39.9	%24.6	3.18	1.02
19. Since un-planned structure of the industry endangers the future of the industry, I do not foresee a future for myself in this industry.	%33.5	%35	%31.5	3.11	1.24
20. There is gender discrimination in tourism.	%37	%24.5	%38.5	3.03	1.24
21. I do not think of working in the industry for many years.	%26.8	%30.7	%42.6	2.76	1.30
22. Promotional opportunities are satisfactory in tourism.	%19.8	%41.6	%38.6	2.76	.96
23. Tourism related jobs are more respected than the other jobs.	%18.2	%38.4	%43.4	2.67	.96
24. I do not think that I would be patient and smile to the tourists.	%11.9	%11.4	%76.7	1.94	1.10

The majority of the respondents (91.1%) believe that the bosses in the industry did not know the industry well and they mostly focused on the profits. Instead they prefer to employ unskilled, low-paid employees. The investment incentives in the late '80s led investors who are not aware of the confines of the industry invested in tourism. 90.7 % of the students think that the employment of people not educated in tourism diminishes the job opportunities for themselves. Their answers to this statement have resemblance with the previous statement. Because the employers prefer to employ low-skilled, low-paid employees instead of employing educated, probably much demanding employees. It is seen that 82.2 % of the respondents have understood the importance of the internship in the industry. It is encouraging to find that 76.7 % of the students expressed their disagreement with the statement of "I do not think that I would be patient and smile to tourists". This finding is interpreted as the students understanding of the industry, and being tolerant for the customer satisfaction. Students disagree with the statements of "Tourism related jobs are more respected than the other jobs" (43.4 %) and "I do not

think of working in the industry for longer years” (42.6 %). Since the students agree with negative statements, it is obvious that students have some negative perceptions about the industry. These findings are coherent with previous studies.

Table 3. Perceptions of students who had an internship experience and those who had not concerning tourism industry

How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?	Degree of agreement or disagreement of students who had an internship experience		Degree of agreement or disagreement of students who did not have an internship experience	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
1. Participation of unskilled and non-educated people in the industry diminishes job opportunities	4.47	.75	4.46	.90
2. Bosses who are not educated or trained in tourism prefer unskilled, low-paid employees for the purpose of making much profit	4.43	.80	4.53	.80
3. Wage levels in the industry are insufficient	4.11	.91	4.01	.96
4. An internship is necessary to work in the industry	4.10	1.06	4.29	1.00
5. Working hours in tourism are very long and irregular	4.06	1.01	4.07	.99
6. There is no job security in the industry	4.05	.89	3.94	1.14
7. Working conditions in the industry affects the private life negatively	3.98	.99	3.71	1.14
8. A regular remuneration is difficult to gain because of the seasonality of the industry	3.92	.98	3.92	1.04
9. Owner/managers are not conscious about tourism	3.92	.92	3.85	.93
10. Bosses who are unaware about the industry do not want to employ educated and trained, quality personnel	3.89	.97	4.03	1.13
11. Tourism graduates were not considered	3.87	1.01	4.00	1.10
12. Personnel in the industry are not appreciated much	3.70	.96	4.02	.96
13. It is necessary to have a university degree to work in the tourism industry	3.70	1.30	4.11	1.24
14. There is no future warranty in tourism	3.61	1.24	3.46	1.39
15. Career development in tourism is very slow	3.53	1.07	3.36	1.14
16. Career development in tourism is un-planned	3.42	1.04	3.42	1.10
17. I believe working in tourism suits me much	3.34	1.17	3.61	1.17
18. Since un-planned structure of the industry endangers the future of the industry, I do not foresee a future for myself in this industry	3.17	1.29	3.04	1.18
19. The advantages of working in the tourism industry are much more than its disadvantages	3.12	.97	3.24	1.08
20. There is gender discrimination in tourism	3.01	1.18	3.04	1.31
21. I do not think of working in the industry for many years	2.84	1.32	2.68	1.28
22. Promotional opportunities are satisfactory in tourism	2.67	.97	2.86	.94
23. Tourism related jobs are more respected than the other jobs	2.61	.92	2.74	1.00
24. I do not think that I would be patient and smile to the tourists	1.94	1.12	1.93	1.09

Moreover, it is not surprising to find out that they plan to work in the industry since 68 % of the respondents chose tourism education willingly. So, it can be said that, tourism students have been informed about conditions of sector before entering school. In the same manner, Kipkosgei et al., (2015) found that, majority of the student

respondents at both undergraduate (62.24%) and diploma (91.84%) chose the tourism career willingly and informed. Zhang and Wu (2004), state that most students of vocational hospitality and tourism colleges in China know very little about hotels and sector before entering school and for most of them, this is a staggering experience when they find out more about hospitality and tourism operations. However, 42.6 % of the respondents indicated that they would work in the industry for many years to come and, 30.7 % of them “neither agree nor disagree” about this statement. This can be interpreted as they liked the business of tourism and they planned a career in the industry.

In order to see the differences between the students who had an internship experience and those who have not, the findings were divided into two sections in table 3.

Table 4: Mann-Whitney Test

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Significance (p)
1. Working conditions in the industry affects the private life negatively	4515,500	-1,686	,092
2. Tourism graduates were not considered	4664,000	-1,321	,187
3. Personnel in the industry are not appreciated much	4204,000	-2,462	,014
4. Bosses who are unaware about the industry do not want to employ educated and trained, quality personnel	4482,000	-1,523	,128
5. Bosses who are not educated or trained in tourism prefer unskilled, low-paid employees for the purpose of making much profit	4627,000	-1,133	,257
6. Working hours in tourism are very long and irregular	5173,500	-,040	,968
7. Wage levels in the industry are insufficient	4793,000	-,754	,451
8. There is no job security in the industry	5126,000	-,159	,874
9. There is no future warranty in tourism	4863,500	-,568	,570
10. Owner/managers are not conscious about tourism	4869,000	-,566	,571
11. Career development in tourism is very slow	4586,500	-1,149	,251
12. Career development in tourism is un-planned	5023,500	-,042	,967
13. There is gender discrimination in tourism	4947,000	-,088	,930
14. Participation of unskilled and non-educated people in the industry diminishes job opportunities	4948,500	-,535	,593
15. A regular remuneration is difficult to gain because of the seasonality of the industry	5105,500	-,089	,929
16. I do not think that I would be patient and smile to the tourists	5054,500	-,086	,931
17. I do not think of working in the industry for many years	4723,500	-,903	,367
18. Since un-planned structure of the industry endangers the future of the industry, I do not foresee a future for myself in this industry	4795,000	-,855	,392
19. Promotional opportunities are satisfactory in tourism	4471,000	-1,570	,116
20. Tourism related jobs are more respected than the other jobs	4588,500	-,803	,422
21. The advantages of working in the tourism industry are much more than its disadvantages	4827,000	-,786	,432
22. I believe working in tourism suits me much	4376,000	-1,780	,075
23. An internship is necessary to work in the industry	4526,500	-1,483	,138
24. It is necessary to have a university degree to work in the tourism industry	4138,000	-2,548	,011

When the responds of two groups are compared it is found that both groups' answers were similar. And most of these statements expressed were negative. Contrary to these findings; Barron and Maxwell (1993), Roney and Öztin (2007), Kozak and Kızıllırmak (2001) found that perceptions of students who have an internship experience differ from those who have not, and they also found that their perceptions become negative after the internship experience. Datta et al., 2013 (cited in Kumar et al., 2014) also explained that there was

difference in expectation between senior students who had completed internship and juniors who were yet to undergo industrial training. The students who had completed their training had a more negative perspective toward the hotel industry. It is also seen that both groups believe that they would be tolerant with tourists and work in the industry for longer years. Contrary to these evidences, King et al., (2003) found that approximately half of their Melbourne and Hong Kong tourism and hospitality graduate respondents never entered the industry or if they did, they left within a few years. However, Petrova and Mason (2004) claimed that in some countries (Mauritius, Australia and Turkey) students are interested in entering the industry, so these findings overlap their indication. Besides, they do not agree with promotion opportunities in tourism and respectability of the jobs in tourism. There appears to be no differences between the two groups related to these statements.

In order to find out any differences between the students who had an internship and *not*, Mann-Whitney test was conducted. Following hypotheses were proposed below:

Ho: The perceptions of both groups were not similar.

H₁: The perceptions of both groups were similar.

It is found that perceptions of both groups were not similar for two statements: *Personnel in the industry are not appreciated much* and *It is necessary to have a university degree to work in the tourism industry*. This difference is significant since $p < \alpha = 0,05$. Here, the difference in the perceptions of both groups about the necessity of university education can be explained by the fact that students trust level in the educational institutions drops after the internship experience. It is also found that perceptions of both groups were not similar for other two statements: *Working conditions in the industry affects the private life negatively* and *I believe working in tourism suits me much*. This difference is significant since $p < \alpha = 0,1$. This may be explained by the lack of experience in the industry.

For other statements, it is found that there were no significant differences between the perceptions of students who had an internship experience with those who had not. Accordingly, the second hypothesis is accepted.

CONCLUSION

This study focuses on analysing any differences between the industry perceptions of students who had an internship experience with those who had *not*. The study results indicate that the prospective employees have negative perceptions on the industry. Moreover, it is found that there are no significant differences in the perceptions of students who had an internship with those who had *not*. The negative perceptions can be explained by the insufficient human resources practices in the industry and negative attitudes against the internship students. All-inclusive pricing and price competition experienced in hotels in Turkey resulted in a decrease in the quality of the visitors and diminished quality expectations of the travellers. Accordingly, the owner/managers neglect the quality issue. As a result, human resources practices and policies are not appreciated by most of the companies. These businesses prefer to employ low-skilled and low-paid workers rather than recruiting qualified personnel and investing in human resources. This is why most of the students believe that the employment of people who are not educated in tourism diminishes their job opportunities. Although the perceptions of the students are negative, both groups of students with internship experience and the others think that they would be pleasant and gracious. Besides, majority of students plan to work longer years in the tourism industry. It could be stated that willingness to choose tourism education results in students' desire to work in the industry. Although there are some weaknesses of the industry, students' willingness to work in tourism is important for the industry. It is a known fact that the industry is in need of young, dynamic and qualified work force. For these reasons, educational institutions, public and private associations

should take the responsibility and pay extra efforts lest graduates leave the industry or lose their motivation at work. Educational institutions may help students to change their negative perceptions. Besides, these institutions can inform the students on the nature of working conditions and can motivate students by creating awareness about the tourism and hospitality sector. Tourism education institutions should design the course curriculum and job description to provide job opportunities that favourable and express positive perception of students' towards hotel and tourism industry in the future. Also, they ought to provide education programs which would increase the qualifications of the graduates according to the industry needs. Increase in the quality of education would result in an increase in the quality of students, consequently the quality of employees. It is crucial to close the gap between what is taught to students and what the industry expects of the students being hired. Tourism businesses should also take the responsibility in overcoming the negative perceptions of the students. They should: improve their human resources practices and policies; maintain better working conditions; better understand the needs of internship students; pay attention to employ tourism educated personnel.

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TOURIST GUIDES' CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABILITY IN ROMANIA

Corina-Florina TĂȚAR*

University of Oradea, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning,
1 University st., 410087, Oradea, Romania, e-mail: corina_criste_78@yahoo.com

Grigore Vasile HERMAN

University of Oradea, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning,
1 University st., 410087, Oradea, Romania, e-mail: grigoreherman@yahoo.com

Maria GOZNER

University of Oradea, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning,
1 University st., 410087, Oradea, Romania, e-mail: mariagozner@yahoo.com

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Abstract: The study aims to identify the tourist guide's role and importance, as a mediator between demand and supply, between tourists and local collectivities in the support of local economy and sustainable tourism, within tourist destinations' areas. The current study was meant to highlight the degree to which tourist guides of Romania promote and abide by the sustainability issues in their guiding activity. This fact emerges alongside the development and expanding of tourist activities and subsequently human pressure on the natural milieu. A close-questions' questionnaire was applied to seventy national tourist guides, with a national geographical coverage of over 50%, who participated at the annual national tourist guides' conference of Oradea city in the year 2017. The results showed that, in their guiding activity, guides promote host-guest interactions, encourage tourists to buy products from locals and care about vulnerable destinations.

Key words: tourist guide, sustainability, tourists' behaviour, local economy

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INTRODUCTION

The current study comes as a sequel to previous studies concerning the tourist guides' ascending trend evolution and the critical aspects which they are confronted with in Romania (Tatar et al., 2017). At the level of Romania 4,335 licensed tour guides (Minsistry of Tourism of Romania, 2017) were recorded in the year 2016 which comes as a huge leap in this professional activity if compared to merely almost two decacdes ago, when only 28 licensed tour guides could be counted in the year 1998.

* Corresponding author

The legislation in force (i.e. Law Order number 637/2004) after the fall of the communist system in Romania allowed the proliferation of the number of tourist guides which currently envisages more such categories such as national, local and specialized. Within previous studies (Tatar et al., 2017) the analysis showed that in the year 2016 the largest share is held by national tour guides with 75%, followed by the local guides with 20% and the specialized ones with 5%. Being an activity in practice even since ancient times, in Ancient Greece tour guides were supposed to lead (*periegetai*) the group and explain (*exegetai*) the natural and man-made heritage (Comănescu, 2012) and later on during the *Grand Tour*, the accompanying guide had also the role of a mentor, basic skills that are maintained even today, to which more roles have been added such as that of a leader, educator, public relations representative, host and conduit (Pond, 1993). In the current globalisation, McDonaldisation (Shaw & Williams, 2004) and acculturation trend of destinations local tourist guides should come to the forefront as representatives of local communities (Lovrentjev, 2015) and sustainably conduct tours that protect destinations and leave them unaltered for the future generations to enjoy too (Ungureanu, 2013; Gozner, 2012; Ilieș et al., 2008).

The term of *tourist guide* was preferred for use in this study in compliance with the *World Federation of Tourist Guide Association* (WFTGA) adopted terminology. The current paper is meant to enhance knowledge about the tourist guides' activity in Romania and highlight their interest into providing a sustainable output, thus more questions were addressed to the licensed tourist guides who attended the National Tourist Guides' Conference, which is organized in a different city of Romania annually. The survey was prepared for and applied to the licensed tourist guides of the National Tourist Guides' Conference of Oradea (i.e. *Sustainable Tourism and the Tour Guide*) held during 19-22nd of February 2017. There were seventy registered national tourist guides, with a wide national geographical coverage, who participated at the conference; out of them 58 filled in the questionnaire. The study was meant to highlight the degree to which tourist guides of Romania promote and abide by the sustainability issues in their guiding activity in the context in which the data collection year, 2017 for this study was declared the International Year for Sustainable Tourism, as postulated by the World Tourism Organisation and the World Federation of Tourist Guide Association. Sustainability in tour guiding refers to the tourist guides' ability to promote local economy by the stimulation to consume local products and services and create new responsible attitudes and behaviour in vulnerable destinations.

The guide is preoccupied to maintain the resources of the tourist destination and to encourage positive encounters between the host community and tourists (Hu & Wall, 2012). Sustainability is fostered through the natural and cultural heritage interpretation, by monitoring and role-modelling visitor behaviour in these areas (Weiler & Kim, 2011), one of his/her stated role being that of a motivator of responsible behaviour (Randall & Rollins, 2009). The tourist guides' focus is on knowledge transmission and skill acquisition, but according to Christie and Mason (2010) a good guiding activity should lead to a change in tourists' attitudes and behavior, a so-called *transformative tour guiding* so as to go beyond the mere presentation of a new environment, country or culture. Tourist guides undertake this activity either as a main or complementary job, some are either retired or semiretired from other professions and often engaged in this activity for lifestyle rather than economic incentives (De Beer et al., 2013). A large share of tourist guides are freelancers whereas some are employed by tour operators. In many countries this occupation is low remunerated despite its high skilled required qualification (Collins, 2000). Within the current research it was showed that all respondents (i.e. licensed guides) had higher education studies.

METHODOLOGY

This analysis relies on the data obtained at the national tourist guides' conference of Oradea, Romania during 19-22nd of February 2017. The conference entitled *Sustainable Tourism and the Tourist Guide* was organized in the context of the declaration of the year 2017 the year of sustainable tourism by the World Tourism Organization. A closed-questions questionnaire was distributed to the participants at the conference. The subjects included in the study were represented by the licensed tourist guides participating in the aforementioned conference. In order to pursue the established research objectives, the present study relies on the sociological survey method based on a questionnaire, a quantitative method of data collection and analysis (Chelcea, 2007; Bryman, 2012; Bar et al., 2016).

Regarding data collection, the questionnaire contained 5 items mainly referring to the role and importance of the tourist guide in developing and supporting the local economy in line with the principle of a sustainable and responsible development of the tourist destination areas in which each one operates. Also, socio-demographic data were included within the questionnaire, i.e. the age and level of graduate studies. The questionnaires were applied by face-to-face meetings which generated higher response rates (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2005; Herman et al., 2016), so that out of 70 tour guides from across the entire country present at the conference, 58 filled out the questionnaire. According to the tour guides' origin, they came from the main cities of Romania and covered more than 50% of the national territory of Romania, according to the discussions held with the conference organizers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the respondents' analysis by age group it was found that the largest share is held by the group of young people aged 20-34 years, 45% (26 persons), followed by the group of mature tourists, aged between 35-49 years, 33% (19 persons) and older tourist guides, over 50 years old, 22% (13 persons).

The subjects' analysis which refers to the level of graduated studies reveals their uneven distribution, most (35 persons) being graduates of university studies, respectively post-graduate (23 persons). It should be noted that there aren't any guides only with high school education in the category of interviewed guides, which indicates the necessity of a high professional training in practicing the tourist guide job, which is then reflected indirectly in sustaining and developing the local economy in accordance with the principle of sustainable environmental development.

The tourist guide's role in supporting the local economy

In order to highlight the guide's role in supporting the local economy, respondents were consulted through two key issues. The first aspect was aimed at facilitating contact between tourists and locals, while the second aspect was centered on the idea of encouraging the stimulation of the local economy through tourism. Thus, from the analysis of the answers given in relation to the respondents' options in facilitating meetings between tourists and locals, most of them (54 persons) agree to it, while 2 persons disagreed. The remaining two people did not know how to respond (Table 1). Tourism has turned out to be a tool for economic development in the era of globalisation and industrialisation, on the backdrop of the demise of traditional industries such as logging, agriculture and livestock breeding (Wang et al., 2018), therefore many emerging global destinations rely on tourism as their main means of income. That is why the tourist guide has an important role to foster good relations among tourists and locals (Tatar, 2013) meant to enhance tourist experience satisfaction but to also educate tourists into consuming local products and buying locally-produced handicrafts and souvenirs.

Table 1. The survey results referring to the role of the tourist guide in supporting the local economy

Question	Yes	No	Do not know
The role of the tourist guide in supporting the local economy			
3. In the guided tour activity, do you choose to facilitate meetings between tourists and locals?	54	2	2
5. Do you encourage tourists to purchase products from local producers in their destination?	58	0	0

The tourist guide's role in promoting the sustainable development of the tourist destination areas

In order to highlight the tourist guide's role in promoting the sustainable development of the tourist destination areas, a set of three questions regarding the accessibility of tourist resources for the next generations, the former capitalization and possible concerns addressed to the guided tourists were elaborated.

After analyzing the answers given by the respondents regarding their desire for the tourist resources to be accessible for the next generations it was found that all the interviewees (58 persons) agreed to it, there was no negative answer (Table 2).

The same idea of preserving, protecting and capitalizing on tourism resources also emerges from the analysis of respondents' answers to the question "If the tourist resource is vulnerable to the contact with tourists, do you suggest to them alternative attractions?" 47 people responded positively, while only 8 people responded negatively, the remaining 3 people did not know how to respond (Table 2).

A similar attitude towards the conservation, protection and capitalization of tourist resources has been observed to the interviewed tourists and the tourists with whom they have been involved over the years. Thus, at the question "Were the led tourists concerned about environmental protection?" forty-four respondents answered positively, while there were only two negative responses. Twelve interviewed people on this subject did not know how to respond (Table 2).

Table 2. The survey results referring to the role of the tourist guide promoting the sustainable development of the tourist destination areas

Question	Yes	No	Do not know
The role of the tourist guide in promoting the sustainable development of the tourist destination areas			
6. Do you want that the tourist resources be accessible to future generations?	58	0	0
4. If the tourist resource is vulnerable to the contact with tourists, do you suggest to them alternative attractions?	47	8	3
7. Did you notice any tourists' concern for the environment in your guiding activity?	44	2	12

Many rules and policies were issued meant to regulate a sustainable behaviour of tourists and many authors (Jacobson & Robles, 1992; Juvan & Dolnicar, 2016; Wang et al., 2018) have promoted sustainable ways of taking holidays through the limitation of natural resources (Gossling, 2002), decreasing consumption at the destination (Tsun Hung et al., 2013) and buying environmentally labelled products (Esperson et al., 2013). Weiler and Black (2014) claim that tour guiding approach towards sustainability envisages more dimensions such as enhancing understanding and valuing, influencing and monitoring behaviour, fostering post-visit attitudes and behaviours.

Tourists can choose to spend their holidays sustainably by recycling, reducing waste and undertaking environmentally friendly activities while hollidaying such as walking on pre-designated trails, avoid using off road vehicles to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and spend vacations closer to their home (Juvan and Dolnicar, 2016). The hosts of tourist destinations worldwide have gradually become aware of the importance to protect environmental quality both for their own helath and to maintain destination competitiveness to attract more tourists (Wang et al., 2018). Hosts play key roles into educating tourist' behaviour in tourist destinations. Therefore we can state that a virtours circle of sustainability in tour guiding involves the tour guides and hosts as key elements in shaping tourists' behaviour (Figure 1).

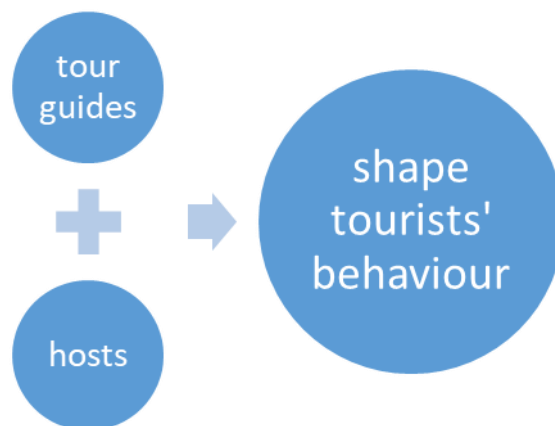


Figure 1. Sustainable approach with key actors for shaping tourists' behaviour at destinations

CONCLUSIONS

Highlighting the tourist guides' role in developing and sustaining the local economy is a sine-qua-non condition that is increasingly necessary both locally and nationally. This is due to the dynamic and complex nature of tourism over the last period, amid mutations in human society, marked by progress in other economic branches and beyond.

The results' analysis obtained from the consultations with the tourist guides showed their important role in facilitating contacts between tourists and local communities, as well as encouraging tourists to buy the specific products of the place. In this way, tourism as an economic activity proves to be an essential supporter for local economies, while the tourist guide is the mediator between local communities and tourists. The role of the tourist guide in promoting the sustainable development of tourist destinations emerges from their desire that tourism resources be accessible for the next generations (58 people expressing their wish) alongside the idea of preserving and protecting vulnerable resources, by choosing alternative attractions where necessary (47 respondents). Thus the same preserving and protecting trend of tourist resources and the environment have been found by guides among tourists with whom they were involved over time. In conclusion, the role and importance of tourist guides in the development and support of local economies, in line with the principle of sustainable development detaches from their actions meant to facilitate direct contact with the local population, encouraging tourists to acquire local products and promote host-guest interactions. The consumed tourist resources should be transmitted as unaltered as possible to the next generations, by their conservation, protection and sustainable valorization during the guided tour process.

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