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SOUTH AFRICA'S KWAZULU-NATAL TOURISM DESTINATION BRAND ESSENCE AND COMPETITIVENESS: TOURISTS' PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract: This study aims to find out tourists' perception of the KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa) brand essence and brand competitiveness as a tourism destination. Questionnaire survey of 406 respondents revealed that tourists are mostly satisfied with visiting KwaZulu-Natal. Most of the tourists are willing to return and they are willing to recommend KwaZulu-Natal to others. Tourists view KwaZulu-Natal as a competitive destination. This study recommends that KwaZulu-Natal destination management organisation should continue to work towards improving the quality standards of the destination, as outlined in this paper, to help it to be able to compete more strongly in the national and global tourism marketplaces.

Key words: brand essence, brand competitiveness, tourism, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

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INTRODUCTION

A deeper conceptual understanding of branding concepts is required before place branding can be regarded as a mature area of study. It is important to delineate the place branding construct by identifying the concepts that form and reflect it and the variables that moderate its implementation and impact (Hankinson, 2015). This paper dwells on two concepts which are central to the place (tourism destination) branding construct: the brand essence and brand competitiveness.

Brand essence, if crafted to reveal a clear value position of a destination, can offer a strategic competitive advantage to a tourism destination (Ezeuduji and Nkosi, 2017). Brand essence captures the core spirit of a brand, and its functional and emotional benefits (De Chernatony and Harris, 2010). It identifies the brand's competitive advantage as well as the benefits received when choosing a brand over its competitors (Light et al., 2012). Functional benefits can be described as the primary purpose for travelling to a destination, for example tourist attractions and activities. The emotional benefits can be described as the intangible benefits received during the visitor experience while at a destination. These could be the benefits that tourists were not expecting to be part of, such as self-development and health benefits (Chen, 2012).

Previous studies on tourism destination brand essence, brand equity, brand image, brand loyalty, brand competitiveness, etc. have been done in the African continent and beyond by several authors (such as Chinomona and Maziriri, 2017; Ezeuduji et al., 2016; Ezeuduji et al., 2014; Giannopoulos et al., 2011; Pike and Mason, 2011; Crouch, 2010; Dwyer and Kim, 2003; Vengesayi, 2003). Though authors such as Crouch (2010) and Dwyer and Kim (2003) proposed generic conceptual models of destination competitiveness, few studies have indeed focussed on specific models for specific destinations. The authors of this paper argue that there is still a dearth of research on tourism destination brand. From the literature reviewed, much of the available studies were conducted outside sub-Saharan Africa. This study therefore explores how tourists visiting KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa (one of the nine provinces of South Africa) perceive this destination's brand essence (functional and emotional attributes or benefits) and brand competitiveness, as a precursor of further conclusive research. The study will also evaluate if this destination offers a clear value position which is essential for the tourists in making their travel decision. Highlights from the State of the Province Address report that tourism has a significant contribution in the KwaZulu-Natal local economy, and continues to grow from a R9 billion contribution (at the time of writing this paper, 1 US Dollar = 14.4 South African Rand) to the Provincial Gross Domestic Product in 2014 to more than R10 billion by 2018 (Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, 2019). Ezeuduji and Nkosi (2017) observed that the province of KwaZulu-Natal is well liked for its heritage and cultural offerings. They further state that its rich heritage (cultural and natural) is a key anchor to its tourism industry. Tourism is viewed a viable tool to improve local economies in sub-Saharan Africa, and tourism development strategies are being adopted by many local authorities in South Africa as one of the key parts of their local economic development initiatives (Abrahams, 2019; Ramukumba, 2019; Strydom et al., 2019). The next section of this paper presents an overview of the literature review conducted regarding the study objective.

OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dwyer and Kim (2003) state that there are indicators of destination competitiveness. Amongst these indicators is the quality of service offered within a destination. Perceived quality refers to consumers' feelings concerning the quality of a product or service associated with brand or destination (Keller, 2001; Kim et al., 2003; Low and Lamb, 2000; Yoo et al., 2000). The quality of service can be measured by, but not limited to, the performance standards in service delivery, programmes to ensure or measure visitor satisfaction, development programmes to enhance quality of service and attitudes of customs or immigration officials. Service quality is central to the development of strong service leading brands since it improves perceived superiority, and assists to differentiate brands in competitive markets (Nam et al., 2011). Tourists who are satisfied with the service level of a destination are likely to return to that destination. Hassan et al. (2010) state that a community within a tourism destination can also participate in destination service quality and branding, via creating a unifying focus to aid all public, private, and non-profit sector organizations that rely on the image of the place and its attractiveness. This can lead to increased respect, recognition, loyalty, correcting out-of-date, inaccurate or unbalanced perceptions;

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improving stakeholder income, profit margins, and lodging tax revenues; enhancing civic pride and advocacy; and expanding the size of the 'pie' for stakeholders to get a larger share, rather than having to rely on pricing to steal their share (Hassan et al., 2010).

BRAND ESSENCE

The functional and emotional benefits that tourists derive from visiting a destination are defined by Ezeuduji and Nkosi (2017) as brand essence. Brand essence, if crafted to reveal a clear value position of a destination, can offer a strategic competitive advantage to a tourism destination (Ezeuduji and Nkosi, 2017). Unlike many commercial products and services, the purchase of tourism offerings is usually infrequent (Wijethunga and Warnakulasooriya, 2014) and consists of a large amount of planning beforehand. The image of a destination is equally vital to tourists in their decision making. Hence, potential tourists are most likely to select a destination that has the most favourable image (Wijethunga and Warnakulasooriya, 2014) and can provide the benefits demanded for when taking a trip outside of their usual environment. The benefits (functional and emotional) received when travelling to a destination are communicated through the brand essence of a destination. Emotional and functional benefits of visiting a tourism destination constitute the brand essence of that destination (Chen, 2012), De Chernatony and Harris (2010) suggest that emotional and functional benefits are part of what is captured by the brand essence, and Aho (2001) states that emotions play a huge part in tourists' experience. Tourists react to their emotions when making a travel decision. The benefits, both functional and emotional, received when travelling to a tourism destination are communicated through the brand essence of the destination. Functional benefits can be described as the primary purpose for travelling to a destination, such as motivation to travel. The physical attributes of the destination also contribute to functional benefits (Ezeuduji et al., 2016). However, some authors (such as Chuang, 2007; Goossens, 2000; Kwortnik and Ross, 2007) posit that tourists are mostly influenced by their emotions to make purchases. Emotions play a vital role in defining unforgettable experiences (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). Gnoth (1997) states that tourist's emotional reactions are essential precursors of post-consumption behaviours and previous studies point out how emotions affect tourists' satisfaction (such as Del Bosque and San Martín 2008). Ezeuduji et al. (2016) describe emotional benefits as intangible attributes of travelling to the destination that the tourist did not expect to receive, such as self-development, wellness and new experiences.

BRAND COMPETITIVENESS

Tourism is now a worldwide industry. In the past fifty years the tourism industry has grown to be one of the biggest industries in the world, playing a vital role in the economies of many countries. People's increase of leisure time, disposable income, and development of efficient transport are making it easy for visitors to gain access to most countries. Tourism has also become a social phenomenon and with its growth, it has made marketing a complex and crucial tool in the competitive global marketplace of tourism destinations. Every destination and country partakes in tourism, even those traditionally closed countries such as North Korea or Iran (Yeoman et al., 2005). Pearce (1997) posits destination competitiveness as the techniques and methods that can be used to analyse and compare the diverse attributes of destinations in the context of planning. Brand competitiveness is a brand's possession of competitive advantage. The ability to create competitive advantage can be identified as competitiveness, whereas competition is the market condition of the brand. The ability to outdo other brands by providing better offerings through price and product or quality service is a competitive advantage. Competition only exists if there are other brands to compare the brand to (Baumann et al., 2017).

The evaluation of the main destination components can offer better understanding of the competitiveness of such destinations. Competitiveness in tourism destinations has also been discussed from an environmental perspective (Mihalic, 2000), while Porter (1990) states that competitiveness could be seen as a synonym of productivity. It has been said that competition in the tourism industry is escalating, therefore each country, province or city needs to enhance their services to remain relevant in the industry. According to Morgan et al. (2002), today's tourists are not asking 'what can they do on holiday?' but 'who can they be on holiday?' Tourists are gradually looking for diversion, culture and self-discovery. These create the basis of an emotional connection that marketers can exploit through branding.

Dias and Cardoso (2017) state that competitiveness of tourist destinations directly depends on how the actual tourists and potential tourists perceive the destination. Hamel and Prahalad (1990) perceive the concept of competitiveness to be associated with the three categories, namely: relative market position, sustainable competitive advantage and core competences of the firm. Winzar et al. (2018) discuss competitiveness by looking at Ma's (2000) work on competitive advantage which has these three assumptions: firstly, competitive advantage which is not automatically linked to an enhanced performance level, secondly, competitive advantage and performance which are two different constructs and lastly, competitive advantage which is context specific in that it relates to competitive dimensions between the company and other competitors in the market place. The background of competitiveness is that it is only relevant when there are competitors to compare the brand to.

Qu et al. (2011) reported that tourists are usually offered various destinations or attractions to choose from but the destination must be a brand that stands out in order for the tourists to choose it from the whole lot. Many destinations offer similar quality accommodation, scenic views and friendly people, however a competitive destination needs to be unique as a brand. The main attractions (such as natural and cultural attractions, historical sites and built environment) may motivate the tourists to travel to a destination, but infrastructure can also play a role in the tourists' decision to travel to that destination. This study therefore explores how tourists visiting KwaZulu-Natal region of South Africa assess this destination's brand essence (functional and emotional attributes or benefits) and competitiveness compared to the other destinations they have visited. The next section of this paper presents the research design and methods of data collection and analyses.

METHODOLOGY

This study explores tourists' perceptions of a destination brand essence and competitiveness, therefore a quantitative research method using a structured questionnaire survey was used to collect date from respondents. The questionnaire variables emanated from the literature study and authors' personal knowledge of the destination. Veal (2011), Ezeuduji (2013) and Tummons and Duckworth (2013) all support the use of questionnaire survey in collecting quantified data from respondents. The authors of this paper argue that tourism is a mass phenomenon, hence quantified data are mostly used to make management decisions. Domestic and international tourists visiting major tourist attractions in KwaZulu-Natal (see Figure 1) were surveyed (such as King Shaka International Airport, Richards Bay Airport, Hluhluwe Game Reserve, and Talana Museum). A non-probability sampling method called purposive sampling, was employed to sample actual tourists among the general population for a period of 7 months (December 2017 to June 2018), cutting across both peak and off-peak seasons. Veal (2011) states that in non-probability sampling methods, the absolute size of the sample is more crucial than the sample size relative to the research population. Veal also argues that the criteria to determine sample size entail the required level of precision in results, the proposed details in analysis, and the available budget. 420 tourists were surveyed, however 406 questionnaires received were usable for data analysis.

IBM's SPSS Statistics, version 25 (IBM Corporation, 2017) supported data analyses. First stage of data analyses employed descriptive statistics (frequencies, mean and standard deviation); and the second stage of data analyses used multivariate analysis (Reliability test using

Cronbach's Alpha) and bivariate analyses (Spearman's Correlation tests) to support addressing the research objective. Bivariate analyses were done at a 95% confidence interval, and reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient employed a cut-off point of 0.7 to explain internal consistency or reliability of variables used to explain brand essence dimensions (Bühl and Zöfel, 2005; George and Mallery, 2003; Hair et al., 2005; Iwu et al., 2018). These variables are set in the questionnaire to have ordinal responses, hence were presented in the questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale. From the reliability test results, both brand essence dimensions (functional attributes and emotional attributes) and brand competitiveness dimension show internal consistency.

As it is common in social sciences, population distributions of the ordinal dimensions (brand essence variables) were statistically found not to be normally distributed (Kolmogorov-Smirnov's and Shapiro-Wilk's tests of normality yielded p-values of less than 0.001). This study therefore conducted non-parametric tests (Spearman's Correlation) to establish relationships of variables. The use of Spearman's correlation tests for comparing ordinal variables were supported by Veal (2011). The results obtained from these analyses are presented and discussed in the following section.

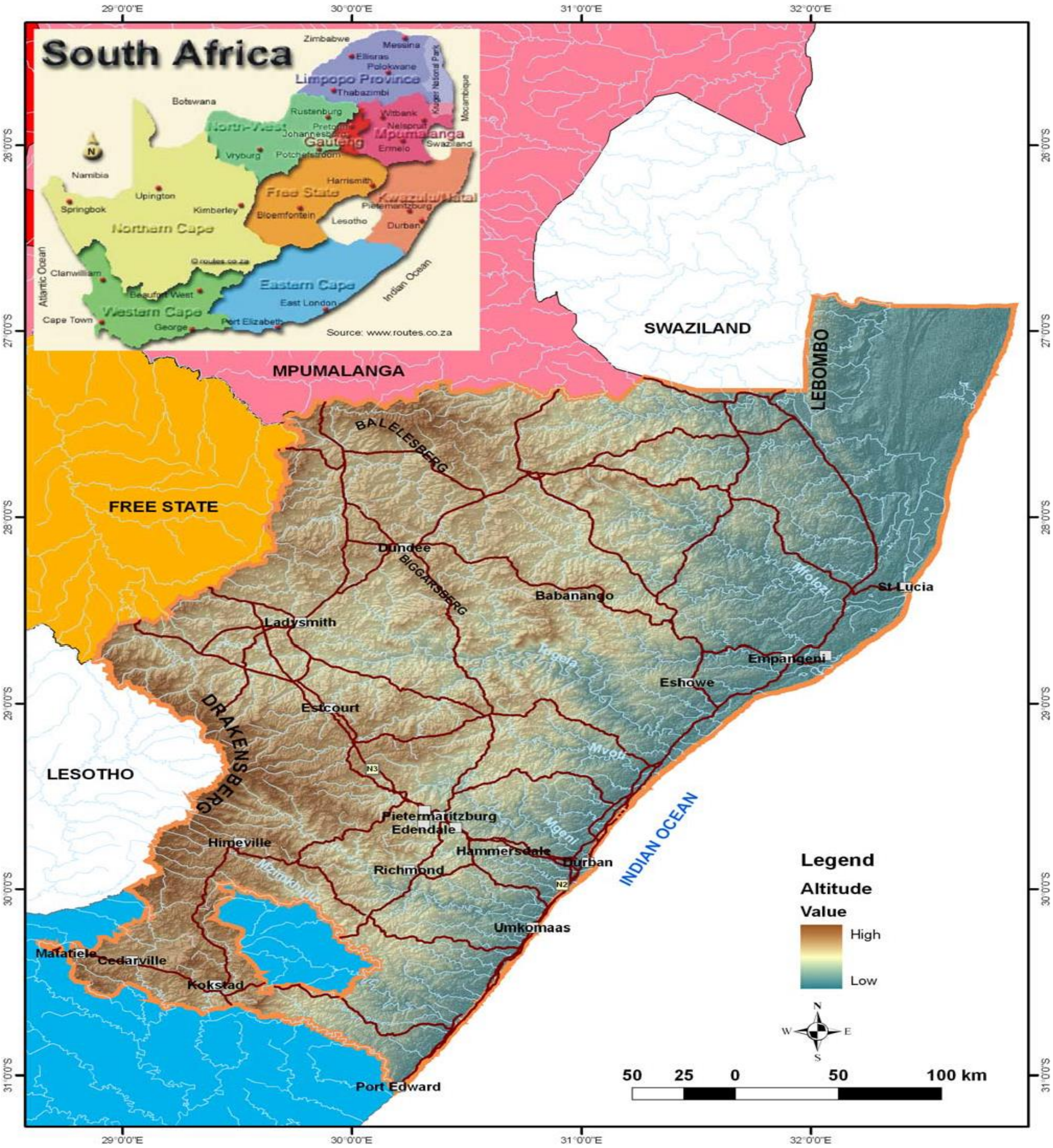

Figure 1. Geographical location of KwaZulu-Natal Province in South Africa

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Highlights of the results in Table 1 show that more tourists above 30 years of age (about 60%) responded to the questionnaire survey, compared to the younger tourists. More than half of the tourists' population are international tourists (53%), and about 30% of the tourists got to know about KwaZulu-Natal through word-of-mouth. Majority of them (about 66%) stayed not more than 10 days in the destination, and many of them (about 62%) are either on holiday or visiting friends and relatives. Good news to Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (responsible Destination Management Organisation) are that 61% of tourists are on return visit; about 83% are either mostly or totally satisfied; about 81% assessed KwaZulu-Natal as little or much better than they expected; and about 72% rated KwaZulu-Natal as little or much better than other destinations they have visited. From these results, the authors infer that KwaZulu-Natal is a favourable and competitive tourism destination in the mind of tourists themselves, and holiday and visiting friends and relatives are the main motives for visiting this destination. Pratminingsih et al. (2014), posit that tourist satisfaction is caused by two dimensions: firstly, it is related to the pre-expectation of the tourist before travel, and secondly, it referred to justification of the tourist on the delivered services after the travel, based on the real experience. Therefore, tourist satisfaction is amplified when their experiences met their expectations.

Table 1. Profile of the respondents (N = 406)

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Female Male	49.0 51.0
Age group	Equal or less than 30 years' old Above 30 years old	40.1 59.9
Origin	South African Non-South African	47.0 53.0
Continent of origin	Africa Australia/ Oceania Asia Europe North America South America	52.8 7.9 6.4 19.3 8.9 4.7
Type of tourist	Domestic tourists (South Africa) International tourists (outside South Africa)	47.0 53.0
Source of Information about KwaZulu-Natal	Internet Word of Mouth Media (travel magazines and books, T.V) Travel Agency/ Tour Operator Other	26.2 30.2 21.0 20.8 1.7
Group travel	Yes No	46.4 53.6
Length of stay in KwaZulu-Natal	1-10 days 11 days or longer	65.6 34.4
Purpose of visit to KwaZulu-Natal	Business (seminar, event, conference) Business (import and export) Holiday Visiting friends and relatives Medical Academic exchange Other	13.4 9.7 45.2 16.9 2.2 9.7 3.0
Have you visited any KwaZulu-Natal destination before?	Yes No	61.0 39.0
Level of satisfaction	Totally satisfied Mostly satisfied Moderately satisfied Mostly dissatisfied Totally dissatisfied	34.3 49.1 12.3 3.7 0.5
Overall judgement of visiting KwaZulu-Natal compared to expectations	Much better Little better About the same Little worse Much worse	45.7 35.7 17.3 1.0 0.3
Overall judgement of visiting KwaZulu-Natal compared to other destinations	Much better Little better About the same Little worse Much worse	34.5 37.3 23.0 4.8 0.5

In Table 2, we measured the mean scores of how the tourists experienced the functional attributes of KwaZulu-Natal during their visit. This study found that the variables used to measure this brand essence dimension are internally consistent or reliable. The top 5 variables to which the tourists have the highest level of agreements include: 'KwaZulu-Natal has comfortable weather conditions', 'KwaZulu-Natal has excellent accommodation facilities', 'KwaZulu-Natal is unique and has diverse attractions and activities', 'KwaZulu-Natal tourism destinations cater for different types of tourists' and 'KwaZulu-Natal destination is well developed for tourism'. These therefore reveal the top 5 functional attributes that make this destination to be considered better than other destinations that the tourists have visited. However, this study notes that tourists did not collectively agree to these 2 statements: 'KwaZulu-Natal is a clean destination', and 'Local transport in KwaZulu-Natal is efficient'. KwaZulu-Natal destination managers need to improve on the cleanliness and the local transport services of the destination. This study found a high level of positive correlation between the KwaZulu-Natal functional attributes on the one hand; and the tourists' level of satisfaction, the overall judgement of KwaZulu-Natal compared to expectations, and the overall judgement of KwaZulu-Natal compared to other destinations on the other hand.

The improvement of the cleanliness of KwaZulu-Natal can however be primarily affected by the provincial and municipal governments, and the local community members. Provincial and municipal governments employees who are tasked with cleaning the surroundings have to improve on their services, and the local community members should also regularly volunteer to uphold a clean and healthy environment. The results from this study also highlight the need for improvement regarding local transportation. This responsibility falls on travel operators, public and private transport services.

These results agree with Hosany et al.'s (2015) inference that tourists develop strong relationships with destinations as a result of products, services and conditions offered or found in the destination. Dwyer and Kim (2003) further discussed the indicators of destination competitiveness; amongst these indicators is the quality of service offered within a destination. Perceived quality is said to refer to consumers' feelings concerning the quality of a product or service associated with brand or destination (Keller, 2001; Kim et al., 2003; Low and Lamb, 2000; Yoo et al., 2000). We therefore argue that tourists' overall satisfaction has a direct relationship with the quality of functional attributes found within the destination, supporting the finding of Del Bosque and San Martín (2008). The study results presented by this study have strongly demonstrated that the satisfaction level will also result in the tourists forming in their minds a positive brand image of the destination, and this can lead to brand loyalty. Manzo (2005), and Scannell and Gifford (2010) reflectively argue that tourists may get attached to tourism destinations; and people-place relationships may involve several emotions, seen as positive: emotions such as pride, love and contentment. These can lead to tourists being attached to a destination, and may as well perceive it superior to other destinations.

Table 2. Comparing tourists' expectations and brand essence – functional attributes

Brand Essence – Functional Attributes				
Statements	**Mean Score [a]**	**Correlation with level of satisfaction / expectations / comparison to other destinations [b]**		
		Level of satisfaction	**Expectations**	**Comparison to other destinations**
1. KwaZulu-Natal is unique and has diverse attractions and activities	1.78	**	**	**
2. KwaZulu-Natal destination is well developed for tourism	1.80	**	**	**
3. KwaZulu-Natal has comfortable weather conditions	1.71	**	**	**
4. KwaZulu-Natal tourism destinations cater for different types of tourists	1.80	**	**	**
5. KwaZulu-Natal has adequate and well-maintained infrastructure	1.90	**	**	**
6. KwaZulu-Natal provides tourists with good value for their money	1.84	**	**	**
7. KwaZulu-Natal has a lot of events for tourists to attend	1.88	**	**	**
8. KwaZulu-Natal has excellent accommodation facilities	1.76	**	**	**
9. KwaZulu-Natal is a clean destination	2.06	**	**	**
10. KwaZulu-Natal has excellent shopping facilities	1.94	**	**	**
11. KwaZulu-Natal has excellent entertainment facilities	1.93	**	**	**
12. Local transport in KwaZulu-Natal is efficient	2.09	**	**	**
Reliability Statistics (Perceptions of brand essence – functional attributes), Cronbach's Alpha =.860, N of Items = 12, *Valid cases = 351 (86.5%), Excluded cases = 55 (13.5%), Total = 406*				

Notes: [a] Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree
[b] Spearman's Rank correlation test significance. **, $p < 0.01$

In Table 3, we measured the mean scores of how the tourists experienced the emotional attributes of KwaZulu-Natal during their visit. This study also found that the variables used to measure this brand essence dimension are internally consistent or reliable. The top 5 variables to which the tourists have the highest level of agreements include: 'My visit to KwaZulu-Natal will be memorable', 'My visit to KwaZulu-Natal has been valuable to me', 'I have gained new knowledge and experience during my visit to KwaZulu-Natal', 'KwaZulu-Natal provides tourists with authentic visitor experience', and 'I feel a strong sense of humanity in KwaZulu-Natal'.

It is important to note here that the concept of *Ubuntu* in Zulu language refers to the strong sense of humanity that is highly valued amongst the local populace of KwaZulu-Natal. These results reveal the top 5 emotional attributes that make this destination to be considered better than other destinations that the tourists have visited. However, this study notes that tourists did not collectively agree to the statement: 'I feel safe and secure travelling in KwaZulu-Natal'. KwaZulu-Natal destination managers need to improve on the safety and security of the destination. This study found a high level of positive correlation between the KwaZulu-Natal emotional attributes on the one hand; and the tourists' level of satisfaction, the overall judgement of KwaZulu-Natal compared to expectations, and the overall judgement of KwaZulu-Natal compared to other destinations on the other hand.

Table 3. Comparing tourists' expectations and brand essence – emotional attributes

Brand Essence – Emotional Attributes				
Statements	**Mean Score [a]**	**Correlation with level of satisfaction / expectations / comparison to other destinations [b]**		
		Level of satisfaction	**Expectations**	**Comparison to other destinations**
13. KwaZulu-Natal provides tourists with authentic visitor experience	1.74	**	**	**
14. My visit to KwaZulu-Natal has been valuable to me	1.66	**	**	**
15. My visit to KwaZulu-Natal will be memorable	1.57	**	**	*
16. I have gained new knowledge and experience during my visit to KwaZulu-Natal	1.71	**	**	**
17. The local people in KwaZulu-Natal are friendly and hospitable	1.78	**	**	**
18. I feel safe and secure travelling in KwaZulu-Natal	2.16	**	**	**
19. I feel a general sense of joy visiting KwaZulu-Natal	1.86	**	**	**
20. KwaZulu-Natal evokes an emotion of love for me	1.96	**	**	**
21. I feel a general sense of inspiration in KwaZulu-Natal	1.97	**	**	**
22. I feel a strong sense of humanity in KwaZulu-Natal	1.75	**	**	**
Reliability Statistics (Perceptions of brand essence – emotional attributes), Cronbach's Alpha =.853, N of Items = 10, *Valid cases = 373 (91.9%), Excluded cases = 33 (8.1%), Total = 406*				

Notes: [a] Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree
[b] Spearman's Rank correlation test significance. *, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$

Ezeuduji and Nkosi (2017) stressed on the need to improve safety and security in KwaZulu-Natal and other South African destinations through police presence and community policing. The local community members are important stakeholders in their tourism development and management, as a downturn of tourism will largely and particularly affect them adversely. Aho (2001) posits that emotions play a huge part in tourists' experience in a destination. Branding of destinations allows tourists to recognize a destination and distinguish it from other competitive offerings. It then becomes easier for the tourists to identify the brand they prefer amongst other brands (Cevero, 2013). This is in agreement with Light et al.'s (2012) position that the brand's competitive advantage as well as the benefits received through a brand determine whether customers can choose a particular brand over its competitors or not. Other authors (such as Chuang, 2007; Goossens, 2000; Kwortnik and Ross, 2007) posit that tourists are mostly influenced by their emotions to make purchases. Emotions play a vital role in defining unforgettable experiences (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). In this regard, Gnoth (1997) states that tourist's emotional reactions are essential precursors of post-consumption behaviours and previous studies point out how emotions affect tourists' satisfaction (such as Del

Bosque and San Martín 2008). According to Donio et al. (2006), satisfaction and commitment are valid indicators of brand loyalty, and customer satisfaction is a matter of value perception, measured as congruence between expected and perceived values.

Table 4. Comparing tourists' expectations and brand competitiveness

Statements	Brand Competitiveness			
	Mean Score [a]	Correlation with level of satisfaction / expectations / comparison to other destination[b]		
		Level of satisfaction	Expectations	Comparison to other destinations
23. KwaZulu-Natal is rich in cultural and natural attributes	1.57	**	**	**
24. KwaZulu-Natal tourism destinations offer quality products, service and valuable experiences to tourists	1.67	**	**	**
25. KwaZulu-Natal offers unique cultural and nature experiences	1.66	**	**	**
26. KwaZulu-Natal is an amazing destination	1.79	**	**	**
27. I feel connected to this destination, KwaZulu-Natal	2.00	**	**	**
28. KwaZulu-Natal has a good image as a tourist destination	1.94	**	**	**
29. KwaZulu-Natal is a well-known destination	2.03	**	**	**
30. KwaZulu-Natal is one of the best destinations in the world	2.08	**	**	**
31. KwaZulu-Natal would be my preferred choice when choosing a destination to visit	2.08	**	**	**
32. I would recommend KwaZulu-Natal to my friends and family	1.59	**	**	**
Reliability Statistics (Perceptions of brand competitiveness), Cronbach's Alpha =.875, N of Items = 10, *Valid cases = 378 (93.1%), Excluded cases = 28 (6.9%), Total = 406*				

Notes: [a] Questionnaire were itemised along a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1, Strongly agree; 2, Agree; 3, Neutral; 4, Disagree; 5, Strongly disagree
[b] Spearman's Rank correlation test significance. *, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$

The results in Table 4 also show very strong correlations, explaining that the feelings that tourists had in the destination, which make them see the destination as very competitive, have a positive impact on tourists' level of satisfaction, and fulfilment of expectations, especially when compared to other destinations. Dwyer and Kim (2003) state that there are indicators of destination competitiveness; amongst these indicators is the quality of service offered within a destination. Perceived quality refers to consumers' feelings concerning the quality of a product or service associated with brand or destination (Kim et al., 2003; Low and Lamb, 2000; Yoo et al., 2000). The last section of this paper concludes this study and proffers study recommendations.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aims to find out tourists' perception of the KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa) brand essence and brand competitiveness as a tourism destination. This research explored how tourists view the KwaZulu-Natal brand essence and if they regard it to be competitive compared to other destinations. The results revealed that tourists are mostly satisfied with visiting KwaZulu-Natal; they indicated that the destination has value for their money. Most of the tourists are willing to return and they are willing to recommend KwaZulu-Natal to others. Tourists see KwaZulu-Natal as a competitive destination. The study makes recommendations that the KwaZulu-Natal should position itself more strongly as an international tourist destination as significant international visitors are attracted to this destination. The service providers should focus more on providing tourism packages inclusive of transport, as a significant number of tourists reported that local transportation in KwaZulu-Natal is not efficient. Local communities in KwaZulu-Natal should work hand-in-glove with the police to improve safety and security in the destination, especially in and around the tourism facilities. These recommendations will assist the managers of the KwaZulu-Natal tourism destinations to improve the quality standards of the destination and help it to be able to compete more strongly in the national and global tourism marketplaces.

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THE IMPACT OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY ON TOURISTS' SATISFACTION: THE MODERATING ROLE OF TOURISTS' AGE

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Abstract: Age has frequently been recognized as one of the key attributes and indicators in creating an advertising system. In any case, it has been infrequently discovered the moderating effects of age on the links between attractions and accessibility as well as tourist satisfaction. Particularly, in the context of Bangladesh, this sort of study has not ever been considered. Hence, this study fulfils the gap by examining the moderating role of age in the relationship of these constructs. The questionnaire survey was directed for gathering data from international tourists in the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Bangladesh. The outcomes got from Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using the SmartPLS v3 uncovered that age significantly moderated the relationship between attraction and tourist satisfaction as well as accessibility and tourist satisfaction.

Key words: Tourist satisfaction, attractions, accessibility, marketing strategy, Bangladesh

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of tourist satisfaction is well documented both in the service management literature as well as the marketing literature. The service management literature suggests that service quality is an antecedent to tourist satisfaction because the higher service quality indicates the higher tourist satisfaction (Chand and Ashish, 2014). The marketing literature indicates that enhancing tourist satisfaction should be the primary function of a destination management organization. Therefore, measuring tourist satisfaction is a prerequisite for the development of a strategy leading to a destination's enhanced attractiveness and its competitive positioning (Nasir et al., 2020). Thus, Chin et al. (2018) explained that the destination's enhanced attractiveness and competitive positioning depends on good accessibility quality. Subsequently, this attractiveness and competitiveness enhance tourists' satisfaction. In addition, Kahtani et al. (2011) established in their study that accessibility is evaluated not only from a transportation or geographic proximity perspective but also from the perspective of available quality functions and facilities at tourist attractions.

Many authors explained some issues regarding tourist satisfaction. These include many factors influencing tourists' satisfaction (Roy et al., 2017; Khuong and Nguyen, 2017; Jayasinghe et al., 2015); accessibility and attractions as the determinant for destination competitiveness and attractiveness that in turn, contribute to tourist satisfaction (Nasir et al., 2020; Hossain and Islam, 2019); the influence of service quality on satisfaction (Mazumder and Hasan, 2014; Ukwayi et al., 2012; Latiff and Imm, 2015); satisfaction and dissatisfaction with destination attributes (Vareiro et al., 2017; Udurawana, 2015). Therefore, several earlier studies showed socio-demographic factors' effects in measuring tourist satisfaction (Rafael and Almeida, 2017; Ma et al., 2018). Salim and Mohamed (2014) investigated the influence of tourists' age on their satisfaction level. Similarly, Ghanbri et al. (2019) showed that there is a positive relationship between socio-demographic factors and tourist satisfaction levels in tourism products. Conversely, several authors found a negative influence of socio-demographic factors and satisfaction levels (Ma et al., 2018). On the other side, several studies found the indirect effects of socio-demographic factors in measuring satisfaction (Huang, 2014; Sereetrakul, 2012). But very few literatures specifically explored the moderating impact of tourist age for identifying the relationship between attractions and accessibility as well as tourist satisfaction (Assaker et al., 2015; Chi, 2011). The current study addresses this knowledge gap by providing discussions and justifications on how tourist age moderates the link between IV (accessibility and attraction) and DV (tourist satisfaction).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourist Satisfaction

According to Ghanbri et al. (2019), satisfaction can be defined as an evaluation of the surprise inherent from a product acquisition as well as consumption experience. Briefly, satisfaction means the psychological state of an individual resulting when the emotions surrounding the expectations are related to the consumers' prior feelings about the consumption experience (Hermawan et al., 2019; Tilaki et al., 2017). Similarly, tourist satisfaction can be defined that it is the state of psychological preferences and pleasure towards tourism products. Tourism products consist of six components that include attractions (natural, man-made, artificial, purpose-built, heritage, special events), accessibility (entire transportation system comprising routes, terminals, and vehicles), amenities (accommodation and catering facilities,

* Corresponding author

retailing, other tourists service), activities (all activities available at the destination and what consumers will do during their visits), ancillary services (services used by tourists such as banks, telecommunication, post, newsagent, hospital) and available packages (pre-arranged packages by intermediaries and principals) (Mohamad et al., 2012; Eichhorn and Buhalis, 2017).

Previous studies mentioned many factors that influence tourist satisfaction (Nasir et al., 2020; Pestana et al., 2019; Hermawan et al., 2019; Ghanbri et al., 2019; Reyes et al., 2019; Chuchu, 2020). Shahrivar (2012) highlighted in his study some major factors that are considered as the destination attributes and significantly influence tourists' satisfaction involving natural factors, cultural factors, shopping, accessibility, infrastructure, reception, services, cost, and price. Moreover, Jeong and Kim, (2019); Chi and Qu, (2008); Lu et al. (2020) showed the relationship among destination image, tourist attributes and overall satisfaction through examining the theoretical and empirical evidence and focused tourist attributes consisting of travel environment, natural attractions, environment and events, historic attractions, infrastructure, accessibility, relaxation, outdoor activities, price, and value. The study of Suanmali (2014) further explained the component of the tourism products consisting of attractions, accessibility, environment, and hospitality that are used as indicators for measuring tourists' satisfaction. Kahtani et al. (2011) argued and focused on accessibility as well as attractions. Because accessibility measures are found not only from a transportation or geographic proximity perspective but also from the perspective of available quality functions and facilities at tourist attractions (Kahtani et al., 2011). Therefore, tourist attractions are required for making destination attractiveness so that many tourists can be attracted (Nadalipour et al., 2019). For these reasons, previous literature on the effects of attractions and accessibility on tourist satisfaction is discussed in the following sections.

Attraction

An attraction refers to a place or anything that appeals to tourists to visit any destination (Suanmali, 2014). Tourist attractions include natural attractions, cultural attractions, and recreation and activities. Lascu et al. (2018) described attractions as the determinant of the destination image that affects tourist satisfaction. These attractions include natural attractions such as scenic mountain and valleys, scenery and natural attractions, gardens and springs, scenic drive, parks, lakes, rivers, wildlife, caves, and underground formations. Another form of attraction is entertainment and events, which include shows, exhibitions, cultural events and festivals, western musicals and nightlife and entertainment; as well as historic attractions such as history, heritage, and vintage buildings (Rajesh, 2014).

Tourist attractions are found to be the core determinants of attractiveness and tourism would not exist without it (Haneef et al., 2019). Tourist attractions are regarded as an essential weapon and competitive advantage for any tourist destination (Nahar et al., 2015). In addition, Manhas et al. (2016) also stated that tourist attractions contribute to the development of the tourist destination as well as have beneficial effects on the overall economic development of any country. Attractions are also important attributes of tourism and hospitality (Handayani, 2016).

Kirom and Putra (2018) developed a research model showing the effects of tourism attractions on tourist satisfaction. Their study showed that cultural attractions, promotion, uniqueness, hospitality, and cost for creating a tourist attraction were considered for measuring their level of satisfaction (Kirom and Putra, 2018). Similarly, Hassan and Shahnewaz (2014) added that attractions and relaxation facilities are important factors for identifying tourist satisfaction. Apart from these, the study findings of Philemon (2015) over-emphasized the tourist attractions for assessing the tourists' perception and satisfaction. Even, Sereetrakul (2012) highlighted attractions as an important component of tourists' satisfaction towards the performance of the Bangkok tourism industry. Castro et al. (2017) explained that boosting the attractions and tourism activities generates comparative and competitive advantages to promote market opportunities and impel the tourist with unique experiences. Ultimately, tourists' satisfaction can be possible because tourist attractions are regarded as an important determinant claimed by Sereetrakul (2012); Castro et al. (2017); Vengesayi and Mavondo (2009); Naidoo et al. (2011); Kirom and Putra (2018); Rajesh (2013). Hence, the following hypothesis can be proposed to test the relationship between attraction and tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1: Attraction will positively affect tourist satisfaction.

Accessibility

Accessibility is defined as the ability to provide tourists' access to a tourist destination including traveling throughout the destination (Suanmali, 2014). But accessibility does not mean only the transport part, also includes access to the tourists' needed information. Thus, Eichhorn and Buhalis (2017) defined accessibility involving transportation along with all the needed information for tourists. Ghose and Johann (2018) defined the concept of accessibility as easy-to-reach desired goods, services, activities, and destinations by the availability, affordability, and convenience of transport facilities, information, or geographic distribution of activities and destinations. Handayani (2016) illustrated accessibility as tourism and hospitality attributes. On the other side, Rajesh (2013) explained accessibility as the attributes of the destination image that affects tourist satisfaction. The development of the conceptual framework indicated that tourists' satisfaction is directly affected by accessibility.

Castro et al. (2017) highlighted tourist accessibility as the most important requirement when tourists plan their trip. Because tourists' needed information allows them to know about safe activities and sites. Furthermore, when they already make plans their trip with truthful and timely information, they become prepared to approach the destination learning about entertainment, leisure activities, restaurants, and hotels. Hence, the study findings of Castro et al. (2017) found that accessibility is an important indicator identified as fundamental for the measurement of tourist satisfaction. Similarly, Ngoc and Trinh (2015) hypothesized that accessibility affects tourist satisfaction.

Sereetrakul (2012) studied the influence of nationality on tourist satisfaction towards the performance of the Bangkok tourism industry. The study identified some factors that directly affect tourist satisfaction including accessibility (Sereetrakul, 2012). In addition, Seyidov and Adomaitienė (2016) claimed accessibility as the attribute of a tourism destination. The study explained that certain attributes consisting of attractions, amenities, accessibility, image, price, and human resources make tourism destination appropriate and available for tourists. Consequently, tourist satisfaction can be possible with these important attributes (Seyidov and Adomaitienė, 2016). Thus, accessibility is regarded as an important component for satisfying tourists (Ngoc and Trinh, 2015; Suanmali, 2014; Rajesh, 2013; Castro et al. 2017; Sereetrakul, 2012). Hence, the following hypothesis can be proposed to test the relationship between accessibility and tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Accessibility will positively affect tourist satisfaction.

Studies Relating to Tourists' Age

It can be stated that a market is made from subgroups of individuals and that every subgroup has needs and expectations (Pakdil and Kurtulmuşoğlu, 2018). The variety of demands and needs of tourists is probably going to bring about an enormous assorted variety of tourist behaviour. Along these lines, destination management organisations need to build up a superior comprehension of the gatherings of tourists to oblige their prerequisites; and market division empowers them to recognize customers with comparative needs or qualities (Kaciak, 2011). Customer segmentation is a successful marketing procedure that can bring about increasingly proficient and compelling utilization of advertising including other promotional strategies. One of the most widely recognized division rules is socio-demographics. This investigation inspected coordinated travellers' sections for their homogeneity, or absence of it, in developing holiday destination tourist satisfaction based on tourist age (Chi, 2011). Age-based research has gotten expanding consideration in tourism and hospitality literature. Most age-based investigations have concentrated concerning the sub-division, motivation, limitations, and behaviour of the senior market. Some considered the impacts old enough on travellers' choices. For instance, Omar et al. (2015) exact investigation reasoned that age did not influence tourists' inclination for a specific kind of lodging for delight travel. Nonetheless, others contended that tourist's age was probably going to fundamentally impact on behaviour pattern and satisfaction (Assaker et al., 2015). However, this review of the literature indicates that there may have, additionally, the indirect effects of tourist age in measuring their satisfaction level (Assaker et al., 2015; Chi, 2011). Although it was found a few studies which showed the moderating effect of tourists' age on the influence of accessibility and attraction on examining tourist satisfaction. Hence, the following hypotheses can be proposed:

Hypothesis 3a: Tourist age will moderate the relationship between tourist attraction and satisfaction.
Hypothesis 3b: Tourist age will moderate the relationship between tourist accessibility and satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the above discussions that have been found from the reviewing of the previous literature, two significant determinants can be considered. Hence, this paper suggests attractions and accessibility are the two crucial antecedents of measuring tourist satisfaction. Although many authors previously identified many other factors influencing tourists' satisfaction, tourists give priority to accessibility from their decision-making phase (Seyidov and Adomaitienė, 2016). For this reason, they collect information that allows them to know about safe activities and destinations (Castro et al., 2017). Then, they proceed with their trip plan having information about attractions and entertainment, leisure activities, hotel, and restaurants. Hence, attractions and accessibility are regarded as a significant determinant to measure tourists' satisfaction despite identifying many other factors. In addition, it is crucial to determine the tourist age effect on the link between these two factors and satisfaction levels. Therefore, no studies have been found in the context of developing countries including Bangladesh. Consequently, the present paper proposes the following conceptual framework (Figure 1) for further analysis after reviewing numerous recent previous literatures.

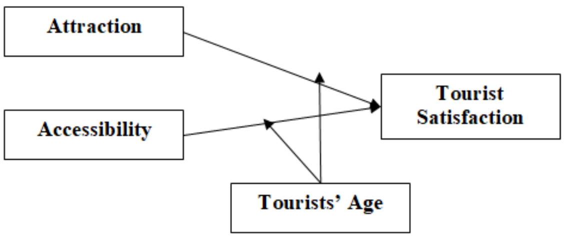

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire survey was conducted for collecting primary data from international tourists in Bangladesh. Of the 500 questionnaires, 387 questionnaires were used for analysis via SmartPLS v3. The data collection procedure was performed at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Bangladesh so that international tourists can be found easily. The total data collection period was from January to March 2020. For conducting this study, five measurement items for attractions were adapted from the studies of Truong and Foster (2006); Chan (2016); Sukiman et al. (2013); another six items were used for accessibility which was adapted from the studies of Truong and Foster (2006); Omar et al. (2015). Moreover, the studies conducted by Yao (2013); Biodun (2014); Aliman et al. (2016) were adapted for selecting measurement items of tourist satisfaction. Therefore, for performing the data analysis process, Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Partial Linear Square of Structural Equation Modelling were utilized.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

As shown in Table 1, 62.0% of respondents were male and 38.0% were female respondents. Moreover, it was found that most of the respondents were 50 years old and above which indicates 30%. Therefore, 9% of respondents were 17-20 years old, 14.70% of respondents were 21-29%, 25.3% were 30-39 years old and 20.90% were 40-49 years old tourists. In the case of the visiting purposes, 10.6% of respondents were for vacation, 27.4% were for religious purposes, 24.3% international tourists were visiting friends and family, 17.1% and 12.4% were for the business and medical purposes and 7.8% were for medical purposes. The mean values (3.7354 and 4.1318) of the independent variables indicate that international tourists were happy in tourist attractions and accessibility in Bangladesh. Moreover, the mean score of tourist satisfaction is 3.6853 indicating that international tourists were satisfied in attractions and accessibility in Bangladesh.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Demographic Factors

No	*Characteristics*	*Variable*	*N*	*%*
1	Gender	Male	240	62.0
		Female	147	38.0
2	Age	17-20 years old	35	9.0
		21-29 years old	57	14.7
		30-39 years old	98	25.3
		40-49 years old	81	20.9
		50 years old and above	116	30.0
3	Visiting Purposes	Vacation	41	10.6
		Religion	106	27.4
		Visiting Friends and Relatives	94	24.3
		Business	66	17.1
		Education	48	12.4
		Medical	30	7.8
		System	2	0.5

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Constructs

No	Variables	Items	Mean	SD	Alpha
1	Attraction	5	3.7354	0.90058	0.820
2	Accessibility	6	4.1318	0.70589	0.869
3	Tourist Satisfaction	5	3.6853	0.98468	0.854

Assessment of the Measurement Model

The measurement model of the study shows that the outer loadings are suitable to fit into the variable. Outer loadings of the study for attraction are 0.819, 0.764, 0.711, 0.806, and 0.705 respectively. For accessibility are 0.804, 0.758, 0.662, 0.842, 0.766, and 0.812 respectively. Conversely, loadings for tourist satisfaction are 0.750, 0.722, 0.809, 0.846, and 0.840.

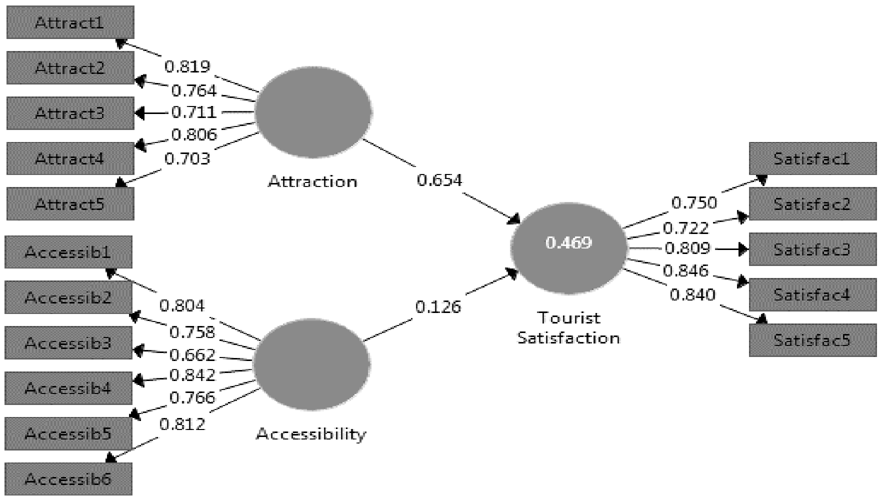

Figure 2. Diagram of the Measurement Model

Table 3 shows the Cronbach's Alpha scores for latent constructs (0.869, 0.820, 0.854), which are above 0.7 (Cronbach, 1951). The results represent enough internal consistency of the measurement items. AVE scores (0.602, 0.581, and 0.632) for the constructs are above 0.5 which means an appropriate measurement model (Assaker et al., 2015).

Table 3. Result of measurement model for the study

Latent variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Accessibility	0.869	0.886	0.900	0.602
Attraction	0.820	0.835	0.873	0.581
Tourist Satisfaction	0.854	0.863	0.895	0.632

Assessment of the Structural Model

The diagram of the structural model (Figure 3) shows higher T-values which indicate enough efficiency in the variables (Ringle et al., 2015). Tourist satisfaction is used as an exogenous factor. Therefore, the age of the tourists was found as an exogenous construct. The effect of the independent variable (attraction and accessibility) to the dependent variable (tourist satisfaction) is positively significant. Furthermore, the moderating effect of age significantly affects the relationships between attraction, accessibility, and tourist satisfaction.

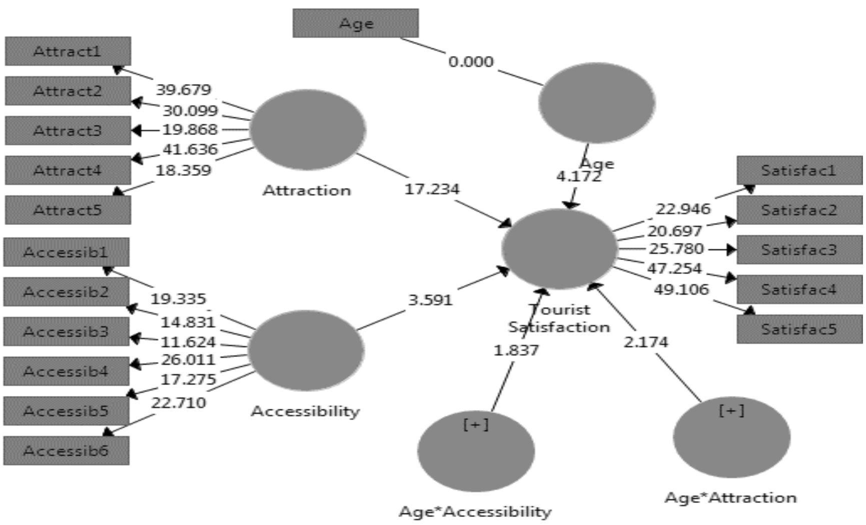

Figure 3. Diagram of the Structural Model

The results are supported because statistically significant relationships are found between independent, moderating, and dependent variables. The direct influence of IV towards DV are representing a significant and positive relationship as accessibility (P value= 0.000) and attraction (P value= 0.000) which demonstrates a fitted structural model in this study. Moreover, the moderating effect of age shows that there is a positive relationship between age and satisfaction (P= 0.000); there is a moderating effect on the relationship between accessibility (P value= 0.066) and satisfaction as well as attraction and satisfaction (P value= 0.030).

Table 4. Results of Structural Model

SL No.	Relationships	Direct/Indirect Effect	T Statistics	P Value	Supported
1.	Accessibility -> Tourist Satisfaction	0.048	3.591	0.000***	Yes
2.	Age -> Tourist Satisfaction	0.285	4.172	0.000***	Yes
3.	Age*Accessibility -> Tourist Satisfaction	0.024	1.837	0.066*	Yes
4.	Age*Attraction -> Tourist Satisfaction	0.029	2.174	0.030**	Yes
5.	Attraction -> Tourist Satisfaction	0.038	17.234	0.000***	Yes

Note: $p \leq 0.01$***; $p \leq 0.05$**; $p \leq 0.10$*

DISCUSSION

Achieving tourist satisfaction is the main objective of all destination management organizations. However, not all organizations are fully aware of the different factors that affect satisfaction levels. Tourist satisfaction needs to be prioritised in the competitive business world. For this reason, Nasir et al. (2020) stated that the role of satisfaction is undeniable because it is essential to make business profitability. Moreover, identifying the factors that can fulfil tourist satisfaction especially in the tourism industry, helps to make a successful destination marketing programme.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the tourists' age effect on the relationships between accessibility and attraction as well as satisfaction. The results indicate that attraction has a positive and significant relationship with tourist satisfaction which is supported by many relevant studies including Suanmali (2014); Sukiman et al. (2013); Chi and Qu (2008); Hui et al. (2007). Therefore, it is found that accessibility has a positive and significant relationship with tourist satisfaction which is supported by several studies in different contexts including Jayaprakash and Mythili (2017); Ozturk and Gogtas (2016); Vareiro et al. (2017). Although, little studies earlier identified the tourist age effect and this gap has been fulfilled by this present study. Ultimately, the outcome shows that there is a moderating effect of age on the relationship between accessibility and satisfaction which is supported by several relevant studies including Assaker et al. (2015); Chi (2011). Moreover, the results interestingly show that there is a moderating effect of age on the relationship between attraction and satisfaction which is supported by several relevant studies including (Zhou, 2005; Salim and Mohamed, 2014). The present study consequently concludes that attractions and accessibility have a significant impact on tourists' satisfaction. Apart from these, tourists' age has a moderating effect on the link between IV (accessibility and attraction) and DV (tourist satisfaction).

Theoretical Implication

The study contributes to the tourist satisfaction literature by explaining the impact of attraction and accessibility. Principally, the current study adds contribution to the existing literature by clarifying the tourists' age effects on the relationships between attractions, accessibility, and satisfaction. prior literature revealed in general that attractions and accessibility are the most widely used factors in the effort to create tourist's satisfaction. However, from these factors, accessibility for tourists is considered as an essential component of successful tourist destination development. Hence, Currie and Falconer (2014) indicated that transport plays an important role in the successful creation and development of new as well as the healthy growth of existing tourist destinations. Therefore, the provision of suitable transport and required information for tourists can transform dead centres of tourist interest into active and prosperous places attracting a lot of tourists (Virkar and Mallya, 2018). As for tourist attractions, they are the main feature of tourism product that triggers someone or group of people to visit any destination (Kruczek and Szromek, 2011). Apart from this, the marketing concept emphasizes the tourist attractions so that many more tourists can be attracted. Hence, Kirom and Putra (2018) observed some attractions variables involving promotion, culture, uniqueness, cost, and hospitality to comprehend tourists' satisfaction. But after review, it has been found that age as a moderating effect for analysing the relationships between attractions and accessibility with tourist satisfaction is rarely studied. Consequently, the findings of the study can provide insights into the investigation on tourist satisfaction in the context of Bangladesh by adding effects of tourist age on explaining the links between accessibility and attraction.

Managerial Implication

The study has several managerial implications. First, the study can assist destination organisations' managers through a better understanding of tourist age effects on tourist satisfaction so that they can realize the age effects in the context of destination marketing. Second, tourism authorities may understand the role of attractions and accessibility for identifying tourist satisfaction. Third, by understanding the current scenario of tourist satisfaction level in Bangladesh, tourism professionals can take initiatives for improving satisfaction levels.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although the study has several contributions to the tourism industry as well as in the existing literature, it has some limitations. The study has been conducted based on the two factors involving accessibility and attraction. It can be further conducted by analysing other destination attributes including accommodation, amenities, activities, and safety. It is recommended that tourists' satisfaction levels be investigated based on nationality, gender, and income of international tourists. Furthermore, data can be collected to identify tourists' intentions to revisit and recommend to others.

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THE ANTECEDENT FACTOR OF TOURISTS' INTENTION TO CONSUME TRADITIONAL FOOD

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Abstract: Traditional food has become one of the essential aspects of developing culinary tourism. However, there are still limited studies that discuss the tourists' intention to consume traditional food when they tour. This study aims to reveal the antecedent factors of the intention to consume the traditional food of tourists when traveling. Data were randomly collected through an online questionnaire from local Malaysian and Indonesian tourists. Structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis is used to analyze the path between the antecedent factors forming the intention of tourists to consume traditional food. The results of the study show that attitude, subjective norms, and behavioural control factors are essential antecedents to form the intention of tourists to consume traditional food. Also, behavioural control is proven to be a primary mediator to strengthen the influence of attitude and subjective norms on the intention of tourists to consume traditional food during their trips. The results of this study have implications for tourism practitioners in developing new culinary tourism based on economic potential (traditional food).

Key words: traditional food, ethnic food, food tourism, consumption intention, cross-cultural

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INTRODUCTION

Culinary tourism has a significant role in the development of sustainable tourism and has a role in improving the country's economy (Ian, 2016; Sims, 2009). This condition makes sense because the potential for culinary tourism can increase the tourists' interest to visit a country as a tourist destination, and ultimately simultaneously also affect the country's economic improvement. Traditional food (TF) is always closely related to tourism because when visiting new tourist destinations, tourists also pay attention to the culinary habits and traditions of the local population. Now, studies of culinary tourism have been widely discussed in various countries (Ahlawat et al., 2019; Ellis et al., 2018; Hamidah et al., 2019; Mahfud et al., 2018; Mahfud et al., 2019; Quigley et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2020). Besides, the development of culinary tourism cannot be separated from aspects of the cultural heritage of food from their ancestors. So the development of culinary tourism often involves elements of traditional food. The involvement of traditional food in the development of culinary tourism aims to preserve the local cultural heritage of the ancestors. It seems that tourists support this destination; tourists choose traditional food as their consumption when they travel for reasons to respect local culture (Hiram Ting et al., 2019). Also, diverse interests and acceptance of food from various cultures have encouraged people to explore alternative food choices (Barrena and Sánchez, 2013).

Their awareness to try exotic cuisine, including local or ethnic food, is increasingly developing as technology and information develop through social media (Burgess, 2014). Now, the experience of tourism in the form of consuming traditional food is increasingly popular and has been widely developed as a local culinary tour (Burgess, 2014; Nor et al., 2012; Hiram Ting et al., 2019; Verbeke and López, 2005).

The presence of traditional food in culinary tourism activities influence the interest of tourists to visit tourist destinations. Collaborating on traditional food and tourist destinations is the right way to develop tourist destinations and culinary tourism as well. This concept provides tourist knowledge about people, the environment, and culture through the exploration of traditional food (Tong et al., 2016). In principle, traditional food has a role in promoting tourism because tourists gain traditional and authentic food experiences in certain cultures (Rand et al., 2003). Also, scholar (for instance, Kim and Iwashita, 2016; H. Ting et al., 2016) has proven that food tourism preferences have an impact on individual behaviour in choosing their travel destinations.

Thus, both aspects consisting of traditional food and tourist destinations, are essential for developing culinary tourism. The main challenge in developing culinary tourism is presenting culinary tourism that suits different tourist preferences from various countries and cultures (Lin et al., 2011; Min and Lee, 2014). Another challenge, the development of traditional food tourism is competing closely with the development of modern food from various countries. Both of these challenges become serious challenges to promote traditional food. Therefore, information about preferences and their constituent factors is critical. Although there have been many studies that show that traditional food has an essential role in the development of sustainable tourism, there are still limited studies that examine the exploration of the antecedent factors of tourists' intentions to choose traditional food as their consumption when they travel.

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Nowadays, food / gastronomic tourism has become an exciting and popular field of tourism studies. However, there is still little information about the interests of both local and international tourists in choosing traditional foods in Southeast Asia as their tourism consumption choices. Specifically, how the intention of tourists to choose traditional Malaysian and Indonesian food is still limited. Malaysia and Indonesia share a common culture, so it is not surprising that many cultural similarities are found, including traditional foods in both countries. Besides, acceptance of traditional foods in Southeast Asia has experienced a good increase (Chang et al., 2011; World Trade Organization, 2017). The report shows that the traditional food of Southeast Asia, especially Malaysia and Indonesia, has excellent potential to be developed as alternative culinary tourism. Therefore, the development and promotion efforts need to be increased by considering the diversity of cultural backgrounds of local and international tourists.

An understanding of tourist preferences for traditional foods and their antecedent factors is crucial to be studied. Information about the structure forming the intention of tourists in choosing traditional foods when traveling is useful for developing culinary tourism by considering the cultural diversity of the tourists. Although Malaysia and Indonesia have great potential in the reception of traditional foods in Southeast Asia, there is still little information that presents perceptions of traditional food choices for tourists when they travel. In particular, there is still little information about the antecedent factors in the formation of the intention to consume traditional foods of tourists. This study aims to reveal the antecedent factors of the intention to consume traditional foods of tourists when traveling in Malaysia and Indonesia. Besides, this study also seeks to reveal the comparison of each antecedent factor between tourists in Malaysia and Indonesia.

The role of traditional food in tourism activities

The definition of traditional food is characterized into four dimensions, namely: (1) the product is often consumed from time to time or related to a particular celebration or season; (2) products related to strong beliefs about nutritional and sensory characteristics that must be transmitted from one generation to another; (3) preparation and consumption are specific, following gastronomic inheritance; and (4) products are closely related to certain areas, regions, or countries (Boncinelli et al., 2017; Guerrero et al., 2009). Traditional foods are part of the cultural heritage of certain regions (Bhaskarachary et al., 2016; Ferguson et al., 2017) and play a role in the transfer of cultural heritage to future generations (Albayrak and Gunes, 2010). Also, traditional meanings contribute to the development and sustainability of rural areas, protecting them from depopulation, involving substantial products of differentiation potential for producers and processors (Avermaete et al., 2004).

Food choice is an essential attribute for tourists, especially about the attractiveness of visited tourist destinations (Giampiccoli and Kalis, 2012; Remmington and Yuksel, 1998). Food reasons are often the reason tourists visit tourist destinations. Previous studies have shown that authentic and attractive local food can influence tourist decisions when choosing their vacation destinations (Ab Karim and Chi, 2010). This is quite reasonable because the involvement of traditional foods can provide an exciting experience for tourists during a tour. Their tourism activities can be used as an experience to learn about the culture and identity of tourist destinations. According to Kunwar (2017), traditional food does not only depend on the specificity of taste but also acts as a channel to know and experience a new culture. Smith and Xiao (2008) report that tourists no longer only eat to satisfy hunger but to learn and experience local culture through local ethnic food. Therefore, the experience of consuming traditional food is often included as part of a tour package to enhance the experience of tourists.

Traditional food consumption intention

Food choices in tourism activities have become an essential aspect in the development of tourism activities. Even authentic food is a platform to introduce and understand the local culture for visiting tourists. In principle, food choices are part of the study of human behaviour. This voting behaviour is influenced by many factors, such as situational and personal factors. Scholar (Prescott et al., 2002) states that the criteria for choosing food are an embodiment of several factors that affect sensory and non-sensory functions. Besides, other factors that influence food choices are personal (such as motives and intentions) to be a precursor to food consumption behaviour (Babicz-Zielińska, 2006; Mak et al., 2012). Specifically, Rozin (1996) argues that cultural background has a strong influence on food choices. Tourist choices will adjust to their eating habits and sensory properties.

Travelers when choosing food consider several factors such as sensory characteristics (such as taste, smell, and texture) and non-sensory characters such as attitudes related to food (Rozin, 1996), health (Filimonau et al., 2018), price (Steenhuis et al., 2011), and ethics (Dowd and Burke, 2013). However, some scholars (Babicz-Zielińska, 2006; Mak et al., 2012) emphasized the importance of personal factors such as motives and intentions as essential determinants of food consumption behaviour. The findings of previous studies indicate that individual intentions are significant in the study of traditional food choices for tourists. Good information about how the behaviour of tourists in choosing food is vital, especially for developing culinary tourism.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) in traditional food consumption intention

The intention of tourists to consume traditional foods is part of the study of personality traits. Therefore, this study is very appropriate to use the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) approach to express the intention of tourists to consume traditional Malaysian and Indonesian food. TPB has been widely implemented in various research fields, including food consumption intentions (Dowd & Burke, 2013; McDermott et al., 2015). This theory is based on the idea that the intention to perform certain behaviours is shaped by the desire of individuals to carry out their behaviour and belief in their ability to do that. Also, TPB emphasized that the most proximal determinant of behaviour was the intention to carry out that behaviour. The intention is believed to be able to direct individuals to carry out a behaviour. However, this intention also depends on attitude, overall evaluation of behaviour, and normal sufficiency.

In Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), it is revealed that individual behavioural intentions are determined by three aspects, namely (a) attitudes towards the behaviour, (b) subjective norms, and (c) perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991, 2011). Attitudes towards the behaviour refer to the extent to which a person has a favorable or unacceptable evaluation or assessment of the planned behaviour. Subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure to do or not do the behaviour. Finally, perceived behavioural control refers to the ease or difficulty that is felt in conducting behaviour and is assumed to reflect past experiences and anticipate obstacles and barriers. Ultimately this theory concludes that the more beneficial attitudes and subjective norms concerning behaviour, and the greater the perceived behavioural control, the stronger the individual's intention to carry out the planned behaviour (Ajzen, 2011).

Referring to TPB theory, then in the context of this study, attitudes towards the behaviour relate to an individual's evaluation of the self-performance of traditional food consumption behaviour. Subjective norms are the expectations of others (social) towards those who consume traditional food. Meanwhile, perceived behavioural control refers to the ease or difficulty that is felt to consume traditional foods. Malaysia and Indonesia have a lot in common because they both come from Malay culture; these cultural similarities include traditional food culture. However, there is still little information that explains how intention tourists are in choosing traditional Malaysian and Indonesian food when they travel. Specifically, how to compare the intention of Malaysian and Indonesian tourists in choosing traditional foods in their travel.

Research Conceptual Framework

The development of this research model uses the TPB approach as a theoretical foundation. Based on TPB theory, we believe that the intention of tourists to choose traditional Malaysian and Indonesian foods when taking a tour is influenced by attitudes towards consuming traditional foods, subjective norms towards traditional foods, and behavioural control over traditional foods. The interaction and collaboration of the three independent variables play an essential role in determining the extent to which tourists' intentions to choose traditional foods and how those intentions are formed. Specifically, we examine the relationship between antecedents and the hierarchical structure of the antecedent factors of intention to consume traditional foods.

Although many scholars have discussed the role of these three aspects to shape food consumption intentions, empirical studies examining how the hierarchical structure of these three factors influence the intention to consume traditional foods are still minimal. The conceptual model in Figure 1 presents the direct and mediating effects between the factors of attitudes towards consuming traditional foods, subjective norms on traditional foods, behavioural control of traditional foods, and intention to consume traditional foods. This study also examines the role of mediating behavioural control of traditional foods in the interaction of attitudes towards the consumption of traditional foods, subjective norms on traditional foods, and intention to consume traditional foods of Malaysia and Indonesia. In this study, we tested the following hypotheses:

H1 = Attitude towards consuming traditional food has a positive effect on traditional food consumption intention among tourists.

H2 = Subjective norm towards consuming traditional food has a positive effect on traditional food consumption intention among tourists.

H3 = Perceived control towards consuming traditional food has a positive effect on traditional food consumption intention among tourists.

H4 = Attitude towards consuming traditional food has a positive effect on perceived control towards consuming traditional food among tourist.

H5 = Subjective norm towards consuming traditional food has a positive effect on perceived control towards consuming traditional food among tourist.

H6 = Perceived control towards consuming traditional food mediates the effect of the attitude towards consuming traditional food on traditional food consumption intention among tourists.

H7 = Perceived control towards consuming traditional food mediates the effect of the subjective norm towards consuming traditional food on traditional food consumption intention on tourists.

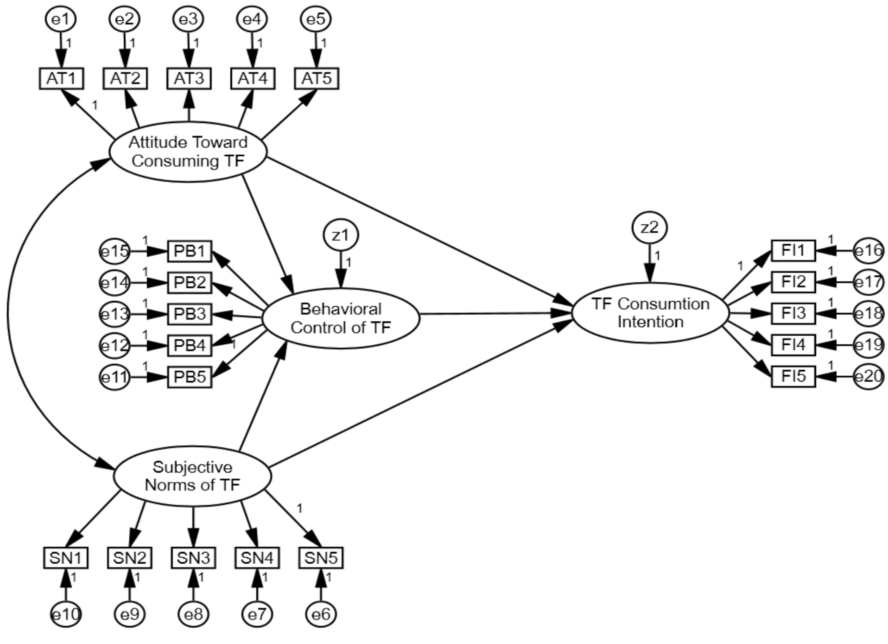

Figure 1. The conceptual framework

Note: AT1-AT5= items of attitude toward consuming traditional food; SN1-SN5= items of subjective norms of traditional food; PB1-PB5= items of behavioural control of traditional food; FI1-FI5= traditional food consuming intention

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study focuses on exploring the antecedent factors of tourists' intention to consume traditional foods. The online questionnaire was randomly distributed to Indonesian and Malaysian tourists who were touring. Four hundred sixty-two tourists completed the survey, consisting of 242 Indonesian tourists and 220 Malaysian tourists (Table 1).

We collected data using a questionnaire from a previous study (Hiram Ting et al., 2019), and we developed a questionnaire. The questionnaire that we have developed is used to measure tourist perceptions about attitudes toward consuming traditional food, subjective norms of traditional food, behavioural control of traditional food, and consuming intention of traditional food. The original questionnaire consisted of three items on each of these variables.

Meanwhile, the questionnaire in this study amounted to 20 items consisting of 5 items attitude toward consuming traditional food (For example, I will try traditional food when I tour), five items subjective norms of traditional food (For instance, I will try traditional food, if important people encourage me to do that), five items behavioural control of traditional food (for example, I have personal control to choose traditional food as food during my tour), five items consuming intention of traditional food (for instance, I plan to consume traditional food when I tour). All variables in this study take a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to agree strongly).

We use structural equation modeling (SEM) with the help of Amos 18 software to test structural models of tourists' intention to consume traditional foods. The coefficients of the structural model are evaluated through a review of various goodness-of-fit criteria. The match test is intended to assess the degree of compatibility between empirical data and the model. Meanwhile, the mediation role test uses a bootstrapping confidence interval with 500 bootstrap sample criteria and a 90% confidence level.

Table 1. Background of participants (N-462)

Attribute	Categories	N	%
Country	Indonesia	242	52.4
	Malaysia	220	47.6
Gender	Male	157	34
	Female	305	66
Profession	Government employees	128	27.7
	Employee state-owned enterprise	3	0.6
	Private employees	38	8.2
	Entrepreneur	4	0.9
	Student	251	54.3
	Others	38	8.2
Educational background	Elementary school	1	0.2
	High school	90	19.5
	Bachelor degree	240	51.9
	Master degree	83	18
	Doctoral degree	48	10.4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Validity and reliability

The validity test results using SEM analysis show all items have a loading factor value above 0.5 (Table 2); this means all items are declared valid. Ghozali (2017) states that the critical limit value used is the loading factor or the parameter value λ of at least 0.5. Also, we tested the reliability of the questionnaire for each variable. The construct reliability test results on all variables showed values above 0.7. Thus, the questionnaire in this study has the reliability to measure attitudes toward consuming traditional food, subjective norms of traditional food, behavioural control of traditional food, and consuming intention of traditional food for tourists.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability of the Instrument in this Study

Variables (N)	Loading Factor (Validity)	Construct Reliability
Attitude toward consuming of traditional food (AT1-AT5)	.774*** – .941***	.995
Subjective norms of traditional food (SN1-SN5)	.532*** – .897***	.988
Behavioural control of traditional food (PB1-PB5)	.606*** – .921***	.989
Consuming intention of traditional food (FI1-FI5)	.770*** – .949***	.995

Note. *** Very small p-value (smaller than 0.001)

The systematic and hierarchical structure of antecedent factors of traditional food consumption intention

The SEM analysis results are shown in Figure 2. The results of the SEM analysis showed that most goodness of fit criteria met proper criteria (Table 3). Next, we tested the effect of each variable that was hypothesized.

Table 3. Goodness of Fit Criteria

Goodness of Fit Measure	Index Value	Cut off-value	Note
df	164		
Chi-square of estimate model	553.061	< 2 df	Not fit model
Probability level	0.000	> 0.05	Not fit model
Cmin/df	3.372	≤ 5	Fit model
Goodness of Index (GFI)	0.878	GFI ≥ 0.9 = good fit; 0.8 ≤ GFI < 0.9 = marginal fit	Marginal fit
Adjusted Goodness of Index (AGFI)	0.843	AGFI ≥ 0.9 = good fit; 0.8 ≤ AGFI < 0.9 = marginal fit	Marginal fit
RMSEA	0.072	≤ 0.08	Fit model
RMR	0.039	< 0.05	Fit model
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.945	TLI ≥ 0.9 = good fit; 0.8 ≤ TLI < 0.9 = marginal fit	Fit model
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.952	CFI ≥ 0.9 = good fit; 0.8 ≤ CFI < 0.9 = marginal fit	Fit model
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.934	NFI ≥ 0.9 = good fit; 0.8 ≤ NFI < 0.9 = marginal fit	Fit model

The first hypothesis testing shows the acquisition of Regression Weights (p-value) of .394 (p = ***), so the first hypothesis is accepted (Table 4). This finding means that the attitude towards consuming traditional food has a positive effect on traditional food consumption intention among tourists. Besides, testing the second hypothesis shows the results of the hypothesis are accepted (p = .035). This result means that subjective norm towards consuming traditional food has a positive effect on traditional food consumption intention among tourists. The third hypothesis testing shows that perceived control towards consuming traditional food has a positive impact on traditional food consumption intention among tourists (hypothesis accepted, p = ***).

Furthermore, testing the fourth hypothesis shows that attitude towards consuming traditional food has a positive effect on perceived control towards consuming traditional food among tourists (hypothesis accepted, p = ***). Testing the last direct path hypothesis (H5) shows that subjective norm towards consuming traditional food has a positive effect on perceived control towards consuming traditional food among tourists (hypothesis accepted, p = ***). Thus, testing the path analysis on the direct impact on each variable shows that the overall effect is directly on the path being hypothesized.

Testing the role of behavioural control mediators using the bootstrapping confidence interval method with 500 bootstrap sample criteria and a 90% confidence level. The results of testing the mediator role (Table 5) reveal that perceived control towards consuming traditional food is a vital mediator to strengthen the influence of attitude and subjective norms on consuming intention of traditional food among tourists. Specifically, the sixth hypothesis testing showed that perceived control towards consuming traditional food significantly mediates the effect of the attitude towards consuming traditional food on traditional food consumption intention among tourists (.201, p = .002, CI = .136 ~ .294), representing partial mediation; thus, Hypothesis 6 was supported (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

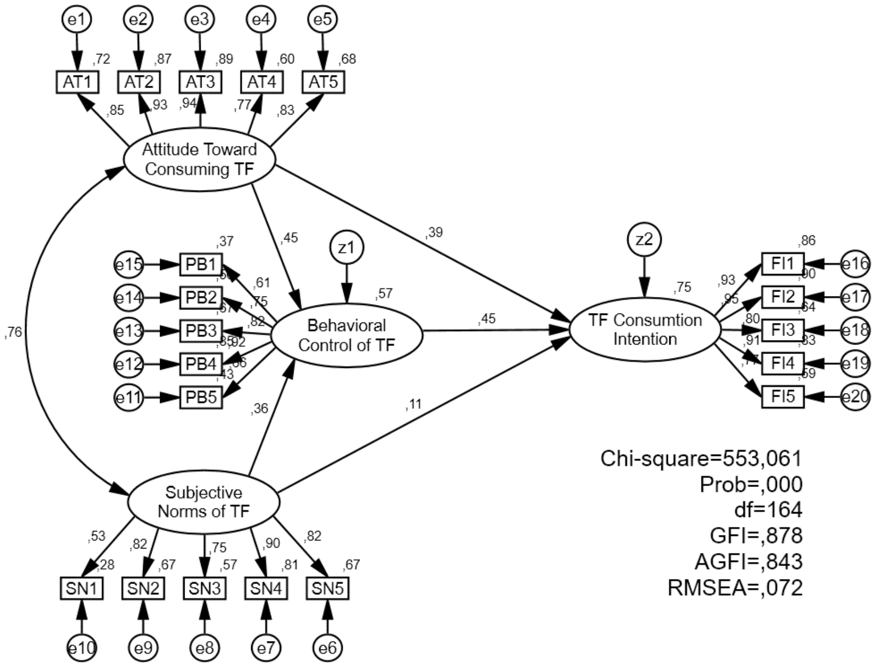

Figure 2. SEM Analysis Results (Full Model)

Note: AT1-AT5= items of attitude toward consuming traditional food; SN1-SN5= items of subjective norms of traditional food; PB1-PB5= items of behavioural control of traditional food; FI1-FI5= traditional food consuming intention

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), partial mediation indicates the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable and the effect of the mediator variable on the dependent variable. Besides, perceived control towards consuming traditional food also significantly mediates the effect of the subjective norm towards consuming traditional food on traditional food consumption intention on tourists (.161, p = .001, CI = .108 ~ .257) and representing partial mediation, so Hypothesis 7 was supported.

Table 4. The path analysis results in Full Model SEM (standardized regression weights)

	Estimate	**S.E.**	**C.R.**	**P**	**Result**
AT → FI	.394	.053	7.671	***	Significant
SN → FI	.105	.051	2.104	.035	Significant
PB → FI	.448	.074	8.576	***	Significant
AT → PB	.447	.048	6.861	***	Significant
SN → PB	.360	.047	5.530	***	Significant

Note. *** = Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level; AT= attitude toward consuming of traditional food; SN= subjective norms of traditional food; PB= behavioural control of traditional food; FI= consuming intention of traditional food

This finding indicates that behavioural control towards consuming traditional food is a vital mediator to optimize the influence of attitude and subjective norm of consuming traditional food among tourists. Also, attitude, subjective norms, and behavioural control are crucial factors to encourage tourists to consume traditional food during their tour.

Table 5. The result of bootstrapping in testing the mediator perceived control towards consuming traditional food

Effect	**Path**	**AT → PB → FI**	**SN → PB → FI**
Standardized indirect effect (PB mediator)	Estimate	.201	.161
	P-value	.002	.001

Note: AT= attitude toward consuming of traditional food; SN= subjective norms of traditional food; PB= behavioural control of traditional food; FI= consuming intention of traditional food.

Discussion

Traditional food is one of the essential potentials in developing cultural-based culinary tourism. A good understanding of tourist preferences and factors that influence tourists to consume traditional food is a vital study for the development of sustainable tourism, especially culinary tourism. This study aims to examine the antecedent factors forming the intention of tourists to consume traditional foods during their tour.

The results of this study reveal that the intention of tourists to consume traditional foods is influenced by three crucial factors consisting of attitude, subjective norms, and behavioural control of tourists to consume traditional foods. This finding reinforces previous studies conducted by Hiram Ting et al. (2019), his research also shows that three essential aspects influence the intention of tourists to consume ethnic food in Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The attitude of tourists about their assessment of traditional food has a vital role in encouraging the intention to consume traditional food. The more they have a positive evaluation of traditional food on their tour, the more they will increase their confidence to try traditional food. Another vital aspect is subjective norms; this aspect illustrates the extent of the influence of social assessment of traditional foods on tourists' decisions to consume traditional foods. This study shows that positive recommendations and reviews from others and the mass media influence the intention of tourists to try traditional foods when they travel.

Another interesting finding, when compared to the three antecedents of intention to consume traditional foods, it was found that behavioural control had the most significant and significant influence. These results reinforce the TPB theory, which states that the higher the perceived behavioural control, the stronger the individual's intention to carry out the planned behaviour (Ajzen, 2011). Behavioural control illustrates the ease and difficulty of tourists to consume traditional food when they travel. The higher the perceived ease of consuming traditional foods, the greater the plan to try traditional foods when they were touring. This study places the behavioural control factor as the most contributory factor in the intention to consume traditional foods, which makes sense. Because after all, individual intentions are primarily determined by their beliefs about planned behaviour (Ajzen, 2011; Mahfud et al., 2019; Mahfud et al., 2019).

Another finding is that behavioural control of tourists about traditional food is influenced by attitude and subjective norms. That is, although behavioural control as the most significant factor contributes to affect the intention of tourists to consume traditional foods, behavioural control is very dependent on the extent of attitudes and social judgments about traditional foods. If attitudes and subjective norms have a positive assessment of traditional food, it will encourage tourists to feel confident and young to consume traditional foods. Thus, this study places behavioural control as a mediator to strengthen the influence of attitude and subjective norms on tourist intentions to consume traditional food. Overall, the results of this study support the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by using the context of tourists' intentions to consume traditional food.

This study has implications for tourism practitioners in the development of cultural-based culinary tourism, especially in Malaysia and Indonesia. Traditional food can be an alternative to introducing local culture to tourists through food. Also, traditional food used as a culinary tourism product can support the preservation of cultural heritage programs in each region. The development of culinary tourism by considering tourist preferences and other essential aspects is something that needs to be considered by tourism practitioners.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study reveal that attitude, subjective norms, and behavioural control are important antecedent factors to influence tourists' intentions to consume traditional foods. In this context, behavioural control factors have the most significant contribution to shaping tourist intentions. However, tourists' perceptions about behavioural control to consume traditional foods depend on their attitude and subjective norms on traditional foods. This study also highlights the vital role of behavioural control as a mediator to strengthen the influence of attitude and subjective norms on tourist intentions to consume traditional foods. Finally, the results of this study have implications for tourism practitioners to consider tourist preferences and other essential factors in developing cultural-based culinary tourism.

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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTION ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM – CASE STUDY APPLIED TO THE PU IN PREŠOV

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Abstract: Sustainable tourism is the concept of travelling and discovering destinations in which the visitor takes full account and respect to the culture, environment and community of a visiting country. The awareness of the increasing global problems related to the environment leads to the change of the consumer behaviour. The aim of the article is to present results of the analysis which was focusing on evaluating the perception of the concept of sustainable tourism. Furthermore, this article identifies the attitudes towards this concept and differences in opinions between genders, among the students of the University of Prešov. The primary source of information was obtained through a questionnaire survey, which sample consisted of 460 students out of which 58.04% were women and 41.96% were men. The questionnaire was processed and evaluated in the MS Excel, Statistica 13.4 and Statgraphics XVIII using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Mann-Whitney test, Kendall rank correlation coefficient. The final results showed that students of the University of Prešov perceive a negative demand of sustainable tourism in Slovakia. In every statement related to sustainable tourism, men showed a more negative approach than women. Slighter different opinion among men and women were noticed in the willingness to financially support the development of sustainable tourism.

Key words: sustainability, sustainable tourism, consumer behaviour, young travellers

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last decades, countries became aware that, the current unregulated development and growth of the world economy is unsustainable. In the conditions of market economy all business entities, which can be viewed as socio-economic systems must be competitive (Ivaničková et al., 2016). For the humanity to continue its existence, the society realized the necessity to create conditions and promote sustainable development, which is the assumption for maintaining a healthy environment. Also, quality of life is directly influenced by the quality of the environment. Environmental quality is influenced by various factors, mainly by anthropogenic activities (Huttmanová et al., 2013). Tourism in many countries creates an important economic share by providing job, new business opportunities which leads to an increased GDP. Sustainable tourism takes full account of the current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, while meeting the needs for both visitors and hosts while improving opportunities for future generations. It is assumed that sustainable tourism leads to managing resources in a way that the economic, social and aesthetic needs are fulfilled while cultural authenticity, basic ecological processes, biological diversity and environmental support system is preserved. The fundamentals of sustainability include environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects. To maintain the long-term sustainability, appropriate balance must be between these tree aspects (United Nations Environment Programme and World Tourism Organization, 2005). However, there is no clear answer to whether tourism can achieve an ideal balance where on one hand a country is economically growing and benefitting while on the other hand respecting, protecting and enhancing the environment and the quality of the life of domestic people.

Sustainable tourism is often confused with environmental, ecological or green tourism. However, sustainable tourism is a wider term, which covers not only the protection of natural, environmental and ecological resources, but also focuses on the economic and social aspects which it helps to develop. As an important part of sustainable development is also the implementation of environmental education at every level of education. Education about sustainable development should primarily focus on how to develop the environmental awareness and raising students' knowledge of the economic aspects of environmental protection. University graduates should unconditionally receive adequate knowledge and information about climate changes uncontrolled economic development. There must be fundamental approaches to a high quality of education for sustainable development. College and university alumni are favourable places not only for educational purposes but also can serve for scientific and research institutions for sustainable development.

Theoretical Background

Sustainable development is one of the most current topics both in theory and practice. The concept of Sustainability and Sustainable

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Development was launched in 1987 at the First World Summit in Stockholm (United Nations Conference on Human Environment) by the United Nation World Commission on Environment. The result was the Brundtland Report document (Black, 2012). In particular, report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, (the document came to be known as "the Brundtland Report"), defined the concept of 'sustainable development' as the development that meets the needs of today's generation without threatening the future generations (United Nations, 1987). Second World Summit on Sustainable Development and environment, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The resulting documents were:

- Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- Convention on the maintaining of natural biodiversity;
- Declaration on the Environment and Development,
- Agenda 21 for the travel & tourism industry: towards environmentally sustainable development universal care for the environment on Earth with a view of the 21st century
- Principles on the use, protection and sustainable development of all types of forests (United Nations, 2012).

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) was held in Johannesburg in 2002 to review progress since the Rio conference in 1992, and to agree a new global deal on sustainable development. Unlike its predecessor, it was primarily concerned with implementation rather than with new treaties and targets, although a number of new targets were agreed, for example one on sanitation. Health was singled out as one of five priority areas, along with water, energy, agriculture and biodiversity. Failure to agree a target on renewable energy was regarded as a major disappointment of the conference (von Schirnding, 2005).

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio +20 was held again in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2012 (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2012). The resulting document outlined practical arrangements for its implementation in national policies. The conference adopted basic regulations on green economy policies, a strategy for financing sustainable development, a policy forum for sustainable development. The United Nations Statistical Commission was asked to launch a program of measures to check if the political decisions of the entities were in line with the rules for sustainable development.

The message of the conference was: "The future we want".

The main document launched of this conference was A / CONF.216 /5 containing a 10-year program with models for sustainable production and consumption patterns (United Nations, 2012). It contained the steps necessary to put these methods into practice. Rio +20 has also taken future decisions, including energy, food security, ocean and urban pollution. The last Sustainable Development Summit was held at the UN headquarters in New York in September 2015. More than 150 world leaders adopted the "Global Goals for Sustainable Development" program and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, valid for 2015-2030. Agenda 2030's message is " By people, from people, to people". This document is the source document for international communities and national governments. Business, connected to Agenda 2030 concentrates not only on achieving the quantity of the objectives that are set, but in particular, quality of the objectives. Agenda 2030 for sustainable development is the most comprehensive document of global priorities so far, consisting of 17 main objectives elaborated into 169 partial objectives (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2018).

The beginnings of scientific research in terms of sustainable development, date back to the 1980s. At that time, the International Organization of UNESCO launched the program "Man and the Biosphere" which evaluated how tourism influenced the territory of the Alps over the past 100 years. The conclusion of the study contains the principles of the sustainable development of tourism, which must be applied not only in the Alps, but everywhere in the world. At that time, the need to move from mass to sustainable tourism development was asserted. Also based on the results of the study, Krippendorf (1987) published a pioneering study entitled Alpsegen - Alptraum, which advocates that tourism in the Alps was developed in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. His theme became interesting in theory and practice and caused the development of the relationship between tourism and sustainable development.

In 1996, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the World Tourism Council (WTTC) and the Earth Council applied Agenda 21 to the conditions of tourism and published it under the title: Agenda 21 for the Travel & Tourism Industry: Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development (UNEP 2003). Since 1999, tourism has been supplied to the third and fourth articles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism as a factor for sustainable development. Sustainable tourism is one of the approaches of the tourism sector, which should help make the best decisions in the tourism industry. They should be able to recognize its positive and negative benefits for the present and future population.

In addition to the initiatives of international organizations, the sustainable development of tourism is also addressed in theory. Its essence and importance are constantly explored by several authors who take into account various aspects.

In the 1990s, the authors paid particular attention to the general strategy and policy of sustainable tourism (Cronin, 1990; Bramwell and Lane, 1993; Butler, 1991; Hunter, 1997; Pigram, 1990; Swarbrooke, 1999). The focus of the study was on selected issues related to sustainable tourism development, namely the development of sustainable development indicators (Miller, 2001), the competitiveness of tourist destinations in terms of sustainable development (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003), an intercultural view of tourism and sustainable development (Robinson and Picard, 2006), surveying residents' attitudes to sustainable tourism (Choi and Murray, 2010). A team of researchers from the University of Applied Science and Arts Lucerne in Switzerland (R. Wehrli, H. Egli, M. Lutzenberger, D. Pfister, J. Schwarz and J. Stettler, 2011) in collaboration with the international travel agency Kuoni and the international consulting company IPK, conducted an international survey in 2011 entitled "Is there a demand for sustainable tourism?" The aim of the survey through 23 sustainability criteria divided into 3 areas - ecological, social and economic - was primarily to find out what factors influence the shopping behaviour of visitors when choosing a tourism product, how important the product sustainability is in choosing and buying a holiday destination and whether they are willing to pay more money for a sustainable product. The researches revealed that although none of the 23 criteria were preferred by the respondents, more than 50% of them considered the socio-cultural criteria as the most relevant to sustainability, namely these criteria included the experience of visiting the destination, gaining cultural authenticity, visiting local landmarks. In connection with sustainable tourism, they considered it necessary to protect the cultural heritage, preserve and enhance the authenticity of the nation's culture. At the International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics, Lund University Sweden, Budeanu (2007) conducted a survey entitled "Sustainable tourist behaviour - a discussion of opportunities for change." The survey focused on the issues of sustainable tourism and passenger behaviour.

In her work, she dealt with the gaps between the positive attitude of passengers to sustainable tourism, but passive behaviour and irresponsible approach to this issue in practice. The research found that tourists behave irresponsibly towards ecology or local communities, thus not creating demand for sustainable tourism products. Low passenger support is one of the main obstacles to progress. One of the reasons may be lack of customer initiative or general ignorance. After identifying the gaps, it presents proposals such as increased awareness and awareness aimed at facilitating the transition to responsible and tourist behaviour (Budeanu, 2007). Professor J., I. Pulido-Fernández and Y. López-Sánchez (2016) at the University of Jaén Spain, the Department of Economics, authors of a case study "Are tourists willing to pay more for sustainable destinations? "were trying to find out if tourist would be eager to pay additional price for sustainable destinations. The results of the survey showed that tourists with greater knowledge about sustainability were willing to pay more for a sustainable destination. The results also showed that only 26.6 % of respondents were willing to pay a higher amount money for a holiday destination if the contribution was used for the sustainable development of the destination. Out of the 26.6 % of respondents, only 15 % would to pay 20% more of the price they paid for their holiday destination in order to support a sustainable destination, the other 85 % would pay up to 10 % more to support sustainable destination. The authors presented two proposals.

One, was to increase the awareness about sustainability in order to change the patterns of the tourist's behaviour to furthermore support the willingness to pay a higher amount of money for sustainable destinations. The second proposal was to improve, innovate and promote existing products to further attract more and more people into this type of tourism. Both cases require strategic steps in supporting the demand and supply area, however involving public authorities and private companies would be necessary in order to secure this tourism with the law and knowledge-raising through advertising and promotion. After all, tourists' cooperation and conscious commitment to support sustainable tourism is the essence of success (Pulido-Fernandez and Lopéz-Sánchez, 2016). The question, how ecological education classes are integrated in the curriculum at pre-university level in Oradea, was to investigate in the research of a team of researchers from University of Oradea, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning (Ilies at al., 2017).

Schwartz's (1992, 1994) classification of human values is applied when comparing a group of Finnish and Russian university students in terms of their environmentally and socially benign orientation, which is measured by including all three dimensions of sustainability in the measures of consumers' self-reported travelling preferences. A total of 872 responses were included in the data, which were analysed by using K-mean cluster analysis and a principal component analysis (PCA).

Differences between Finnish and Russian students were compared using independent samples t-test with equal variances assumed. The respondents divided evenly into two clusters, which could be named according to Schwarz as Self-Enhancers and Self-Transcenders. The majority of Finnish respondents (67 %) were Self-Transcenders, and among Russian students the majority were Self-Enhancers (84 %). The findings indicate that among the Russian students the concept of sustainability is understood as an ecological question, but for Finns, it is a comprehensive concept covering ecological, economic and social aspects. In the Finnish sample value based groups seemed to explain the sustainability concerns, but in the Russian sample, the value based group explained only the attitude towards ecological sustainability (Komppula et al., 2018). In recent years, the issue of overtourism has been increasingly discussed. Pasquinelii and Trunfio (2020) contribute to academic debate on overtourism by adopting a narrative approach to the analysis of how online news media represented it, stated its causes and effects, and suggested the actins to be taken for addressing it.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Based on the theory presented in the previous chapters, sustainable tourism is a current issue of the 21st century (see also Gallo et al., 2019). The answer, how to solve this issue all depends on the individuals' mentality, personality and many other factors related to human activity. This case study focuses on evaluating the perception on the sustainable tourism concept from the PU students (university ranked as the 3rd largest university in the Slovakia) point of view which belongs to the millennia's. The aim of the article is to identify attitudes and gender differences in the perception of sustainable tourism aspects in Central Europe. Data about the population, i. e. the amount of students, were collected from the Overview of Universities in Slovakia (CVTI SR, 2020). The total number of full-time students studying at the bachelor and master degree is 6060. The representative sample, consists of 460 students, who fully completed the questionnaire. The majority of respondents were women (58.04%).

The questionnaire survey was carried out from 14 December 2018 to 14 March 2019 in several forms. In order to remain responsible towards the environment, the survey forms were handed out only in electronic form - GoogleDocs. Creating a QR code the questionnaire was available via social platforms such as Facebook, BeeTagg or QR APP. The questionnaire survey itself was preceded by a two-week pilot survey with 19 respondents.

The structure of the questionnaire is divided into 4 sections and precisely created from questions needed for analysing the issue. The beginning of the questionnaire includes identification questions which are followed by asking a direct question about what is understood by the concept of sustainable tourism. The respondents in the second section expressed their level of agreement or disagreement (on the scale of 1 to 5) with the statements related to sustainable tourism. In the third and fourth sections, the respondents expressed the degree of importance of selected factors and activities needed for sustainable tourism.

The conclusion of the analysis is formed mainly from the first and second section of the questionnaire, i.e. evaluating the perception of the sustainable tourism concept and its selected aspects, which were implemented through the following questions:

1. What do you understand under the concept of Sustainable tourism?
   A. Traveling that meets the needs of tourists and preserves opportunities for future generations.
   B. Traveling that minimizes negative impact on the environment.
   C. Traveling that respects the culture, history, traditions and heritage of a host country.
   D. Traveling that provides economic benefits, job opportunities for local residents and involves them in decision-making processes.
   E. Traveling which is associated with active and passive participation in sport activities.
   F. I do not know what sustainable tourism is.
2. Please select the degree of agreement with the following statements by choosing one of the following options (Likert scale 1-5):
   I. In the country I currently live, there is a demand for sustainable tourism.
   II. Protection of local heritage and tourism activities can be compatible.
   III. Ecologically managed tourist destinations, preserved in their natural state, are more attractive for tourists.
   IV. The local community should profit (financially, socially, economically) from tourism.
   V. I am willing to contribute a financial amount to support the development of sustainable tourism (economic, social and environmental activities).
3. How much EUR would you be able to contribute to support sustainable tourism?

The questionnaire is processed and evaluated by using MS Excel, Statistica 13.4 and Statgraphics XVIII using a statistical formulas consisting of:

a) Kolmogorov-Smirnov test

$$D_{n_1,n_2} = \underset{-\infty < x < \infty}{sup}\left|F_{1,n_1}(x) - F_{2,n_2}(x)\right|$$

where: $F_{1,n_1}(x)$ - empirical distribution function of first selection;

$F_{2,n_2}(x)$ - empirical distribution function of second selection.

b) Mann-Whitney test

$$Q = n_y n_x \frac{n_y(n_y+1)}{2} - R_y$$

where: n_x - number of observations, resp. the extent of the x-th file

n_y - number of observations, resp. range of the y-th file

R_y - the sum of the order of the y-th file

U, U´ - test statistics

c) Kendall rank correlation coefficient

$$r_K = \frac{n_c - n_d}{n(n-1)/2}$$

where: n - number of observations of a pair of variables;

n_c - the number of matching pairs of the pair;

n_d - the number of mismatched pairs of the pair. For the theoretical background of selected tests/coefficients and their formulas see Cyhelský et al. (2001), Anděl (2007) or Pacáková et al. (2009).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result interpretation of the survey is divided in two parts. In the first part, the results are described using relative and absolute response rates. The second part of interpretation the results are analysed using the above described mathematical-statistical methods.

Description of the results obtained

The first step and as a part of evaluation was getting to know the understanding of the concept of "sustainable tourism", which directly determines the overall obtained results. The majority of respondents (96.30%) chose one of the four offered interpretations of sustainable tourism. The largest group of respondents (32.83%) understood the concept of sustainable tourism as traveling that meets the needs of tourists and preserves opportunities for future generations (i.e., Answer A), while the proportion of women in this group is more than double.

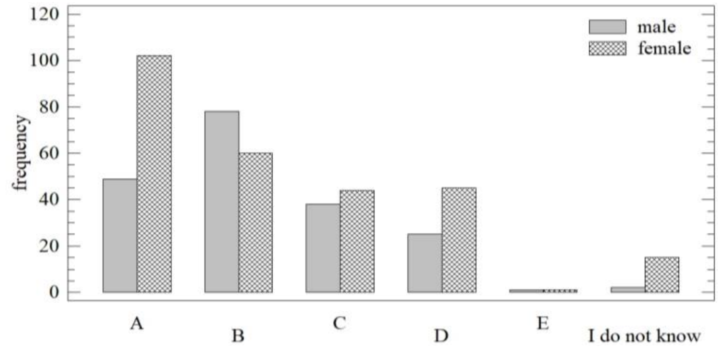

Figure1. Perception of the concept of sustainable tourism

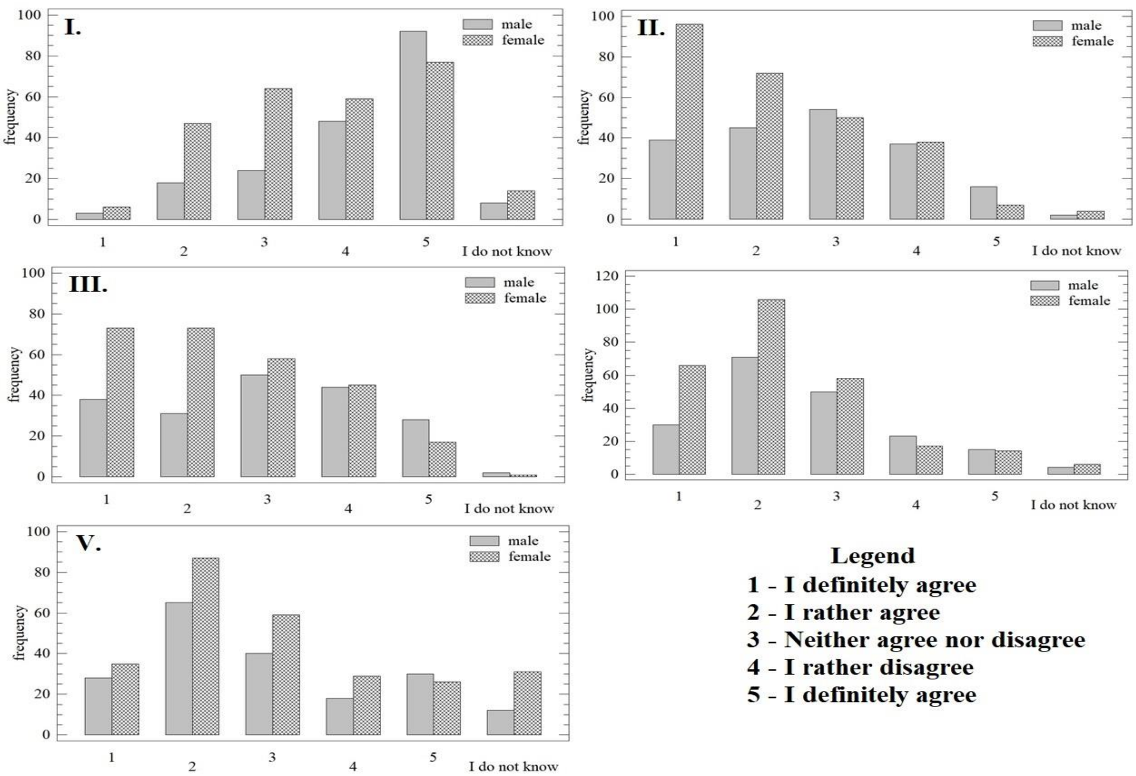

Figure 2. The level of agreement to the statements

The other three options, it is possible to observe the differences between the responses of men and women, which, however, are not as different as in the previous case (Figure 1). Interestingly, there is a significant female (15 to 2) predominance in the group of students who did not know what sustainable tourism is.

The first five statements, women evaluate the existence of demand for sustainable tourism in the country more positively than men. Almost half of men disagree with this statement (47.60%), while only 4.7% of respondents were unable to define their point of view. We observe a more significant difference in the view of the protection of monuments and the support of tourism (statement II.), where rather women consider to be beneficial. Likewise, women perceive more positively the attractiveness of ecologically managed tourist destinations (statement III.), 99.35% of respondents were able to answer (457 out of 460).

The statement “the local community should profit from sustainable tourism” (statement IV.) is supported by an absolute majority of both men and women, while in the other categories we can see similar representation of both groups.

We can also observe a higher willingness of women to financially support the development of sustainable tourism (statement V). Figure 2 shows more detailed results and differences. The second part of the analysis concentrates on the statistical verification of the differences between men and women whereas the analysis does not include the answers of those respondents who were not able to give an opinion on individual statements, i.e. their answers can be described as 'I do not know'.

Statistical evaluation of the obtained results

The first step of the analysis compares the differences in the distribution function between the responses of men and women, which is also shown in Figure 3. Graphic differences were also demonstrated by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (e.g., $D_{I.} = 5,14$; $p < 0,01$), i.e. differences in the response structure of men and women can be considered statistically significant.

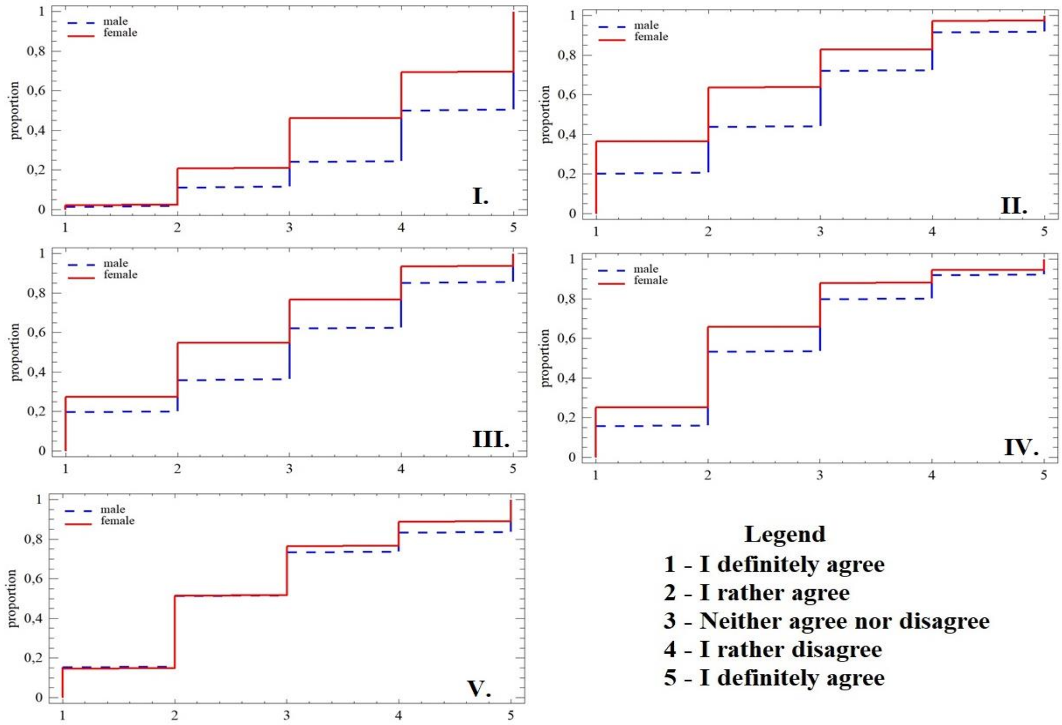

Figure 3. Quantile plot of given statements

The distribution function of the first four statements also demonstrated significant differences in the mean value. In the statement V, i.e. “the willingness to contribute a financial amount to support the development of sustainable tourism (economic, social and environmental activities) “, the median value is equal to 2 - I rather agree (Q = 20854.5; p = 0.669). The differences in linear correlation of the opinions to every statements, i.e. their correlation, is shown in Figure 4. In both groups we observe 5 pairs of questions, while evaluation is significantly related. In the group of men, we determine small positive correlations e.g. a linear link between the existence of demand for sustainable tourism, and the mutual benefit of preserving monuments and promoting tourism. In the group of women, we observe a medium linear correlation in case of 3 pairs, which may bring greater benefits in other areas than men if one aspect of sustainable tourism is improved.

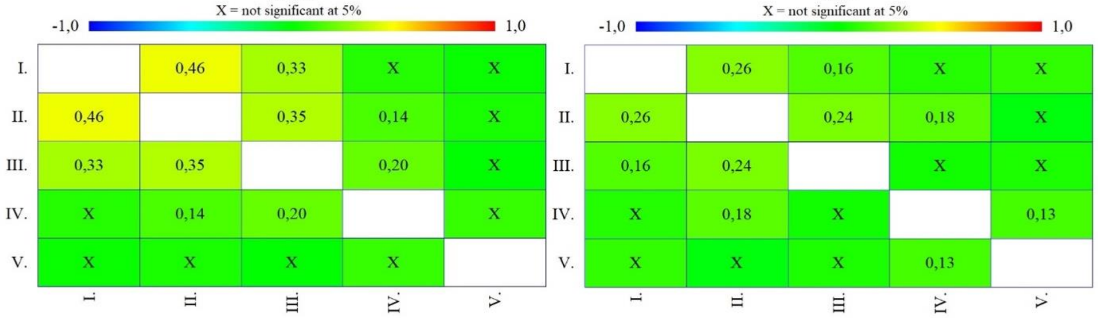

Figure 4. Rank linear correlation of the statements

CONCLUSION

The survey showed negative and positive findings. Respondents, i.e. PU students in Prešov, negatively evaluated the existence of demand for sustainable tourism in the country in which they live (i.e. Slovakia). They understand sustainable tourism as a concept of traveling that meets the needs of today's tourists and preserves opportunities for future generations.

They consider the protection of monuments and the promotion of tourism to be mutually beneficial and are partly willing to financially support the development of sustainable tourism. Men are generally more negative towards the given statements, and the smallest difference can be observed especially in the willingness to financially contribute to the development of sustainable tourism. However, in case of women, if one attitude improves, it is possible to expect the improvement of evaluation of other observing aspects of sustainable tourism.

There are certain limitations that exist in the interpretation of results, for example, the research sample is represented by students from one university in Slovakia. This means that the results can be generalized only for the needs of this article, however in case of wanting to obtain objective results on the national level, it is necessary to conduct a similar survey at other universities across Slovakia. One of the solutions that could help achieving this comparison is the preparation and submission of a joint project focusing on sustainable development in Slovakia. Another dimension for research is cooperation with universities with similar field of study within Slovakia and comparison of the received results. The results could be used for a more specific survey, which would take into account the conclusions of a possible comparison of results at the level of university students in Slovakia (or university students studying within the economic field). Further use of these results can be found in the subsequent in-depth analysis of one of the evaluated areas. It is also possible to check other identification factors that could have a significant effect on the results obtained, e.g. place of residence or social status of the respondent.

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ANTECEDENTS OF DESTINATION IMAGE IN NATURAL PROTECTED AREA: THE MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED VALUE

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Abstract: Ecotourism is a nature-oriented tourism idea that is flourishing and with promising outlook. The present study attempts to explore the importance of local communities' attitude, carrying capacity and destination attractiveness & resources towards destination image by adopting perceived value as a moderator on examining the antecedents on destination image. Data were collected from 146 tourists who have visited Bako National Park, Sarawak. The research employs WarpPLS 6.0 and the results revealed that local communities' attitude, carrying capacity and destination attractiveness & resources have impact on destination image. Perceived value has moderating effect between destination attractiveness & resources and destination image.

Key words: local communities' attitude, carrying capacity, destination attractiveness and resources, perceived value, destination image

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become a noteworthy part of economic development. As revealed by Andrades and Dimanche (2017), the future economic benefits of tourism to regions or countries have been a recurring topic in the literature on tourism research. Ecotourism is a nature-oriented tourism that is thriving with promising future as it is able to satisfy the needs of tourists. It serves tourists with enriching "experience" that enables them to fulfil their tourism experiences (Lin, 2019). Therefore, the development of ecotourism has become the development direction of various governments to meet tourists' expectations and satisfaction. According to the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC), Malaysia has encountered a rise in terms of visitor arrivals with an inclination rate of 14.66% among international tourists in 2018 (MOTAC, 2020). Besides, The National Ecotourism Plan 2016-2025 forms part of Visit Malaysia 2020 and was planned to optimize the capacity of ecotourism and ensure the sustainability of tourism (The Star Online) which would further improve the contribution of the tourism industry to the economy given the lackluster results in the first quarter of 2020 with figures adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The challenge of sustainable development of ecotourism has emerged as an important and popular theoretical objective to consider the costs, risks and impacts of global environmental hazards on tourism and travel (Jamal and Budke, 2020). Two immense drivers of change are climate change and global health emergencies namely the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) that is currently impacting tourism sector. In addition, national parks are known as ecotourism or recreational tourism destination due to pristine environments with a unique natural formation. Establishing national parks without efficient tourism management could also have a negative impact in protecting and conserving natural areas where it can damage the environment, causing overcrowding and pollution (Buckley, 2011; Tepavčević et al., 2019).

The present study was conducted at Bako National Park situated in Sarawak, Malaysia. According to the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Sarawak (MTAC), Bako National Park is the oldest national park in Sarawak and is easily accessible from Kuching. It has proven a hit with foreign and domestic tourists where it has recorded the highest number of tourist arrivals on its diverse biodiversity, unique landscape, and favorable tourism infrastructure. In the light of the above discussion, this study attempts to examine the antecedents of local communities' attitude, carrying capacity and natural resources on destination image in Bako National Park, Sarawak. In addition, perceived value is adopted as a moderator variable to examine the relationship among the constructs. There are no studies investigating on perceived value as a moderator on linking between antecedents and destination image. Therefore, this paper tries to fill the gap by conceptualizing perceived value as a moderator in the relationship between local communities' attitude, carrying capacity and natural resources on destination image. The outcome of the study will provide useful and effective insights for future research.

Literature Review and Development of Hypotheses

Destination Image

An increasingly strong competitiveness of a destination is focused primarily on the perceived image of its destination (Michaelidou et al.,

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2013). Destination image is an attribute of strengthening destination for tourists (Le et al., 2020). This can be described as the sum of a person's beliefs and impressions towards the destination (Chiu et al., 2014). Destination image may be analysed by multi-attribute approach because of its effective identity and holistic images which are influenced by cognitive interpretation of destination attributes (Jiang et al., 2017). The thoughts and feelings of a tourist destination are created, and the forming image of the destination is affected holistically (Veasna et al., 2013; Moon and Han, 2019). Therefore, a good and positive destination image will be a factor that impacts the perception of tourist towards tourism destination. Destination image can generally prove its attraction and satisfy the expectations and satisfaction of the tourists. In addition, previous studies have provided empirical evidence that the destination image is a valuable concept for understanding tourist preferences, selection processes, revisiting intentions and recommendations (Kim and Lee, 2015; Kladou and Mavragani, 2015; Souiden et al., 2017).

Local Communities' Attitude

The attitude of local communities can be described as the psychological behaviour of local communities through the expression of their favourable or unfavourable attitude towards tourists (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). The impact of local communities has been recognized as an important aspect of ecotourism (Duffy et al., 2017). In most ecotourism destinations, the community plays an important role as a provider. Their favourable and unfavourable behaviours will enhance the destination's popularity otherwise it will result in negative impression (Abas and Hanafiah, 2014; Chin et al., 2018). Past studies have revealed that local communities are one of the key factors in encouraging tourists' visitation and to spend time at a destination as well as significantly influencing a tourist's expected behaviour and destination image (Henkel et al., 2006; Reitsamer et al., 2016). The local community can complement natural and experiential resources in a destination. According to Kim et al. (2012), tourists who experience close encounters with local communities and the local culture are most likely to experience memorable tourism experiences that directly leads to higher tourists' satisfaction and generate a positive image of a destination which will likely result in a positive word of mouth publicity. Based on aforementioned, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1: Local communities' attitude has a positive effect on the destination image.

Carrying Capacity

From a general point of view, tourism capacity can be defined as the maximum number of people who can visit a tourist destination at the same time without causing the physical, economic and socio-cultural destruction and an unacceptable reduction in the quality of tourist satisfaction (Coccossis and Mexa, 2017). Carrying capacity is further defined as the environmental quality and visitor satisfaction that could not be diminished by the physical, biological, social and psychological capacity of the environment to support the visitant activity (Dioko and So, 2017). Past studies (Maggi and Fredella, 2010; Ndlovu and Chigora, 2019) have reported that an uncontrollable carrying capacity may destroy the environment and attractiveness of a tourism destination where it may result in the tourism destination losing its image to potential eco-tourists who are environmentally conscious as well as their future revisit intention and their level of satisfaction towards the destination (Joshi and Dahal, 2019). Besides, Wang et al. (2020) revealed that over-tourism of a destination can brings impacts to wider factors such as air quality and local environmental environments. The importance of carrying capacity may instrumental in the success of developing and creating a positive and memorable destination image (Yamagishi et al., 2020). Therefore, carrying capacity helps to maintain the balance between the benefits of a tourism destination and tourists' perception towards tourism activities. In light of the above discussion, the following hypothesis is developed:

H2: Carrying capacity has a positive effect on the destination image.

Destination Resources and Attractiveness

Destination resources and attractiveness refer to attractions, attribute and resources and considerable diversity of items compounding the set of characteristics of the destination's offer (Vinyals-Mirabent, 2019; Enright and Newton; 2005; Hong-bumm, 1988). Reitsamer et al. (2016) state the uniqueness and attractiveness of the destination is based on tourists' insights about a destination and its ability to satisfy their satisfaction and needs. Past studies (Wong and Teoh, 2015; Zhang et al., 2014) have intensively explored the influence of this element on tourist's behavior, loyalty and revisit intention. Additionally, (Martín-Santana et al., 2017) revealed that destinations with various resources and attractiveness contribute to the formation of the overall impression and image of the destination in tourists' minds. Therefore, the destination's resources and attractiveness are crucial for both image formation and memorability of the staged destination experiences. The following hypothesis is proposed based on the above discussion:

H3: Destination resources and attractiveness have a positive effect on the destination image.

Perceived Value

The Moderating Role of Perceived Value on Local Communities' Attitude, Carrying Capacity and Destination Attractiveness and Resources on Destination Image

Perceived value is defined as the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product or service based on perceptions of what is received and what is given (Zeithaml, 1998). It can further recognize its role in predicting future behavioural intent and influencing competitive advantage as one of the most influential forces in the tourism industry (Bigne et al., 2009; Cheng et al., 2018). Previous study by Cheng and Lu (2013) confirmed that more favorable destination images are correlated with higher perceived value. Additionally, local community plays an important role by recommending the uniqueness of the destination and increase tourists' revisit intention (Cheng et al., 2018) while local attitude has been identified as a factor shaping the attractiveness of the destination (Gonzalez et al., 2018). Tourists are satisfied if they perceived the experience of what they expected (Dean et al., 2019).

Therefore, perceived value has a significant moderating impact on the relationship between local communities and destination image by reinforcing tourists' level of attitude and give rise to positive behavioural intention. In addition, a key perception in carrying capacity is the perception of overcrowding. Zhang et al. (2017) elucidated that uncontrollable carrying capacity of a destination may decrease tourists' satisfaction and expected needs. Thus, the perception of crowding may be thought as an attitude in which perception of an excessive use level of tourism and may lead to tourists' negativity perceived behavioural intention and will indirectly affect positive image of a destination (Gonzalez et al., 2018). Other than that, destination attractiveness and resources have been specified as the most important factors in strengthening destination image. Previous research has reported that tourists' perceived value of a destination would depend on the attractions that a destination provides on its positioning as a tourist destination (Michael et al., 2018). Therefore, it is widely accepted that perceived value is important in promoting a long-term relationship with tourists proven by Wang et al. (2016) that it has a positive effect on the likelihood of revisiting and recommending the destination to others by increasing the positivity of a destination image. Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses have been developed as follows:

H4: The positive relationship between local communities' attitudes and destination image will be enhanced when the tourist's perceived value is high.

H5: The positive relationship between carrying capacity and destination image will be enhanced when the tourist's perceived value is high.

H6: The positive relationship between destination attractiveness & resources and destination will be enhanced when the tourist's perceived value is high.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross-sectional analysis was used in this research, in which results were used a self-administered questionnaire. All questionnaire items were adapted from previous studies and measured on a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In this analysis, local communities' attitudes were calculated using four elements (Collins, 2005; Tseane, 2006; Yusof and Rahman, 2011; Canny and Hidayat, 2012); carrying capacity was measured using four items (Artuğer, 2015); destination resources & attractiveness were measured using four items (Kim et al., 2006; Maroofi and Dehghan, 2012; Oriade, 2013; Herstanti et al., 2014); destination image was measured using five items (Buhalis, 2000; Aliman et al., 2016); and the perceived value was measured using four items (Howard and Sheth, 1969; Apostolakis and Jaffry, 2005; Sanchez et al., 2006).

This study utilized G*Power Version 3.1.9.2 software to analyze and calculate the minimum sample size. Based on the calculations, a sample size of 103 (N=103) is needed for this study with the power set at 0.80, assuming a significance level of 5% and the effect size of 0.15A pre-test was performed before a full-scale survey to detect any problems that respondents might encounter with the questionnaire items, such as unclear wording or other difficulties. WarpPLS 6.0 was applied based on path modeling to assess the model developed as shown in Figure 1 (Kock, 2017). A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to examine the tourist's perception towards ecotourism development after they visited Bako National Park, Sarawak. In total, 146 valid responses were received, indicating a response rate of 36.5%. 46.6% were male and 53.4% were female and most of the respondents were found between 21 to 30 years old (52.1%). 38.4% of the respondents are employed, 34.2% are students and 9.6% are running own business. Lastly, 41.8% of the respondents earned monthly income less than RM1500, 17.1% earned monthly income between RM4501 to RM6000 and 14.4% earned monthly income ranged from RM3001 to RM4500.

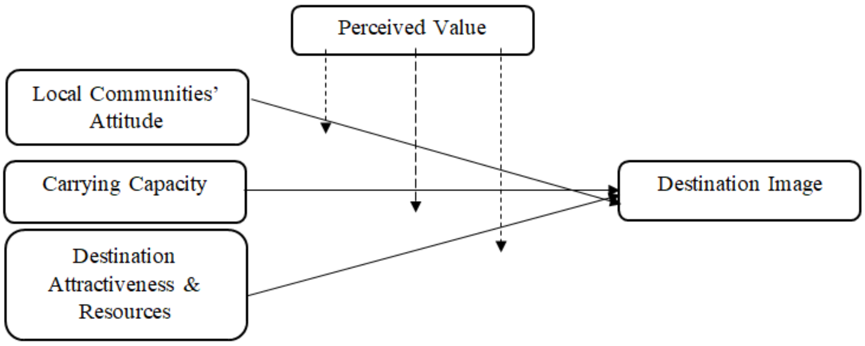

Figure 1. Research Model

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To analyze the proposed model, WarpPLS 6.0 software was applied. As suggested by Hair et al. (2017), this study tested the model using a two-stage approach. The first stage tests the measuring model, which involves evaluating the validity and reliability of the measuring components. The second stage involves the evaluation of the structural model, which enables assessment of the proposed relationships between the measurable constructs.

Assessment of the measurement model

The measurement model was examined by assessing the individual item reliability, construct reliability, convergent reliability and discriminant validity as all constructs in this study are modelled as reflective (Henseler et al., 2016). As shown in Table 1, all the factor loadings exceeded the minimum cut off point of 0.50 (Gefen et al., 2000), which thus signified the internal consistency as to be achieved.

Table 1. Summary of Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct	No of Items	Items Deleted	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Local Communities Attitude	4	1	LCA_1 LCA_2 LCA_4	0.852 0.844 0.722	0.653	0.849	0.731
Carrying Capacity	4	1	CC_2 CC_3 CC_4	0.817 0.771 0.658	0.565	0.795	0.611
Destination Attractiveness & Resources	4	0	SQ_DRA_1 SQ_DRA_2 SQ_DRA_3 SQ_DRA_4	0.725 0.865 0.879 0.760	0.656	0.883	0.822
Perceived Values	4	0	Values_1 Valeus_2 Values_3 Values_4	0.832 0.822 0.819 0.730	0.643	0.878	0.814
Destination Image	5	0	DI_1 DI_2 DI_3 DI_4 DI_5	0.724 0.778 0.752 0.770 0.669	0.555	0.862	0.799

According to Sarstedt et al., (2014), construct reliability is considered adequate if the composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha values of the constructs are between 0.70 and 0.95. The average variances extracted (AVE) should be more than 0.50 for adequate convergent validity. As presented in Table 1, all AVE values exceeded this threshold (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2014). Lastly, the discriminant validity was tested by using Fornell-Larcker criterion, in which the square root of AVE must be significantly greater than the variance shared between the construct and other constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table 2 shows that all constructs have met the requirements of discriminant validity.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity of Constructs of HTMT of Measurement Model

	Local Communities' Attitudes	Carrying Capacity	Attractiveness & Resources	Perceived Value	Destination Image
Local Communities' Attitudes	**0.808**				
Carrying Capacity	0.348	**0.752**			
Attractiveness & Resources	0.513	0.544	**0.810**		
Perceived Values	0.578	0.515	0.658	**0.802**	
Destination Image	0.446	0.537	0.543	0.599	**0.745**

Assessment of the structural model

The structural model was assessed based on the significance of the structural path coefficients, the R^2 values, the effect size of f^2 and the collinearity. Table 3 and Figure 2 display the results. Out of six hypotheses, four hypotheses were supported. There are three direct relationships supported namely, local communities' attitudes, carrying capacity and destination attractiveness & resources, and one moderating effects relationship was supported. Specifically, the results of the statistical analysis support Hypothesis 1 ($\beta = 0.204$, $p < 0.005$), Hypothesis 2 ($\beta = 0.364$, $p < 0.001$), Hypothesis 3 ($\beta = 0.149$, $p < 0.032$), Hypothesis 6 ($\beta = 0.162$, $p < 0.022$). In addition, the result shows that destination image ($R^2 = 0.372$) has weak value (Hair et al., 2017). On top of that, the variation inflation factor (VIF) values were obtained to test multicollinearity issue among the constructs. The results in Table 3 indicate that multicollinearity is not a concern in this study, as all VIF values are below the threshold of 5 (Hair et al., 2011).

Table 3. Summary of Path Coefficients and Hypotheses Testing (Include T-Values, Bias Corrected Confidence Intervals)

Hypotheses	Relationship	β	Std. Error	p-value	VIF	f^2	Decision
Direct Relationships							
H1	LCA->DI	0.204	0.079	0.005	1.663	0.093	Supported
H2	CC->DI	0.364	0.076	<0.001	1.651	0.198	Supported
H3	SQ_DRA->DI	0.149	0.080	0.032	2.486	0.081	Supported
Moderating Effects of Perceived Values							
H4	Values*LCA->DI	0.108	0.081	0.091	1.656	0.043	Not Supported
H5	Values*CC->DI	-0.265	0.078	<0.001	1.868	0.112	Not Supported
H6	Values*SQ_DRA->DI	0.162	0.080	0.022	2.459	0.069	Supported

Note: $^*p<0.05$, $^{**}p<0.01$; LCA represents local communities' attitudes, CC represents carrying capacity, SQ_DRA represents destination attractiveness & resources, Values represents perceived values and DI represents destination image

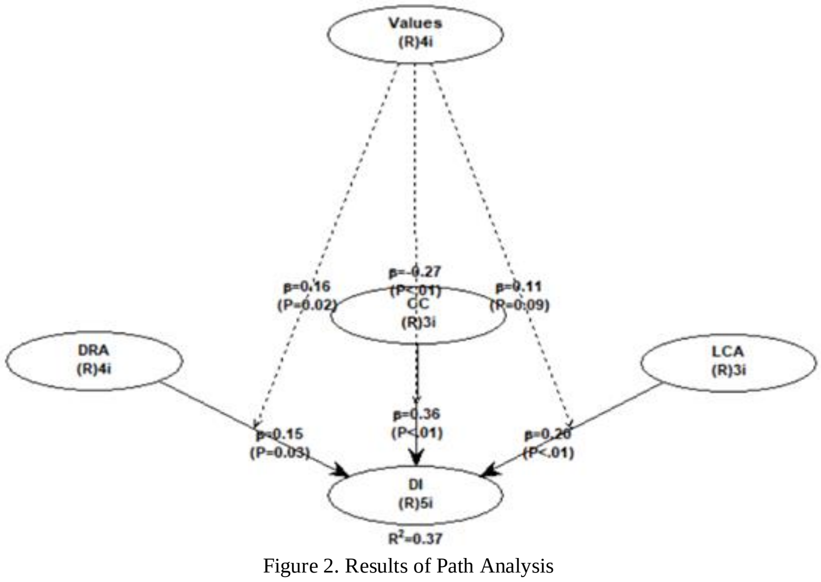

Figure 2. Results of Path Analysis

This study aims to examine the tourist's perceived value as a moderating role and destination image of Bako National Park, Sarawak as a tourist destination. Past studies have demonstrated that destination image is an important variable in the evaluations by tourists with respect to their travel experience and has an impact on their satisfaction (Toudert and Bringas-Rábago, 2016; Wang et al., 2017). In addition, the perceived value of tourists is seen as benefits of expected consumption.

Therefore, the perception of the tourists on the attributes of the destination and destination attractiveness will interact to shape the overall image of the destination (Susilowati and Sugandini, 2018). This study has adopted three independent variables, namely, local communities' attitudes, carrying capacity and destination attractiveness and resources, with perceived value as the moderator and destination image as the dependent variable. In summary, out of six tested hypotheses, four hypotheses were found to be supported.

As predicted, the empirical results showed that local communities' attitudes have had a significant impact on destination image, and thus supporting H1. Local communities have a better understanding of the destination politically and economically, instead of receiving unilateral information from the media (Isaac and Eid, 2019). Previous research by Mai et al., (2019) has proven that local community contributes to shape destination image by direct contact with tourists and help to enhance the attractiveness of the destination. Additionally, the results of this study indicated that carrying capacity has a positive impact on the destination image, indicating that H2 is supported. Carrying capacity is regarded as a way of providing sustainable management to a destination and is a crucial value to the conservation of vulnerable area such as national parks, protected area and heritage sites (Andrade, 2018). This is supported by past study (Andrade, 2018) that the carrying capacity of a destination will influence both destination image and tourist's revisit intention. Moreover, Reitsamer et al. (2016) indicated that attractiveness of destination is important for image formation and memorability of the destination experience. As such, the destination's popularity highly depends on its perceived prestige (Ram et al., 2016) as well as exclusive experiences that go beyond purchasing goods or services. This, therefore, underlines that intrapersonal authenticity has a positive influence on the image of the destination. In short, this indicated that tourist satisfaction will influence the attractiveness of the destination and in turn bring a positive image towards the destination.

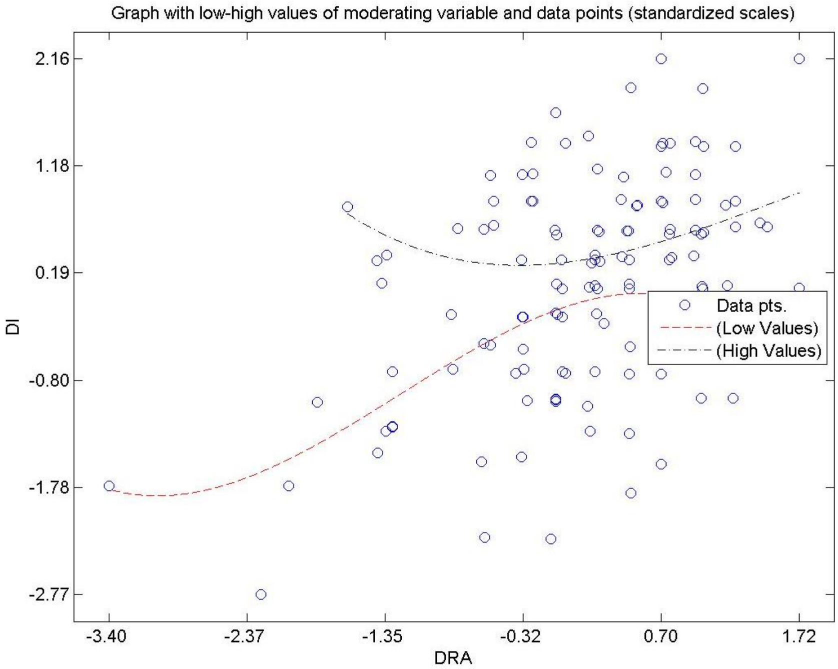

Figure 3. The Moderating Effect of Perceived Value on the Relationship between Destination Attractiveness and Resources and Destination Image

The statistical results further revealed that perceived value moderated the relationship between destination attractiveness and resources and destination image, thus supporting H6. Figure 3 showed the low-high values of the moderating effect of perceived value on the relationship between destination attractiveness and resources and destination image. The results indicated that the relationship between destination attractiveness and resources and tourism destination image is stronger when tourist perceived value is higher. According to Mura (2015), an exceptional resource and attractiveness of a destination may trigger a tourist's sensory stimulation that leads to the deepest perceived experiences of existential genuineness. The destination attraction contributes to tourist's perceptible value by engaging in adventurous activities (Ram et al., 2016; Jiang et al., 2016). Therefore, destination attractiveness and resources through moderation support from tourist perceived value bring positive influences and image on the destination. On the other hand, the statistical results have also indicated that perceived value had no influence on the relationship between local communities' attitude and carrying capacity of tourism destination image, thus H4 and H5 are not supported. Plausible justification can be due to the tourists' themselves might think that the local community is not able to provide better and reliable information of their perceived destination and has no effect of giving positivity image towards the destination. Besides, tourists may think of the opinion that Bako National Park provides value as perceived by tourists in return. It can be concluded that this destination has fulfilled the demand of visitors and provides value experienced by tourists during their visits.

CONCLUSION

In summary, this study provides empirical evidence for the influence of local communities' attitudes, carrying capacity and destination attractiveness and resources on tourism destination image from tourist perception. In addition, perceived value is confirmed as a moderator moderating the relationship between destination attractiveness and resources and destination image. Both theoretical and practical implications and recommendations for future research are further discussed in this section.

From the theoretical implications, this study provided a comprehensive investigation into whether each antecedent such as local communities' attitudes, carrying capacity and destination attractiveness and resources as well as moderating variable, the perceived value on a sample of tourists at Bako National Park have substantiated the hypotheses in this study. From a practical point of view, the outcome of this study provides valuable information to tourism stakeholders and tourism planners about the importance of local communities' attitudes, carrying capacity and destination attractiveness and resources in the development of destination image. Therefore, tourism stakeholders, business operators, and tourism planners can focus on the prominence on these antecedents for effective implementation and development of ecotourism.

Nonetheless, there is some limitation that needs to be acknowledged. A tourism destination needs to maintain its positivity image of the destination to stay competitive and sustainable. Therefore, this research model may highlight other characteristics that could assist in building a stronger quantitative measure for destination image. In addition, it is possible not solely focusing on the view of the demand-side but also the perception view for the supply side. A wider concept and comprehensible perspective from different respondents such as tourism players should be integrated to get more accurate and precise results. For future studies, it is suggested to examine on tourist travel satisfaction and focus on more protected areas. Moreover, this study employed perceived value as the moderating variable to examine the relationship among the constructs. Future research may consider adopting another potential moderator variable and to test the framework.

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MECHANISMS FOR THE INTEGRATION OF TOURISM SYSTEMS: TYPES, PROBLEMS, PROSPECTS

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Abstract: Tourism systems can be defined as a component of a geographic information system or a regional economic development system. The article aims to study the tourist system as an element of the integration mechanism between states. To solve a wide range of optimisation problems in logistics, the methods of linear programming and integer programming were used. The authors propose a model that allows to integrate tourist routes into the structure of tourist flows both within the country and internationally. The economic consequences of the use of information systems in tourism will create additional value and ensure regional development.

Key words: tourism, globalisation, information, development, formation

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalisation, the countries of the world are undergoing processes of transformation and reorganisation of all areas of managerial activity, and the role of tourism enterprises in these modern conditions is determined by special relevance due to a number of technological, economic, political, social, cultural problems from the integration and information and communication progress that creates objective conditions for both the unification of society and its separation (Liying, 2018; Sakulyeva, 2020). At the same time, globalisation acts as a transition to the politics of supranational organisations (UN, NATO, G8), in the economy – transnational corporations and supranational bodies (World Bank, UNWTO – United Nations World Tourism Organisation), the formation of global international economic and political structures, which opens up significant prospects for the study of these processes (Song, 2017).

A volatile globalisation space requires tourism enterprises to adapt to rapid economic, political, and social changes through the use of new principles and modern methods for effective governance (Damian & Suárez-Barraza, 2015). This is manifested in the reorganisation of the management of tourism enterprises, the expansion of financial, cultural, social, sales, resource and labour markets, the increase in the share of foreign direct investment in developing economies, the expansion of the labour market, the diffusion of technology, communications, and global cultural integration (Yuexi & Feng, 2018; Rudenko, 2018).

The globalisation problems of the 21st century are still little explored and need analysis, and many countries are not ready to adapt to the rapid changes in modern scientific and technological progress, structural changes in the world market and sociocultural transformations of society that form the geopolitical, geo-economic, geo-cultural space for the development of states (Błażejowski et al., 2019). The symptomatology of these processes must be studied at the level of world prerequisites, state transformations and the reorganisation of managerial processes of enterprises in various areas of production activity (Song, 2016; Fedotov et al., 2018). A fundamental study of the theoretical and methodological approaches of globalisation phenomena or social processes should be started with the disclosure of the categorical-conceptual apparatus, methodological understanding of the individual components of the problem to determine the basic laws and concepts with the help of which it is possible to analyse certain influential problems in society (Sharifzadeh et al., 2020). The content of the concept of "globalisation" remains the subject of heated debate, causing a clash of different, sometimes even diametrically opposing points of view, and is explained by two reasons (Smoliy et al., 2006; Towner, 2016). First, the process of globalisation has begun relatively recently and it is not possible to fully assess its consequences (Carmignani & Moyle, 2019). Secondly, the deployment of this process leads to exacerbation of contradictions in the global economy, affects the interests of its various actors (Wondirad et al., 2020; Sayabaev et al., 2016). It is not surprising that sometimes social forces in every way welcome and promote economic globalisation, while others criticise it sharply.

In the economic sense, the development of enterprises in the modern geo-economic space is impossible without considering the internal and external management process (Coca-Stefaniak, 2019; Basiurkina et al., 2020). The modern economic space, the parameters of which must be determined, combines not only real business processes but also transcendental elements of their activity, which are still in their infancy, and therefore remain theoretically unreasonable, outside the boundaries of the visible process and institutional definitions. Each complex process that takes place in society requires its decomposition into simpler ones in order to fully comprehend them (Li, 2017, Shtal et al., 2019).

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That is, a constant analysis of changes in globalisation phenomena is necessary that directly affect the activities of a tourism enterprise and lead to reorganisation changes in their management and understanding of the essence of globalisation paradigms for applying universal methods and principles for making evolutionary decisions in modern management of tourism enterprises, provide grounds for determining evolutionary the origin of managerial thought (Prabpriree et al., 2016; Diekmann & McCabe, 2016).

From the beginning of the last century (i.e., the moment the theory of control was born) and until the 1960s, management principles were constructed in a closed manner (Todd et al., 2017; Shtal et al., 2018). Only with the development of society, the complexity of products, the growth of high-tech industries, management science began to approach the problems arising from the fact that the work of tourism enterprises is largely determined by the external environment (Akay, 2020). Management science developed by analysing the experience of American schools, and the practical application of developments was constrained by the lack of needs of manufacturers and the underdeveloped market environment (Qian et al., 2019; Rudenko et al., 2016).

Studying the realities and tracing the patterns of the globalisation phenomena influence on the development of enterprises provides ground for considering the theoretical and methodological foundations and fundamental analysis of the management paradigm (Hair et al., 2019; Khytrova et al., 2020). Successful solution of these problems will allow to determine competitive advantages and directions for the effective use of the internal resource potential of enterprises. So, the relevance of this study makes it possible to speak about the tourism system as a component of sustainable development in the socio-economic environment.

METHODOLOGY

The tasks associated with routing are carried out by simple and effective heuristic methods that allow to quickly find the needed solution, but it does not guarantee to find the optimal solution (Kavun et al., 2015). As a rule, to solve a wide range of optimisation problems in logistics, the methods of linear programming (LP) and integer programming (IP) are used. The work focuses on the economy of the tourist route and combination of the heuristics flexibility and mathematical modelling using cyclic programming, which allows to get the best or at least probably the best solution. This combination is called the unified optimisation methodology (Sherali & Driscoll, 2019). The combination of these two methods will help to solve and ease many issues when creating a formalised model. Firstly, to describe the sequence and priority of excursion objects, that is, to determine the priority of one of them. Secondly, cyclic programming and integer programming will help to develop a selection of several optimal route options for a series of variable indicators.

The paradigms of the modern development of enterprise management are not possible in the current interpretation, but require radical changes in their application (Lin, 2018). Evolutionary methods that fundamentally direct the effective management of tourism enterprises in the globalisation space are reflected in a combination of the methodological achievements of several paradigms (Backer & Ritchie, 2017). That is, the following modern methods can be distinguished (Raj Sharma & Bisht, 2018):

– A systematic method that allows to consider the management of a tourism enterprise as a set of laws, principles that constantly interact with the environment.

– Synergetic method – it shows that in the globalisation space it is impossible to use linear control of systems (state, tourism enterprises) since economic, political, sociocultural phenomena are chaotic. Therefore, it is necessary in modern conditions in the management of tourism enterprises to apply a combination of synergetic and systemic methods, which allows to explain the features of the development of the management system in the usual and catastrophic modes of exposure to the globalisation environment.

– Structural, functional and institutional methods allow to reveal the content of exogenous and endogenous shifts in society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The developed algorithm for designing and organising a tourist route represents an enlarged model (Figure 1), on the basis of which an effective tourist route is formed, unlike existing ones, it makes it possible to define excursion objects and describe their sequence of visits by priority, cost, time, length of the route thread and make a selection of route options for a number of variable indicators and determine the optimal priority tourist route.

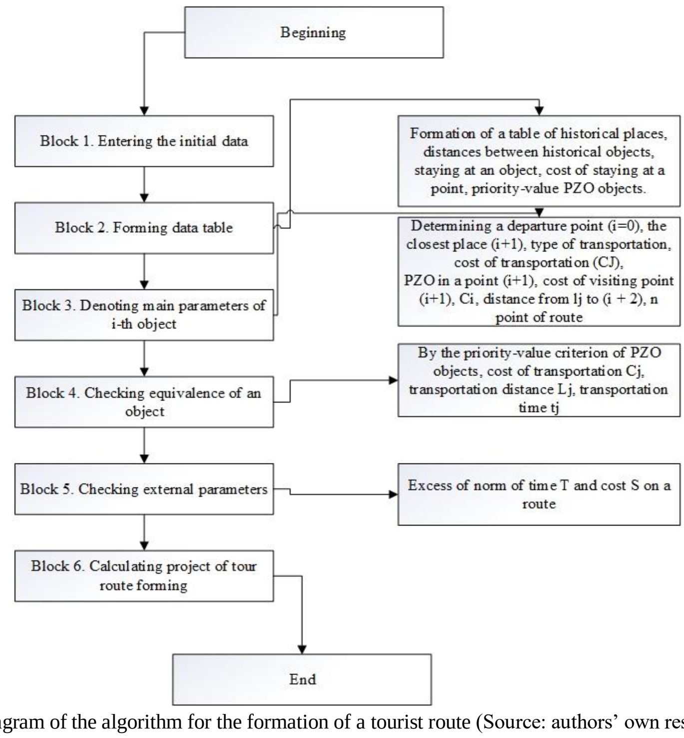

Figure 1. The enlarged block – a diagram of the algorithm for the formation of a tourist route (Source: authors’ own research based on Rudenko et al., 2019)

The developed algorithm allows to solve complex marketing, organisational and design tasks that are posed during the formation of a tourist route. The model for the formation of a tourist route involves the use of algorithm modules, with set theory, namely, using mathematical and cyclic programming, they helped to determine the priority areas of the route and apply the sequence of selected objects on a priority scale. This made it possible to develop a selection of several optimal route options for a number of variable indicators, which form their own factor group on the basis of the software that allows to take into account all the criteria for choosing an effective route, while using all incoming tabular data. Therefore, for a more detailed presentation of the stages of each block on a formalised model, a block diagram of a formalised model for the formation of a tourist route was used. In this case, such variables are: the number of objects $ш = 0 + n$; time spent in each one – t; price Ci – visiting the i-th object; the cost Cj of transporting tourists by j -ous means of transport.

The tourist route formation algorithm is formed from blocks. Block 1 generates the source information. It uses tables of such source data:

– formation of a table of possible historical places (Block 2);
– formation of a table of distances between points (Block 3);
– formation of a table of possible time spent at a point (Block 4);
– formation of a table of historical value at a point (Block 5);

Block 6 provides for the formation of a table of the cost of staying at a point.

Block 2 means the formation of a database of all historical sites and recreational potential in each of the places. The design of a tourist route involves the implementation of a set of actions, which are described in Block 1, which allows using the formalised model to simplify the complexity of actions when they are performed. Block 3 means that on the basis of the selected objects from a certain territorial zone using the Business Map program, a sample of the allowable minimum distances between the selected objects is calculated. Block 4 means using the approximate time spent by a tourist at a historical point. This table is based on research data on the provision of excursion services and is formed as the average time spent at this point. Block 5 means an assessment of the historical value of the selected objects according to the criteria of the largest visits in a ballistic sense. Block 6 means the formation of a database of the average price of the service (excursions in a particular object). Based on the previous blocks (source data), we proceed to Block 7, which means choosing a different optimal departure point for the tourist group from which the beginning of the model and route will be formed. Block 8 – selection of the nearest point (historical object) to the point of departure. The whole stage of the route economy and the choice of transport or method of transportation to the selected objects depend on Block 9. Depending on the object, city or region, different types of transport can be used, the tariffs for transportation of which depends on the following variables: the number of persons transported (N); distance between objects (l), which forms the total distance along the route, L; total time spent on the route (T).

Based on this, the initial table of the database with the tariffs of Block 10 for passenger transportation by various modes of transport according to variable criteria was established (Table 1).

Table 1. Tariffs for the carriage of passengers by road (Data source: authors' own calculations based on Mazur, 2019)

Transport passenger's capacity		**5-9 persons**	**19 persons**	**22-43 persons**	**30-36 persons**	**47-82 persons**
Passenger transportation	Price per hour, USD	80	90	150	170	220
	Minimum rental time 3 hours					
	Minimum price per hour, USD	200	250	400	500	600
The cost of passenger transportation per 1 km.		-	2	4	6.5	7

Distances between cities are calculated using a computer program that is based on satellite communications, where all maps and programs are shown, with which the distance between cities is calculated. With the help of expert research, block 11 is formed. When the first object on the route is fully explored, the authors gradually proceed to the excursion object $i+1$ by adding the numbers to *i* (0, 1, 2, 3 .... 4). That is, the first object has a serial number 0 + 1 = 1; the second 1 + 1 = 2; the third 2 + 1 = 3, and so on. If the historical value of the first object is higher than the others, then it is necessary that its serial number be greater than the serial numbers of another object.

Turn to Block 12, where the next distance to the nearest historical object on the route is investigated. Again, Block 13 investigates the type of movement and proceeds to determine the historical value of the object. Block 15. If at this stage among the previously selected points there are points (objects) of equal priority, we return again to Block 15 and we find the following historical value of the route point. At the same time, the following selection criterion, of two equally historically valuable objects, is the minimum cost of staying in it (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2019). The authors proceed to identify the next minimum distance to the nearest historical object on the route. The authors again examine the type of movement and proceed to determine the historical value of the object. If at this stage among the previously selected points there are points of equal priority, then it is worth to return again to Block 2 of module 1 and find the following historical value of the route point. Moreover, the next selection criterion, from two equally historically valuable objects, is the minimum cost of staying in it.

If $i+2 \rightarrow maxCi$ of i-th object goes to block 2, module 1, and exclude this point. If the $i+2 \rightarrow minCi$ -th object, the authors proceed to the next test and calculate its historical value and proceed to the choice of the next object. Block 3 provides for the verification of the following selected points. They are examined by: historical value and determine the most valuable points; by the criterion of the time spent at the point. If there are no points of equal historical value, then the authors proceed to determine the cost of moving. If the time spent at the point exceeds the time limit, then this point is excluded from the route and proceed to determine the total cost of the route. If the time does not exceed the limit, then the total time on the route is calculated.

Block 21 provides for checking the identity of objects by distance, if such a point is found, then go to Block 22 and return to the previous point. If this object is not found, then go to Block 23 and again select the type of movement. Researching the next point of Block 24 determines the historical value of objects and if similar objects are found, then the authors go to Blocks 25, 26 and 27, where the most valuable point is determined. At this stage of selecting an object, a new criterion appears: the choice of time to stay at a point is Block 29. The time to visit each historical object is different, therefore, depending on the recreational object, the tourist spends a different time period. A table for visiting historical places (objects) is designed as a time card. If in Block 25 there are no points of equal historical value, then go to block 28 and determine the cost of moving. If the time spent at the point exceeds the specified parameters, then the authors from Block 30 go to 31 and exclude this point from the route and go to Block 34 to determine the total cost of the route. If the time does not exceed the specified parameters, then in Block 32 the total time on the route is calculated according to the formula (Damian & Suárez-Barraza, 2015):

$$T_H = \sum_{i=1}^{n} t_i + \left(t_1 + \frac{L_{zag}}{V_m} \right), \qquad \text{Equation 1}$$

where: t_i – average time of stay of a tourist in a historical object, min.; t_l – average travel time, min .; L_{zag} – distance of movement of passengers, km; V_m – the average speed of transport around the city, km/h. This formula is used if tourists are transported by road (bus). The total cost of the route is determined according to the formula (Damian & Suárez-Barraza, 2015):

$$C = \sum_{i=1}^{n} Z_i + B, \qquad \text{Equation 2}$$

where: Z_i – the average price of visiting a historical site, dollars; B – total cost of transportation of tourists, dollars.

Figure 2 presents a working block diagram of an algorithm for the formation of an effective tourist route. The algorithm is based on additional software modules, each of which forms its own separate factor group that allows to take into account all the criteria for choosing the thread of an effective route and at the same time use all incoming tabular data. Modular blocks make up such a basic sequence: determining the total priority of the object of visit; cost formation between objects of visit; formation of total costs between objects of visit; ordering objects by priority; the probability of the formation of all routes on the priority territory of a trip; route selection with a limited total travel time; determination of the total cost of the selected route. Analysis of the project is the final stage of its design. It is carried out by representatives of corresponding functional units of a tourism enterprise. It aims to identify and timely eliminate inconsistencies in a project. The result of the analysis is the updated content of the technological documentation of the tourism company.

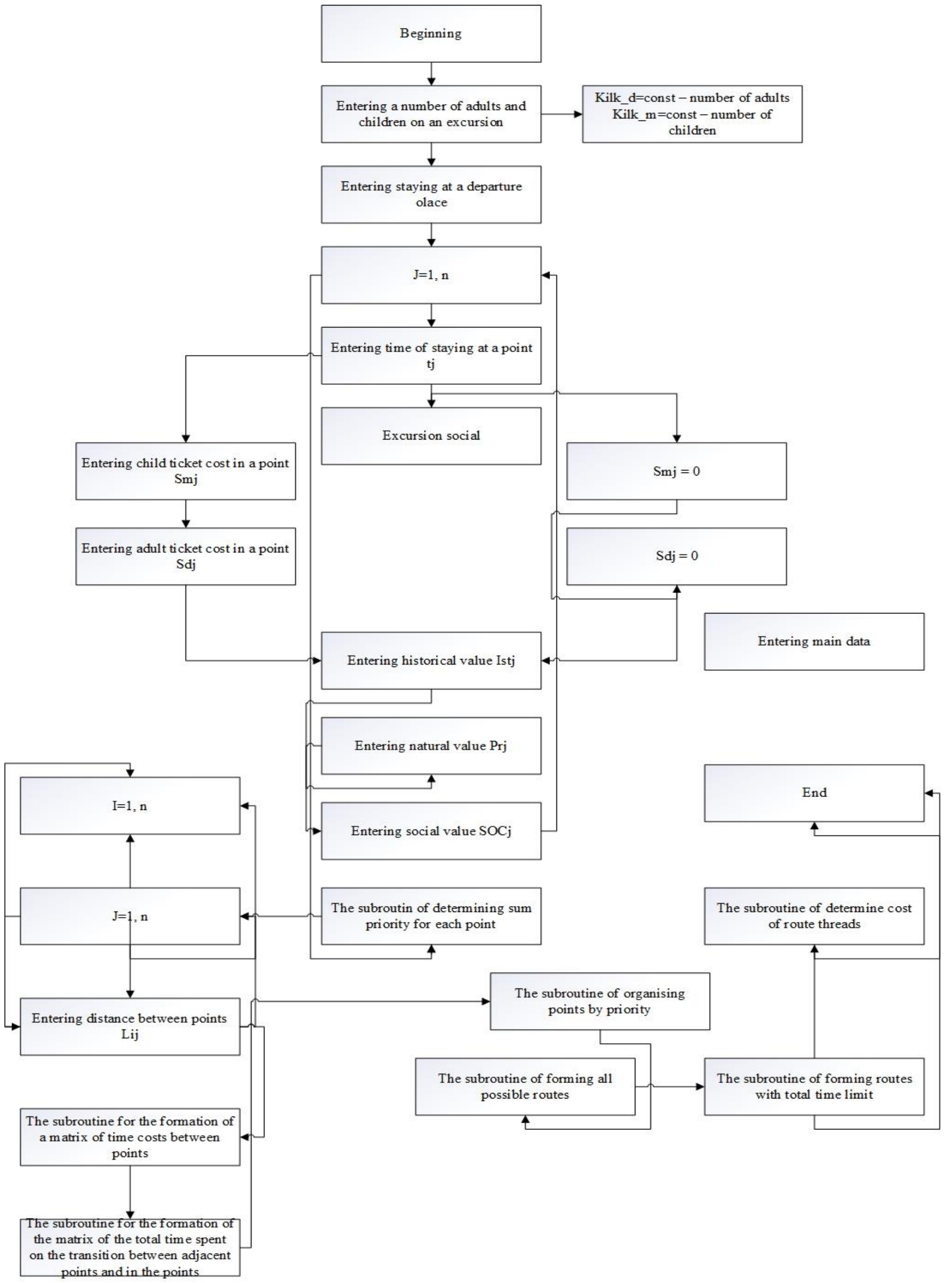

Figure 2. The working block diagram of the formation of the tourist route (Source: authors' own research based on Lin, 2018)

After passing through all the stages of creating routes, the authors proceed to block 35, which contains the design of the route, that is, the execution of all documents:

1. Drawing up a contract for the provision of excursion services. This is an organisational issue for the provision of qualified excursion services to a group of tourists. Tourism organisers are obliged to use the services of qualified tour guides (guides, guide-interpreters) who have the proper license or accreditation of an object (museum, temple, monastery, another object of the tourist display of the national park).

2. Registration of a contract of tourism organisers or individual tourists (excursionists) with persons providing services of a guide (guide, guide-translator).

3. The conclusion of a contract (accession to a contract) for the provision of excursion services is certified by an excursion ticket. The form of the tour voucher is determined in the manner prescribed by the authorised state tourism authority. A person who provides excursion services must, before concluding an agreement, provide the tourism organiser with the necessary and reliable information about the tourist-excursion company, the excursion bureau, about the services, their types and features, the qualification of the guide, about the procedure and terms for paying for the services (Kifyak, 2019).

The stage of designing a tourist route is completed, which is provided for by Block 2, where the following successive stages are provided for in the algorithm for designing and organising a tourist route: establishing standardised characteristics of the service; the establishment of technology for the process of serving tourists; development of technological documentation; definition of quality control methods; project analysis; submission of the project for approval.

The result of the design of tourism services are technological documents (routings, rules, instructions). The documentation on quality control should establish the forms, methods and organisation of control over the implementation of the process of servicing tourists in order to ensure its compliance with the planned characteristics. In order for the model of the formation of an optimal tourist route (FOTM) to work efficiently, its qualitative implementation is necessary, which is able to ensure the effective functioning of all enterprises in the tourism industry. This will help to reduce the cost of tourism enterprises (tour operators, tourist excursion bureaus) to obtain a tourism product from tour operators. A comprehensive assessment of tourist routes led to the creation of two models: the first – an assessment of the priority area of tourist travel; the second – the phased formation of a rational thread of the route. The use of a model for the phased formation of a rational route thread involves the creation of software that is based on computer technology (Figure 3).

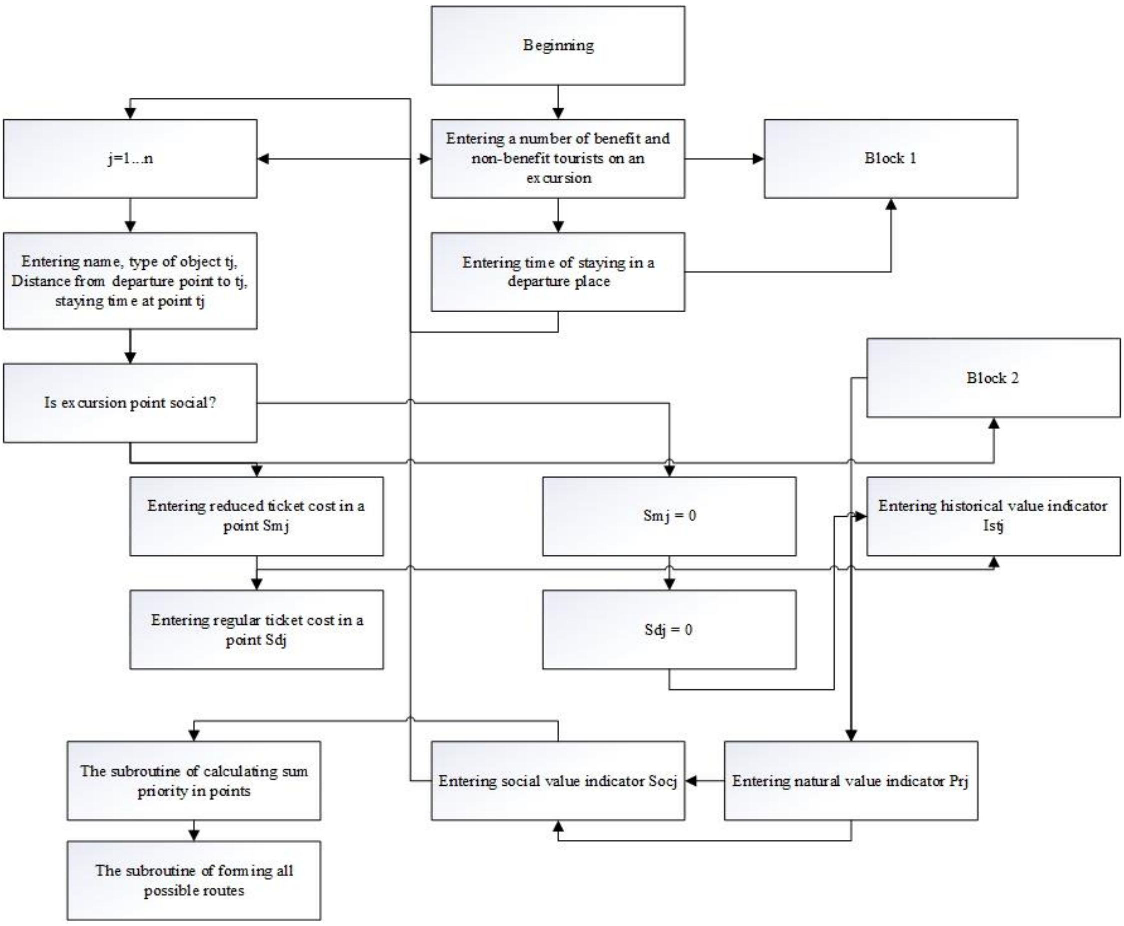

Figure 3. The block diagram of the program for the implementation of the task of finding a rational tourist route
(Source: authors' own research based on Rudenko et al., 2019)

Block 1. Data on the number of adults and children on the tour are entered. The cost of the excursion depends on these data, because if the ticket price at the excursion point is preferential for children, this affects the cost of a tour. At the same time, an assessment of the priority area of a tourist trip allows, based on an analysis of the identified tourism potential, to develop recommendations on promising areas of tourism development in the regions to identify reserves for their further growth. As a result of the study of the assessment of the priority travel area, it was found that the most actively used objects were of cultural heritage, rivers and lakes for summer educational and sports tours. The number of tourists without benefits is determined by the formula (Song, 2017):

$$Kilk\_d = const, \quad \text{Equation 3}$$

where: *Kilk_d* – the tourists without benefits; *const* – permanent value. The number of tourists with benefits is determined by the formula (Song, 2017):

$$Kilk\_m = const, \quad \text{Equation 4}$$

where: *Kilk_m* – the tourists with benefits.

According to the conditions of the task, this amount is unchanged throughout the thread of the route, at each point. Only two types of excursionists are considered – beneficiaries (children, students, pensioners and other categories considered by law) and not beneficiaries. Next, in Block 1, the value of the time spent at the point of departure is entered. It is taken equal to 20 minutes. This value affects the total time of the route, therefore it must be fixed and defined. Block 2. The values of the time spent at each point are entered, and it is also checked whether the excursion point is social. For this: a cycle is started according to the number of probable route points; input vector – a column of names of probable objects; a vector is introduced – a column of distances from the departure point to each probable route point; the input vector is the column of the time spent at each point, determined by the formula (Song, 2017):

$$t = t_1, \ldots t_n, \quad \text{Equation 5}$$

where: t_1 – time spent at the first point of the route, min; t_n – time spent at the next point of the route, min. t – the condition is checked whether the excursion point is social. To do this, a priority rank of 1 and 0 is entered. If the point is social, the indicator is 0, if commercial – 1. Entering the cost of a reduced ticket *(Sm)* (Song, 2016):

$$Sm_j = \begin{cases} Sm_j, S_j = 1 \\ 0, S_j = 0 \end{cases}, \quad \text{Equation 6}$$

The cost of a non-preferential ticket is entered in the following order (Song, 2016):

$$Sd_j = \begin{cases} Sd_j, S_j = 1 \\ 0, S_j = 0 \end{cases}, \quad \text{Equation 7}$$

– introduction of an indicator of historical value, Ist_j;

– introduction of natural value Pr_j;

– introduction of an indicator of social value, Soc_j;

– completion of the cycle after the transition to all numbers of probable points on the route.

The subroutine for calculating the total priority in points provides the following actions:

1. A matrix of dimension $m \times n$, is created, where m – the number of rows, n – the number of columns in those rows (point numbers), values are set for each column. The column number carries information about the type of value: 1 – historical; 2 – natural; 3 – social. Quantitative indicators of value vary from 1 to 3 for each type of value.

2. The cycle on i runs on. The line number is fixed.

3. The initial value of the sum for each point is taken equal to $Sum = 0$.

4. The cycle on j begins.

5. For each point, the sum of the historical, environmental and social values of the point is calculated according to the formula (Liying, 2018; Lin, 2018):

$$PrSum_j = \sum_{j=1}^{n} \left(Ist_j, Pr_j, Soc_j \right), \quad \text{Equation 8}$$

where: Ist – historical value of the excursion object; Pr – the natural value of the excursion object; Soc – social tourist sites.

6. After adding all the values in the row by columns, the cycle on j closes, the value of the sum fills a new place in the column vector created from the values of the sums of the current row.

7. Proceeding to the next line.

8. After enumerating all the point numbers, the cycle closes.

The routine for the formation of all probable routes a matrix of possible routes between points is created. By i and by j, values of probable transitions between points are introduced. Where: i – the number of the previous point; j – number of the next point. Thus, there are many possible options for transitions between points. This is preliminary data, because no restrictions are taken into account. Probably the matrix is shown in the form of equation (Liying, 2018; Lin, 2018):

$$C_{i,j} = \begin{array}{cccccc} & t_1 & t_2 & \ldots & t_{n-1} & t_n \\ t_1 & 0 & c_{1,2} & \ldots & c_{1,n-1} & c_{1,n} \\ t_2 & c_{2,1} & 0 & \ldots & c_{2,n-1} & c_{2,n-1} \\ \ldots & \ldots & \ldots & 0 & \ldots & \ldots \\ t_{n-1} & c_{n-1,1} & c_{n-1,2} & \ldots & 0 & c_{n-1,n} \\ t_n & c_{n,1} & c_{n,2} & \ldots & c_{n,n-1} & 0 \end{array}, \quad \text{Equation 9}$$

By i and by j, values of probable transitions between points are entered: where: i – number of the previous point; j – number of the next point. Thus, there are many possible options for transitions between points that are shown in the matrix (Liying, 2018; Lin, 2018):

$$L_{i,j} = \begin{array}{cccccc} & t_1 & t_2 & \ldots & t_{n-1} & t_n \\ t_1 & 0 & l_{1,2} & \ldots & l_{1,n-1} & l_{1,n} \\ t_2 & l_{2,1} & 0 & \ldots & l_{2,n-1} & l_{2,n-1} \\ \ldots & \ldots & \ldots & 0 & \ldots & \ldots \\ t_{n-1} & l_{n-1,1} & l_{n-1,2} & \ldots & 0 & l_{n-1,n} \\ t_n & l_{n,1} & l_{n,2} & \ldots & l_{n,n-1} & 0 \end{array}, \quad \text{Equation 10}$$

For this, two cycles by i and j are launched. Block 3. Entering distances between points. A matrix of probable distances between points is created. The subroutine for the formation of a matrix of time costs for moving between points:

1. The cycle starts by i and by j – the previous and next point.
2. The condition is checked whether the distance between the points is greater than 0.7 km. If more, then the movement between the points occurs in transport, the speed of which is 40 km/h. If less, then the excursionists move from one point of the route to another on foot. In this case, the speed (V_{ij}) is 4 km/h (Damian & Suárez-Barraza, 2015):

$$V_{i,j} = \begin{cases} 40, l_{i,j} \geq 0.7 \\ 4, l_{i,j} \leq 0.7 \end{cases}, \qquad \text{Equation 11}$$

3. The value of the time spent moving between the points $t(per)$ is calculated, which is determined by the formula (Damian & Suárez-Barraza, 2015):

$$tper_{i,j} = \frac{l_{i,j}}{v_{i,j}}, \qquad \text{Equation 12}$$

where: li, j – distance between objects, km; Vi, j – average speed of transport, km/h.

4. An explanation matrix is formed – on foot or by transport, excursionists move between points (Damian & Suárez-Barraza, 2015):

$$Rem_{i,j} = \begin{cases} j_{i,j} < 0.7 \\ l_{i,j} \geq 0.7 \end{cases}, \qquad \text{Equation 13}$$

After recalculations, a time-expenditure matrix is formed at all points, after which the cycles are closed. The subroutine for the formation of the matrix of the total time spent on the transition between adjacent points and in the points themselves:

1. The cycles by points i and j are opened.
2. The sum of the time spent at each point and the transition between points is found. It should be noted that the stay at each point is described by a vector, and the transitions between adjacent points by a matrix. Therefore, the total time spent on the route is formed by the formula (Damian & Suárez-Barraza, 2015; Lin, 2018):

$$t_{zag_{i,j}} = t_{per_{i,j}} + t_i, \qquad \text{Equation 14}$$

where: $tperi, j$ – time to move between given points, hours., (min.); ti – time to visit the i -th point, hour., (min).

3. After using all the actions, a matrix t_{zag} is formed.
4. The cycles are closed.

The subroutine for forming an array of numbers of points minimum in distance from zero:

1. A value is set that in advance is less than the probable value in the array.
2. The initial value for the accountant of the number of points with the smallest distance from the initial is set equal $0, k = 0$.
3. A cycle is set by j for sorting through all elements of the array from 1 to n.
4. A condition is set for checking whether the element of the array r is less than the minimum and, if the condition is satisfied, the minimum value takes the current value.
5. If the condition is satisfied, the counter is turned on to determine the number of the minimum element of the array *kl*, the minimum value is assigned – the value of the distance to the current point and the array *dovg_min* is formed of the numbers of minimum values.
6. There can be several such values, therefore the number of such values is deduced.

The subroutine for forming an array of numbers of highest priority points.

1. A value is set that in advance is less than a probable value in the array *min=lE-5*.
2. The initial value of the number of maximum points equal to 0 is set.
3. The cycle is launched to iterate over all elements of the array *prsum* – total priorities.
4. The condition for checking: is there the array element *prsum* and is greater than the maximum.
5. The cycle closes, a new one opens for the same number of elements *(j=1… m)*.
6. All elements of the array are checked for their equality with the maximum. If the condition is satisfied, the counter is turned on to determine the number of the maximum element of the array *k2*, the maximum value and the distance value to the current point are assigned, and an array *prior_max* is formed of the numbers of maximum values.
7. The cycle closes.

The subroutine of finding matching points in terms of priority and minimum distance. Two arrays are checked from the selected point numbers by priority and distance, or they are the same. After the first match, the point number is fixed; sampling is stopped. If there is no match and the first point is taken, the first one closest to zero:

1. The cycle by i opens.
2. The cycle by j opens.
3. The condition is checked (Liying, 2018; Lin, 2018):

$$First\_point = \begin{cases} prior\_max, dovg\_min = prior\_max, \\ dovg\_min, dovg\_min \neq prior\_max \end{cases} \qquad \text{Equation 15}$$

4. The cycles close.
5. The values of the first point after the zero and its name are displayed.

After the first point of the route was found, it is necessary to find the entire thread of the route. This will happen by enumerating all the distances between the points. In each column there is a minimum value and in the next columns the elements of the rows in which these values are located are replaced by a number, that is, such that in any case there will be more array element. The subroutine of finding the first point and excluding it from the selection of the future route. The value of the column number is set to 1, that is $j=1$:

1. The cycle is opened by i, that is, all elements of the column are sorted by rows.

2. The condition is checked whether the line number coincides with the number of the first point after zero, or not. If it matches, the element of the first column is assigned equal to tm, if it does not match – equal to the output value (Liying, 2018; Lin, 2018):

$$First\_point\_Intro_{i,1} = \begin{cases} "tm" i = First\_point, \\ L_{i,1,i} \neq First\_point \end{cases} \qquad \text{Equation 16}$$

3. The cycle repeats until all the lines have been sorted. Then the cycle closes.

A subroutine for forming a matrix in which all values that belong to the location line of the first point are indicated $1*E^5$:

1. The cycles are started first in rows *(i)*, then in columns *(j)*.

2. The condition is checked, either it is equal to the row number *First_point* or the value is 0. If the condition is satisfied, the element is given a value $1*E^5$, if not – the value of the element of the distance array.

3. All the elements of the matrix are iterated in cycles. The cycles close.

The subroutine for generating a vector from minimum column values. One of the tasks of this subroutine is that in each subsequent column those lines in which values were found are not used. This is due to the fact that excursion points cannot be repeated on the route thread (Mazur, 2019; Denissova et al., 2018). In this subroutine, two vectors are formed – one of the numbers of the minimum elements, and the second directly from these elements. The order of numbers is the very thread of the route, because it determines the previous and next point:

1. The cycle by columns *(j)* opens.

2. The previous value of the minimum element is affected such that it is in advance larger than any value in the matrix, *min*=1000.

3. The cycle by rows *(i)* starts.

4. Whether the column is the first is checked. Indeed, if the condition is confirmed, in this column the value of the line number in which the point is located is known and equal *First_point*.

5. The row number is entered in the vector *Nom_min_stov p*, which is formed from the numbers of elements.

6. In the event that the column number is different from 1, the following conditions are checked: whether the element is less than the minimum row, and (or); or there was a minimal element in this row in the previous columns.

7. If the condition is true, min is provided to the value of this element.

8. The value of the element that satisfies the condition is assigned equal $1*E^5$.

9. If any of the conditions is false, the next element is taken.

10. All the values are iterated and the cycle by i closes.

11. The minimum value is assigned to the element of vector; its number is entered in the vector *Nom_min_stov p* and values in the vector *Znach_min_stov p*.

12. The cycle by j closes.

The subroutine for calculating the time spent on the route. To calculate the time spent on excursions, first it is necessary to select from the matrix t_{zag} those values that belong to the rows of the column numbers of the minimum elements *Nom_min_stov p*, creating a new vector from them t_{pereb}, and then find their sum:

1. The cycle starts in columns.

2. The initial value of the number of elements is 0.

3. The cycle starts by row.

4. The condition is checked whether the element number of the total time row t_{zag} matches the number of the minimum element in distance *Nom_min_stov p*.

5. If it matches, then the counter k=k+1 is turned on and a new array is formed t_{pereb}. Exiting the cycle i.

6. If it does not match, the next item is taken.

7. After iterating over all the rows, go to the next column.

8. Exiting the cycle.

9. The sum of the elements of the array t_{pereb} is found.

The total time T_{sum} spent on the tour is determined by the formula (Damian & Suárez-Barraza, 2015):

$$T_{sum} = \sum_{j=1}^{n} t_{pereb_j}, \qquad \text{Equation 17}$$

The subroutine for calculating the cost of an optimised excursion is calculated using the subroutine of Block 2:

1. The cost of an excursionist presence at each point is checked.

2. The cost of staying at all points is attached.

3. The cost of moving between points is added to the total cost of staying at points. If on foot, then 0, if by transport – the cost of transportation is added.

The introduction of methodological approaches involves the implementation of actions that will ensure the effective use of all work modules.

CONCLUSIONS

The formation of a holistic tourism system allows to consider the possibility of additional investment in depressed regions and reduce the resulting anthropogenic load. In addition, there is an opportunity to form interstate tourism entities. The authors proposed a model based on international standards and adapted to the current socio-economic situation. The development of the module according to the presented algorithm will allow real-time control in real time, while allowing to develop a received order to create a thematic route for reduced time.

To train employees of a tourism organisation, the following actions are performed: receiving applications for the creation of thematic excursion routes; clarification of a territory of a trip; clarification of a priority valuable object; coordination of a number of objects to visit; coordination of a total travel time; coordination of a type of movement on a route; creating a route thread according to specified parameters of an application. To create faster route thread calculations for employees of tourism enterprises, software was developed that does not require a large investment of time and certain additional skills for its mastering.

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IMPACT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED TOURISM FIRMS ON EMPLOYMENT IN KAZAKHSTAN

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Abstract: Nowadays, small and medium-sized tourism firms play a key role in the development of the national economy of Kazakhstan. In 2019, there were over 7000 small and medium-sized tourism firms in Kazakhstan. The tourism firms have many contributions to make labor-intensive and more often self-proprietary, comparatively improved levels of efficiency and better income distribution, has a strong socio-economic imperative for the country, and disseminates broadly the benefits of economic growth. However, there is a little information available on the impact of tourism firms on employment in Kazakhstan. The objective of this manuscript is to fill this information gap by investigating the impact of tourism firms on employment by applying regression analysis. The results of the regression analysis revealed that there is a positive relationship between tourism firms and unemployment reduction. This manuscript may be beneficial for practitioners and academicians. Examining the impact of tourism firms on employment tends to raise or provide some useful insights into some theoretical issues on one hand. On the other hand, it raises some practical implications for policy makers in the government.

Key words: tourism firms, employment, regression analysis, Kazakhstan

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, it has become obvious that the development of a competitive socially oriented market economy is impossible without building a flexible labor market. The analysis of the impact of tourism firms on the development of the labor market and employment is becoming especially relevant, which formulates a set of effective measures aimed at increasing employment and developing the economy as a whole (Davis et al., 1996; Foelster, 2000; Carree et al., 2002; Acs and Armington, 2004; Oosterbeek et al., 2010; Doran et al., 2016). Quantitative and qualitative indicators reflecting the state of the labor market are simultaneously indicators of the effectiveness of using the investment, organizational and financial potentials of the labor market, as well as the national economy as a whole (Baumol, 1993; Rocha, 2004; Mueller, 2007; Cumming et al., 2014; Al-Haddad, et al., 2019). They characterize the state and direction of development of an entrepreneurial society, whose participants, along with the functions of producing goods and services, combining factors of production, stimulating aggregate demand and introducing the achievements of scientific and technological progress, perform a social function consisting in creating jobs, which determines the quality and the standard of living of the population, the state of human capital (Lepoutre and Haener, 2006; Taiwo et al., 2012; Memili et al., 2015; Maksimov et al., 2017).

This is an objective prerequisite for the formation and implementation of labor potential, the rate and type of economic growth depend on the volume and quality (Audretsch and Thurik, 2001). Entrepreneurial structures on the labor market and employment is determined by many factors, among which are: the type of economic activity performed, the legal form, the level of concentration and centralization of production, etc. (Malesios et al., 2018). In this regard, it seems necessary to identify business entities in as independent participants in the labor market, which will determine the characteristics of labor resources, changing under the influence of entrepreneurial activity tee (Aliyeva et al., 2020). Interest in such a study is growing due to the deterioration of the macroeconomic situation in the context of aggravating geopolitical risks, which inevitably affects the state of the labor potential of the national economy as a whole and of individual territorial entities (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2008; Lonial and Carter, 2015).

Historically, tourism firms have not played an important role in Kazakhstan due to specific resource-based economy (Koshim et al., 2018; Koshim et al., 2019). Resource sector in particular energy is by far the most important for Kazakhstan's economy (Movkebayeva et al., 2020). It accounts for one quarter of its total GDP and just under one third of its total industrial production, and contributes about

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half the income to the annual budget (Karatayev and Hall, 2020). Energy exports, which account for 60% of total national exports, have been the crucial factor that explains the impressive annual rise of 7-10% of Kazakhstan's GDP for the years 2010–2019 (Karatayev et al., 2016). To reduce reliance on resource export, government aims to develop sustainable knowledge-based economy (Karatayev and Hall, 2017) with dynamic activities in small and medium entrepreneurship sector.

The effective development of entrepreneurial activity depends on the influence of external and internal environment (Lerner and Haber, 2001; Nga and Shamuganathan, 2010; Noguera et al., 2013; Bruton et al., 2013; Aparicio et al.2016).

An analysis of external (international, political, economic, legal, environmental, technological, social, market) and internal (consumers, suppliers, competitors) factors is necessary for the development and implementation of a balanced state regulatory policy, which should meet the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises and promote growth degrees of economic freedom of business (Singh et al., 2012). According to the National Statistics Agency in 2019, 1.2 million small and medium-sized enterprises were registered in Kazakhstan (NSA, 2019). Small and medium-sized enterprises employ 21% of the total number of people active in the economy and account for about 24% of the total turnover of products and services produced by enterprises in the country.

Of these, 57.6% of small and medium-sized enterprises are individual entrepreneurs, 28.1% are joint entities, 22.4% of them are microenterprises, 8.6% are small enterprises and 0.9% are medium-sized enterprises (Saiymova et al., 2018). The main activities of small and medium enterprises are trade (more than 36.7%) and the provision of services (28.6%). In 2019, over 7000 tourism firms in Kazakhstan were registered as small and medium enterprises. In addition, in Kazakhstan, there is a high level of employment and low unemployment (NSA, 2020). The employment rate is 75.1% and the overall unemployment rate is 8.5% (Saiymova et al., 2020). In this regard, there is growing interest in modeling the tourism firms' impact on employment.

METHODOLOGY

Regression analysis, as a combination of mathematical methods for detecting the correlation between random variables or attributes, allows a comparison of a number of indicators in the field of employment in tourism firms and further develop a model of the measured data and study their properties (Menard, 2000; Peng et al., 2002; Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2011). Data sets for regression analysis were obtained from National Statistic Agency for 2011-2019 period (NSA, 2020). This Agency is national provider of credible, relevant, accurate, and timely statistics that are essential for policy makers, individuals, households, businesses, academic institutions, and other organizations to make informed decisions. The data on socioeconomic and entrepreneurial trends in Kazakhstan is available on https://stat.gov.kz/.

The indicator "Employment dynamics" was selected as the resulting indicator. The dynamics of the growth rate of employees in tourism firms for the period 2011-2019 has a general growth trend (Table 1). In many respects, the positive dynamics of this indicator is due to the development of the financial and credit support system for tourism firms and the solution of the problem of access to financial resources and the active participation of local financial institutions in lending to tourism firms.

Table 1. Employment dynamics, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	101.1	102.5	102.6	97.3	104.3	103.6	100.4	103.9	103.5

The following indicators were selected as factors influencing the rate of growth of employment: X_1 - share of small and medium-sized tourism firms; X_2 - share of economic active population; X_3 - share of employed persons; X_4 - share of employed persons with higher education; X_5 - share of unemployed persons; X_6 - share of persons outside the labour force; X_7 - the average monthly wage of the population; X_8 - real disposable income of the population; X_9 - inflation rate.

The first factors selected for the development of the economic and mathematical model is the dynamics of the growth rate of the number of tourism firms for the period 2011-2019 in % to the previous year (Table 2). This indicator is a kind of barometer of the economy, as a result, has very unstable dynamics: during periods of economic growth - the number of tourism firms increases, during moments of economic recession quantitative growth of tourism firms does not occur.

Table 2. The growth of tourism firms, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	106.7	111.7	113.0	112.6	103.8	99.7	96.0	101.2	106.7

Analyzing the following indicator "The growth of the economic active population" in % to the previous year (Table 3), we note that the largest increase in the economically active population in Kazakhstan was recorded in 2012.

Table 3. The growth of economic active population, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	103.6	105.8	101.5	99.8	101.8	101.9	102.6	97.7	97.2

As the next factor selected for the correlation and regression analysis, the indicator "The growth of the employed persons" in % to the previous year was selected (Table 4). The minimum value is noted in 2014 – 93.5%, after which the general trend of employment of the population until the end of the period becomes positive.

Table 4. The growth of the employed persons, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	101.0	100.7	97.3	93.5	98.8	100.2	103.3	98.2	100.2

In direct proportion to the economic situation are not only indicators of changes in employment and unemployment, but also the quality of the workforce, determined by the level of education. Therefore, the next factor was selected "The growth of employed persons with higher education" in % to the previous year (Table 5). Higher education is very important in the current economic environment, as it enables potential employees to choose from a wider range of vacancies, while people with secondary, specialized secondary or vocational education are very limited in their choice in employment. The important issue remains the quality of education, the level of training of specialists. The overall dynamics of this indicator is negative, which negatively affects the activities of enterprises.

Table 5. The growth of employed persons with higher education, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	111.5	99.7	99.5	105.3	96.1	95.0	99.7	92.7	94.0

The next indicator selected is “The growth of unemployed” in % to the previous year (Table 6). The minimum value noted in 2017 is 65.6%. The maximum growth rate of the number of unemployed in the study period was recorded in 2014, and then it amounted to 140.4%.

Table 6. The growth of unemployed persons, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	78.1	98.1	98.3	140.4	92.1	85.5	65.6	90.6	66.2

One of the important indicators for analysis impact of small and medium-sized tourism firms on employment is the share of persons outside the labour force (Table 7). The inactivity rate is the proportion of the working-age population that is not in the labour force. A subgroup of persons outside the labour force comprises those known as discouraged jobseekers, defined as persons not in the labour force, who are available for work but no longer looking for work due to specific labour market-related reasons, such as the belief that there are no jobs available.

Table 7. The growth of persons outside the labour force, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	83.6	101.6	98.8	102.9	97.6	90.1	71.1	96.1	73.8

The next factor for the development of the model was selected the factor “The growth of the average monthly wage of the population” in % to the previous year (Table 8). The average monthly wage affects the level of employment, not only as a motivating indicator, but also as an argument for the development of tourism firms in certain industries. The dynamics of this indicator does not have a pronounced growth or decline trend. For the growth rates of the average monthly wage during the study period, transitions are observed: the maximum value was noted in 2012 - the growth rate was 122%, and the minimum - in 2014, when the growth rate was 99.4%.

Table 8. The growth of the average monthly wage of the population, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	121.6	122.0	121.1	99.4	108.3	110.8	109.6	110.7	106.0

Another indicator for conducting a multivariate analysis was selected “The growth of real disposable income of population” (Table 9). In contrast to the average monthly wage, the trends in the growth rates of real disposable income of citizens have a general tendency to decrease. The maximum value was recorded in 2012, when the growth rate of the indicator was 111.2%. The minimum value was noted in 2014 - the growth rate of the indicator was 97%. The influence of real disposable income of citizens on the level of employment in tourism firms is determined by means of additional income, part-time employment, and other equally important criteria.

Table 9. The growth of real disposable income of population, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	109.0	111.2	109.4	97.0	101.7	104.0	104.1	104.1	103.6

The last indicator of the economic-mathematical model was chosen as “The growth of inflation” in % to the previous year (Table 10). Analyzing the data in the table, we can conclude that in crisis periods (2013 and 2019), the maximum value of this indicator is noted – 9.8 and 10.7%, respectively. The growth rate of inflation reflects the growth rate of prices and affects the state of the economy of economic entities, the level of development of the regions and the country as a whole. The increase in inflation negatively affects the financial and economic situation of tourism firms; as a result, the unstable situation entails a decrease in the level of employment in this sector of the economy.

Table 10. The growth of inflation, in % (Source: NSA, 2020)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indicator growth rate	6.7	6.0	9.8	10.7	7.1	7.6	6.5	7.4	9.8

To conduct a correlation regression analysis, it is necessary to form a summary table of indicators that affect the dynamics of the number of employees in tourism firms. Table 11 and Figure 1 serves as input to the development of a pair correlation matrix.

Table 11. A summary of indicators (Source: compiled by the authors)

Indicators	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Y	101.1	102.5	102.6	97.3	104.3	102.6	100.4	103.6	102.5
X_1	106.7	111.7	113.0	112.6	103.8	99.7	96.0	101.2	106.7
X_2	103.6	104.8	101.5	99.8	101.8	101.9	102.6	97.7	97.2
X_3	101.0	100.7	97.3	93.5	98.8	100.2	103.3	98.2	100.2
X_4	111.5	99.7	99.5	105.3	96.1	95.0	99.7	92.7	94.0
X_5	78.1	98.1	98.3	140.4	92.1	85.5	65.6	90.6	66.2
X_6	83.6	101.6	98.8	102.9	97.6	90.1	71.1	96.1	73.8
X_7	121.6	122.0	121.1	99.4	108.3	110.8	109.6	110.7	106.0
X_8	109.0	111.2	109.4	97.0	101.7	104.0	104.1	104.1	103.6
X_9	6.7	6.0	9.8	10.7	7.1	7.6	6.5	7.4	9.8

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using a correlation regression analysis, we obtain a matrix of pair correlation coefficients (Table 12). Factors such as: X_3 - number of employees; X_6 - the average monthly wage of the population; X_7 - real disposable income of the population; X_8 - the inflation rate does not satisfy the conditions of the study, therefore it is discarded. An analysis of the matrix of pair correlation coefficients showed the presence of a relationship of factors and the resulting indicator, thereby determining the influence of the criteria on the change in the number of employees in tourism firms. The second step in building a model is conducting a regression analysis. Regression is necessary to analyze the effect of factors X on the resulting indicator Y by deriving some functional dependence, called the regression equation or correlation regression model (Table 13). As a result of the regression analysis, the value of the "R-squared" indicator, which is the coefficient of determination, amounted to 0.957275. The coefficient of determination, the factors included in the model, more than 70% determine the impact on the change in the number of employees in tourism firms. As a result of the regression, the coefficients necessary for compiling the regression equation were also obtained (Table 14). Based on the results obtained, the regression equation takes the form: $Y = 110.5337 + 0.053807X_1 + 0.114424X_2 - 0.18223\ X_4 - 0.09027\ X_5$. The obtained equation meets the goal of correlation and regression analysis and is a linear multivariate model of the dependence of the number of people employed in tourism firms on four main factors, each of which affects the change in the number of employed people in the tourism firms.

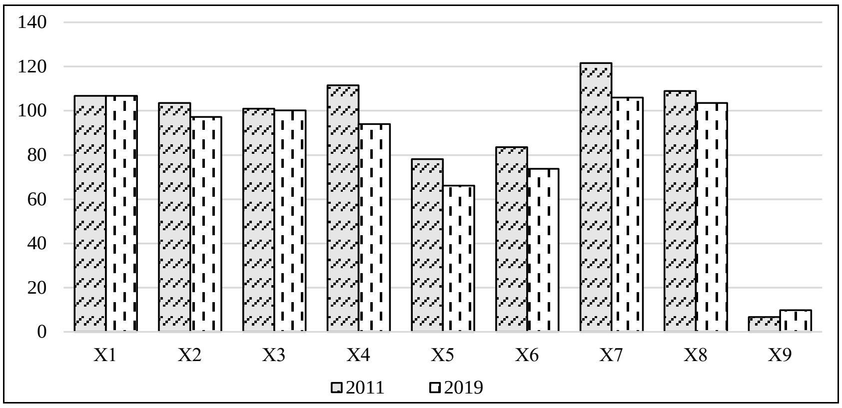

Figure 1. A summary of indicators (Source: compiled by the authors)

The economic sense of developing a correlation and regression model is as follows: an increase in the number of tourism firms by 1% will contribute to an increase in the number of employees in tourism firms by 0.05%; a 1% reduction in the number of working citizens with higher education will contribute to an increase in the number of people employed in tourism firms by 0.18%; a decrease in the number of unemployed by 1% will contribute to an increase in the number of people employed in tourism firms by 0.09% (Table 15). As a result of calculations and economic analysis, it was found that the greatest impact on the change in the number of people employed in tourism firms is exerted by the number of tourism firms, the number of economically active population, the number of working citizens with higher education and the number of unemployed.

Table 12. A matrix of pair correlation coefficients (Source: compiled by the authors)

	Y	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4	X_5	X_6	X_7	X_8	X_9
Y	1									
X_1	0.85	1								
X_2	0.88	0.99	1							
X_3	0.68	0.86	0.86	1						
X_4	0.89	0.99	0.99	0.86	1					
X_5	0.87	0.99	0.99	0.82	1.00	1				
X_6	0.84	0.86	0.87	0.89	0.96	0.99	1			
X_7	0.83	0.85	0.95	0.94	0.70	0.96	0.98	1		
X_8	0.81	0.82	0.99	0.98	0.85	0.99	0.99	0.96	1	
X_9	0.85	0.87	0.94	0.94	0.69	0.96	0.98	0.99	0.96	1

Table 13. The indicators remaining after the correlation analysis (Source: compiled by the authors)

Y	X_1	X_2	X_4	X_5
103.3	171	101.8	113.7	80.3
100.7	108.9	102.6	101.9	100.3
100.8	113.9	99.3	101.5	100.5
95.1	109.8	97.6	107.5	142.6
102.1	111.4	99.6	98.3	94.1
100.8	105.6	99.7	97.2	87.5
102.6	97.5	99.8	100.7	67.8
101.4	98	99.9	94.9	92.8
104.3	103	99.4	96.2	68.4

Table 14. Regression statistics

Multiple R	0.978404
R- squared	0.957275
Normalized R- squared	0.91455
Standard Error	0.763673
Observation	9

Table 15. Input data for regression equation

Y	110.5337
X_1	0.053807
X_2	0.114424
X_4	-0.18223
X_5	-0.09027

The resulting model can be used to predict changes in the average number of employees at certain factor values. The values of such indicators as the number of tourism firms, the number of economically active population, the number of working citizens with higher education, the number of unemployed for the period 2011-2019 were used as initial data for the development of forecast values for 2020-2022 (Table 16, Figure 2). Thus, in the process of developing forecasted indicator values, all factors have a positive dynamic, with the exception of the dynamics rate of the economically active population.

Table 16. Forecast of indicator values (Source: compiled by the authors)

Indicators	2020	2022
Y	102.5	104.2
X_1	89.2	89.8
X_2	98.8	98.6
X_4	93.1	91.8
X_5	75.6	63.6

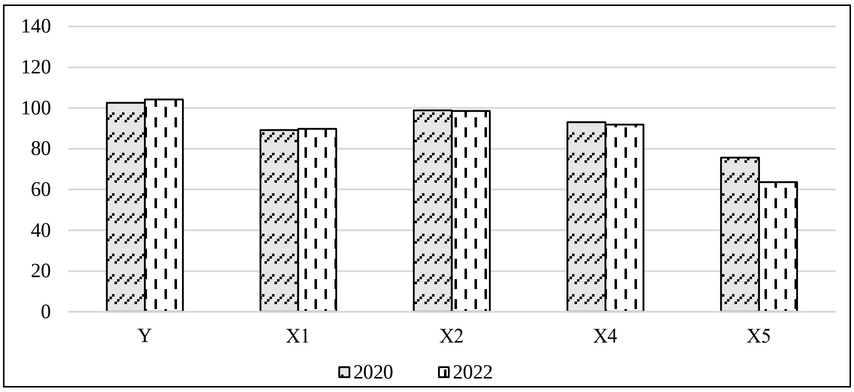

Figure 2. Forecast of indicator values (Source: compiled by the authors)

CONCLUSION

Small and medium-sized tourism firms provide a relatively higher growth rate of the number of employees. The analysis allows, thus, showing some features of the functioning and development of tourism firms in the modern market system, to identify its role in solving employment problems. It has been established that tourism firms are in demand and successful where the demand for products is often changing in nature or personified. These areas include the service sector (in this area, the total share of employees in tourism firms has traditionally increased), art, craftsmanship, etc. The tourism firms can actively create jobs for socially vulnerable categories of the population, contributes to the development of self-employment.

However, one should also point out the ambiguous impact of the development of tourism firms on employment processes, since, on the one hand, tourism firms, expanding, attracts more and more free labor, but at the same time fierce competition both within the tourism system and between tourism firms and big business, leads to the ruin of part of small enterprises and the loss of jobs. Hence, there is a need to create such conditions for the functioning of the tourism system under which employment growth would be stable.

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GEOMORPHOSITES ASSESSMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENTIFIC GEO-TOURISM IN NORTH AND MIDDLE ANDAMAN'S, INDIA

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Abstract: India possesses some of the most interesting, intriguing, wonderful landforms. The diversity of landforms in India arises from unique geology, structure, tectonic history, climate and coastline. India, therefore, provides a rich context for the study of diverse landforms and how they are influenced by the processes of the earth's surface. Their detailed mapping and visualization is yet to be done. Geomorphosites can potentially be major tourist attraction in India. On the one hand they are integral part of country's geological evolution and on the other, these sites consist of features that are often associated with events of cultural or religious significance. Geomorphosites as tourist attractions may yield a good revenue to the country and have a significant impact on the local community. They can also provide scientific understanding about the geological and geographic process to the researchers. Already people do visit these places but mainly for recreational purposes, therefore their tourism potential remains largely underdeveloped. Not much information is available regarding many geomorphosites in India. Specifically, detailed inventory of geomorphosites /geoheritage sites in India is important from the viewpoint of geo-tourism. Andaman and Nicobar Islands in India have the treasurer of different geomorphosites but at the same time they also known for its unique biodiversity and very fragile ecosystem therefore any type of tourism development require an understanding about the carrying capacity of different places and right aptitude about the fragility of the environment too. In this context present study examine few geomorphosites of Andaman and Nicobar islands by using the "Reynard Model" used by Reynard, 2008.

Key words: Geomorphosites, Geo-tourism, "Reynard Model", carrying capacity, tourist perception

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INTRODUCTION

India is perceived as magnificent landscape because of its unique geology, structure, and tectonic history. The diverse landforms in India have great influence on India's tourism. Now more and more people are visiting India than ever before. Around 2.4 million international tourists came to India in 2017 they were five times more than two decades back. Though the real boost is coming from domestic travel. In less than 10 years, the World Travel & Tourism Council expects India to become the fourth-largest travel and tourism economy behind China, the U.S., and Germany. Tourism in the subcontinent generated more than $230 billion in 2017, up from almost $209 billion in 2016 (Popescu, 2018). The vast country offers myriad options. In India, tourism is steered by government subsidies and tax incentives, five regional budget airlines debuted100 far-flung routes last year, helping citizens' desire to explore.

However, unchecked growth can threaten stakeholders in the fragile places supported by the surge in visitors. Therefore India needs to follow the principles of geo-tourism. Geo-tourism is environmentally and culturally responsible tourism at the same time it is synergistic that means it bring together all elements of geographical character to create a travel experience that is richer than the sum of its parts and appealing to visitors with diverse interests. Geo-tourism is especially important in the case of Andaman and Nicobar Islands as the islands has fragile environment and already facing the challenges of biodiversity loss, damage of ecosystems, water scarcity, loss of indigenous people and seismicity (Moef, GOI/UNDP Action Plan, 2003).

ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS: A HIGH POTENTIAL GEO-TOURIST DESTINATION IN INDIA

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, located in the Bay of Bengal to the east of the Indian mainland has several ingredients that can make it a favored tourist destination. There has been a rise in the arrival of tourists in Andaman and Nicobar islands after 2005. This has primarily been driven by domestic tourists. Although there also appears to be a marginal increase in the number of international tourists between 2005 and 2010, this has almost remained stagnated from 2010 to 2015. Andaman and Nicobar islands have recently became a very popular destination for the tourists the Figure 1 shows that the total tourist visits have increased from last two decades. There has been an increasing trend of tourist arrival since 1991, with some fluctuations around 2005. This can be attributed to the impact of tsunami that hit the coast in 2004. Since 2005 the numbers of international tourists have also shown an increasing trend. According to data available with the home ministry, more than 16 lakh tourists visited the Andaman and Nicobar Islands between 2015 and October 2018 to enjoy the natural beauty, beaches, flora and fauna and historically-significant landmarks in around 38 inhabited islands out of the 572 islets.

The archipelago has received 4, 023, 93 tourists, including 11,818 foreigners, till October, 2018 while it received 4, 87,229 tourists, including 15310 foreigners in 2017. In 2016, as many as 4, 00,019 tourists, including 15,467 foreigners, had visited the Andamans and in 2015, a total of 3, 11,358 tourists, including 14,674 foreigners, had gone to the union territory (Figure2).

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a union territory and comes under the administrative control of the home ministry of India. The main challenge of the islands is its isolation from the mainland. The Government of India has taken various measures to promote and develop

* Corresponding author

the tourism activities in these islands. The government is promoting public-private partnership (PPP) for the development of tourism (Sharma, 2018). Foreign tourists can now directly fly to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands the government has designated Port Blair airport as an authorized immigration check post for entry into and exit from India with valid travel documents.

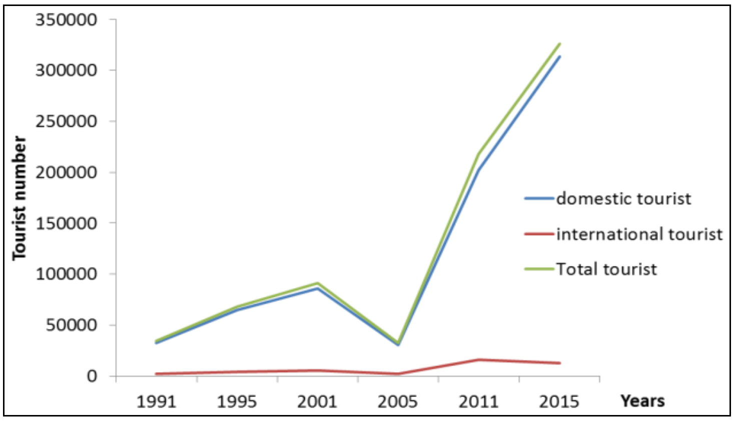

Figure 1. Tourist Arrivals in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India (1991-2015) (Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, A&N Islands 2016. Tsunami of 2004 had an impact on tourist visit in 2005)

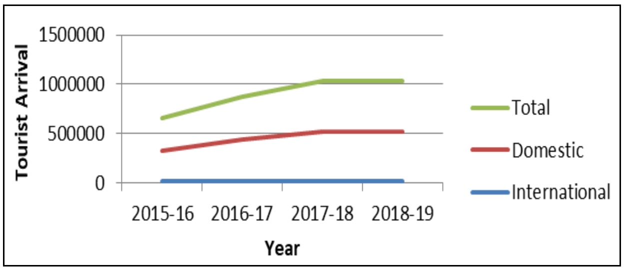

Figure 2. Tourist Arrival in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India (2015-2019) (Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, 2018)

In another notification, the home ministry appointed the Superintendent of Police, CID, the Andaman and Nicobar Police, as the "civil authority" for the immigration check post at Port Blair airport with effect from December 31, 2018 (Times of India,31-12- 2018). The efforts are also evident in promoting the sites as Geosites and heritage sites, promoting beach activities, opening hotels and providing the amenities for recreational purposes but lacking in tracing the value of these places as the sites of scientific tourism. Considering the carrying capacity of the places government also put restrictions on the numbers of tourists at some places. But public as well as private tourism development approaches both most of the time have missed the tourists opinion as an actor of the system and either based on the livelihood generation for the locals or revenue generation for the government. In this regard present study will provide first-hand information about the tourist's opinion and perception about the development of different geomorphosites. At the end study also present a detail discussion about the carrying capacity of these sites which need to be considered by the government and tourist agencies while promoting the tourism at these places.

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this paper is to evaluate selected Geomorphosites of Andaman islands for the Development of Scientific Geo Tourism.

STUDY AREA: The survey was carried in the following geomorphosites on Andman islands namely

1. Volcanic Origin: • Barren Island
   • Mud Volcano. Baratang
2. Karst Topography • Limestone caves, Baratang (Figure 3).

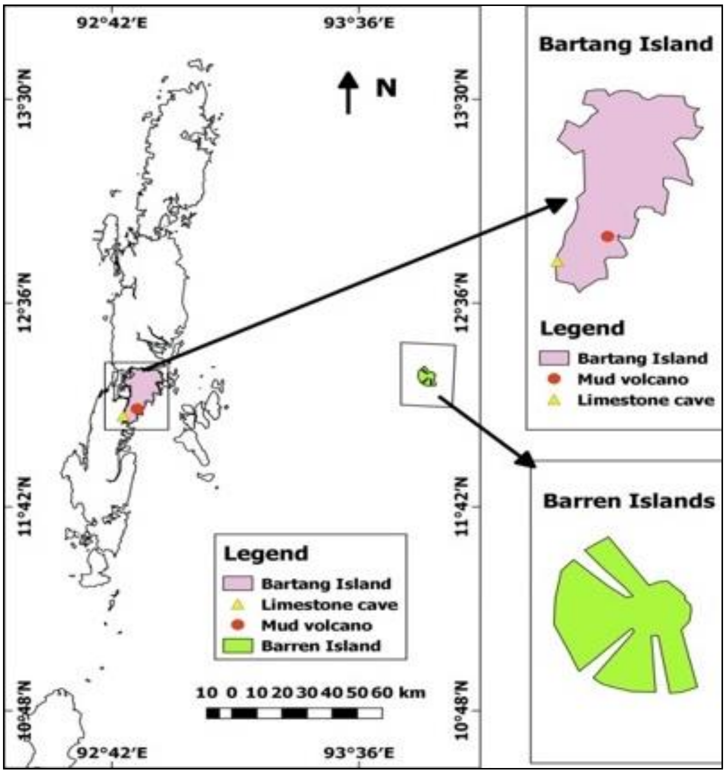

Figure 3. Location of Selected Geomorphosites at Andaman Islands, India

The **Barren Island** (Figure 3) is a volcanic site studied to assess the potential site of scientific and volcano tourism. Rational behind choosing this site is that, it is relatively less studied and less known. This is the only active volcano of Indian territory. It is located 70 KM east of the Andaman Island chains. It is uniquely positioned given that it is a place where oceanic volcanic and meta volcanic rocks, such as pillow basalts, ultramafics, serpentinites, greenstones, as well as flysh sediments are exposed (Allen et al., 2007).

However, Barren Island is a restricted zone and special permits are required to visit it. Also, one cannot stay in the island. Hence in order to experience the island, one needs to plan an early morning trip. It takes 4 to 5 hours to reach the island. Tourists enjoy travelling to the island just to get a proximate view of it. They travel through ships and get enthralled by the interesting basalt formations and topography shaped by past lava flows as well as fast growing coral gardens. The island can be visited by obtaining approval of the forest department as well as after getting the necessary permits. In 2018 the volcano has erupted and has drawn attention of tourists from around the world. The mud volcano and lime stone cave at **Baratang Island** are (Figure 3) other two important geomorphosites which are not yet explored for scientific purposes.

The Baratang island trip brings forward the tropical side of the Andaman Islands. It has dense Forest, Tribes, and Mangroves. Various recreational activities like Dongi rides, beaches, birds, caves and trekking etc also happens here. Baratang Island is about 90 km away from Port Blair. Regular bus services are available from STS Bus Terminal, Aberdeen Bazar. Journey takes about 2 hours and 30 minutes from Port Blair to Middle Strait. The journey is in 2 phases – Port.Blair to Jirkatang (40 km, 1 hr 15 minutes) and then Jirkatang to Baratang (49 km, 1 hr 15 minutes) From Jirkatang starts a stretch of 49 km forest (Jarwah Reserve Forest), where you cannot halt your vehicle or walk on foot or take snaps/video. On the other end of the Jarwah Reserve forest is Middle strait jetty. The jetty will take you to the other side of the strait in about 15 minutes and then you will reach Baratang islands. The site of **Mud Volcano** (Figure 4) at Baratang is about 4 km away from the jetty. To reach their shared taxi to and fro from Baratang can be hired.

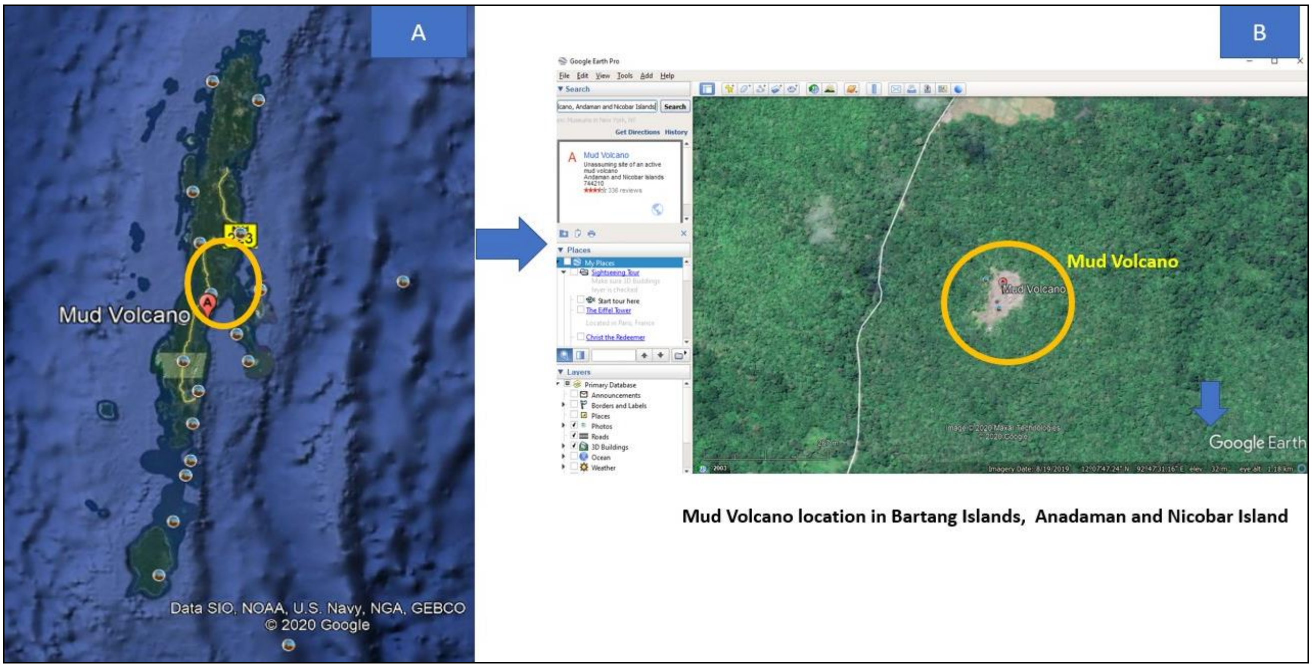

Figure 4. The Aerial View of Mud Volcano, Baratang, Andaman Islands (Source: Data SIO NOAA, US Navy, NGA, GEBCO, 2020; Google)
(A) Macro View of Mud Volcano (B) Meso View of Mud Volcano

Figure 5. The Mud Volcano, Baratang, Andaman Islands

Figure 6. Limestone Caves, Baratang

Mud volcano is important geomorphological site as here volcanic activity is taking place due to the ongoing subduction of the Indian Plate beneath the Andaman island arc, which forces magma to rise in this locationof the Burma Plate (Balasubramanian, 2008). It is an interesting feature on the earth. It is a geological phenomena created by the extrusion of pressurized gases and mud from below the crust.

A mud volcano tends to start out as small bulges and develop into cone like landforms. There are about 30 mud volcanoes in the Andaman Islands. A mud volcano may also erupt sprays of mineral water and sediments like mud or clay with or without oil (Balasubramanian, 2008). Deposition of miles thick sediments deposited on the ocean floor, the weight of which traps and heats up organic materials and creates fluids and gas in the sediments, building up regional level pressure and causing fluid and gasses to escape upward leads to the formation of tall, cone shaped mud volcanoes which may have crater on the summit.

Andaman and Nicobar islands also has various attractive locations to observe the different features of Karst Topography. **Limestone cave** near Baratang is one of them (Figure 6). The lime cave in Baratang island is located 100 km north of Port Blair and situated between the South and Middle Andaman (Lat. 12°05´ 44.2" N and Long. 92° 44´ 37.6" E). Limestones are sedimentary rocks and the limestone cave in Baratang would have formed over millions of years due to deposition of marine life, shells, corals and skeletons. This later on underwent a natural compression to form unique shapes within caves. The limestone caves of Baratang Island also contain speleothems. Dripstone curtains a meter or more in length are seen hanging from the ceiling, and pillars of stalagmites grow above the ground Radiocarbon dating (Laskar et al., 2013). The caves stalactites and stalagmites embrace the secret of a million years of Andaman.Some of the structures that can be seen in the limestone caves of Baratang are speleothem, flowstones, stalactite, stalagmites and columns.

Geologistand biologist (Whitton and Potts, 2000; Knoll, 2008; Swingley et al., 2008; Biello, 2009; Blankenship, 2010; Brasier et al., 2015) indicates that these limestone structure form around 3.8 billion years ago when the most primitive life forms evolved in the oceans.The single celled algae called cyanobacteria performed photosynthesis, releasing oxygen into the air. There were many other chemical reactions performed by these algae which resulted in the formation of dolomitic limestone – a sedimentary rock. During this time, the acidic groundwater or underground rivers dissolved some of the limestone leaving cavities behind. Eventually, due the movement in the earth's crust, these became exposed to dry land. As time passed, the weak carbonic acid in rainwater dissolved and continued to erode the limestone formations to give it various shapes and structures (Andaman Islands Destination Guide).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The methodology adopted in the paper is both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Three most visited sites, which have also geomorphological significance were selected as the geosites in North and Middle Andamans. Then after, geomorphosites tourism perception study was done and was evaluated on the basis of scientific, educational, economical and conservation values through Structured and semi structured questionnaire. The data collected is a longitudinal data. The tourists have been questioned regarding various values of these sites like scientific, educational, economical and conservation values. The sample of 50 tourists has been randomly selected. The care has been taken to ascertain response from both national and international tourist. The survey has been carried in November 2019 at geomorphosites namely Barren Island, Mud Volcano and Limestone caves at Baratang.

Tourism potentials are evaluated using "Reynard Model" (Reynard, 2008) whereby selected sites in North and Middle Andamans were fitted into "Reynard Model". The criteria of "Reynard Model" (Figure 7) have been applied to assess the perception of the tourists related to each geomorphosite. The perception is an important factor to assess in a tourism system as tourist is an actor of the system, without his movement the activity of tourism will lose its significance.

Reynard et al. (2003) analyzed the relationship between geomorphology and tourism: geomorphology may be a tourist resource as part of the primary or original offer (geomorphological site as an attraction or geomorphological site as a support for tourist activity, e. g. climbing) and secondary or derived offer, when tourist infrastructures (e.g. didactic trails), instruments (e.g. educational booklets) or services (e.g. guided tours) are proposed for effective use of the original offer (Kulbalikova, 2013).

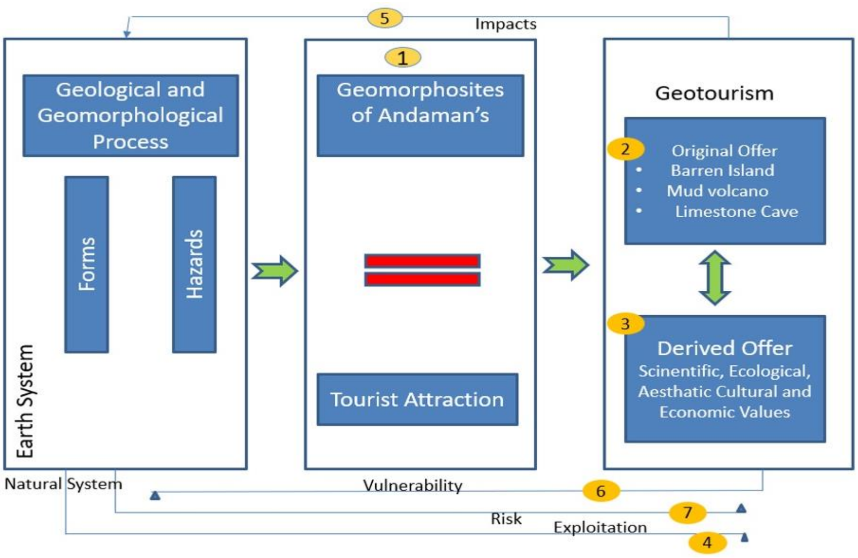

Figure 7. "Reynard Model" for Scientific Research and Tourist Promotion of Geomorphological Heritage (Source: Reynard, 2008; modified by authors)

"Reynard Model" (2008) is an important factor in the holistic approach for sustainable ***tourism*** development (Reynard and Brilha, 2018). "Reynard Model" (2008) investigates the role of tourism and its effects on the development of geomorphosites and tourism potentials of any identified site. Reynard in his 2008 model analyzed the relationship between geomorphology and tourism. For any geomorphologic site, geomorphology and geology is the original offer. This model includes plenty of assessment methods for evaluation of geosites and geomorphosites from different points of view. The analysis on scientific value, added value and compound value of the research location gives it new perception to look tourism and its scope. In this study "Reynard Model" (2008) is used to analyzed the potential of scientific research and geotourism development at three selected sites of Andaman Islands, India

The importance of geodiversity can be represented by multiple values that are important for human activities (Gray, 2004):

• Scientific value: It deals with knowledge of geology and geomorphology of the region. The region must have evolved geologically to form the present structure but the structures are bound to be dynamic and might change to new forms in future. The geomorphosites thus have huge scientific value. Like a volcanic site can be scientifically explored to understand the behaviour of the volcano, the features formed by it and its future processes.

• Cultural value is connected to geomythology – an explanation of the geological and Geo-morphological features using the supernatural forces and beings (Vitaliano, 2007). Cultural values are also attached to amenities and accessibility factors. The development process and the availability of amenities are big boost to the tourism activity of any area.

• Aesthetic value refers to visual (and non-visual) appeal provided by geo-diversity including a psychological impact on human beings (Gray, 2004; Pereira, 2006). The geomorphosites have an aesthetic importance as they become a natural area with natural settings. Many tourists appreciate the natural beauty and biodiversity of such sites. But aesthetic significance is very subjective.

• Ecological Value: These areas have lot of biodiversity both in terms of flora and fauna. The regions are many a times preserved and conserved by the state to maintain or enhance the ecological value of the area.

• Economic and functional value is represented by the use of resources, e. g. fuels, construction materials; utilization of landforms, e. g. platforms as a suitable place for airports (Gray, 2004) and utilization of geodiversity, respectively geoheritage, for geotouristic and geoeducational activities (Reynard et al., 2003; Pralong, 2003; Panizza and Piacente, 2008). The tourism activities also provide various job opportunities in isolated geosites but they are usually seasonal in nature.

Value Criteria of Assessing Geomorphosites for the Development of Scientific Geo-tourism

Assessment in this study is based on the modified value criteria suggested by Reynard et al. (2007)

Scientific value

Geological/ geomorphological significance

Knowledge of Geomorphological and geological process and phenomena

Ecological value

Ecological significance

Knowledge of the ecosystem

Aesthetic values

Understanding the natural beauty

Appreciating aesthetic values in geosites

Cultural value

Geomythology and religious value

Educational importance

Glimpses of diverse Indian culture

Economic and functional value

Economic products

Job opportunities (Reynard et al., 2007)

The respondents have been asked to rate the significance of selected geomorphosites based on the "Value Criteria", on the scale of 0 to 1. Their responses have been tabulated to assess the value significance of each site i.e. which site is more valuable for which criteria namely, scientific, ecological, research, cultural or economic. Average scores of each sites based on scores given by tourist is calculated and proportion based linear scale index was prepared. The after, obtained value was categorized into: Very high= 1-0.8; High =0.8-0.6; Medium 0.6-0.4;Low =0.4-0.2;Very Low <0.2.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A primary survey was conducted in Novemeber 2019 among the visitors of Barren Islands and response were collected from 50 tourist of various age groups. The respondents male and female ratio was 50 :50. On the basis of their responses following table is drived for this site (Table 1).

Table 1. Assessing the Barren Island Volcanic Sites

Value	Rating of Respondents	Degree of Geotourism Relevance
Scientific	0.9	Very high
Ecological	0.9	Very high
Aesthetic	0.7	Medium
Cultural	0.6	Medium
Economic	0.5	Meduim

Table 1 shows that most of the tourist rated that this site is very significant for the pupropse of scientific research but no where it is highligted in tourism promoton of the islands. According to respondants scientifically and ecologically this site is very important but aesthetically ,culturally and economically they rated it in the medium level which shows that site has potential to develop the geotourism. Many visitor come here to have experience of viewing an active Mud volcano which demonstrate the power and importance of fire. According to Hindu mythology 'Agni' is a Sanskrit word meaning fire and connotes the Vedic fire god of Hinduism There were many fires discussed in Vedic times. One of the fire among them is located under the sea, spat out by a submarine mare known as Vadavagini that causes mists and clouds to form. This fire of the submarine mare prevents the sea from overflowing. But one day, it will escape and burst forth as volcanoes. That day will be Pralaya—the sea will overflow and consume the earth. Therefore this site also has geomythological value but it is not much explored. The educational value is also underutilized therefore visitors culturally ranked this site at medium level.

The journey to volcano site can be made more attractive and research oriented and economically gainful by advertising its significance, providing the facility of experts guides and using the pamphlets etc. The volcano is of late Pleistocene period and lava flow is dominantly basalt and basaltic andesite, with minor andesite (Sheth et al., 2009) which made the site more attractive for scientific geo-tourism .The volcanoes have equally excited the academics and the adventure seeker. While academics are interested in studying volcanicity, volcanic eruptive style and plate tectonics, the adventurous tourists seek the thrill of volcano boarding and taking hot air balloon trips over volcanic landforms. It is not surprising that volcano related sites attract thousands of tourists. The Barren Island site has all the ingredients of becoming a very popular tourist attraction.

On the site of Mud Volcano also almost similar responses are received during the November 2019 survey of tourists (Table 2). Here also most of the visitors had the opinion that site is very important for scientific studies and educational purposes but the level of maintenance and its right promotion was unsatisfactory. Most of the tourists perceived that this site is very crucial for research in the area of plate tectonic and can provide great insight to the earthquakes and tsunami related research they also had the opinion that site also possess unique biodiversity and has high ecological value. Most of the tourist had opinioned that the site has medium aesthetic value and can be improved significantly by maintenance and by small human interventions like making the attractive boundary and labeling of the places. The place has very less amenities which can be improved. This site got low rating in the context of travel, boarding and lodging facilities. Though the site is carrying the geomythological and religious values but they are still unexplored. The site is the symbol of truly dynamic geology but it isnot utilize properly for educational purposes therefore most of the visitors culturally mark it at medium level

Table 2. Assessing the Mud Volcano Site

Value	Rating of Respondents	Degree of Geotourism Relevance
Scientific	0.9	Very high
Ecological	0.3	High
Aesthetic	0.7	Medium
Cultural	0.6	Medium
Economic	0.3	Low

Both the sites has incredible potential to increase scientific tourism however "Reynard Model" warns us that unchecked exploitation of geosites can magnify their vulnerability risks and lead to tremendous losses. The figure below (Figure 8) explains that by introducing a derived offer in the form of education and research, the propensity of unregulated tourism in geoheritage and geosites to cause harm to the natural system and add to natural hazards can be reduced for geomorphosites of volcanic origin.

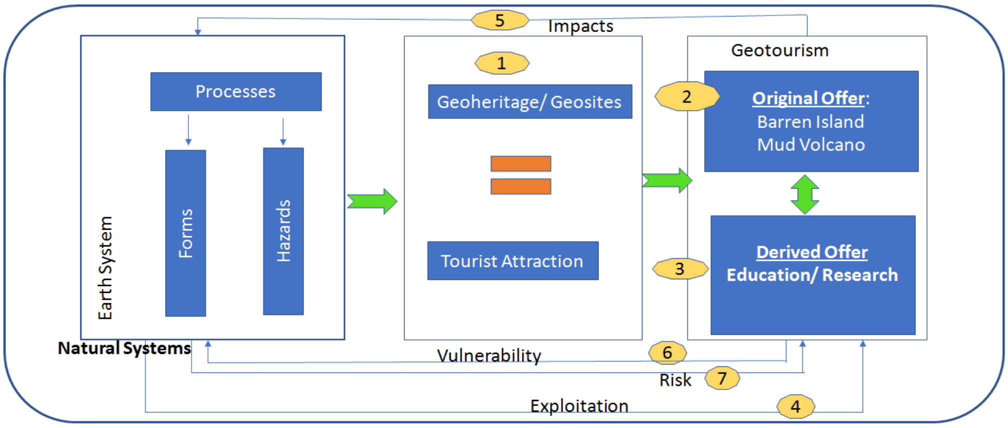

Figure 8. "Reynard Model" for Geomorphosites of Volcanic Origin (Source: Reynard, 2008, 225-230; modified by authors)

During the survey at **Limestone cave** visitors have the opinion that Lime Stone Caves Karstland is very important site for scientific research and study. The study of site can unfold the history of over millions of year's deposition of marine life, shells, corals and skeletons (Palmer, 1991). The tourist also had the opinion that sight is surrounded by variety of mangroves and other flora therefore has high ecological value. The site and journey from Baratang to limestone cave provide beautiful picturesque views therefore aes thetically also it rated high by the visitors. During the survey perception of the people was that this site has high culture value but economic value found to be low and need to be improved significantly (Table 3). The cave are geomythologically very important because the stalagmite formations present in most natural limestone caves resemble Shiva Linga, a representation of Hindu God Shiva, due to which some of the caves in India are considered of religious importance. The limestone caves of Baratang do have a significant pattern of various god like images formed out of those reactions which are worth seeing by the visitors and give out an impression of th e ancient but rare and extinct sculptures combined to produce a magnificent yet spectacular designs each one bearing some divinity and lightening element. The population of Baratang islands consist Bengalis, Telgu, Tamils, Malyalis which provide the glimpses of mini India. A visitor can also see the ethnic culture of Munda, Khadiya, and Chotanagpuri. There is no opulent restaurant in Bartang Island, but a visitor surely gets to experience the rich taste of this island through its food stalls and small eateries. Most of these eat eries are located around Nilambur jetty and they mainly serve Bengali and South Indian cuisines.

Table 3. Assessing the Limestone Caves at Baratang

Value	Rating of Respondents	Degree of Geotourism Relevance
Scientific	0.9	Very high
Ecological	0.9	Very High
Aesthetic	0.8	High
Cultural	0.8	High
Economic	0.3	Low

According to "Reynard Model" the figure below (Figure 9) shows that, karst topography and karst aquifers, potentially provides education and research as a derived offer in the field of karst hydrogeology, karst modeling, karst hazards and management. Karst areas are important to study but because of slow work of dissolution by water with limestone rocks making it a peculiar and vulnerable environment. Therefore only limited scientific and research oriented tourism may be promoted on this site.

The tourists visiting all the sites perceived that these areas have very high scientific value. These sites are store house of knowledge especially indigenous knowledge. The ecological values were high but aesthetic values were of medium relevance. It was found the tourist perceive that the sites has medium cultural and low economic value. This is because the amenities like hotels, roads etc were not much available and the area could not create much of the economic opportunities too.

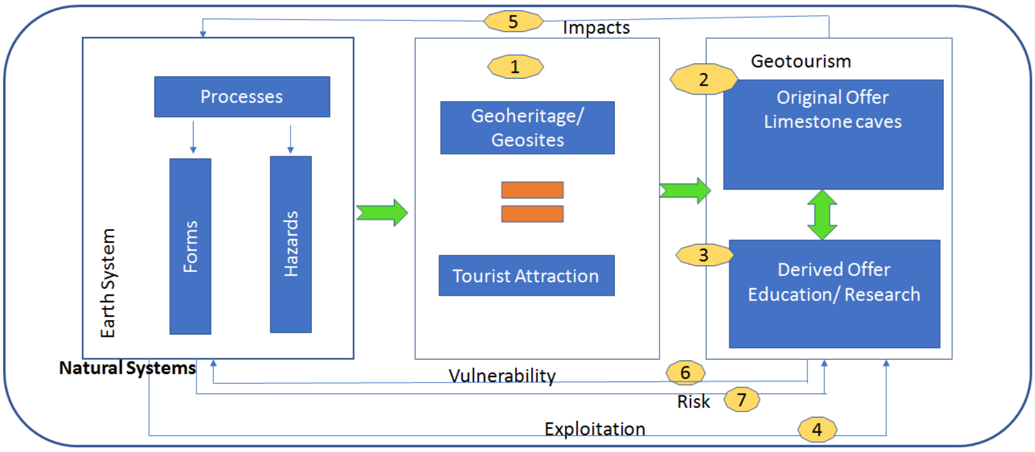

Figure 9. "Reynard Model" Geomorphosites of Karst Topography (Source: Reynard, 2008, 225-230; modified by authors)

CARRYING CAPACITY OF THE SITES

These sites has great scientific value but at the same time they have very fragile ecology, they cannot bear the outside influence after a limit therefore while promoting the tourism at these sites a special care about their carrying capacity need to be considered. The islands are fragile not only physically, environmentally, strategically but also socio-economically. In 2013 R. Gobalakrishnan, K. Sivakumar and L. Kannan from Centre of Advance Study in Marine Biology, Faculty of Marine Sciences, Tamilnadu done a study of Human Impact on the Limestone Cave, Baratang Island in the Andamans found the lint deposition that visitors might leave behind a mix of biodegradable and non-biodegradable materials, can create microhabitats with nutrients that can support the growth of contaminating microbes and can alter even the underlying surface They indicated that changes in the cave's microclimatic conditions such as temperature, CO, relative humidity and microbial composition besides abundance are associated with human interference. These changes can damage the cave features and artefacts, the very factors that attract the tourists. Hence, there is an increasing need to investigate the microorganisms of the caves, determine their reservoirs and create awareness among the public about the importance of caves in the island ecosystems and the necessity to conserve them and keep them clean (Gobalakrishnan et al., 2013). The eco-diversity and richness of A&N are its core strength. Any development activity in the islands including tourism has to be sensitive to their fragility.

Mangrove forests are found on shores, mouths of creeks and inland channels of these islands and occupy 966 sq.km areas. Mangroves add to lush natural landscape of the islands, making creek cruises a creek a popular tourist attraction. The journey from Baratang to lime stone caves by small boats provide a mesmerizing view of mangroves to the tourists. The unique and rich mangrove environment present in Andaman & Nicobar has been the focus of substantial research. Concerns were raised about the decreasing quantum of mangrove forests (mangrove forests were destroyed to make land available to settlers, the wood also finds use as fuel wood, construction material and charcoal). Tourism development along the creeks can poses a threat in the form of clearance of forests for developing resorts, jetties etc. However, with the strict monitoring by the administration this can be controlled.

There are valid concerns regarding the status of forest in Andman and Nicobar. There is evidence that forest land has been cleared by encroachers and unscrupulous players in the tourism industry. This has resulted in loss of forest cover and has caused harm to the wildlife. Unregulated tourism clearly poses threat to the natural environment. Therefore the tourism development strategy of Andman and Nicobar needs to be forest focused – tourism promotion along with preservation of the natural environment. A key requirement for this is that the tourism related infrastructure should be developed in the peripheral area which lies outside the forest area. There is also a need to promote activity based tourism, related to natural trails, bird and wildlife watching, and research. The core forest area should be accessible only to the serious researcher. For facilitating this kind of work, a buffer area between the periphery and the core forest area can be used to create temporary and mobile infrastructure such as tents, machan over trees, temporary hutments etc.

While developing the tourism in these areas. The dwindling population of the tribals is another source of concern. Because of their uniqueness, the tribal population in A&N is a subject of curiosity and kindles tourist interest. Like in a journey from Port Blaire to Baratang a stretch of 49 km forest from Jirkatang starts which pass through Jarwah Reserve Forest. Watching the tribals from buses and cars may be a tourist attraction for visitors but various reports in the past highlighted the numerous harmful impact of tourism on the tribals in this area. Tourism could negatively impact tribal lifestyle if tribal areas are freely opened and tribal practices put on display.

Availability of land for infrastructure development is limited as more than 92% of the land is under forest cover (most of which are protected / reserve). For example Baratang island where mud volcano and limestone caves are located has total area 297.60 sqkm, from which 283.20 sq km is reserved forest area and only 14.40 sq km area is available for other uses. The Andaman and Nicobar islands are also among the most seismically active zones in the world, with earthquakes occurring even twice a month. Therefore infrastructure development at high scale in these islands can increase the vulnerability of the areas. Then there is the issue of the economics of providing for the everyday essentials of the people in Andaman and Nicobar. The islands depend on the Indian mainland for a majority of daily essentials necessary for daily existence. In places outside Port Blair, supplies are refreshed at a frequency of a week or more, and they need to be rationed. The local population is dependent on these supplies as are the tourists. An unregulated and very large influx of tourists can cause shortages and push prices up, thereby increasing the cost of living of the local population. Therefore tourism management agencies and government while promoting the scientific tourism at these sites should take care the fragility and carrying capacity of the areas.

CONCLUSION

Considering the limited carrying capacity and fragility of the islands a restricted size of tourism sector can be sustained here however Andamans can be made centre of geo heritage destination of India. Considering our analysis and evaluation, we propose that strong promotion of scientific tourism for the geomorphosites discussed here should be undertaken.

The geomorphosites are rapidly changing under dynamic conditions. Management of Geomorphosite should be an important aspect of geotourism in India. There can be possibility of formation of geomorphosites tourist circuit. There can also be establishment of interpretation centers in the docks carrying tourists to sites such as Barren Island, which can provide preview of the geomorphosite. Knowledgeable and well informed guides are needed especially at geomorphosites. Local people can also be helpful in imparting indigenous knowledgeto the tourist. The provision of information about geomorphological processes to tourists in simple language should be promoted. Geomorphosite tourism offers an opportunity to learn, and to enrich humanity. Hence, it can be stated that maintenance, conservation and preservation of geomorphosites should be seen as a project of national importance.

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ENDOWED AND CREATED RESOURCES TOWARDS ECOTOURISM COMPETITIVENESS: NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS IN SARAWAK

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Abstract: The richness of natural areas in Malaysia leads ecotourism to become one of the rapidly growing industries within the nation. The present study aims to discover the impacts of endowed and created resources on ecotourism competitiveness from both domestic and international tourists' perspectives. 189 respondents had completed the questionnaire and WarpPLS 6.0 was used to test the model created. The results revealed that endowed resources (e.g. natural resources and cultural heritage attraction) are positively and significantly correlated to ecotourism competitiveness. Surprisingly, created resources (e.g. tourism infrastructure and range of activities) were observed to have no significant relationship with ecotourism competitiveness.

Key words: natural resources, cultural heritage attraction, tourism infrastructure, range of activities, ecotourism competitiveness, tourists' perspectives

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism, it is a complex occurrence where movement of people across places or nations is involved alongside remarkable number of entities, subjects, sectors, happenings, and behaviours (Baggio, 2019). Recently, a study has shown the growing number of individuals who seek opportunities to travel for authentic experiences on natural and cultural (Forbes, 2017). Based on this fact, policy makers, such as destination marketing organizations (DMO's) and researchers have drawn their attention towards sustainable development of tourism (Hall, 2019). Past studies have postulated several returns led by sustainable development of ecotourism, which comprises alleviation on poverty as well as enhancement in the business opportunities. In conjunction with that, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (2019) has drawn its attention towards development of ecotourism whereby its campaign of visit 2020 targeted 30 million of international visitors in total with receipt of RM100 billion (New Sarawak Tribune, 23.7.2019, 3).

As revealed by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Sarawak (2019), Sarawak, Malaysia has encountered a rise in terms of visitor arrivals with a growth rate of 5.22%. Consequently, there is a possibility that over tourism issues may happen which is increasingly critical to the tourism management. Nevertheless, Centre for Responsible Travel (2018) suggested that, inactive tourism management plan contributes to the over tourism, which is overcrowding of a destination, specifically national parks. As a result, the fall in tourists' arrivals may happen at national parks due to the reduction in quality of visitors' experiences, eventually leads to loss of revenues. Furthermore, destinations might face environmental degradation including pollution in the air, noise, and water at the nature reserve due to ineffective tourism management (Eagles, 2002; Nianyong and Zhuge, 2001; Anup, 2016).

The natural resources of national park play a considerable role as tourists' attraction, as well as other built resources contributing to its destination competitiveness (Lo et al., 2017). As such, with high quality of tourism infrastructure it ensures tourists' expectations are met while increasing destination competitiveness (Su and Wall, 2009; Chin et al., 2017).

Moreover, it is vital to consider the range of activities for better attraction of tourists by offering appealing natural and cultural experiences (Ayikoru, 2015; Zehrer et al., 2017). Previous researchers have discovered that tourists' perceptions are a part of substantial determinants of tourism destination competitiveness (Barsky and Nash, 2002; Carneiro et al., 2015). Consequently, the present study aims to examine the perceptions of both domestic and foreign tourists on the impacts of natural resources, cultural heritage attraction, tourism infrastructure, and range of activities towards competitiveness development of tourism destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

Competitiveness Theory

Researchers (e.g.: Ritchie and Crouch, 2003; Hanafiah et al., 2016; Croes et al., 2020) highlighted theoretical basis for model development for destination competitiveness considering both concepts on comparative resource and competitive advantage. Comparative resources are referred to core attractions such as natural environment and resources, whereas competitive advantage is defined as elements which are more progressive consisting created resources such as tourism infrastructure and facilities (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999). Subsequently, theories of comparative resource and competitive advantage are focused on past studies in examining tourism destination competitiveness (Ritchie and Crouch, 1999; Mihalic, 2000; Navickas and Malakauskaite, 2009). Likewise, recent studies applied competitiveness theory to investigate sustainable competitiveness of tourism destination to explicate the key competitiveness development from both resources, namely comparative resource and competitive advantage (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012; Oye et al., 2013; Zehrer et al., 2016; Yozcu, 2017).

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Tourism Destination Competitiveness

The destination competitiveness concept has undergone development where different definitions were proposed (Ritchie and Crouch, 1993; Enright and Newton, 2004; Kim, 2012). The competitiveness of a destination, as suggested by Pearce (1997) its aptitude to maintain its market position among the competing destinations by generating and assimilating value addition to its existing tourism-related products for sustainable resources in the long run (Hassan, 2000). Crouch and Ritchie (1999) suggested a reputable model concerning destination competitiveness for the emphasis of core resources, attractors, and features in relevance to business in determining the competitiveness of a touristic destination (Lee and King, 2007). Past studies have proven the consequential role of tourism core resources and attractors that lead to competitiveness development of a tourism destination (Wilde and Cox, 2008; Armenski et al., 2018; Muresan et al., 2019). Subsequently, Dwyer and Kim (2003) have postulated the necessity for competitiveness development in a tourism destination to ensure sustainability among tourism destinations (Law and Lo, 2016).

Natural Resources

Natural resources are referred to the essence of an environment's core resources that comprise available species on floral and faunal (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999). Recently, a study has shown that visitation to an area has become a concern due to the tremendous growth in the number of tourists visiting a destination (Jaini et al., 2019) where violation of human activities can cause damage to countless floral and faunal species (Sukserm et al., 2012). As indicated by Dwyer and Kim (2003), tourism destinations consist of a remarkable range of tourism products which are significant in attracting tourists including facilities and services (Gunn, 1994) alongside other social-cultural and environmental resources (Buhalis, 2000). Natural resources play a vital role as one of the tourists' main attractions (Hassan, 2010) and competitive advantages of tourism destinations (Ritchie and Crouch, 2000; Jaafar and Maideen, 2012; Law and Lo, 2016). Thus, it is sensible for the conservation of natural resources by tourism stakeholders without causing unnecessary impacts to the environment (MacDonald and Jolliffe, 2003; Scales, 2014; Lo et al., 2017) as natural resources dimension is a determinant for tourism destination competitiveness (Ritchie and Crouch, 1993). Consequently, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Natural resources are positively related to destination competitiveness.

Cultural Heritage Attraction

Culture is a mechanism consisting of variation in feelings, ideas, creation, and behaviour performed by human in their social lives (Koentjaraningrat, 1992). From the perspective of culture, uniqueness of a tourism destination is recognized as a remarkable element in the process of branding (Ryan, 2005). Moreover, the element of culture encompasses various aspects such as authenticity, variety, originality, and uniqueness as representation of purity or the degree that a product concerning tourism is well-preserved (Damanik and Weber, 2006). Past studies have postulated positive impression by cultural attributes on tourists' satisfaction (Putri, 2017). Subsequently, Liu (2013) and Park (2014) have demonstrated the shift in the tourists' travel patterns towards cultural experiences, especially destinations that offer unique attributes (Dallen, 2006). Cultural heritage attraction of a destination offers a range of unique heritage which has been identified as the fundamental factor in determining tourism destination competitiveness (Dwyer and Kim, 2003; Dwyer et al., 2004; Gupta and Singh, 2019). Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed:

H2: Cultural heritage attraction is positively related to destination competitiveness.

Tourism Infrastructure

Tourism infrastructure is a physical element, which is created to provide visitors with basic framework for effective development systems including urban areas, industry, and tourism (Inskeep, 1991). Additionally, tourism infrastructure comprises amenities, transportation as well as facilitating resources (Buhalis, 2000; Khadaroo and Seetanah, 2008). Furthermore, tourism infrastructure can be categorized into two major groups, namely soft infrastructure which includes perception and experiences among tourists at tourism destination (Dwyer and Kim, 2003; Ancincova, 2014) and hard infrastructure, comprising facilities on transportation, information and access method for visitors (Richie and Crouch, 2003; Pride, 2008). Moreover, researchers revealed that transportation infrastructure is a fundamental factor to improve destination competitiveness while determining tourists' visit intentions (Wilde and Cox, 2008; Aref and Gill, 2009; Aguila and Ragot, 2014). Tourism infrastructure plays a vital role in meeting visitors' demands and delivering substantial physical satisfaction to them (Lo et al., 2017). Thus, it is essential for a tourism destination to possess user-friendly transportation infrastructure in order to attract more tourists. Based on the above discussion, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H3: Tourism infrastructure is positively related to destination competitiveness.

Range of Activities

Range of activities are defined as a set of activities possible at a tourism destination as important tourism attractor and taken to produce value for its customers (Dwyer and Kim, 2003; Ban and Ramsaran, 2016). These activities comprise facilities for recreation and sports such as golf, tennis, swimming, fishing, night clubs as well as other facilities for visitors with special needs such as ecotourism, cultural and heritage. Additionally, outdoor activities are often emphasized as they serve as the core services in a tourism destination while offering a more cohesive experience to tourists (Buhalis, 2000; Maksimovic et al., 2015). Generally, outdoor activities are conducted for the purpose of gathering both visitors and residents while conducting any activities together to encourage social interaction among all participants (Lo et al., 2017). Moreover, a wide range of activities ranging from cultural, educational, recreational, and natural experiences are important for a tourism destination (Wu and Zheng, 2014). Range of activities help to fulfil tourists' expectations in a tourism destination and play an important role in ensuring successful development of tourism destination competitiveness (Ritchie and Crouch, 2010; Parahiyanti and Hussein, 2016). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H4: Range of activities are positively related to destination competitiveness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted at three national parks situated in Sarawak, Malaysia, namely Bako National Park, Niah National Park, and Gunung Gading National Park. As revealed by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Sarawak (2019), among numerous national parks and nature reserves in the state of Sarawak, these national parks sustained substantial number of visits ranging from domestic or international, specifically nature lovers with a growth rate ranging from 1.08% till 45.58% in 2018 as compared to the previous year. The uniqueness of these national parks is well-recognized where it is preserved as the habitat for endangered and protected species like Proboscis monkey, limestones, and Rafflesia. Figure 1 shows the locations of the three studied natural protected areas, located in the state of Sarawak, Malaysia while each of the studied locations is shown in Figure 2.

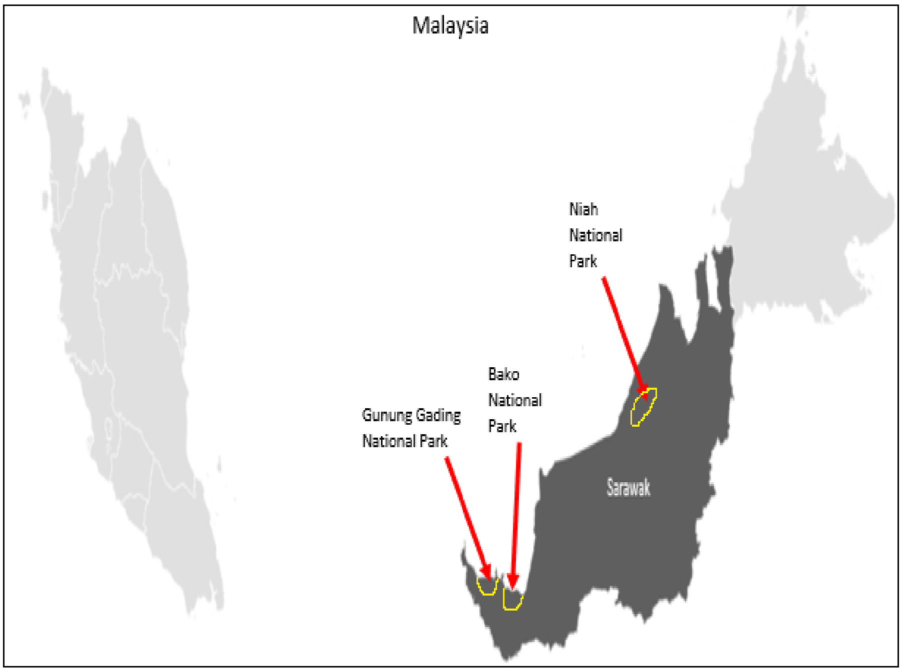

Figure 1. Locations of the studied natural protected areas

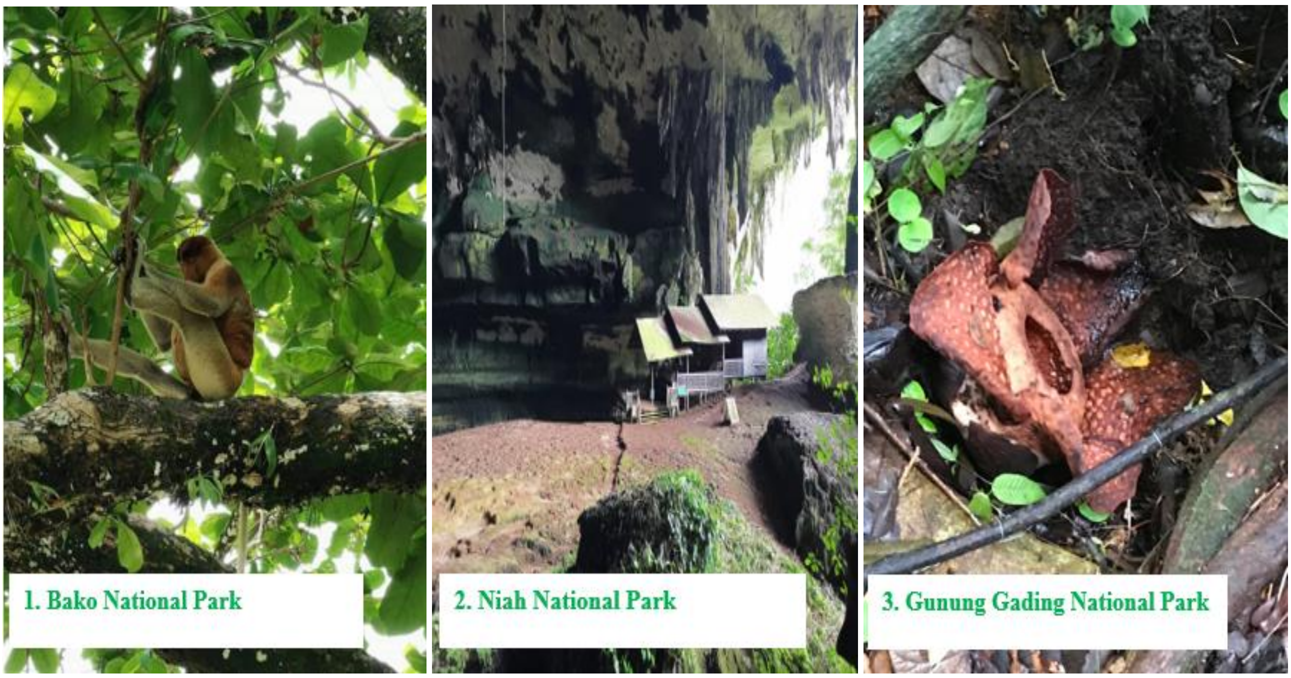

Figure 2. The studied natural protected areas of Sarawak

In this study, a quantitative approach was conducted through questionnaires distribution for data collection (Bakker, 2018; Giannoni and Peypoch, 2020). The sample of this study was targeted on both the domestic and international tourists who have visited these national parks. The questionnaire consists of two sections, where the respondents' demographic information was collected in Section A, whereas Section B consists of the measurement concerning the 5 variables. Based on past researchers (Collins, 2005; Chi and Qu, 2008; Canny and Hidayat, 2012; Herstanti et al., 2014; Artuger, 2015), 24 items in total were adapted to measure the constructs as proposed (e.g.: natural resources, cultural heritage attraction, tourism infrastructure, range of activities, and destination competitiveness).

Consequently, a total of 194 sets of questionnaires were collected through convenience sampling method for statistical analyses. Initially, a series of preliminary analyses were performed on the data collected using Statistical Package for Social Science 26.0 (SPSS) where 5 sets of incomplete questionnaires were discarded. Subsequently, WarpPLS 6.0 (Kock, 2017) was used to assess the present research model as shown in Figure 1 was assessed with using the remaining 189 sets of data. The measurement model comprising valuation on the reliability, convergent and discriminant validity of the measures was used to examine the data in PLS analysis followed by structural model. Then, the hypothesized relationship constructs were tested using bootstrapping.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, WarpPLS 6.0 software was applied to analyze the research model as proposed. A two-stage approach was performed, where the measuring model is tested in the first stage, involving the evaluation on reliability and validity of the constructs (Hair et al., 2017). The evaluation of the structural model was conducted in the second stage, enabling the assessment of proposed relationships between the constructs.

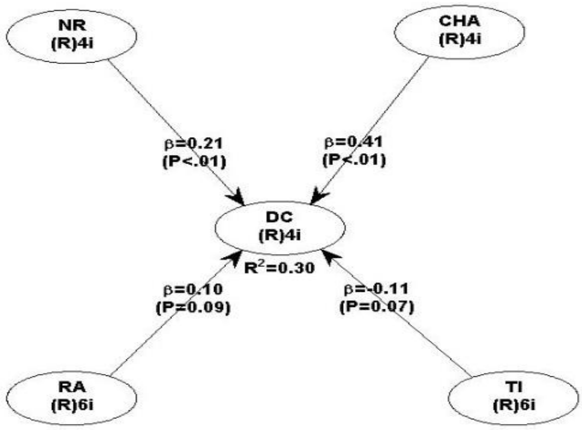

Figure 3. Research Model with path coefficients and p-values

Assessment of the measurement model

By using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) approach, the reliability, convergent and discriminant validity of the measures were tested. The loadings with threshold of 0.5 and above to ensure internal consistency (Bagozzi, Yi, and Philipps, 1991) were abstained in Table 1. As suggested by Chin (2010), the values of composite reliability (CR) should meet the minimum cut off point of 0.7 to declare validity. The values for average variance extracted (AVE) should meet the minimum criteria of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). As a result, the minimum criteria have been met by the values of CR and AVE respectively. In order to test the reliability and internal consistency of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha values were also adopted (Cronbach, 1951), and the results indicated that the Cronbach's alpha values for cultural heritage attraction, tourism infrastructure, range of activities, and destination competitiveness were identified at good level, whereas the value for natural resources was considered acceptable. As suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), the value of 0.60 indicating poor, 0.61 – 0.79 for acceptable, and above 0.80 signifying good level respectively.

Discriminant validity of the measures is shown in Table 2, referring to criterion by Fornell and Larcker (1981), the AVE value was square rooted and testified against the inter-correlation of the construct with other constructs in the research model and all the values noted as greater than each of the constructs' correlation (Chin, 2010). Hence, the measurement model was acceptable and evidence in terms of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity are provided. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.304 for destination competitiveness, which explained 30.4% of the construct. The (R^2) was above the minimum indication as suggested by Cohen (1998) which is slightly above the value of R^2_0.19.

Table 1. Summary of Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct	No of Items	Items Deleted	Items	Loadings	CR	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Natural Resources	4	2	NR_1 NR_2 NR_3 NR_4	0.779 0.779 0.821 0.648	0.844	0.752	0.631
Cultural Heritage Attraction	4	1	CHA_1 CHA_2 CHA_3 CHA_4	0.837 0.824 0.779 0.743	0.874	0.807	0.648
Tourism Infrastructure	6	0	TI_1 TI_2 TI_3 TI_4 TI_5 TI_6	0.848 0.823 0.808 0.823 0.826 0.782	0.924	0.902	0.670
Range of Activities	6	0	RA_1 RA_2 RA_3 RA_4 RA_5 RA_6	0.797 0.809 0.778 0.700 0.805 0.757	0.900	0.867	0.601
Destination Competitiveness	4	0	DC_1 DC_2 DC_3 DC_4	0.804 0.871 0.832 0.785	0.894	0.841	0.678

Table 2. Discriminant Validity of Constructs of HTMT of Measurement Model

	Natural Resources	Cultural Heritage Attraction	Tourism Infrastructure	Range of Activities	Destination Competitiveness
Natural Resources	**0.759**				
Cultural Heritage Attraction	0.497	**0.797**			
Tourism Infrastructure	-0.064	-0.013	**0.819**		
Range of Activities	0.124	-0.010	0.354	**0.775**	
Destination Competitiveness	0.421	0.493	0.016	0.180	**0.818**

Assessment of the structural model

Next, the results from hypotheses testing are presented in Table 3. As a rule of thumb for one-tailed hypotheses testing, the probability value, p-value must be lower than 0.01 or 0.05 significance. The statistical results indicated that two of the direct relationship hypotheses tested were supported. Natural resources and cultural heritage attraction were found to have significant relation to tourism competitive advantage from both domestic and foreign tourists' perspectives. Surprisingly, the remaining two hypotheses, which are hypothesized with the significant relationship between latent variables, namely tourism infrastructure and range of activities were not supported as indicated by the results that they were not significant. On top of that, the variation inflation factor (VIF) values were also acquired to assess the issue of multicollinearity among the constructs. According to Bock et al. (2005), the results indicated that all the VIF values did not exceed 10, thus it is confirmed that no multicollinearity issue exists among the constructs.

Table 3. Summary of Path Coefficients and Hypotheses Testing (Note: *p<0.05, **p<0.01)

Hypothesis	Relationship	Standard Beta	Standard Error	p-value	Decision	VIF	f^2
H1	Resources >> Competitiveness	0.213	0.070	<0.01	**Supported**	2.047	0.009
H2	Attraction >> Competitiveness	0.414	0.067	<0.01	**Supported**	1.834	0.214
H3	Infrastructure >> Competitiveness	0.106	0.071	0.070	**Not Supported**	2.735	0.018
H4	Activities >> Competitiveness	0.095	0.072	0.092	**Not Supported**	1.704	0.017

The resulting analysis for hypothesis 1 demonstrated that natural resources are positively related to destination competitiveness in the context of Bako National Park, Niah National Park, and Gunung Gading National Park. As revealed by the result, natural resources of these destinations can be concluded as a determinant of ecotourism destination competitiveness. In other words, this element of natural resources plays a significant role in determining the competitiveness in an ecotourism destination. Natural resources are of the basic criteria when visitors are making decisions to travel, while acting as a source of attraction for tourists (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999; Lane, 2009). It was suggested that destinations with good quality of natural resources are capable of attracting new market while enhancing the travel experiences among tourists (Hassan, 2010; Jaafar and Maideen, 2012).

The finding is congruent with past study where natural resources of a destination leads to effective development of competitiveness in that particular destination (Law and Lo, 2016; Su et al., 2018). Thus, it is undeniable that the dimension of natural resources in these national parks have been perceived by the visiting tourists as determinant of its destination competitiveness.

In addition, it was discovered that cultural heritage attraction has a significant positive impact on destination competitiveness, thus supporting hypothesis 2. In brief, cultural heritage attraction is positively related to the competitiveness in the destination of the natural protected areas, namely Bako National Park, Niah National Park, and Gunung Gading National Park. The element of uniqueness in a destination is notable especially in the branding progression (Ryan, 2005). According to Damanik and Weber (2006), attractions in a tourism destination must comprise numerous features such as originality, diversity, validity, and uniqueness leading to satisfactory level of experience among tourists (Putri, 2017). Subsequently, the outcomes are aligned with previous investigation by Gupta and Singh (2019) where cultural element is positively related to a destination's competitiveness. In this case, tourists have perceived cultural heritage attraction as an important factor leading to destination competitiveness in these national parks.

The findings demonstrated that three of the other competitiveness determinants (e.g.: tourism infrastructure and range of activities) do not have any significant relationship with tourism destination competitiveness. The statistical finding of hypothesis 3 has indicated that tourism infrastructure has no significant impact on destination competitiveness. This result has a contradiction with past studies which indicated that tourism infrastructure is a significant determinant of destination competitiveness (Tozser, 2010; Chin et al., 2016). The reason could be that the tourists, who are the nature lovers in this case, are uninformed of the importance of the tourism infrastructure due to the fact that they are more emphasized on the abundant of genuine natural resources during their visitations to these natural protected areas, namely Bako National Park, Niah National Park, and Gunung Gading National Park. Furthermore, the findings also revealed that range of activities were not significantly related to destination competitiveness, hence, hypothesis 4 was rejected. There is a contradiction between these findings with the findings by scholars (e.g.: Tubey and Tubey, 2014; Lo et al., 2017), nonetheless, it is reasonable by the fact that the current tourists are satisfied with the events available at these natural protected areas, where factually tourists have provided feedback that they are more emphasized on natural and cultural experiences (e.g.: hiking and sightseeing) instead of additional activities.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the competitiveness of an ecotourism destinations is highly dependent on its natural resources (Lo et al., 2013; Jaini et al., 2019). Generally, both local and international tourists visit ecotourism destination, or known as nature protected areas for short getaway from stressful environment of working. Nonetheless, improper destination management in a tourism destination, specifically natural protected areas may encounter diminution in its environmental resources due to the increased tourists' arrivals. Thus, it is important to ensure tourism destination resources (natural or man-made) to be at decent quality in order to maintain its competitive and comparative advantage as well as its market position among its competitors (Angelkova et al., 2012; Zehrer et al., 2016). Henceforth, this study has revealed and confirmed that tourists perceived that natural resources as the main determinant for the development of ecotourism destination competitiveness. Similarly, the significance of cultural heritage attraction of a touristic destination was also discovered as a contributor towards developing ecotourism competitiveness. Subsequently, tourists are mostly drawn towards exclusive element of culture in an ecotourism destination for satisfactory travel experiences. Consequently, incomparable cultural features in a destination boost tourists' satisfaction, thus, leading tourists to perceive the dimension of cultural heritage attraction as a determinant of competitiveness in a destination.

Additionally, the results from the present study provides to the growing research body on the identification of ecotourism destination competitiveness determinants. Moreover, this study attempts to further understand both international and local tourists' perspectives towards the impact of destination resources (endowed and created resources) on ecotourism destination competitiveness. Thus, these findings can be valuable to policy makers, local planners, and business operators to ensure effective development in ecotourism destinations. In current competitive market, there has been expansion on the importance of destination competitiveness, particularly in ecotourism context. The essential attractors are profoundly dependent on the accessibility of natural resources and destination cultural heritage attraction. Hence, the competitive posture and ecotourism destination sustainability are influenced by the variety of destination core resources. Therefore, further investigation into destination resources and destination competitiveness is strongly recommended.

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GEOSITES IN THE ISLAMIC AGE, CAIRO - EGYPT

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Abstract: The interest of community administrations in geological heritage is now growing worldwide, the Egyptian history is the result of the confluence of many cultures that found their way to the River Nile, and influenced its native ancient civilization; one of the oldest civilizations in the world. The admix of these civilizations is what makes Egyptian geological and archeological heritage so unique. This paper focuses on an important geologic heritage in the Islamic period of Egyptian history starting in the seventh century AD. Evidence of the influence of Islamic architecture can be found throughout the city of Cairo. Cairo has a large number of Islamic archaeological sites of particular importance is the Saladin Citadel and the surrounding streets of old Cairo, these sites is considered as an important unique geosites from the point of geological heritage view. The Islamic age is well documented by historians. Whereas the hundreds of masjids (mosques) as well as the Saladin Citadel tell the story of Islamic Cairo, This article sought to demonstrate the first Islamic Geosite inventory in the old Cairo, Egypt, and to elucidate its value throughout the ages. Method: field and sample investigations used to recognize the geosites in the islamic age. The paper are showing unique segment in this age, converting the archeological Islamic sites into geosites and geological heritage value.

Key words: Archeological sites, Geology; Islamic age, Geo site, Geotourism

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INTRODUCTION

Many authors worked on the geological heritage and its assessment like Gray (2013); Prosser (2013); Henriques and Brilha (2017); Ruban (2017) and Brilha et al. (2018), they discussed the Geological heritage as a unique geological phenomena to be used for the Earth sciences, education, and geo-tourism is an important geological resource of many African countries.

The historic city of Cairo covers an area of approximately 8 Km^2. Situated on eastern bank of the Nile, surrounded by the vast modern extensions of the residential and commercial quarters of greater Cairo. Most of the registered historical monuments dating from the foundation of Cairo in 969 to mid-19th century are located within this area. The architectural wealth of the Islamic (Medieval Cairo) is still a living reality due to the existence of important areas of the original urban fabric that shaped its physical environment.

The gradual preponderance of Islamic architecture, starting in the Middle Ages, in time led Cairo to be known as the city of a thousand minarets. Over time, the call to the Muslim prayers became audible from anywhere in the city. During the month of Ramadan and other important Muslim feasts, most of minarets were lit. Some minarets had up to 60 lamps. After sunset, the city was transformed into a magical place. Until the first half of the 20th century, what we know today as Greater Cairo was known as Misr, the Arabic name for Egypt is "Misr" (Gharib, 2017). Cairo is an unequalled treasure house of Islamic architecture. Built and over a span of a thousand years, Cairo's historic center contains the most concentrated, the most numerous, and the most varied collection of monuments in the Islamic world. But Cairo is not only a sum of its monuments; its historic center remains a dynamic urban organism. Medieval Cairo was the city where the tales of the Thousand. Over the centuries, Cairo has continued to be a literary setting. Cairo, unlike Baghdad and Damascus, was spared the devastation of the Mongol invasions (Williams, 2008).

Tangible heritage is considered by Islam as an important tool for interpreting history. An early form of what we know now as cultural tourism was put forward by the Qur'an and adopted by Muslims. Muslims are encouraged to visit the remains of previous civilizations in order to understand history better and to reflect on the meaning of life. Islam teaches Muslim visitors of such sites to abide by a strict etiquette and show the utmost respect. Muslims are instructed to observe and respect natural and cultural diversity as an essential part of their religious observance. From an Islamic point of view, local, regional, natural, and cultural diversities are seen as expressions of God's creation. The adoption of such diversities in turn led to a diversity of Islamic artistic, architectural and urban heritage in different regions of the world.

Islamic archeology emerged as an independent field of inquiry that studies a period that spans hundreds of years. Initially, it developed relatively slowly compared with other branches of archeology, but has since gained considerable momentum (Vernot, 1997).

The exquisite nature of architecture the Islamic period can be seen throughout Cairo. Marveling at the beauty of such architecture, a question remains as to how much science was involved in the erection of the mosques and other buildings. Clues throughout Islamic Cairo suggest that geology had evolved into a well-established science. For example, ornamental stones used in building mosques were evidentiality acquired from old quarries first used in ancient Egypt (Figure 1). Evidence also indicates that, in choosing the site of the Aladdin Citadel, avoidance of geo-hazards were taken into consideration.

AbdelMaksoud and Emam (2019) studied the importace of geology in the Ancient Egypt and they linked almost all branches of geology as an ancient science studied in the Pharonic age in ancient Egypt, the mentioned the important geosites and their assessment to geological heritage, this previous study open a new vision to see the geosites found in other previous ages like the Islamic age.

Many authors described how to evaluate a geosite Gray (2013); Prosser (2013); Henriques and Brilha (2017); Ruban (2017) and Brilha et al. (2018); AbdelMaksoud and El- Metwaly (2020); AbdelMaksoud (2020) which can be summarized in the geologic importance in the site, and archeological importance if found (not all geosites linked to archeological places but if found increased the rank and the importance of the site), finally the unique of this geologic heritage in the site. The study are presented in this paper are proposing 3 geosites in the old Cairo depending on its geological value and archeological importance. The main objectives are characteristics of this unique geosites, this study employs the Islamic geosites as a representative example of Archeological geosite -related to geological heritage assessment in Cairo- Egypt.

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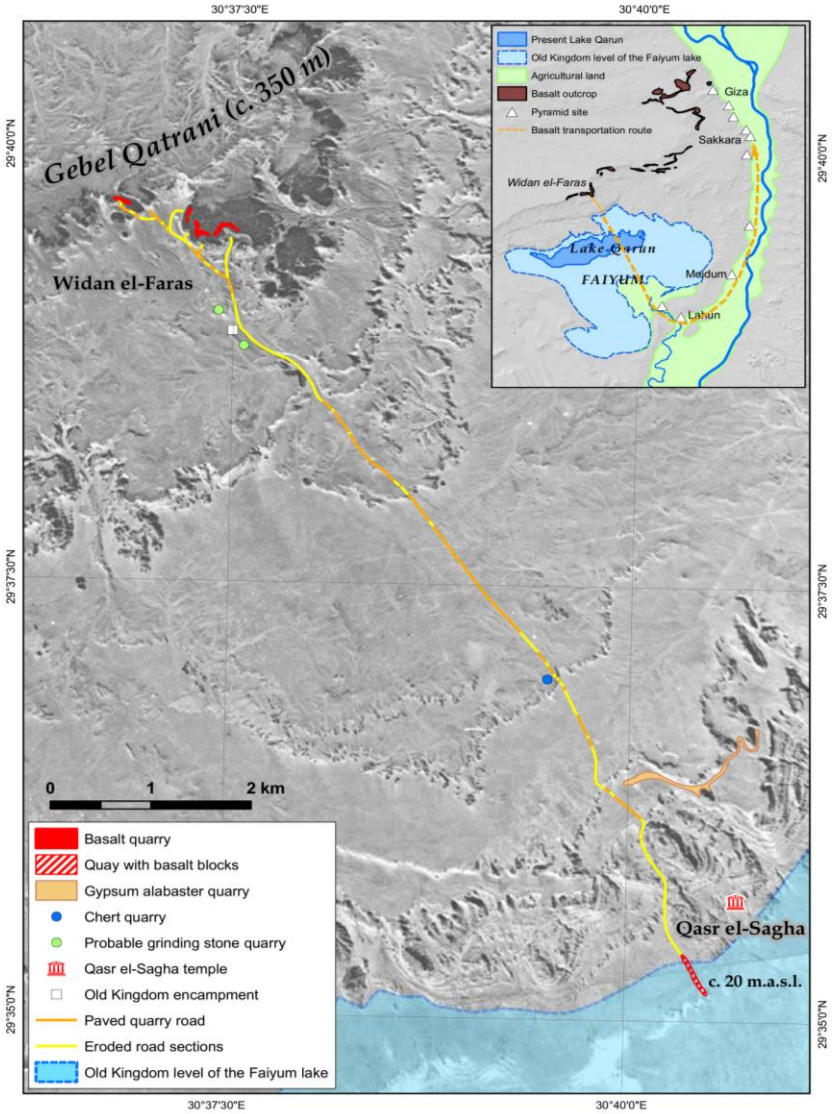

Figure 1. Ancient quarries used for ornamental stones since Phoars, passes through Roman time and Islamic age, after Harrell and Storemyr (2009)

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Ornamental Stones Geosite

Some authors worked on the value of ornamental stones in the geological heritage as geosites; Todaro (2019); Wever et al., (2017); Brilha (2016) mentioned that the value of monumentstand building is getting high by the presence of Ornamental stones with educational and touristic values, Sites with high tourism value can also be known as geomonuments; this term is already used to promote geosites to the general public in some countries, this describtion is perfectly applied on Ornamental stones of ancient Egypt were cut out of a diverse group of rocks. These stones were well sought after for their gorgeous colors and patterns and ability to take a good polish. They had a variety of decorative applications in both art and architecture. At least 48 varieties of ornamental stone were used by the Egyptians. These come from 45 well-known ancient quarries; two in northern Sudan and the rest in Egypt (Harrell, 2013).

Harrell, (2013) stated that dozens of types of ornamental stones were also imported into Egypt from around the Mediterranean region during the Roman Period. They were used for statuary and especially architectural elements in villas, temples, and public buildings. Much of this material was later reused in Egypt's medieval mosques and other Islamic monuments, where stones were employed as floor tiles, wall veneer, columns, and other decorative applications (Rogers, 1976; Harrell, 2004b; Harrell et al., 2002b). Some of this material has also been reused in Coptic Christian churches. In Egypt, Muslim builders of the Middle Ages evidently understood and applied some of the basics of geology to their work. They used ornamental stones that they had quarried and polished to decorate citadels, palaces and mosques (Figure 2). Like the ancient Egyptians before them, they also used gemstones as accessories in a variety of ways (AbdelMaksoud and Emam, 2019).

The Saladin Citadel Geosite

Another example of geologic architecture is the citadel founded in Old Cairo during the reign of Saladin. Understanding the choice of the Mokattam Plateau Figure 3 as a site of the citadel may, at first, seem like an oddity. This plateau is comprised of sedimentary rock that contains swelling clays which may crack and slide. People who live in the area today use moisture barriers to prevent the clay from swelling and sliding. On initial examination, the plateau does not seem ideal for the erection of a fortified citadel. And yet, the 837-year old citadel still stands to date and shows no evidence of fractures. The original builders of the citadel had dug a water well inside the citadel to provide water for soldiers. The nature of sedimentary rocks would suggest that such a well would eventually crumble over, but the well has stood the test of time. Did those responsible for erecting this citadel consider the nature of this sedimentary rock and the potential problems it would create before they had started to build the citadel? Why, despite all the aforementioned potential problems, was the plateau chosen to build the citadel?

Figure 2. Shows a master piece in one of the most popular mosques in Old Cairo, this figure contains more than 4 types of stones; The Egyptian alabaster, one most famous sones in Egypt (white creamy), Serpentinte (green stone), Red Marble (fleshy red), Black marble (black). Using ornamental stones in the Islamic Period for decoration of Mosques

Figure 3. Saladin Citadel

Figure 4. S Panoramic view showing differences in elevation. "C" is the citadel plateau while A & B are the opposite plateaus

Boukhary et al. (2010) addressed this question. Their conclusions may be summarized as follows:

1. The plateau chosen as a site for the citadel was not the highest plateau in the area. Some of the surrounding plateaus were higher (Figure 4). Inarguably, other characteristics of the Mokattam Plateau must have been taken into consideration. And yet, historians have stated that Saladin had chosen this site due to its elevation, which would have provided him a clear view of Old Cairo to "watch over" it (Rabbat, 1995; El- Harthy, 1999).

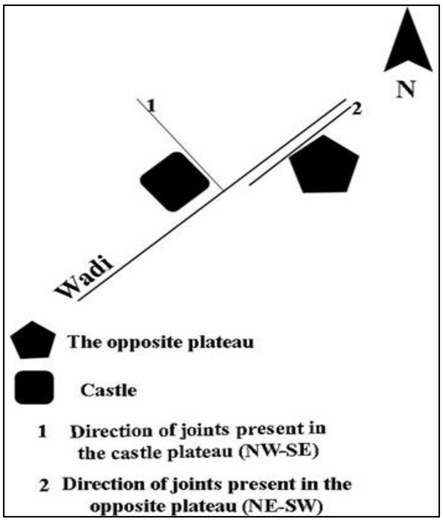

Figure 5. Schematic diagram showing joint direction in comparison with valley direction

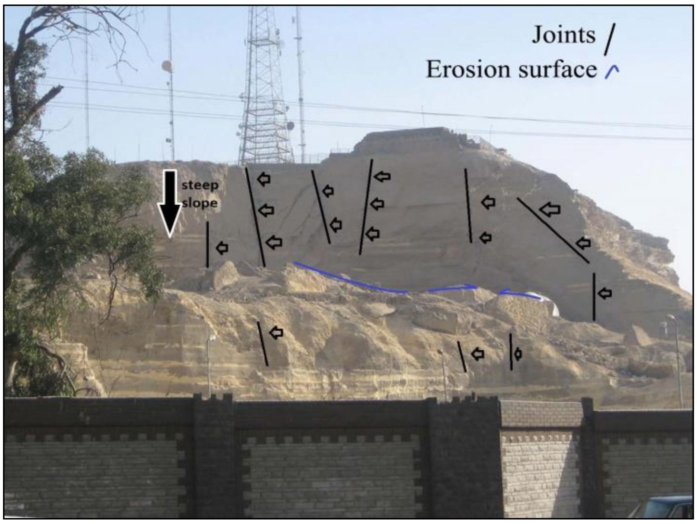

Figure 6. The plateau opposite to that of the citadel, showing joints in parallel to the valley. The photo was taken from the valley. Note the steep slope and the erosions

2. Upon careful examination of joint direction of both the Mokattam Plateau and other surrounding plateaus two sets of joints, vertical and horizontal are discovered. The vertical joints along the plateau opposite to the citadel plateau run NE-SW, while the vertical joints present in the citadel plateau run NW-SE (Figure 5 and Figure 6). The vertical joints present in the citadel plateau are perpendicular to the direction of the valley below, a feature which probably prevented blocks from sliding over the years (Figure 6).

3. As shown in Figure 8 and 9, the citadel plateau has a gentle slope, while the opposite plateau has a steep slope (Youssif, 2000; El-Shoby et al., 2004). It is well established that gentle slopes are better for construction than steep slopes which are more susceptible to erosion.

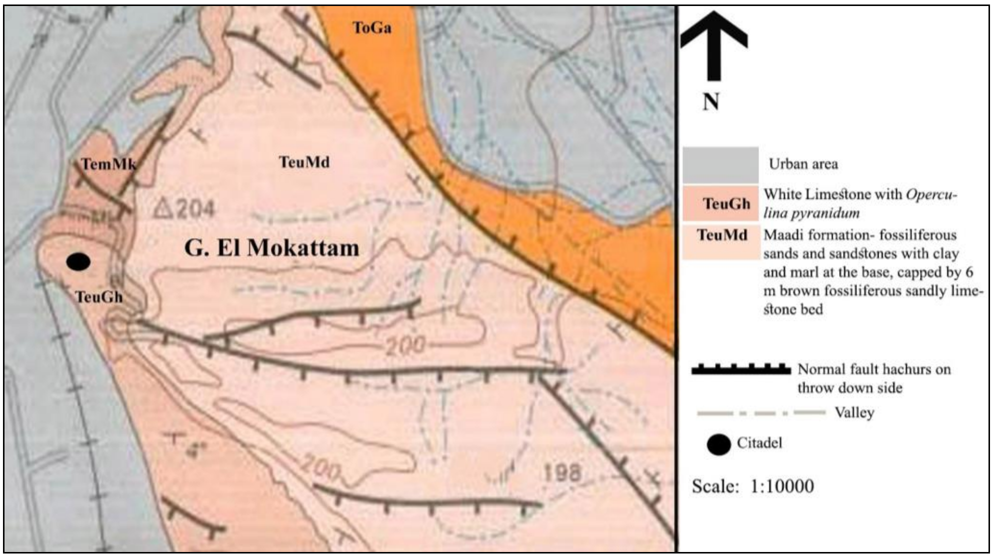

Figure 7. Geologic map for the Citadel area (Source: after the Egyptian Geologic Survey, 1984)

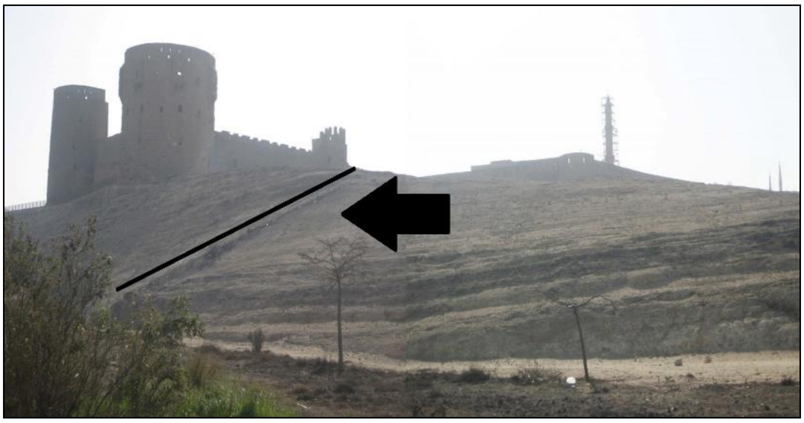

Figure 8. The citadel plateau. Note the gentle slope by the black arrow and the line show the slope

Figure 9. The steep slope of the plateau opposite to that of the citadel

4. The exposed rocks of the Mokattam Plateau have a total thickness of 166 meters (Mustafa et al., 1991). These rocks date back to the middle and late Eocene ages based on their lithostratigraphic sequences which were studied by Shukri (1954) and Strougo (1986). The Maadi formation is made up of a series of easily identified, well-developed brownish beds of fissured limestone, marl and shale, while the section housing the citadel is made up of white to gray massive limestone. According to Aboushook and Sherif (2000), the section that includes the citadel is is more resistant than the Maadi formation and, as a result, an erosion surface separates the two, which makes the section chosen for the citadel more suitable than other surrounding hill sites. Boukhary et al.'s (2010) conclusions clearly suggest that the early builders of the citadel had carefully considered their choice of location of the Saladin Citadel in order to minimize any possible geological hazards.

Figure 10. The Magra El Eyoon Aqueduct

Figure 11. Another view of the aqueduct, showing its height and length

The Magra El-Eyoon Aqueduct Geosite

This structure was built to transferring water from the River Nile up to the plateau. Similar structures to Magra El Eyoon or the 'waterway' in English were built in ancient times (Figures 10 and 11). Magra El Eyoon is a large wall, 7 km in length and about 30 meters at its greatest height, and is considered to be unconventional architecture. There is no researchers worked on the geology of the rocks in the researchers worked on the improvement of this place as a touristic place (Khalil, 2014) mention the in her work and makes a licker account with very interesting photos for the whole place (https://www.flickr.com/photos/13747511@N07/sets/72157627827313575).

The structure of this proposed geosite is Dolomitic they used this kind of rocks to build this structure, likely because of its impermeability to water, also they cemented the with clay, this proposed geosite was built in Salah al-Din era to transport water from the Nile to the castle and farming area near the castle. When the castle widened, Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad IbnQalawun developed the adqueduct to transport water more to the castle (http://arabicivilization2.blogspot.com/2008/12/blogpost_25.html).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Egypt richness of the geological heritage makes it very suitable for investigation and exploitation, the rise of which has started recently. However, the knowledge of unique geological phenomena of this country remains restricted, and some promising locations as well as the entire types of geological heritage need assessment.

Despite the large amount of scientific publications on these region's geology and the occurrence of several sites of international importance, the regional government has not yet included geological heritage in its policies related to the conservation and management of nature.

Predominantly, the geological heritage resource can be engaged effectively for generating additional income to regional and national budgets, supporting sustainable development of the country. One of the aims of this paper is to insist on the relevance of inventorying and preserving archeological sites that will not be mentioned as geological importance. The present inventory encompasses few locations in old to be listed as geosites. It is imperative not only to highlight their existence, but also to point them out as possible geotouristic resources with its archeological and Islamic value. A deep knowledge of the geosites will allow its integration in administrative and legal processes.

CONCLUSION

The present proposal for the inventory and assessment of geological heritage and geosites geodiversity sites can be applied in different settings, in different size areas, and under diverse legal contexts (geotourism). Despite of the assessment method used for geosites, it should be highlighted that a final reflection about the obtained results is essential.

There must be scientific coordinator of the inventory to confirm the quality of the results and search for eventual ranking positions for the three proposed geosites. Though, the three geosites proposed in this paper can surely. In fact, this assessment has one perspective; it tries to evaluate the scientific value of sites and the potential educational and touristic use of geosites. This difference is due to the fact that a geosite should be conserved for its geological value individualistically of its effective touristic usage. Finally, the assessment of the three geosites should be Protected and managed for paramount rank both for science and other societal uses.

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TOURISTS' PERCEPTIONS OF LANGKAWI ISLAND AS A WORLD TOURISM DESTINATION

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Abstract: Tourists' perceptions of a destination play essential roles in determining the purpose behind the behaviour of visiting the place. Hence, it enables the tourism planners to comprehensively predict tourists' actions. Several studies have debated the importance of researching the perceptions of tourists on destination to develop effective strategic marketing planning. In line with this issue, the main purpose of the study is to investigate tourists' perceptions of Langkawi Island as a world tourism destination. Today, Langkawi Island has increasingly active in promoting itself to be eminently known as a world tourism destination. A survey was conducted involving 677 tourists including both local and international tourists visiting the island. Interestingly, the findings indicate that most of the tourists are first time visitors and have stayed in Langkawi between 3 – 7 days, travelling in a group of less than 5 and have made their own travel arrangement. Among the purposes of visiting the island are to experience the natural resources and historical places of the island. In fact, the majority of tourists want to experience the interesting life in Langkawi as more as possible. Generally, the findings reveal that tourists have perceived Langkawi Island positively as a world tourism destination. The study eventually would assist the stakeholders particularly the policy makers and tourism marketers to have better and comprehensive information regarding tourists' perceptions of the island. Additionally, the findings would also assist the tourism planners to actively promote the beauty and natural resources of Langkawi Island and potray it as a world tourism destination.

Key words: Tourist, perception, tourism destination, Langkawi Island

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Langkawi Island is in the northern region of West Malaysia, located at the north of the Straits of Malacca, approximately 30 km from Kuala Perlis; 51.5 km from Kuala Kedah; and 109 km from Penang. Today, tourism has become a well-known industry in the island which significantly contributed towards the enhancement of local communities particularly in the sense of providing greater economic benefits for the country. In line with this development, Langkawi Island is increasingly active on promoting itself to be eminently known as world-class tourist destination similarly to Phuket, Thailand and Bali, Indonesia. Langkawi Island is also known as a popular destination for famous sports events for instance Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA), Le Tour de Langkawi, Langkawi International Regatta, Langkawi Ironman Triathlon, and Langkawi International Dialogues (LID).

The development of Langkawi Island as a tourism destination has begun with the conferring on the Duty Free Zone status in 1987, followed by the establishment of the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) in 1990 and has been one of the agendas in the Sixth Malaysia Plan (1991 – 1995). These acknowledgements have led to a more systematic development of the island and transformed Langkawi into the modern tourist island destination. The recognition of Langkawi Island by UNESCO as Malaysia's first Global Geopark in June 2007 eventually has brought in more visitors, researchers and nature enthusiasts. Langkawi Island still remains as one of the top tourist destinations for Malaysia even though the number dropped slightly in 2005 to 1.8 million due to the post-tsunami impact (LADA, 2016; Tourism Malaysia, 2016). Further, the government, private sectors and local communities have also experienced a considerable amount of economic development as a result of the booming tourism industry in Langkawi Island (Anand and Sen, 2000).

As reported by LADA (2015), Langkawi Island has received about RM 2.6 billion revenue from the approximately 3 million recorded tourist arrivals in 2012. In line with this achievement, the government has taken prompt action by proposing a Blueprint Langkawi to make Langkawi Island listed as 10 highest islands visited by tourists as well as to make Langkawi as a luxury tourist destination by the year 2015. Added to this, the target in economics is to double tourism in Langkawi Gross National Income (GNI) of RM 0.8 billion in 2010 to RM 1.9 billion in 2015. Further, recipients are also expected to double from RM 1.9 billion tourists in 2010 to RM 3.8 billion in 2015 through the launching of marketing campaign based on customer needs. The major purpose of this marketing is to enhance the itinerary of foreign countries to Langkawi and product marketing in the luxury market and high spending tourists. As for the year 2016, 3.3 million tourists arrivals in Langkawi Island was recorded, an increment of 8.1% compared to 2015 (LADA, 2016). The year 2018 has shown a rapid growth of tourists' arrivals of 3.67 million with recorded revenue of RM 5.6 billion (LADA, 2019).

Even though there have been various studies on Langkawi Island as a tourism destination, studies on tourists' perceptions of visiting it as world tourism destination are still lacking. Hence, this study was conducted to investigate tourists' perceptions of Langkawi Island in order to promote it as a world tourism destination. It is important in the first place to understand tourists' perceptions of Langkawi as it plays a key role in planning activities more effectively by the tourism authority. The creation of perceived images will vary with regards to personal beliefs and demographic factors. According to Munien et al. (2019), examining visitor profiles, perceptions, preferences and experiences is important to improve planning and management of these destinations to ensure long-term sustainability. Hence, by investigating why people engage themselves in travelling will assist the Langkawi destination marketers and planners to gain insight into tourism development and marketing process. Moreover, the information may provide better explanation to authorities, marketers and service providers of Langkawi Island regarding tourists' behaviors and actions. Additionally, the findings on tourists' perceptions can be used by the local people to assist tourists in having an enjoyable and memorable time during their stay. The valuable information compiled would also assist the stakeholders to implement effective market segmentation and targeting Langkawi Island as a world tourism destination.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Study on tourists' perception of a destination's image as a preferred choice for travel is crucial. Munien et al. (2019) examined tourists' profiles in Cape Town and found that tourist profiles such as gender, age and educational level play important roles to improve the planning and management of tourist destination. According to Law (1995), tourists' perception affects the formation of a destination image, and in return, the perception is affected by specifying the similarities and differences among the facilities, attractions, and service standards of several destinations. As noted in a study by Farsani et al. (2019), tourists like to discover new destinations thus it is vital to study their perceptions and satisfaction of a destination. Their study on mines as tourist attractions indicated that tourists would choose to stay at geo-accommodation and visiting underground as their geotours. Pantano et al. (2017) conducted a study regarding tourists' perceptions of a certain attraction using open data sources. The purpose was to form appropriate future travel propositions as well as the reliability of online reviews on formulating intentions. The study also contributed to the importance of understanding tourists' perceptions and created new challenges particularly to the tourism managers to make better predictions about the destination. Further, Athula Gnanapala (2015) surveyed tourists' perception and satisfaction of Sri Langka as tourism destination and found relationships among the psychological variables, such as motivation, attitude, perception, and satisfaction. The study concluded that tourists would make repeat visits and spread positive word of mouth publicity if that destination could identify and satisfy their needs and want. Hence, it is vital to study tourists' perceptions of a destination as it will lead to important developments and the growth of the tourism industry.

According to Augustyn and Ho (1998), destination marketing can be facilitated well with a better understanding of tourists' perceptions, needs and motives. Before a marketing program aimed at a specific market segment, tourism companies should understand the typical tourists' perceptions of that particular market. On the other hands, findings on tourists' perceptions can be used by the local people and employees of the tourism facilities to help assist tourists in having an enjoyable and memorable time during their stay. Baloglu and McCleary (1999) suggested that countries seeking to increase their tourism should consider the characteristics of their target markets and tailor their image development and positioning efforts to specific sociodemographic, perceptions and motivation segments. Study on tourists' perceptions is also considered important since tourists behavior may lead to their perceptions on the destination image. Since image of tourism destination depends on tourists' perceptions, several researchers have conducted an extensive studies to understand this phenomenon. Breitsohl and Garrod (2016) conducted an online survey involving 1350 tourists to understand their perceptions and emotions toward breach of ethics at a tourism destination. The study used cognitive appraisal theory and the findings indicated that tourists play major role in shaping hostile emotions toward tourism destination. They also noted that tourists' perceptions and word-of-mouth would likely lead to re-visit of the destination.

Further, Maghsoodi Tilaki et al. (2017) investigated the behavior of tourists visiting Penang Island, Malaysia and found that tourists' perceptions and expectations are vital in promoting the destination in the media sources. They concluded that examining the tourists' perceptions and behaviors would provide better understanding of the most influential factors in realizing tourists' satisfaction. They also highlighted in their study that destination image is also influenced by the tourists' experiences. Hence, the results of this study indicated a negative gap for perceived destination image and suggested that the tourists' expectations are greater than their real actual experiences in the destination. Previously, Ahmed (1991) conducted a research on tourism by focusing on the perceptions of tourists toward destination, in consideration of the fact that a traveller's perceptions can influence tourism marketing. Assael (1984) found that an image of a destination is established by a collection of perceptions regarding a product or service, which are obtained from different sources. Hence, it is important to study and investigate the tourists' perceptions of a destination to plan for effective marketing strategy.

Heung and Quf (2000) emphasized that it is critical to develop infrastructure, products and services to satisfy tourists' preferences for Hong Kong as a travel destination. Therefore, they studied the understanding of the preferences and travel related behavior of tourists and found that it is vital for tourism marketing in terms of market segmentation and the design of effective promotional campaign. In other studies, it was noted that the perception of a country or a specific destination is developed on an individual basis and the perceived expectations of tourists can be a factor in determining the effectiveness of destination branding. Chheang (2011) emphasized that tourist's perception of Angkor is positive and their experiences are beyond expectations. It was also found by Bertan and Altintaş (2013) in their study that to increase the number of visitors coming to the Pamukkale region, the great value should be placed on the perceptions of visitors. Wang et al. (2016) also agreed that assessing tourists' perceptions is in line with examining their expectations of the destination which eventually lead in achieving standard levels in the quality of service to ensure satisfaction. Hence, tourist expectation has been defined as a preconceived perception of travel outcome.

Interestingly, studies also found that tourists play important role not just in terms of their perceptions and expectations, but also their motivations. For instance, a study on cultural and heritage sites in Kwazulu Natal, South Africa highlighted that tourists would visit the place due to several push factors such as desire for escape, relaxation and exploration of cultural heritage sites whilst unique cultural heritage sites, knowledge of Zulu Kingdom and good place for family are among the pull factors motivating tourists to visit the place (Ndlovu, 2015). Pantouvakis and Patsiouras (2016) in their study found that several factors motivated tourists to visit tourism destination such as the customs procedures, the cultural and historical attractions, the low crime rate, the constant political environment, the stability of currency and exchange rate, the availability of night life activities and of recreation facilities, the overall value and level of cost and finally the availability of hotels. Additionally, the study noted that the nationality of the tourist would also affect their choice of a destination. These motivational push and pull factors are significantly in line with tourists' purposes of visiting a tourism destination.

METHODOLOGY

In order to attain the stated research objective, the study was based on a descriptive research approach where specific information requirements and a quantitative methodology was used. Basically, the study was an exploratory study to understand and examine tourists' perceptions of Langkawi Island as a world tourism destination. The primary data was acquired through questionnaire distribution to 1000 tourists visiting Langkawi in three months time of peak seasons; March, June and December 2016. Most tourists were targeted at famous spot in Langkawi such as Pantai Cenang, Kuah Jetty and Airport. Questionnaire was chosen because of its ease of use and it provides the most possible alternative for measuring unobservable constructs such as attitudes, values and personalities. Further, according to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), survey questionnaire is an efficient data collection mechanism to ensure relevancy and consistency of information gathered as the responses are objective, standardised and comparable.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections namely Section A, B and C. Section A consisted of 11 items on tourists' demographic profiles such as gender, age, marital status, country of origin, educational level, profession, amount spending in Langkawi Island, number of trips to Langkawi Island, number of days in Langkawi Island during the visit, number of persons travelling together and arrangements to Langkawi Island. Section B asking the tourists' purposes of visiting Langkawi Island. Further, Section C asking the tourists their perceptions of Langkawi Island and also their perceptions regarding values and portrait of Langkawi as a world tourism destination. This section was measured with five Likert scale ranged from totally disagree to totally agree.

The study further used the Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS) with descriptive and inferential analysis to identify patterns and general trends in the dataset of this study. Descriptive analysis refers to the transformation of raw data into a form that make them easier to understand and interpret (Zikmund et al., 2010). Hence, descriptive analyses such as frequency counts, percentages and cumulative percentages were employed in this study. A univariate and bivariate analysis was also performed on all variables; displaying means, standard deviations, frequencies, percentages, cumulative frequencies and cumulative percentages.

FINDINGS

Tourists' Profiles

A total of 677 tourists respond to the questionnaire representing a 67.7% response rate. Table 1 indicates the findings regarding tourists' profiles. It is noted that the majority of the tourists are female (51.0%) and the remaining are male (49.0%). As for the age distribution, the survey shows that most of them are between 18 – 34 years old (83.8%), follows by 35 to 54 years old (12.3%), and then tourists who are above 50 years old (3.7%). Additionally, most of the tourists are also single (44.0%) and married (44.0%). The findings also highlight that majority of the tourist possessed a degree from university (57.0%). Further, the profiles of tourists indicate that most of them are students (31.0%), company employee (23.0%) and also government servant (18.0%). It can be seen that most tourists spent between RM3,000 – RM4,999 (36.8%) and only few spent between RM5,000 – RM6,999 (2.4%).

The findings also highlight that the majority of the tourists are first time visitors to Langkawi (68.0%). The survey shows that majority of the tourists stayed in Langkawi between 3 – 7 days (51.0%) and visited Langkawi in a group of less than five persons (77.4%). Additionally, majority made their own arrangement for the trip (52.0%) whilst some used overseas travel agent (25.8%), few used local travel agent to plan for their trip (12.3%) and the remaining made arrangement through their friends or relatives (9.9%). The findings also indicate that majority of the tourists are local tourists or Malaysians (39.0%) which presented by tourists from outsides Langkawi, for instance, Kuala Lumpur, Melaka, Johor, Penang, Sabah and many more. This is then followed by tourists from China (13.0%). Further, similar findings were noted for tourists who visited Langkawi from Australia, United Kingdom and other European countries (7.0%).

Table 1. Tourists' Profiles

Profile	Percentage	Profile	Percentage
Gender:		***Travel arrangement:***	
Male	49.0	Overseas travel agent	25.8
Female	51.0	Local travel agents	12.3
		Friends/relatives	9.9
		On your own	52.0
Age:		***Professions:***	
18 – 34 years old	83.8	Student	31.0
35 – 54 years old	12.3	Government servant	18.0
Above 55 years old	3.7	Company employee	23.0
Missing value	0.3	Self-employed	17.0
		Retired	3.0
		Unemployed	8.0
Marital status:		***Number of persons travelled***	
Single	44.0	***together:***	77.4
Married	44.0	Less than 5 persons	18.0
In relation	12.0	5 – 10 persons	4.6
Separate	0.0	More than 10 persons	
Level of education:		***Amount spending in Langkawi:***	
High school certificate	6.0	Less than RM1000	34.1
College diploma	28.0	RM1000 – RM2999	26.6
University degree	57.0	RM3000 – RM4999	36.8
Masters/PhD	9.0	RM5000 – RM6999	2.4
Did not finish high school	0.0	More than RM7000	0.1
Number of trips to Langkawi:		***Country of origin:***	
First time	68.0	Malaysia (local)	39.0
1 – 3 times	24.0	China	13.0
More than 3 times	8.0	Australia	7.0
		United Kingdom	7.0
		Other European countries	7.0
		Arab countries	6.0
		Indonesia	5.0
		Thailand	5.0
		Other countries	11.0
Number of days staying in			
Langkawi:	38.0		
Less than 3 days	51.0		
3 – 7 days	11.0		
More than 7 days			

Tourists Purposes of Visiting Langkawi

Figure 1 highlights 12 common purposes of tourists visiting Langkawi. The findings indicate that the majority of the tourists visited Langkawi to gain experience of the island as a tourism destination (79.2%). Most of them also visited Langkawi for relaxing (64.5%), visiting natural sites in Langkawi (55.7%) and also visiting historical places and attractions in Langkawi (40.6%). Besides these reasons, one of the main reasons visiting Langkawi is to visit the museums (35.3%), few of the tourists also visited Langkawi for shopping (32.3%).

Only few tourists visited Langkawi for the purpose of attending cultural events (13.0%), attending festival (11.4%), visiting friends and relatives (8.9%) and go to night club (4.3%). Additionally, few indicates for other reasons (0.9%) and fishing (0.3%).

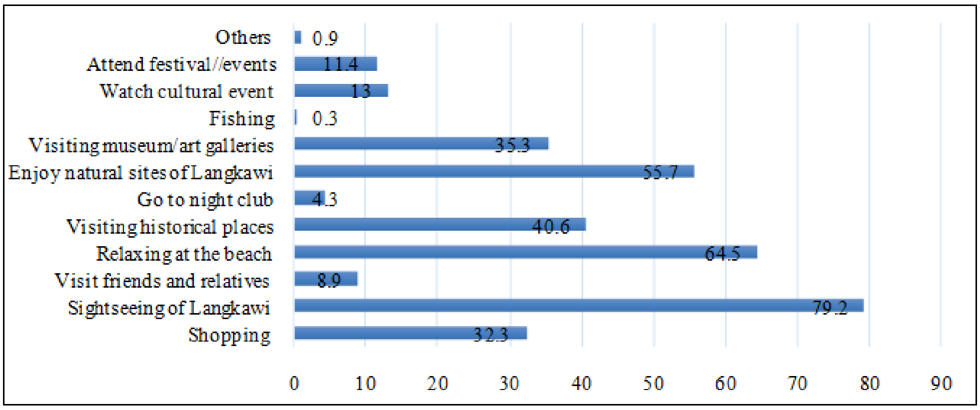

Figure 1. Tourist Purposes of Visiting Langkawi Island

Tourists' Perceptions of Langkawi

The findings as depicted in Figure 2 highlight 22 items on tourists' perceptions of Langkawi as the world tourism destination. Majority of the tourists want to experience travelling in Langkawi as much as possible (96.9%). This is followed by they are interested to travel to Langkawi (96.8%). Further, there are a variety of food and drinks in Langkawi which they can enjoy (93.9%). Most tourists also perceive Langkawi as worth visiting (90.4%) and most of them are satisfied with their visits to Langkawi (89.2%). Additionally, the findings significantly show that tourists really enjoyed their trips in Langkawi. Most tourists would recommend Langkawi to others as a tourist destination (88.7%).

More, tourists also agree that Langkawi is a popular tourist destination (87.8%) and a unique tourist destination (86.1%). Most tourists perceive buying a vacation in Langkawi as buying a gift for themselves (86.4%). They also consider vacation in Langkawi as pleasurable for them (86.0%) and interest them a lot (82.4%). Further, majority of the tourist also perceive Langkawi as a destination that they would revisit in the future (83.3%). The findings of the survey also show that tourists attached great importance of visiting Langkawi (79.2%). They perceive Langkawi as providing quality service through the accommodation sector (73.8%) and also agree that the transportation sector in Langkawi is comfortable (73.4%).

Question on the arrangement made for the trip in Langkawi shows that tourists would encourage travelling to Langkawi using tour package (70.1%). Interestingly, most tourist would visit Langkawi regardless of the high visitation cost (65.8%). Hence, the findings are probably consistent where the tourists have mixed emotion regarding Langkawi (54.3%). Some of the tourists have broad knowledge of travelling to Langkawi (51.8%) and in fact some of them perceive the cost of travelling to Langkawi is high compared to other regions (42.4%). Only few tourists have second thought about visiting Langkawi in the future (25.9%) and find that it is complicated to choose Langkawi as tourist destination (25.5%).

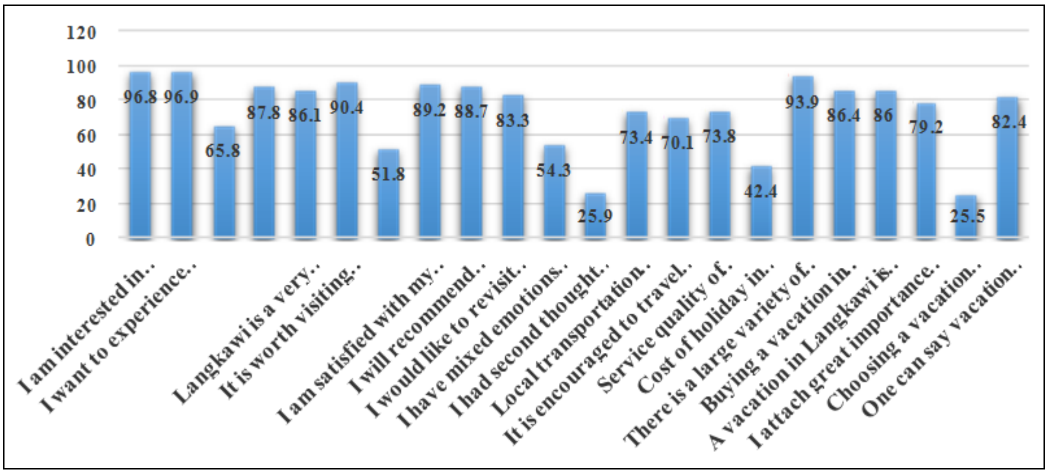

Figure 2. Tourists' Perceptions of Langkawi Island as a World Tourism Destination

Additionally, the tourists were also asked to name the value of promoting Langkawi Island as a world tourism destination (Table 2). They believed that Langkawi Island can be internationally promoted based on the values it possessed. The majority of tourist found Langkawi as a natural island destination (84.8%). It is a fact that looking at Langkawi Island brochure today, the island is being promoted as natural tourist destination. Further, they also believed Langkawi Island is a welcoming destination to the tourist (62.5%), followed by traditional tourist destination (43.0%).

Besides these values, the tourists also found that Langkawi Island is an authentic destination (39.4%) and a historical destination (33.4%). The findings moreover indicated that Langkawi can be promoted as an ecotourism destination (31.5%) and because it also has a value of fresh destination (30.1%). Additionally, the tourists believed Langkawi Island can be valued as nostalgic (21.0%) and invigorating destination (19.8%). Few of the tourists valued Langkawi Island as contemporary destination (10.3%), luxury destination (4.3%) and stylish destination (2.5%).

Regarding the portrait of Langkawi Island as a world tourism destination, the survey revealed interesting findings. As depicted in Figure 3, the majority of tourist potrayed Langkawi Island as a destination which tourists aim to visit (70.6%).

Most of them also potrayed Langkawi Island as destination with various places to visit (70.3%) and a destination visited by couples (48.7%). Some of the tourists described Langkawi Island as a destination that makes people happy (48.2%). Further, some of them also pictured Langkawi Island as a destination for the whole family (47.6%).

Table 2. Tourists' Perceptions regarding the Value of Langkawi Island as a WorldTourism Destination

Profiles	Percent
Natural island destination	84.8
A welcoming destination to tourist	62.5
A traditional tourist destination	43.0
An authentic destination	39.4
Historical destination	33.4
An ecotourism destination	31.5
A value of fresh destination	30.1
Nostalgic destination	21.0
Invigorating destination	19.8
Contemporary destination	10.3
Luxury destination	4.3
A stylish destination	2.5

This is followed by destination which offers good value for money (44.6%) and a safe destination to visit (32.8%). Additionally, few of the tourists' potrayed Langkawi Island as an easy detination to get to (28.8%) with various range of quality accommodation (23.8%) and it was also potrayed by the tourists as a year round destination (19.6%). Finally, only few of the tourists indicated Langkawi Island as expensive destination (7.8%) and a destination for older people (3.7%).

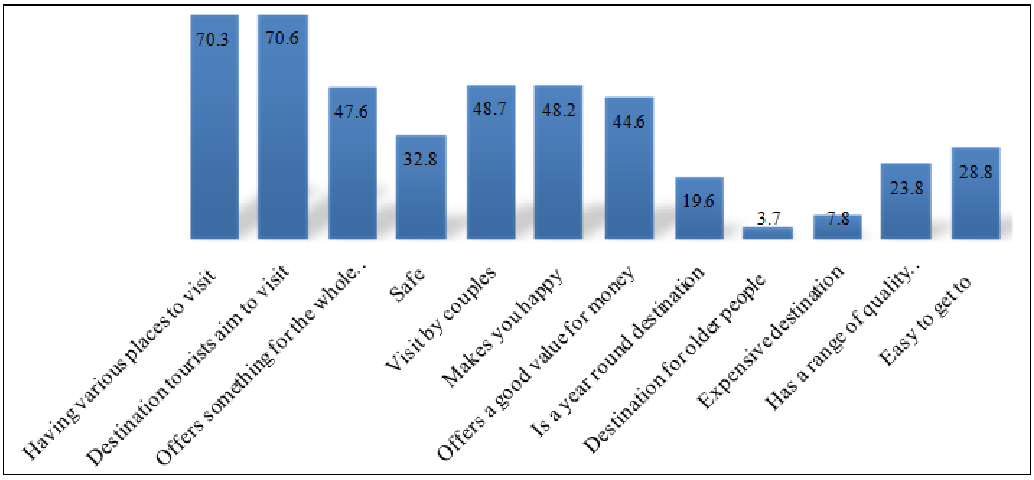

Figure 3. Tourists' Perceptions regarding the Potrait of Langkawi Island as a World Tourism Destination

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, it is highlighted that most tourists have visited Langkawi Island to experience the natural resources and historical places of the island. This is in line with previous study by Nair and Azmi (2008) where they noted that the main purpose for tourists visiting Langkawi Island is to have a simple relaxing holiday. Additionally, the study is also consistent to other studies regarding tourists motive to visit tourism destination (Ndlovu, 2015; Pantouvakis and Patsiouras, 2016). This is also probably due to the fact that Langkawi Island has been promoted as a unique island full of myths and legends. Shopping is not counted as vital purpose and activity by the tourists who visited Langkawi Island even though it is a free-duty destination.

As for promoting Langkawi Island as a world tourism destination, the findings indicate that Langkawi Island has so many values and can be promoted as tourism destination throughout the world as it objective to be in the top 10 world tourist destination map. The study is similar to the findings by Ezeuduji et al. (2016) regarding tourists experience and satisfaction of Cape Town where the researchers found that among tourists valuable experience are memorable visit, valuable visit, friendly and hospitable population, level of service quality at facilities in the city, being one of the best places and destination's good value for money.

However, it is also noted that Langkawi Island received only a small number of tourists from Indonesia and Thailand. This could be the fact that the neighbouring countries probably visited other destinations with different cultural values or perhaps visiting their own countries. This could be due to the fact that Indonesia and Thailand also have their own beautiful island which is known through out the world as tourism island destinations such as Bali in Indonesia and Phuket in Thailand.

The findings of the study eventually would assist the stakeholders of the tourism industry in Langkawi Island particularly the policy makers and tourism planners to have better information regarding the profiles, purposes and perceptions of tourists visiting Langkawi Island. Additionally it would assist LADA to highlight and conserve natural resources in Langkawi Island and at the same time sustain the destination with its myths and legends. The information moreover can also be used by the marketing planners to effectively promote Langkawi Island as world tourism destination. Knowing tourists purposes and perceptions of Langkawi Island probably would assist the travel agencies to plan better promotional strategy.

The findings may also provide marketing researchers and planners with some valuable view of the choice of appropriate markets based on the values and portrait of the destination. This probably could differentiate the tourists' perceptions of Langkawi Island and also meet the tourist's future demand. Further, the marketing sector can use the promotional activities through the internet and other electronic media including to be utilized to attract the new and existing tourists to Langkawi Island.

Limitations

The study, however, is only focused on tourists visiting the island. It has not taken into account the stakeholders' awareness such as the policy makers, community and tourism marketers. Evidently, there is limited research statistics and/or information available on tourists' demographic profiles to compare with the current findings. It is suggested that future research could include more number of tourists and more extensive research to gain further insight into profiling tourists visiting Langkawi Island.

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IMPACTS AND BENEFITS FROM TOURISM AN EXAMPLE FROM THAILAND

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Abstract: This qualitative research aims to study current impacts and agreement of benefits perceived from tourism in Chiang Saen District of Thailand. This is a case study that collected data by purposive sampling and used structured interview as a research tool. The in-depth interview was conducted with 26 interviewees who are involved in tourism and logistics. The findings illustrate the current impacts covering economic, socio-cultural, and environment dimensions. The total impact demonstrates the most positive impact as income generation for investors, with environmental impact being harmful to the area. There are both agreements and disagreements of perceived benefits from tourism and logistics.

Key words: Impacts, benefits, tourism, logistics

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INTRODUCTION

Exploring the impact and agreement on the benefits of tourism and logistics in Chiang Saen District of Chiang Rai Province, Thailand, is crucial in border areas where related-tourism businesses and logistics facilities are provided. Tourism is one of the most dynamic business sectors in the world and plays a pivotal role in foreign exchange earnings, while international tourism and worldwide revenue receipts report about 7.3% of world exports of merchandise and services (Asian Development Bank, 2008). Tourism can be both a driving force for poverty reduction and environmental protection, and makes major contributions to the national economies of countries in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) (Asian Development Bank, 2008). The GMS program has brought about regional collective actions geared for greater connectivity and integration of tourism plans, programs, and strategies among member countries (Asian Development Bank, 2008). The GMS group comprises Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Yunnan Province in the People's Republic of China (PRC), Vietnam and Thailand (Asian Development Bank, 2008).

There was steady growth in the number of tourist arrivals and revenue among GMS countries between 2018 and 2019, as reported by World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2020). Thailand presented the highest number of tourist arrivals at 38.2 million in 2018, climbing up to 39.8 million in 2019, with the percentage of change being 4.2%. Cambodia in 2018 had 6.2 million tourists, 3.7 million in Lao PDR, and 3.5 million in Myanmar (UNWTO, 2020). Vietnam illustrated the biggest increase between 2018 and 2019 at 16.2% (UNWTO, 2020). Based on revenue from tourism, Thailand received the largest share at US$ 56,366 million in 2018, and US$ 60,521 million in 2019, a 3.2% rise (UNWTO, 2020). In 2018, Vietnam gained US$ 10,080 million, followed by US$ 4,352 million in Cambodia, US$ 1,652 million in Myanmar, and US$ 734 million in Lao PDR (UNWTO, 2020). Surprisingly, Myanmar displayed the most significant growth of revenue at approximately 50.3% between 2018 and 2019 (UNWTO, 2020). By comparing the number of tourist arrivals and revenue among GMS countries (specific data only the South East Asia countries) in 2018 and 2019, Thailand is the most popular destination which is indicated by the highest number of both tourists and revenue.

Chiang Saen is a pioneer city of tourism among GMS members for many reasons. CSC is the largest Mekong port after the river departs China, and mostly serves as the main turnaround point for cargo ships moving products between PRC and Thailand through the culturally rich CSC which was once the capital of the Lanna Kingdom, with the old city wall and ancient Buddhist monuments still visible (UNWTO, 2016). Chiang Saen's high-quality pier serves as the terminus for passenger vessels transporting to and from Yunnan and there are good opportunities for cruise tourism as there is a daily longboat service to and from Sop Ruak River, or cruising to Chiang Khong for crossing into Lao PDR (UNWTO, 2016). A border of the GMS in Thailand is Chiang Saen District in Chiang Rai Province, where border tourism and logistics cross the countries. Chiang Saen City (CSC) is an ancient city founded in the 13^{th} – 14^{th} century (MOTS, 2019b); and it is located approximately 60 kilometers to the North of Chiang Rai city and about 891 kilometers from Bangkok. The charm of Chiang Saen is its location by the stunning and peaceful Mekong River among the convergence of Thailand, Myanmar and Laos (Yaprasit, n.d.). There are a number of highlighted tourist sites, including the Golden Triangle Viewpoint, the Golden Triangle Park, the Hall of Opium, and the huge gold Buddha image. However, there is no precise information of the number of visitors and receipts in CSC, only the information for the entire Chiang Rai Province as presented by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS, 2019a). The total number of visitors was 460,097 in 2018 and 471,596 in 2019, an increase of 2.50% in Chiang Rai Province (MOTS, 2019a). The number of Thai visitors was greater than the number of foreign visitors in both years.

However, the growth rate for the number of foreign visitor was larger than the number of Thai visitors (MOTS, 2019a). The total revenue from all visitors in 2018 was US$ 129.2 million and US$ 130.8 million in 2019, steadily rising by about 1.25%. The growth of revenue from foreign visitors being 0.51%, while it was 1.43% from Thai visitors (MOTS, 2019a). The increasing changes of visitor number and revenue in Chiang Saen District are based on tourism database in Chiang Rai Province between 2018 and 2019.

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Statement of the Problem

It is estimated that in the Mekong River Basin climate change provided 82.29% of the total streamflow change between 1992 and 2009, and human activities caused 62% of the total change between 2010 and 2015 (Li et al., 2017). Based on the results of Li et al. (2017), the current study would like to explore the exact components of the human activities as a cause of the impact. Lertrit (2016) explained that local people in CSC had no cooperation with the government officials in the Cultural Resource Management (CRM) project, and had failed to understand the information value of the ancient site as they did not have a sense of ownership for the cultural property. However, local people were ready and willing to support the CRM project if they felt they would have a beneficial stake in the CRM program, and any cooperation as well as assistance from residents would be a possibility (Lertrit, 2016). It appears that the sense of ownership is based on cooperation and assistance between government officials and local people. Based on the results of Lertrit (2016), the current study would like to investigate the agreement of benefits from tourism and logistics businesses because the benefits can fill the sense of belonging and ownership for the locals in CSC.

Research Objectives, Questions, and Benefits of the Study

The current study tries to achieve the following objectives: (1) to study the current impact of tourism and logistics in Chiang Saen District of Thailand; and (2) to identify the agreement of benefits more than costs of tourism and logistics in Chiang Saen. The research questions are:

(a) What are the current impacts of tourism and logistics in Chiang Saen District of Thailand?

(b) How can local people agree on benefits more than costs of tourism and logistics in Chiang Saen? The results of this study will be of benefit for the Chiang Saen Government (CSG), to consider the issue of the supportive development policies for border tourism and logistics under the perception of locals on tourism and logistical impacts, and the agreement of benefits.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social exchange theory (SET) suggests that residents are likely to participate in exchange to support tourism development until the perceived benefits of tourism exceed the perceived costs of tourism. The social behaviour of humans in economics is undertaken by incorporating economics, psychology, and sociology based on SET (Homans, 1958). SET posits that all human relationships are formed by the use of subjective cost–benefit analysis and the comparison of alternatives (Homans, 1958). SET is an exchange of material goods but also non-material ones (Homans and Rex, 1961). The elements of SET are (1) social rewards and value of rewards and (2) equity and distributive justice, rewards and value of rewards [social rewards, costs, and profit] (Homans and Rex, 1961). Based on SET, there are a number of tourism impact and tourism development studies such as the following:

The economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors are likely to affect residents' perceptions of tourism and their willingness to participate in an exchange to support for or against tourism development (Yoon et al., 2001). Both positive and negative economic impacts as well as negative environmental impacts were identified as significant contributors to how residents assess perceived benefits resulting from the development of gaming (Kang et al., 2008). The theoretical approach of this study infers that SET is related with both ‘impact’ and ‘benefit’; due to benefit or profit being a factor to encourage people exchanging (participating) in society; and benefit is a component in positive economic impact. There are some studies which support that the study of impacts and benefits are involved. A case in Indonesia, the number of Karamba, (a local term describing a floating net cage), is reduced in order to limit the ecological impact on the Lake Maninjau area (Firdaus et al., 2019). However, the reduction of Karamba affected the income of Karamba farmers; thus, to increase economic benefits, Karamba is now used as a tourist attraction showing that tourism can contribute to the social and economic benefits to local communities and to maintain environmental sustainability at the same time (Firdaus et al., 2019).

In Chiang Saen, there is the potential of river tourism which should generate benefits for locals. There is a huge potential in river tourism on the upper Mekong River that it is not run by central government, but the people of Chiang Rai Province. It was a type of river tourism they consider best fits with the current needs of tourists. Thus, river tourism on the upper Mekong is something unique to Chiang Rai Province but no positive attitude has so far been shown by the local authorities (Amnuay-ngerntra and Hideki, 2013). Paraskevaidis and Andriotis (2017) revealed that reciprocal altruism (the basis for some socially acceptable activities such as volunteering, charity, philanthropy, and blood donation) is one of several motives for participating in voluntary tourism association. Altruistic Surplus Phenomenon is more adequate that SET to interpret the study groups’ social behavior (Paraskevaidis and Andriotis, 2017).

Chiang Saen is a city which not only attracts tourists for ancient ruins and river tourism but this city is also a logistics hub because of its strategic location at Thailand’s border connecting the GMS members. There are several accepted definitions of logistics. Logistics is defined as a supply change orientation, from point-of-origin to point-of-consumption; while logistics management is defined as the process of planning, implementing, and controlling the efficient, cost-effective flow and storage of raw materials, in-process inventory, finished goods, and related information flow from point-of-origin to point-of-consumption for the purpose of conforming to customer requirements (Council of Logistics Management, 1986). Logistics is a part of the supply chain process that plans, implements, and controls the efficient, effective flow and storage of goods, services, and related information from the point-of-origin to the point-of-consumption in order to meet customers’ requirements (Council of Logistics Management, 1998). Likewise, logistics is defined as the management of inventory in motion and at rest and that the goal of the logistics manager is to achieve the lowest level of investment in inventory consistent with ensuring customer service and maintaining efficient production (Delaney, 1996). Further, focusing on the customer service area within logistics, it is defined as a process which takes place between the buyer, seller, and third party (Lalonde et al., 1988). Customer service is a critical component of any definition of logistics or logistics value (Rutner and Langley, 2000). Thus, customer service is also related with tourism logistics. In Chiang Saen, tourism logistics is also a crucial business.

For tourism logistics at the level of tourism towns which are related to the tourist service (Tourism Supply Chain Operation) is involved in the three flows or movements – physical flow, information flow, and financial flow (Sanyanunthana and Benabdelhafid, 2016). Physical flow refers to travel, transportation, baggage, transport of tourists, and convenience of travel; while information flow refers to giving news and information, guideposts, place signs, information on how things should be done in some places, and warning of dangers for the tourist (Sanyanunthana and Benabdelhafid, 2016). Financial flow refers to facilitation of goods payment or tourism services, and buying various kinds of travel ticket (Sanyanunthana and Benabdelhafid, 2016). Based on the purpose of this study, ‘logistics’ refers to tourism logistics which is focusing on transportation and the logistics is a part of tourism. Transport was the most crucial source of environmental hazards in the logistics system (Aronsson and Brodin, 2006; Wu and Dunn, 1995). The concerning environmental impact was discussed in terms of measurements of emissions of carbon dioxide caused by the use of transport vehicles and other strategic logistics decisions with their emissions (Abukhader and Jonsson, 2003; Aronsson and Brodin, 2006; Wu and Dunn, 1995).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This empirical study is qualitative research by the case study approach. The data were collected in September 2019 from 26 key informants in the area of study near the border and the center area of CSC. The key informants are subjects who are impacted by tourism and logistics and benefits received, including government officers, travel agency managers and staff as well as villagers. Data collection method is face to face in-depth interview for 25 key informants and video call interview for 1 subject by purposive sampling technique. Research tool is a structured interview form with the question guidelines as the following:

Q1: Please explain the current situation of Chiang Saen with regard to tourism and Logistics.
Q2: What do you think about the current positive impact from tourism and logistics on the economy at Chiang Saen?
Q3: Please explain the current positive impact from tourism and logistics on socio-culture at Chiang Saen
Q4: How do you explain about the current positive impact from tourism and logistics on the environment at Chiang Saen?
Q5: Please provide information about the current negative impact from tourism and logistics on economy at Chiang Saen
Q6: How do you feel about the current negative impact from tourism and logistics on socio-culture at Chiang Saen?
Q7: Please give some details about the current negative impact from tourism and logistics on environment at Chiang Saen
Q8: Please explain any other impact from tourism and logistics
Q9: How do you perceive the overall impacts of tourism and logistics in Chiang Saen? (Kang et al., 2008).
Q10: Do you agree or disagree that the benefits of tourism and logistics are greater than the costs to the people in Chiang Saen? Please explain (Kang et al., 2008).

Data were analyzed by open coding in ATLAS.ti. ATLAS bears on the idea of mapping the world by an archive of meaningful documents; and the abbreviation 'ti' in the software name refers to text interpretation (Friese, 2014). ATLAS.ti belongs to the genre of Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) program (Friese, 2014). ATLAS.ti was selected for use in this study for several reasons based on the authors' experience. First, it impressively provides a multicolor coding network presentation (as shown in Figure 1) as compared to Nvivo program which provides only one color. Second, it gives the 12 options of network layouts which is more than Nvivo gives (only 4 options – layered directed graph, hierarchical, circle, and directed). Third, it provides many choices of explanations of relationships between one code and another code e.g., it contradicts, is a property of, is a cause of, and is a part of; but Nvivo provides only one explanation of relationships. Lastly, ATLAS.ti is a more stable system for data storage because in Nvivo all data is instructed by the system to be removed before updates, but in ATLAS.ti, the data is not removed in any case. The analysis process consists of five steps by: (1) Preparing data in word file: to decode data from sound record and interview form by listening and reading data, then typing into word file; (2) Grouping data: to group data by topic and sub-topic, e.g. Impact is a topic and a positive economic impact is a sub-topic; (3) Open coding: to insert data file into Atlas.ti program and create codes of data; (4) Categorizing data: to categorize data by counting frequency of codes; (5) Thematizing: to theme data at final process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents a demographic profile of the key informants, impacts and benefits of tourism and logistics as well as discussion. The total of key informants is 26 subjects. Most of them are male 77%, and female 23%. The age of the informants is 30 to 59 years old 73%, 29 or lower 23%, and 60 or above 4%, respectively. Most of them have educational level in college or bachelors 46%, followed by high school or lower 42%, and master or above 12%. Most of the interviewees work in the business sector 65%, in government sector 19%, and other 16%.

Impacts of Tourism and Logistics

This sector presents the impacts of tourism and logistics in CSC and perceived total impacts of the key informants. The impacts of tourism and logistics were studied in three dimensions – economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts.

Table 1. The Codes of PECI and NECI

Group	Codes	F
PECI	Lot of Chinese visitors at GT – good product selling	2
	Tour and logistics make good income from China	1
	Work travelers make good income in service and logistics	1
	More trading establishment	1
	Municipality gets income from customs and tax	1
	Local products more selling	1
	Lao people influx buying products in CS, chemical products in Laos	1
	Getting more support fund	1
	Increase investment of tourism better economy	1
	High fruit export to China	1
	Laos visitors come only Sunday – good	1
	Export higher volume	1
	Good tourism – locals get income by serving transport	1
	SMEs get income	1
	Total PECI	**15**
NECI	Low visitors make poor economy	4
	Lesser volume of selling products	4
	Unfairness in income distribution	3
	Not good to import fruit and products from China – fake – chemical	2
	High competition in product selling	2
	Risk investment if products not in accord with Chinese demand	1
	Low water level in river made slow down economy	1
	Income is not good	1
	Some tourism and logistics business close by slow down world economy	1
	Product price is expensive	1
	Only investors got benefits	1
	High investment cost of products and plus rental of shops	1
	Total NECI	**22**

The current study divided tourism impacts into six sections based on the study of Polnyotee and Thadaniti (2015), including positive social impact, positive environmental impact, positive economic impact, negative social impact, negative environmental impact and negative economic impact. The codes and the frequency (F) of positive economic impacts (PECI) and negative economic impacts (NECI) are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 reveals the codes of PECI and NECI as well as frequency. 'Lot of Chinese visitors at GT – good product selling' as the highest frequency code (2) in PECI, while other codes have only 1 frequency of each. There are several categorizations of the code frequencies in NECI, 'Low visitors to make poor economy' and 'Lesser volume of selling products' (4), 'Unfairness in income distribution' (3), and 'Not good to import fruit and products from China – fake – chemical' and 'High competition in product selling' (2), respectively. Thus, the number of visitors is a primary factor to determine a good economy in CSC. The number of tourists is a significant factor to retain the status of tourism management as mentioned in the tourism development theory. Tourism development theory identified seven stages – (1) exploration, (2) inclusion, (3) enlargement, (4) exacerbation, (5) renewal, (6) stagnation, and (7) downturn (Butler, 1980). The exacerbation stage pointed out the number of tourists is still growing and marketing tools were used to prolong the tourist season to attract more tourists. Thus, marketing is a factor to retain the stage of exacerbation. The CSC needs to find out the exact tourism product identity and the outstanding service in logistics which are significant factors for marketing creation. The dynamic marketing and promotion were strategies as a pull factor to motivate the demand of the visitors that accorded with the statement of Yu and Turco (2000). If destination managers well-promoted a special event, it could be a powerful strategy for boosting the local tourism industry (Yu and Turco, 2000). Besides, the special events and activities may be created as in the case at Victoria Falls, that the economic benefits came from tourist activity development (Tichaawa and Mhlanga, 2015). The high number of visitors affects good economic impacts by high volume of shopping and consumption payment; however, communities are confronted with threats of the visitors. Chinese visitors were normally held in a positive light in relation to the purchase and use of local products, transport, and lodges (Gong et al., 2019). The next results reveal the codes of positive socio-cultural impacts (PSOI) and negative socio-cultural impacts (NSOI) as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The Codes of PSOI and NSOI

Group	Codes	F
PSOI	Locals care more about conservation in culture	4
	Visitors like visiting the ancient city	1
	Visitors enjoy joining Loy Krathong Festival (Lantern) – alert economy	1
	Local venders have more Chinese demand	1
	Logistics makes exchange in social activities – import – export – makes good economy	1
	Local people can live in the community with visitors	1
	Visitors enjoy inspecting school events and parades	1
	Thai food promotion by selling to Chinese visitors	1
	CSC has diverse ethnicities as good cultural products	1
	Ageing people get free transport traveling in the city	1
	Temples, traditions and culture make income from tourism	1
	Locals have more participation in tourism activities	1
	Increase number of taxis between ancient city to GT and Maesai	1
	Total PSOI	**16**
NSOI	Chinese visitors don't respect rules & have poor manners (impolite dress, danger driving, smoking)	2
	Unlawful activities – stealing, gambling	2
	Social change and mixed culture – change dressing, service style	2
	Public areas were used by street venders	1
	Taxi services make local transport lose income	1
	Venders cater to Chinese demand but ignore locals	1
	Different religious beliefs make it difficult to cooperate	1
	Investors from outside buy land or boats and change the lives of locals	1
	Online gambling from casino	1
	Children may copy impolite dressing from outsiders	1
	Most Chinese visitors smoke which can affect our children	1
	Ancient ruins get destroyed reducing their value	1
	Social problems from imported laborers who don't respect rule	1
	Chinese visitors are careless and cause accidents on roads	1
	Criminal cases from visitors	1
	Total PSOI	**18**

Table 2 shows the codes of PSOI and NSOI and frequency. 'Locals care more about conservation in culture' is the top frequency (4) in PSOI, while 'Chinese visitors don't respect rules and have poor manners – impolite dress, dangerous driving, and smoking', 'Unlawful activities – stealing, gambling', and 'Social change and mixed culture – change dressing, service style' with 2 frequencies are the top in NSOI. Hence, more conservation impacted local behaviors, while locals got negative impacts from Chinese visitors. Chinese tourists as a core group of visitors in CSC who expressed behaviors e.g., non-respect of local rules, unpleasant manners, impolite dressing, dangerous driving, breaking smoking rules, and non-cleanliness of the public toilet related with the findings of Gong et al. (2019). The residents in Bangkok highlighted a perceived lack of respect by Chinese visitors for local laws and customs, e.g., drinking, smoking, or being loud in public areas (Gong et al., 2019). The next findings display the codes and the frequency (F) of positive environmental impacts (PENI) and negative environmental impacts (NENI) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 reveals the codes in PENI and NENI, and frequency. 'Good development of infrastructure and city' is the highest frequency code (4) and followed by 'Construct colorful and neat buildings' code (2) in PENI. At the same time, 'Increase volume of garbage in river and on land' is the top frequency code (4), followed by 'Oil leakage from boats', 'More chemicals in agriculture products – government no control', and 'More chemical seeps into air and rivers' code with 3 frequencies. So, tourism and logistics developed infrastructure and CSC, but the city and people encountered more garbage, polluted water and air, and chemicals. The key informants perceived overall impacts by everyday observation and their senses because they live in CSC. Further, locals received information of impacts from news, social media, meetings, and discussion. For example, the positive economic impact – they knew that ducks and meat as well as ready-to -eat pineapple were in high demand to Chinese markets. They retained these products to sell, and then changed their behavior of eating fish by eating duck and meat. Minced raw meat is the identity and favorite food in their community that the Chinese markets impacted and changed local behaviors. The key informant also perceived a positive economic impact by inspection of the accommodation invoices and the high number of guests which was evidence of high income in hotel business and entrepreneurs received even more income from logistics. For negative impacts, locals often saw and smelt dead animals floating in the river. Finally, the roads in the areas of the Golden Triangle are too narrow which is a negative aspect. Infrastructure development in CSC is an effect from tourism and logistics that accorded with the findings of La Rocca (2005), that town planning should contribute to ameliorate the urban quality of life by forming plans of action to manage the urban transformations due to the introduction of new urban demand. The CSC has been affected from the chemical leakage in the river and air which causes burning in the nose and eyes, this is a serious environmental impact that the government need to be concerned about and develop law enforcement to control this impact.

Table 3. The Codes of PENI and NENI

Group	Codes	F
PENI	Good development of infrastructure and city	4
	Construct colorful and neat buildings	2
	Convenient transportation and good roads	1
	Have campaigns to protect against mosquitoes	1
	Shops were developed – more convenient to shop	1
	Environment conservation for tourism	1
	Logistics make orderly city	1
	Total PENI	**11**
NENI	Increase volume of garbage in river and on land	4
	Oil leakage from boats	3
	More chemicals in agriculture products – government no control	3
	More chemical seeps into air and rivers	3
	Arbitrary throw away garbage and spitting by Chinese	2
	Chinese visitors don't keep the toilets clean	2
	People in upper countries left dead animals in rivers	1
	Deforestation and covered by cement at Casino areas	1
	Chinese block river water, keeping water to use in casino	1
	Environment continuously changing because of Chinese investors	1
	Develop riverbank for tourism and cruise has affected fish stocks	1
	Removal of rock for boating	1
	Casino drained wastewater to Mekong River – not clean for bathing	1
	Air pollution from vehicles	1
	Destroy nature to make new roads accessing new houses	1
	Visitors cut and pick flowers	1
	Public fishing areas change to be private areas	1
	Total NENI	**28**

Perceived Benefits and Costs

The perception between the benefits and costs of tourism and logistics in CSC. The codes and a network of the agreements are presented in Figure 1.

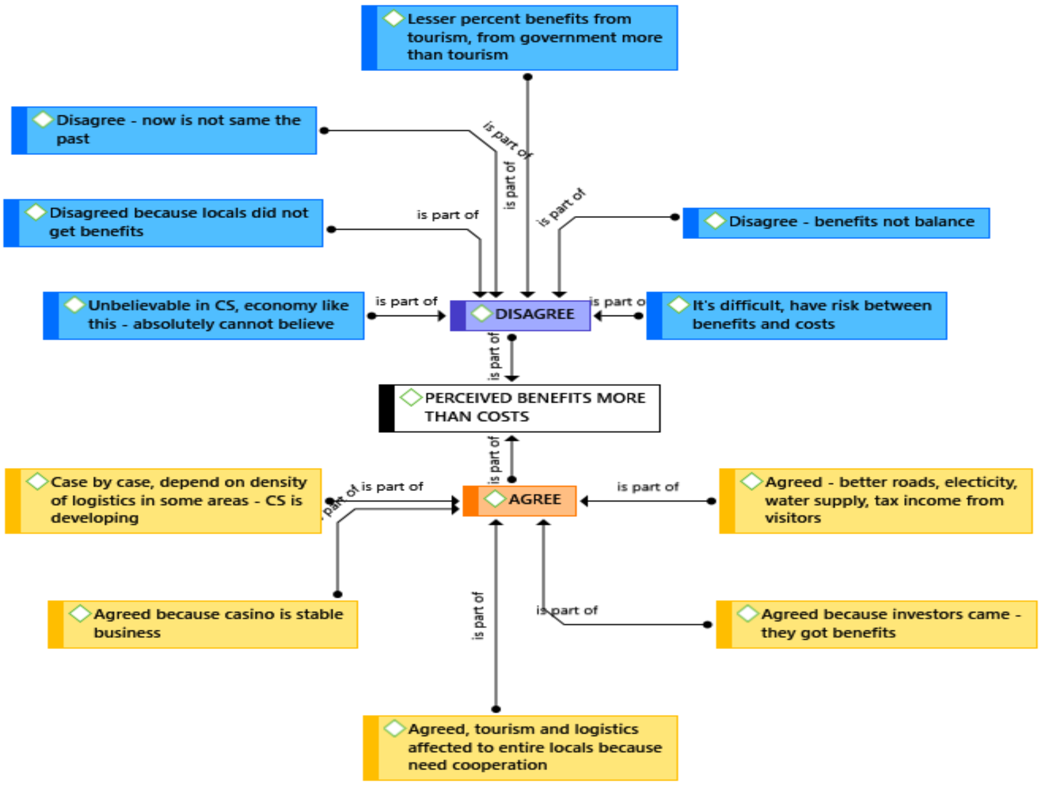

Figure 1. Perceived Benefits and Costs (Source: Authors' own work, 2020)

Figure 1 displays the perceptions of key informants and the codes are grouped to be agree and disagree. The findings show the agreement and disagreement with reasons. These results can be a summary of overall impacts that the key informants were concerned with and encountered in this area. The codes and frequencies are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. The Codes of Perceived Benefits and Costs

Group	Codes	F
Agree	Agreed because investors came – they got benefits	2
	Agreed – better roads, electricity, water supply, tax income from visitors	1
	Case by case, depend on density of logistics in some areas – CSC is developing	1
	Agreed because casino is stable business	1
	Agreed tourism and logistics affected all locals because of the need for cooperation	1
	Total Agree	**6**
Disagree	It's difficult, there are risks between benefits and costs	1
	Disagree – benefits not balance	1
	Lower percentage of benefits from tourism, from government more than tourism	1
	Disagree – now is not similar in the past	1
	Disagreed because locals did not get benefits	1
	Unbelievable the economy in CSC is as bad as this	1
	Total Disagree	**6**

Table 4 demonstrates the codes of agreements in the benefits and costs of tourism and logistics in CSC. Both sides – agreement and disagreement are presented in the same frequencies (6). Indeed, the agreed side indicates 'agreed because investors came – they got benefits' as 2 frequencies that the code is more significant than others. So, the direction of these findings will be modified in the discussion section. The villagers in CSC have more cooperation which has the effect of tourism and logistics benefits. This statement argues the findings of Lertrit (2016) which indicated locals in CSC had no cooperation with government officials in the CRM project, had failed to understand that the archaeological ruins belong to the government, the government's responsibility for looking after the ruins, as well as not having a sense of ownership for the cultural property (Lertrit, 2016). Based on SET (Homans, 1958), people who perceived benefit gain and social equity liked to cooperate and participate in society which related with the current findings. The benefits had a relationship with the support tourism development that is claimed by SET and they affected decisions regarding communication and relationship of people interaction (Kang et al., 2008; Yoon et al., 2001). Based on the results, the benefits of tourism and logistics in CSC belong to only entrepreneurs and large organizations such as the casino, which was not balanced in CSC. Likewise, key informants indicated disagree more significant than agree of a higher benefit than costs in tourism and logistics as they mentioned unfair benefit distribution and not believing they would get higher benefits. The fairness of benefit distribution needs to be taken into consideration as locals have strong feelings about this. Strong feelings were also expressed that there should be legitimacy in relation to resource distribution and tourism benefits (Palmer and Chuamuangphan, 2016).

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND LIMITATION

The current economic impacts in CSC confront a slow-down of the economy due to the decrease of visitors who are significant shoppers who influence economic status. The income distribution in the entire area is not balanced. The local people have more concern about conservation of the ancient ruins and culture as tourism products in their community, even though the communities encounter unpleasant behaviors of Chinese visitors, social changing by multi-cultures, and illegal goings-on in CSC. There is a good development of infrastructure in CSC, but there is a rising volume of garbage in the city, oil leakage into the river, chemicals in agricultural products which leak out to the air and rivers. Additionally, Chinese visitors' behaviors affect the cleanliness in the areas.

The perception of benefits and costs of the tourism and logistics in CSC indicated more benefits than costs to entrepreneurs, however benefits were less among communities. The Thai government needs to take serious action and have inter-country agreement of the impact that has been created by the use of chemicals in Lao agriculture, as the chemicals leak into the air and rivers and have a negative environmental impact which affects CSC. The CSG needs to issue some policies to make a more balanced income distribution, add Chinese language information boards throughout CSC, for directions and important regulations as well as law enforcement to control the threats from visitors to communities and reduce the negative socio-cultural impacts. The issue of stronger GMS law- enforcement concerning the environment care may help to increase the responsibility of logistics about vessels' condition to prevent oil leakage into the river. There is a limitation of data triangulation that should be collected by observation and evaluated again by a survey method.

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TOUR GUIDE'S COMPETENCIES AS PREDICTORS OF TOURISTS' SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOR – EVIDENCE FROM NATIONAL PARKS

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Abstract: The aim of the study was to identify which tour guide's competencies can be predictors of environmentally sustainable behavior of visitors of national parks. Authors gathered answers through questionnaires from 305 visitors of two national parks located in Serbia. The results showed that guide's knowledge and telling stories in an engaging and interesting way were predictors for almost all learning outcomes. Also, guides who are energetic and show that they enjoy doing their job, can arouse visitors' interest in the presented topic, create pleasant memories and serve as a role model for sustainable behavior after the tour ends.

Key words: national parks, tour guide's competencies, sustainable behavior, visitors, learning outcomes, Serbia

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INTRODUCTION

According to existing studies, tour guides are expected to perform a wide range of roles in facilitating the tourist experience. Tour guiding may be complex and it often varies depending on the environment, topic and type of a conducted tour (Hansen and Mossberg, 2017). The quality of the tour guide service has great impact on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty (Kuo et al., 2018; Hwang and Lee, 2019), and on destination image and branding (Pereira, 2015), but the impact will be positive only if visitors' expectations are matched with guide's services. Studies examining the guide from the perspective of the customer or tourist, included examining tour guides' roles (Haig and McIntyre, 2002; Yu et al., 2002; Weiler and Yu, 2007), tour guide performances (Zhang and Chow, 2004), tourist satisfaction with tour guide services (Wong, 2001), tour guide administration system (Dong et al., 2002) and message delivered to tourists (Armstrong and Weiler, 2002).

Tour guide's competencies have a great impact on what feelings and knowledge visitors will develop after the tour ends. Guide's enthusiasm and passion were marked as initial in fulfilling different roles (Bryon, 2012), while professional skills can have impact on all involved parties. Enough knowledge on the topic being presented, practical experience of the guide and personal qualities proved to have positive effects on a person, some part of history or local community and attractiveness of tourism facility (Tsai et al., 2016). Also, professional skills like knowing how to meet visitor's needs and professional attitudes lead to a developing of closer relationship between guide and visitors/tourists (Hwang and Lee, 2019). Tourists who seek the services of a tour guide usually do that because they want to be guided by an expert and that moment tour guides should use to teach tourists how to behave properly, to increase their knowledge and skills (Koroglu and Guzel, 2013), all of this because people "look for memorable consumption experiences that can affect them for a long time and might even change them" (Mossberg, 2003, pp. 59).

Weiler and Walker (2014) stated that the tour guides role is more and more connected with sustainability issues and that tours should contribute to changing visitors' behavior and conservation perspectives not just on destination that they are visiting, but also in their everyday situations. During tours, guides strive to increase tourists' knowledge about the visited destination and create special empathy towards local people, their culture and environment (Black and Crabtree, 2007) or to promote responsible behavior by modifying or by pointing to those which are not appropriate (Hu and Wall, 2012). In research done by Matsushima (2007), visitors of the public beaches in Japan became more aware of environmental problems and consequences of visitors' depreciative behaviors after the tour guide presented them how those beaches can be protected and what every visitor can do to save the environment. Also, Wiles and Hall (2005) proved that tourists can change their attitudes by highlighting that interpretation tour in some national parks in the USA lead to different perspectives when it comes to wildland fire. These researches showed that increasing tourists' knowledge, creating positive feelings for the environment

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or trying to change their values can contribute to sustainable behavior of visitors. Encouraging visitors to minimize their negative impact on environment during traveling has become one of the priorities in developing sustainable tourism and this is especially pronounced in national parks and other natural protected areas where the environment is fragile (Brown et al., 2010), while education of the tourists during visits was seen as desirable strategy to achieve that goal (Marion and Reid, 2007). Boren et al. (2009) and Curtin (2010) highlighted that managers and, especially, tour leaders can modify visitors' behavior in areas with wildlife by giving them instructions and supervision, that is, by teaching them how their behavior can be with low impact (for example, decreasing noise and disturbance, feeding animals where permitted).

This showed that the tour guide has unique opportunity to, in direct contact with tourists, increase visitors' knowledge, understanding and provide memorable and meaningful experience (Pereira and Mykletun, 2012), while the guide's knowledge and skills are important competencies in encouraging environmentally responsible behavior (Tatar et al., 2018). National parks can play a critical role in moving the communities and visitors they serve towards a more sustainable future. Generally, national parks have a positive impact on society and their main challenge is to ensure that they deliver social benefits in ways that are environmentally and economically sustainable. To thrive sustainably, national parks must have access to all the skills and knowledge they need. They need to become better at using the skills and knowledge of their staff, especially tour guides. By guides' behavior, national parks could become demonstration models for a sustainable society. Since visitors in national parks have direct contact with tour guides, the question is whether and how the tour guide can influence social desirable development and behavior of visitors. The aim of the study is to identify which tour guide's competencies can be predictors of environmentally sustainable behavior of visitors of national parks which will be applicable in their everyday situations. As a case study, authors gathered answers from visitors of the two national parks located in the Republic of Serbia.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Visitors' perceptions of the tour guide's competencies were examined in regard to the four categories: 1) handling the group within the national park (14 variables), 2) communication skills (7 variables), 3) knowledge and pedagogy (14 variables), and 4) professionalism (9 variables; variable - *Cooperation with teachers* – was excluded from the questionnaire since it was not relevant for the research). The four groups of competencies were drawn from the research done by: Pereira (2015), Al Jahwari et al. (2016) and Schep et al. (2017). Visitors assessed tour guide's competencies using a five-point scale (1- *totally disagree*, 5 – *totally agree*).

A principal component factor analysis was applied to see if all competencies should be kept for further analysis. Hence, 44 tour guide competencies were analyzed by testing inter-correlations. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant ($p< 0.001$) and the Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) was 0.831, while Cronbach's Alpha was 0.803. Four factors were identified with a total of 67.4% variance explained (each factor had a reliability alpha over 0.7). Four variables within the fourth group (*Professionalism*) had to be excluded since their factor loadings were lower than 0.4. Those variables are: *Cooperation with other guides*, *Reflecting on personal performance*, *Professional development*, and *Contribute to improving tours*, leaving that the last factor contained 5 variables used for further analysis. It seems that these variables gained lower loadings because they cannot be easily evaluated by visitors (e.g. visitor cannot know if the guide used the opportunities for professional development offered by the national park or if the guide consulted other guides about the tour).

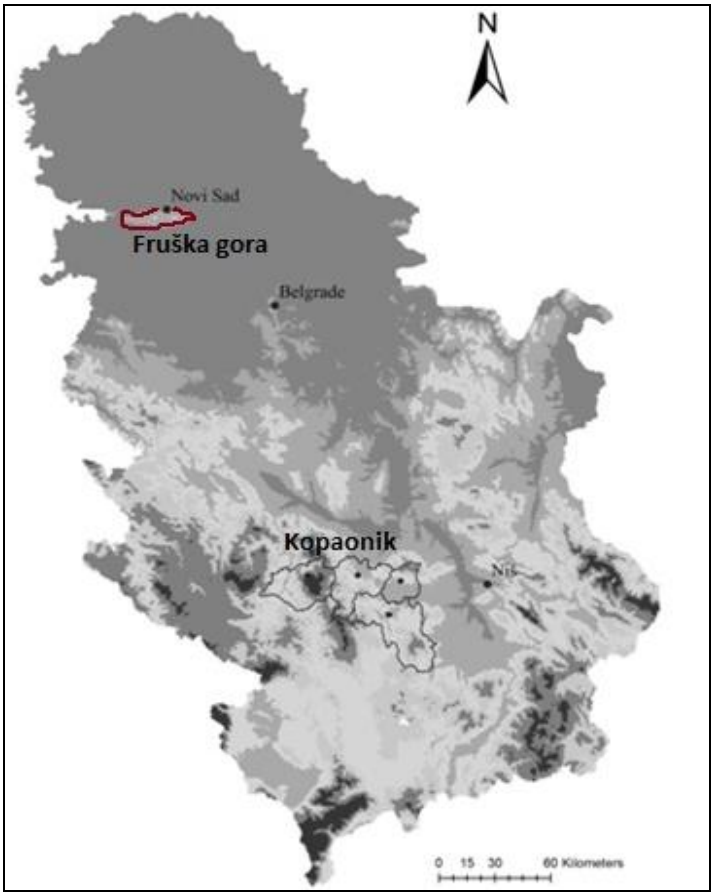

Figure 1. Location of the two national parks in Serbia (Fruška gora and Kopaonik) where the research was conducted

The four groups of learning outcomes were drawn from the outcomes for environmental education in national parks defined by Powell et al. (2020). These four groups of learning outcomes were: 1) enjoyment and satisfaction (4 variables), 2) interest/motivation to learn (4 variables),

3) action orientations (7 variables), and 4) action (6 variables). Visitors of the national parks were asked to assess the extent to which they had learned different things during the guided tour through the parks using a five-point scale (1 – *totally disagree*, 5 – *totally agree*).

The Republic of Serbia has five declared national parks that are managed by specialized public companies and whose business is regulated by the National Parks Act (Ćurčić et al., 2019). With the Act, activities that will not harm species and ecosystems were defined, all for the purpose to secure sustainable development. The first national park in Serbia was founded in 1960 (National park Fruška gora), while the youngest was declared in 1986 (National park Šar-planina). All national parks are part of the European Federation of National Park (EUROPARC). There is no precise data on the number of tour guides in Serbian national parks.

Collection of the field data was done by a face-to-face survey methodology. In two national parks in Serbia (Fruška gora and Kopaonik – Figure 1), researchers were present during every guided tour and after the tour ended, adult visitors were asked to participate in the research. The fieldwork was carried out from June to September 2019 and, in total, 305 usable questionnaires were collected. Of the total number of the respondents, 51% were male and 49% were female, ages between 31 and 40 (32%) and 41 and 50 (30%), employed (41%) or unemployed (22%), with a bachelor degree (56%), visiting national park with a family member (42%) or with a friend (34%).

The profile of the respondents and descriptive analyses were done by using an SPSS Statistics Version 22.0 for Windows. The collinearity statistics were expressed through calculating tolerance and variation inflation factor (VIF) with the aim to measure the degree of correlation between predictor variables, while a stepwise model of the confirmatory regression analysis was used to define the range of the defined tour guide's competencies as predictors of learning outcomes in national parks.

RESULTS

In order to use space in the manuscript more efficient, values of the tolerance and variation inflation factor were not presented in the tables for each learning outcome, but they were in accordance with the recommendations of Coolican (2004), ranging from .465 to 1.000 for the values of tolerance, and between 1.000 and 2.160 for the VIF values.

Predictors of enjoyment and satisfaction

Table 1 shows that five tour guide's competencies can be marked as predictors for the first group of learning outcomes – enjoyment and satisfaction, while the regression model was strong and explained 47% of the variance. Creating a positive and relaxed atmosphere (β = .436) and storytelling (β = .422) were the strongest predictors of the enjoyment and satisfaction. Providing safety information before the tour starts was the third strongest predictor (β = .361), showing that, in order to feel relaxed, visitors in national parks like to know which safety instruction they need to follow during the tour. Although the last two predictors gained slightly lower scores, they can still be considered important for the enjoyment and satisfaction. This showed that visitors' enjoyment and satisfaction will be increased if guides keep an overview of the group and make sure that all visitors are following the group (β = .315) and if the guides are energetic and enthusiastic about the things they tell, and know how to kindle enthusiasm in the visitors during the tour.

Table 1. Regression model for enjoyment and satisfaction

ENJOYMENT AND SATISFACTION	*R* .597	R^2 .475	*Adjusted* R^2 .416	*Std. error of estimate* .744	
	R^2 *change* .021	*F change* 5.283	*df1, df2* 1, 103	*Sig. F change* .039	
Predictors	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		*Sig.*
	B	*Std. error*	Β	*T*	
1) Creating a positive and relaxed atmosphere	.488	.083	.436	5.340	.000
2) Storytelling	.452	.159	.422	4.266	.001
3) Providing safety information before the tour	.401	.137	.361	3.631	.019
4) Keeping an overview	.363	.114	.315	3.086	.028
5) Enthusiastic and energetic	.299	.076	.248	3.012	.000

Predictors of interest and motivation to learn

The regression model for the learning outcome “interest and motivation to learn” contained four tour guide's competencies and explained 42% of the variance (Table 2).

Table 2. Regression model for interest and motivation to learn

INTEREST AND MOTIVATION TO LEARN	*R* .410	R^2 .419	*Adjusted* R^2 .191	*Std. error of estimate* .803	
	R^2 *change* .179	*F change* 4.346	*df1, df2* 1, 107	*Sig. F change* .002	
Predictors	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		*Sig.*
	B	*Std. error*	Β	*T*	
1) Use of knowledge	.438	.084	.404	4.615	.000
2) Asking questions	.270	.081	.339	2.286	.028
3) Stimulate visitors to carefully look	.224	.107	.257	2.355	.031
4) Stimulate an open attitude	.221	.116	.223	1.937	.042

In order to increase interest and motivation of visitors to learn, tour guides need to have a wide knowledge about national park, different species, sustainable development, etc. and be capable to transfer that knowledge in an interesting way and in a way that visitors can understand (β = .404). Also, asking questions (β = .339) proved to be a strong predictor showing that questions can give visitors room for different perspectives, encourage them to think out loud, contextualize or use their imagination. Enable visitors to see something in person in national park (e.g. animal, plant) and inspire them to have an open attitude towards new experiences can boost visitors' interest to learn more after the tour ends. In sum, all predictors for this learning outcome belong to “knowledge and pedagogy” group of guide's competencies.

Predictors of action orientations

The regression model for the learning outcome “action orientations” was weaker than the last two models, since it explained only 31% of the variance (Table 3). Four tour guide's competencies can be marked as important predictors for gaining knowledge, developing some attitudes and skills. The guide's knowledge and the way it is presented to visitors (β = .335) has the strongest impact on the third learning outcome. Finding enough balance between explaining and seeing things in real can ensure better experience for visitors (β = .304), and visitors' active participation in a tour through asking questions, giving comments or own perspectives (β = .258) can help them in developing sustainable behavior. Using some learning activities and exercises were appropriate can be important for the success of this learning outcome.

Table 3. Regression model for action orientations

ACTION ORIENTATIONS	*R* .462	R^2 .307	*Adjusted* R^2 .350	*Std. error of estimate* .663	
	R^2 *change* .035	*F change* 5.418	*df1, df2* 1, 109	*Sig. F change* .022	
Predictors	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		*Sig.*
	B	*Std. error*	*B*	*T*	
1) Use of knowledge	.455	.131	.335	3.168	.001
2) Balance between interaction and explaining	.368	.125	.304	2.597	.004
3) Asking questions	.279	.102	.258	2.271	.028
4) Usage of learning activities	.242	.093	.217	2.135	.012

Predictors of action

The regression model for the last group of learning outcomes was strongly explained by five guide's competencies, since they explained 45% of the variance (Table 4).

Table 4. Regression model for action

ACTION	*R* .437	R^2 .446	*Adjusted* R^2 .382	*Std. error of estimate* .894	
	R^2 *change* .036	*F change* 4.189	*df1, df2* 1, 108	*Sig. F change* .042	
Predictors	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		*Sig.*
	B	*Std. error*	*B*	*T*	
1) Use of knowledge	.455	.108	.392	4.277	.000
2) Using objects for critical analyses	.432	.109	.367	3.353	.000
3) Storytelling	.420	.114	.288	3.102	0.03
4) Asking questions	.316	.103	.245	2.569	0.02
5) Enthusiastic and energetic	.308	1.05	.221	2.516	0.08

Encouraging visitors to behave sustainably on their next trip or in everyday situations and to do something new depends on guide's knowledge (β = .392) and his/her ability to give clear examples by critically analyzing how visitors' behavior or activities can potentially have negative impact on species in national parks (β = .367). Telling stories in an engaging way (β = .288) and letting visitors to actively participate in a tour by asking questions (β = .245) were significant predictors. The results showed that being enthusiastic and energetic during the tour can encourage visitors to take some actions or behave the same way when the tour is over.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the research showed that tour guide's competencies which belong to two groups – "handling the group within the national park" and "knowledge and pedagogy" were important predictors for the learning outcomes of visitors in national parks, i.e. have significant impact on shaping tourists' sustainable behavior.

The guide's ability to create a relaxed and positive atmosphere, for example, by using humor can have a positive impact on visitors to feel relaxed and can have impact on their enjoyment. As Hamalainen and Vahasantanen (2011) showed in their research, making atmosphere relaxed can encourage people to learn more, while pleasant environment is stimulating for visitors' satisfaction (Etelapelto and Lahti, 2008). The results indicated that introducing visitors to the safety instructions in national park can relax them before the tour starts. Visitors sometimes have a perception of national parks as wild and unpredictable environment, so knowing how to behave and what to expect during the tour can calm them and prepare better for the tour. It is proven that negative perception of risk and safety during vacation can have negative impact on destination image, choice and visiting the same destination again (Siew et al., 2018). Clear safety instructions like staying on the trails during the tour, staying away from the animals, do not leave food or garbage, indicating that there will be special and safe places to take pictures, should not be used to intimidate visitors, but rather presented as something that can have double benefit – prevent visitors' injuries and keep them safe, but also, that it will protect the park from degradation.

For the feeling of visitors' enjoyment, tour guides need to keep an overview of the group and make sure that all visitors are following the group. Tour guides should take the lead, but try to do that without putting themselves above the group. Also, all of this can make visitors to feel safe. If a tour guide is energetic and enthusiastic about the things he/she tells and knows how to convey that enthusiasm to visitors, it will affect enjoyment, and what is more important, it can have positive impact on visitors' actions after the tour ends. Some previous research highlighted that guide's enthusiasm had great impact on visitors' satisfaction with the provided service and the tour in general, while those guides who were not enthusiastic about helping visitors during their stay at the destination, decreased visitors' satisfaction and possibility to get to know the destination better (Zhang and Chow, 2004). Guides who are energetic and show that they enjoy doing their job, can arouse visitors' interest in the presented topic, create pleasant memories and serve as a role model for sustainable behavior after the tour ends. It is shown that passionate employee can increase customers' loyalty (Hapsari et al., 2017) and be a moderator for ethical leadership and behavior (Ogunfowora, 2014).

Importance of guide's knowledge and telling stories in an engaging and interesting way were shown through their ability to act as predictors for almost all learning outcomes – storytelling for enjoyment/satisfaction and actions, while using of knowledge for interest and motivation to learn, action orientation and actions. It is shown that knowledge and the way it is presented can have central role in environmental education of visitors and their future actions. During the tour, guides should avoid a simple enumeration of facts, use of too professional terms (e.g. Latin names for certain species) without adequate explanation since it can remind visitors on school classes and decrease the level of enjoyment, while leaving the feeling of boring activity (Rubino et al., 2015).

An adequate and sufficient knowledge can build the interest of the visitors, encourage them to ask questions and actively participate in the tour by giving their own interpretations (Foreman-Peck and Travers, 2013). The only learning outcome that had lower percentage of variance was "action orientation". This lower percentage can be explained by putting skills in this group and skills require longer period in order to be developed. It cannot be expected that during a tour that lasts one hour visitors learn and develop some new skills, but it can be a good start.

The results showed that if national parks want to encourage visitors' sustainable behavior and leave national parks with motivation to learn, gain some new knowledge and skills, they need to have one thing in mind - visitors do not want to be passive and silent observers, they want to actively participate in the tour. This can be achieved by asking questions, stimulate visitors to carefully look and by using some learning activities. During the tour, guides should avoid talking all the time, since it can be monotonous for visitors, but rather give space to visitors by asking questions. Asking questions can activate visitors' knowledge, give them opportunity to hear what other visitors think, to hear their perspectives, give opportunity to think out loud, to interpret and use imagination.

As Kember (2009) stated in his research, professors who used interaction with students as one of the teaching methods, encouraged students to much easier express their opinion and gain some skills like how to solve a problem or make a decision. The factors which usually motive people to visit national parks include the possibility to see different animal and plant species, opportunities to learn more about nature, or opportunity to enjoy in a beautiful landscape and peaceful/quiet environment (Gundersen et al., 2015; Mutanga et al., 2017). This shows that visitors want during the tour to see or hear some things in person, not just to imagine based on a guide's story. The guide can draw attention to a particular species when the group is near them and allow visitors to carefully look at them or if it is not possible to show them in a picture or video. During or after the tour, guides can use some learning activities to encourage action orientations among visitors, like guessing which species are presented based on the cards with pictures, divide visitors in groups to apply appropriate components of survival for humans, plant and animal species, give case studies, etc.

The results from this research can be a useful guideline for the management of the national parks and other protected natural areas. During the training or hiring new employees, special focus should be paid to the competencies that will enhance learning outcomes and sustainable behavior of visitors. The focus should be especially put on knowledge (land management, ecological processes and environmental practices and issues) and those competencies that will let visitors to actively be involved in the tour and interpret their own views. Future research can analyze if other factors like motives for visiting the national park, visitors' demographic characteristics, type of the tour, differences between expectations and guide's performances can shape sustainable behavior and learning outcomes on a different way.

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A STUDY OF DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLS USAGE HABITS AMONG HUNGARIAN TOURISTS

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Abstract: Digitalisation has become inevitable these days. It has been in the forefront due to innovations, the development of information technology tools, internet and smartphones transforming the tourism industry, too. Digital marketing tools and methods have attracted an increasing interest among the Hungarian tourists, as well. The study focuses on the spread of these opportunities in Hungary. The paper's aim is to investigate when and in what way Hungarian tourists participate in digital tourism. Secondary and primary research was conducted between October 2018 and March 2019 with a sample of more than 500 respondents. The results show how Hungarian tourists are related to the digital development in tourism. This study also explores the link between the risk of the activities and the usage of online tools. The study advances into the literature about the importance of digitalisation in tourism. It shows specifically where service providers need to pay close attention in the marketing communication, in order to remain competitive and gain a competitive advantage.

Key words: digital tourism, digital tools, digital services, e-tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Digitalisation is an increasingly important area in all sectors including tourism. The development of new technologies is the basis for the development of e-tourism, and simultaneously it has prompted the increase of its influence in recent years (Korinth et al., 2019). The past decade has seen the rapid development of digital tourism in many countries. There are new, innovative methods and tools to help tourists get involved in every step of the tourism buying process. As digitalisation is driven by the consumer, the process of digitalisation is unstoppable in tourism as well (Szigetvári, 2018a). Previous studies have reported about smart tourism (Lopez De Avila, 2015), e-tourism (Buhalis, 2003), and digital tourism (Benyon et al., 2014), as well. The previous study of the authors has sought to determine a model of the complexity of the digital tourism (Happ and Ivancsóné Horváth, 2018).

In Hungary, there has been little quantitative analysis of the supply and demand side of the tourism market regarding digital tools and methods. This indicates a need to understand the various perception of digital tools and methods that exist on the Hungarian market. On the one hand, it is an important issue for service providers if they are able to adapt to the digitalisation process, in which areas and in what depth innovative solutions are being applied. On the other hand, it is significant to investigate which digital tools and methods are being adopted by tourists and how often they use them. The major objective of this study was to investigate the prevalence of the tools and methods used by Hungarian tourists, the digital consumption habits, which was examined by a survey along the model created and published earlier by the authors (Happ and Ivancsóné Horváth, 2018). This research seeks to address the following question: In what areas are Hungarian tourists most likely to use online tools and methods? Both secondary and primary types of research were used in this investigation. Data from the supply side of the tourism market were collected with the help of secondary research.

The primary research focused on the travel-related online activities, concentrating on the consumer side. The primary research was conducted in the form of a survey, with data being gathered via Internet. This study offers some important insights into Hungarian tourist's habits of using digital marketing tools. The findings provide relevant perceptions for the service providers, as well.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. Definitions

The first time we see digitisation is in the field of information technology. Digitisation is the process of converting material (text, image, sound) already existing in another medium into an encoded form, readable by computer[1]. However, digitalisation is a complex concept that involves many interdependent processes and made of different steps for almost every organisation. Digitalisation in business means the use of digital technologies that ensure a change in business model and build up new revenue and value-creating opportunities. Digitalisation also occurs in tourism, which primarily involves the use of modern infocommunication tools and technologies. Tourism based on the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) tools appears in the literature under various names. The term 'smart' is used more and more for technological, economic and social development generated by sensors, big data, open data, new connectivity methods and information exchange. According to Höjer and Wangel (2014), what is called "smart" technology is not so much the unique technology development, but rather the interconnection, synchronisation and coordinated use of different technologies. The term "smart" is also used in connection with the operation of cities (intelligent or smart city), where it refers to activities aimed at the use of innovative technologies to achieve resource optimisation, efficient and equitable management, sustainability and to reach a better quality of life (Gretzel et al., 2015, Kim and Kim, 2017). The term is also used in connection with tourism. Smart tourism is made up of three main components that are built on info-communication tools: smart destinations, smart experiences and smart business system (Lopez De Avila, 2015). The essence of e-tourism is the use of ICT in all sectors of tourism. According to Buhalis (2003), e-tourism is "the digitalisation of all processes and value chains of

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[1] Digitize: Definition of Digitize by Oxford Dictionary on Lexico.com also meaning of Digitize. (n.d.). Retrieved June 13, 2020, from https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/digitize

tourism and hospitality that enable organisations to maximise impact and efficiency" (Buhalis, 2003; Buhalis, 2011:6). E-tourism, as a type of e-commerce, is an industry based on the selling and marketing of products and services through an electronic system. Like e-commerce, e-tourism includes electronic data transfer, distribution management, e-marketing (online marketing), online transactions, electronic data interchange, management systems and automated data collection. In addition, e-tourism is complemented with special activities of tourism, such as the virtual presence of tour operators, travel agents and other tourism professionals. E-tourism for consumers includes e-information, e-booking (hotels, transport, etc.) and electronic payment (Buhalis and Jun, 2011; Sion and Mihãlcescu, 2013).

The meaning of digital tourism is linked to the support of tourism experiences with digital tools (Benyon et al., 2014). The term digital tourism includes the use of all information communication tools and IT solutions that help to meet the needs of tourists and improve the competitiveness of organisations and enterprises operating in the field of tourism. All three terms have almost the same content from different perspectives (Happ and Ivancsóné Horváth, 2018).

2. The place, role and significance of digital services in tourism

Digitalisation, though first appeared in connection with bookings - starting with airline tickets and then accommodation -, is nowadays present in all areas of tourism. A paradigm shift happened and a new era of tourism, the period of digital tourism, has started that goes beyond the previously understood consumer orientation, as it not only takes into account the needs of the consumer, but they are now actively involved in the marketing processes by the interconnection of digital devices and their networks.

Consumers are now involved in product design, as well as real-time price development. The main venue of sales is the online/virtual space, and online communication takes the first place in building relationships with the consumer, which at the same time means a personalised message that fits the customer's profile. The function of the model is influenced by the consumer, the consumer behaviour and the tourist profiles defined within it (Happ and Ivancsóné Horváth, 2018). Placing the e-elements of digital tourism in a common illustration, the complexity of the digitalisation process in tourism can also be observed (Figure. 1).

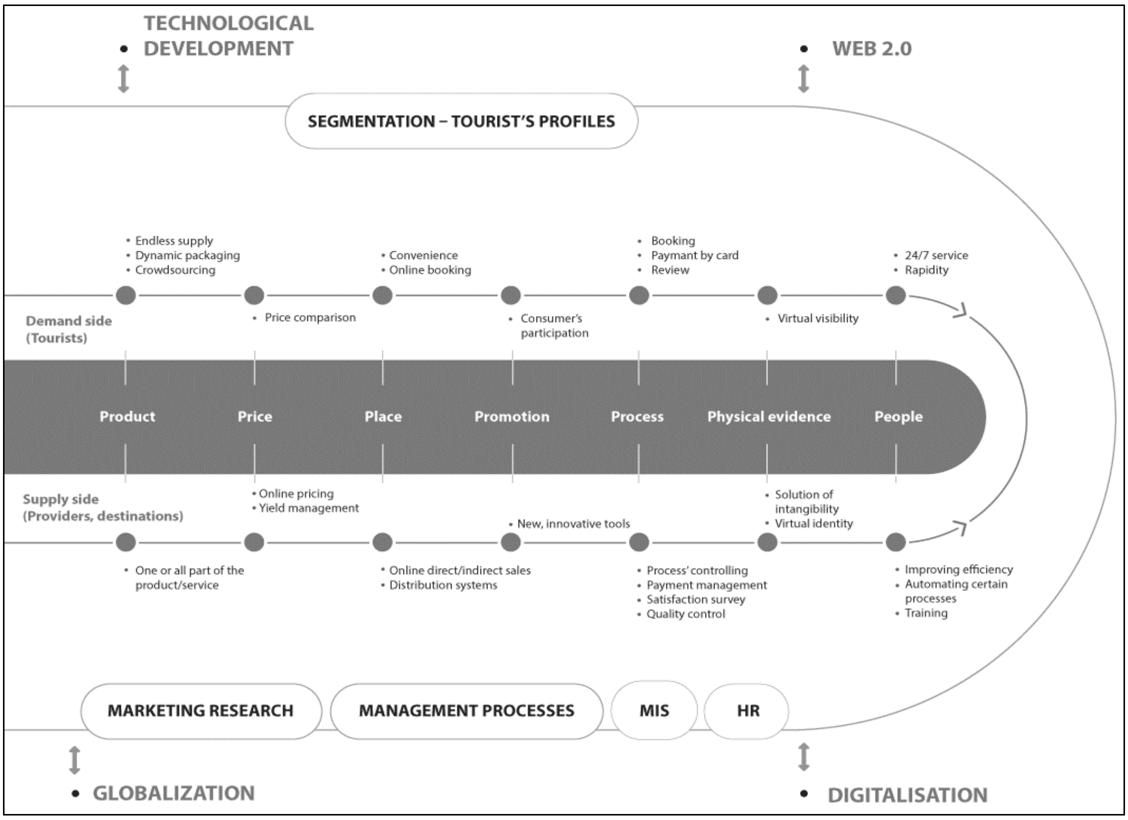

Figure 1. The model of digital tourism in a marketing-oriented approach (Source: Happ and Ivancsóné Horváth, 2018)

3. Digital tools and methods

There are several examples of the use of digital technologies in tourism. Innovative methods appear primarily in the innovation of products and services, but they can also be found in the design of sales channels and the sales process. The digital tools and technologies, which are already in use in tourism, are summarized in Table 1.

4. Digital tourism in Hungary

Different conditions must be met for the development of digital tourism. We examine the technological conditions typical of Hungary and present the current state of digital tourism using secondary sources. Investigating the current situation, we analyse data from e-tourism, which includes both online reservations and online travel ticket purchases.

Technological conditions

Development of online commerce requires that consumers have adequate internet access. The proportion of Internet users is constantly increasing, as is the number of people in possession of digital devices. The proportion of Internet users in Hungary was 81.0% in 2018, which is the 42nd highest Internet penetration rate among the countries of the world. This value is higher than the European-Central Asian average of 79.4% (Staffa et al., 2019). The number of mobile phone subscriptions is also close to the world average, with 122.5 mobile subscribers per 100 people in Hungary (Staffa et al., 2019).

Tools	Examples
Online booking sites	eg. Booking.com, szallas.hu, airbnb.com
OTAs (online travel agency)	eg. Expedia, eDreams, cTrip.com
Distribution systems	eg. Amadeus, Galileo, Sabre, Worldspan
Online payment systems	eg. OTP, Paypal, Transfer wise, We Pay
Online check in and check out	hotels, airports
Front Office systems	eg. Hostware, Hotelgram
Revenue management softwares	eg. Hostware, Hotel Yield Software – Xotels, Hotelgram
Channel manager	eg. Siteminder, Hotelogix
Online price comparison (metasearch) sites	eg. Trivago, HotelsCombined, Kayak
Online user satisfaction measures	NPS (Net Promoter Score) Wootric
Audio-guide	eg. museums, exhibitions
Own websites	every service provider in tourism
Virtual concierge	hotels, Concierge 4nt he Go
Smartphone systems in hotels	eg. Think Labs, Handy
Digital key	eg. Accor Hotels
Social media sites	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.
Tourism applications	maps, tour guide, search engine
Wi-fi	
Online marketing tools	eg. Google Adwords, Google Analytics, Moz
VR-glasses	
Bionic contact lenses	
Smart hotel	KViHotel
Robots	field of housekeeping
Introduction of workflow handling softwares	hotelkit.net, digital bookkeeping programs
Smart home control	iNels

Table 1. Digital tools and methods in tourism (Source: own research; Gelter, 2017)

Digital commerce

In Hungary, mostly the younger generation is using online commerce for shopping. Older generations prefer traditional stores in their shopping process. Digital commerce means revenue from e-commerce, e-tourism, e-services, digital media, and connected car markets.

In Europe, the share of digital spending within per capita consumer spending in 2019 reached 5.8%. This proportion is 5.2% in Hungary. Digital commerce revenue expected in Hungary in 2019, broken down by group, is as follows: e-commerce 56.3%, e-tourism 37.3%, e-services 3.2%, digital media 2.8%, connected car 0 4%. E-commerce has the highest share of digital commerce revenue (56.3%) with € 1,852,9 million in digital revenue. E-tourism also has an outstanding share of about € 1,227 million (Staffa et al., 2019).

E-Tourism

The e-tourism market is dominated by the sale of online services and digital products over the Internet. The definition includes online travel reservations (packages, hotels) and tickets booked for travelling such as airline tickets, coach tickets, train tickets, car rental and other travel services. Ticket booking or buying may be carried out both on desktop or mobile devices (smartphones or tablets).

Looking at the Hungarian data (Figure 2), a steadily growing forecast can be observed for digital tourism revenue over the next 5 years.

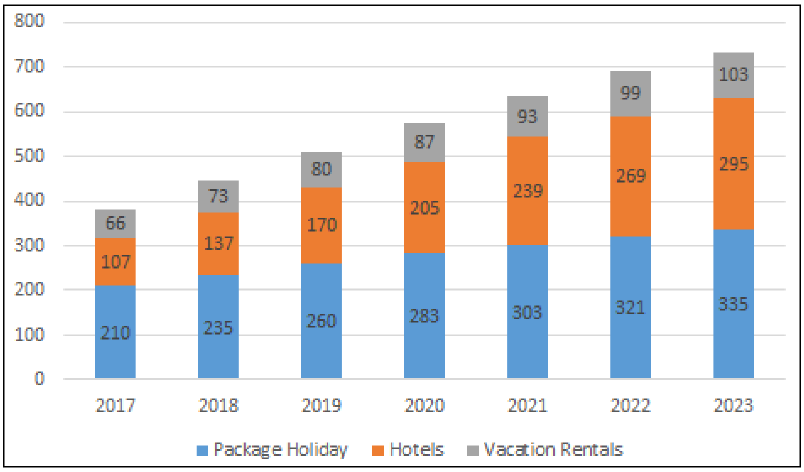

Figure 2. Revenue in the Online Travel Booking market in Hungary (in million €) (Source: Statista Mobility Market Outlook, 2019)

According to the forecast, online revenue is expected to grow steadily in both online booking and online ticketing, however, the growth is expected to slow down from 2020 onwards. At the same time, e-tourism revenue could reach €1.845 million by 2023 (Statista Mobility Market Outlook, 2019). The same changes can be observed in the number of users as well. It is expected that by 2020 approximately 2 million consumers will use the online options when booking, both for accommodation and travel tickets. Online booking users are projected to reach 22.4%, while online ticket purchases to reach 27.5%.

Average revenue per user (ARPU) for online booking may increase from € 253.6 in 2017 to € 344.44 in 2023. Considering the purchase of online travel tickets, this amount is projected to increase from € 312.96 to € 424.57.

Based on e-tourism revenues, on the TOP5 rankings the US is expected to have the highest revenue in 2019, with a market share of approximately € 235,085 million. Hungary's expected revenue from digital tourism is € 1,229 million (Statista Mobility Market Outlook, 2019). It is worth analysing e-tourism by markets as well, that is studying the data and changes in the fields of online booking and online ticketing.

Online reservations

Online booking includes holiday packages, hotel stays and private holiday apartments booked through the Internet. Online payment process is a prerequisite for this segment. Regardless of the number of travellers, users represent the person who made the booking. Well-known providers of travel packages include online travel agencies (OTAs) such as Expedia and Opodo, and tour operators such as TUI and Thomas Cook. Special online booking sites for hotels and private accommodation include Hotels.com, Booking.com and Airbnb.

Online accommodation booking will continue to grow in all surveyed areas over the next few years, but hotel bookings in particular are showing outstanding growth rates. With a market share of around € 1,488 million in 2019, the US generates the largest revenue. The highest share of users in the online hotel booking market is in Sweden (37.4%). The number and proportion of Hungarian users is much lower (18.3%). Online accommodation booking forecasts suggest that revenue and user numbers are expected to continue to grow in the coming years. Average spending by users is also expected to grow year by year. Statistical data show that online hotel reservations are the most popular among the 25-34-year-olds (24.6%) and the 35-44-year-olds (24.7%) in Hungary (Statista Mobility Market Outlook, 2019).

Online travel ticket purchase

The online ticketing group includes flights, coaches and online train tickets, as well as car rentals and car sharing services (Uber, Lyft) booked with the use of Internet. These services are booked directly through the service providers' website or through online travel agencies (OTAs). When determining the number of users, we take into account the number of ticket purchasers, regardless of how many travellers are included in each booking. Worldwide, similarly to hotel bookings, the US is the first in purchase of online tickets as well, with expected revenues of € 143.597 million by 2019. The highest proportion of users is in Sweden (43.7%). This proportion is 20.7% in Hungary.

The online ticket market in Hungary is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 11.6% between 2019 and 2023, bringing the revenue of the surveyed area to over € 1 billion by the end of the period. The largest segment of online transport services is airline ticket purchase, with around 2 million users expected by 2023. The users of the services typically belong to younger age groups, with approximately 67% of them are under 45 years of age (Statista Mobility Market Outlook, 2019).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE, METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Secondary research data show the extent of materialisation of e-tourism. The aim of our primary research was to survey the spread of the tools and methods used by Hungarian consumers, that is, their digital consumption habits. This is investigated with the help of a model, the 7P, created by the authors and presented earlier (Figure 1).

The research was conducted between October 2018 and March 2019 through an online questionnaire survey. Within the given period, 539 respondents completed the questionnaire. The questions are partly related to the use of digital devices and partly to travel habits, including the use of digital devices in relation to travelling. Descriptive statistical methods (frequency, maximum, minimum, mode, median), cross-table analysis and chi-squared test were applied for the statistical analysis.

1. Presentation of the sample

Table 2 presents the characteristics of the sample. The table summarises and breaks down the results by gender, age and place of residence as well as respondents' own perceptions of their income situation.

Characteristics of the sample (%)	
Gender distribution	
Male	32,4
Female	67,6
Age distribution	
Baby boomer	7,8
X-generation	38,3
Y-generation	38,0
Z-generation	15,9
Place of residence	
Capital City	23,5
County seat	31,6
City	28,9
Village	16
Education	
Primary school (Grade 8) or less	0,1
Vocational school	3
Vocational high school or secondary school matriculation	21,4
College or university	75,5
Respondents' perception of their income situation	
Live well from income, can put money aside	59,8
Live well from income, but cannot put money aside	30
Barely make ends meet	8,3
Cannot make ends meet	1,9

Table 2. Presentation of the research sample

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We present the research results along the logic of 7P, with the provision that first the results of general digital device use will be introduced.

1. Owning and using a digital device

In our study, we first examined what kind of digital devices respondents have. Based on the responses, we found that there is an increasing tendency that people prefer mobile devices among digital devices. This will certainly help to further digitise tourism from a consumer perspective. Laptops and tablets are taking the place of desktop computers.

At the same time, smart phones have almost completely displaced traditional cell phones as well as cameras. The challenge for service providers is no longer the digital presence - though in some places it still is - but applications optimised for different devices. It is interesting to note that no correlation could be found between the ownership of digital assets and the economic situation of respondents based on their own perception. Although the contingency table, which was set up during the contingency analysis shows a shift in the number of assets held towards a better economic situation, this result cannot be considered as significant. However, it is proven that the tools are available for online activities and our studies show that respondents are actively using it. It was also found that the communication with other people has shifted to the online platform in the highest level, but information search and shopping are gaining ground as well.

2. Product policy from the consumer side

In the context of e-tourism, we first examined the consumer side of product policy. Accordingly, the extent to which digital solutions are used by tourists in travel organising. Information search (93.1%) and online booking (83.5%) were most often cited as online travel arrangements in the process. More than half (55.8%) of the respondents organise their entire trip using their digital devices, and the online purchase of airline tickets is also frequent (47.1%). However, the process is still incomplete, as while nearly half of those surveyed buy airline tickets online, not even one-third (29.9%) do the check-in online. The least used online service among those surveyed is car hire. Only 18.4% of respondents had already rented a car this way. At the same time, the highest rate of rejection can also be observed here, as 16% said they would definitely not rent a car online again.

3. Price examination by tourists

It is well-known that Hungarian consumers are price sensitive, so the possibility of price comparison is important. 86% of the respondents of the survey most of the time use online price comparisons when organising their travel. 406 people, 75% of the surveyed consider this opportunity important. They mostly use Tripadvisor to see this factor, but it is also common to check the same offer on different sites.

4. Process management from the consumer side

A representative survey by Intrum claims management company, published by MTI Hungarian News Agency, reveals that Hungarian population is quite distrustful with online payment and they rather use cash (Szabó, 2019). According to our research, Hungarian consumers use online payment at a much higher rate than expected (Figure 3), but it was also noticeable that consumers are more courageous to use online activities where payment is not a necessary part of the process. As a result of the survey, we can say that the majority of respondents have already used and will continue to use online payment in the future. This is indispensable to achieve not only information collection and sharing to happen online.

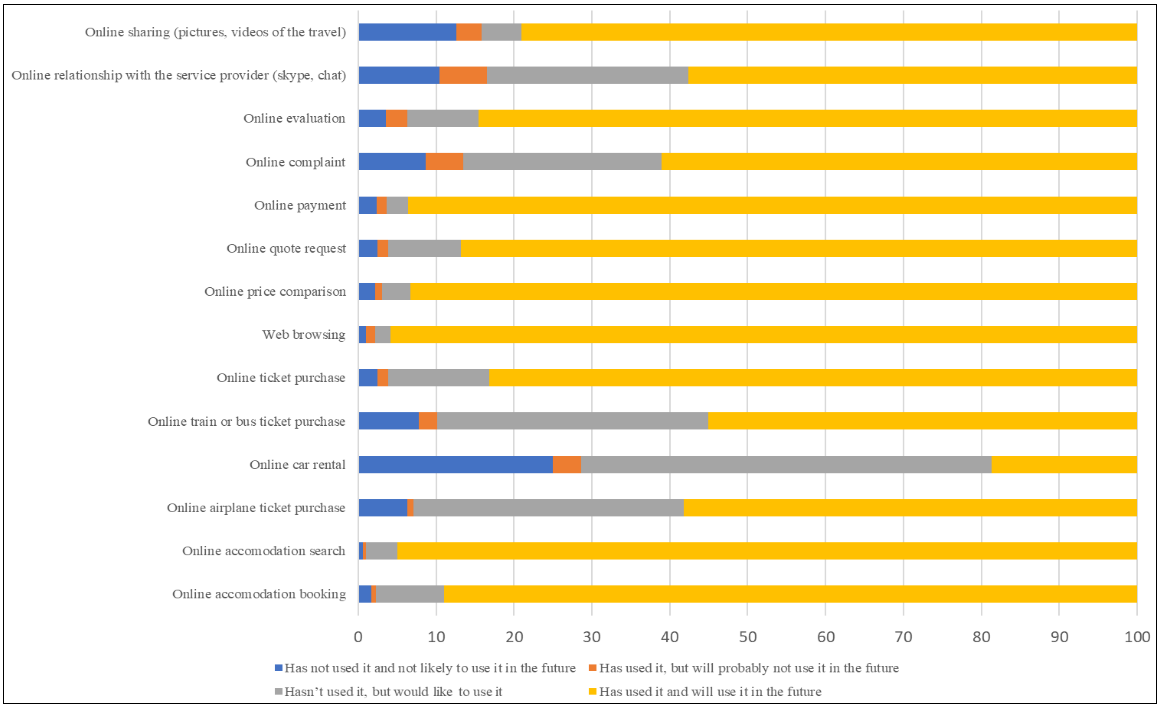

Figure 3. Tourism-related online activities among the respondents (n=539)

The results clearly show that the higher the risk (we cannot complete the transaction when buying a plane, train or bus ticket, or the process of car rental without payment), the less of the process is realised online. In most cases, booking can be cancelled, paid on the spot, all of which increase the sense of security, reduce the risk for the consumer, and thus increase the frequency of use.

The language of the interface can also influence consumers' online activities. It is known that the Hungarian population does not have the best language knowledge, so processes that are only available in foreign languages are overshadowed.

Another conspicuous result is that respondents rather contact with the service provider and file complaints in person or through traditional means (telephone), than online.

5. Point and mode of sale from consumer perspective

Traditions of travel bookings have changed radically over the last 30 years. However, these changes make it even easier to bridge greater geographic distances. The search for information has largely shifted to online tools, which can be observe in our research as well. At the same time, most hotel bookings and ticket purchases to various means of public transport are mainly made online (Figure 3).

Nowadays, consumers can choose between direct and indirect channels when booking, and in both cases there is a possibility to book online and offline as well. In 2013, eNet had already written in a study that almost half of hotel bookings were made online (ENet., 2013). Since then, this situation has shifted even further towards the online booking. Within online sales, according to research by Szállás.hu and

HOTREC (Szigetvári, 2018b, Turizmus.com, 2018), from 2013 to 2015, the proportion of direct hotel bookings dropped from 59.4% to 55.2%, while the share of OTAs increased from 19.3% to 22.3% and by 2018, it even increased to 26.1%.

Results of our research show that while respondents are happy to use direct online reservation systems, such as booking via the provider's own website or in e-mail, the channels most frequently used by them are already the OTAs, in Hungary mainly szallas.hu and booking.com (Figure 4). The preference for booking through travel agent companies and in person is very low among the respondents.

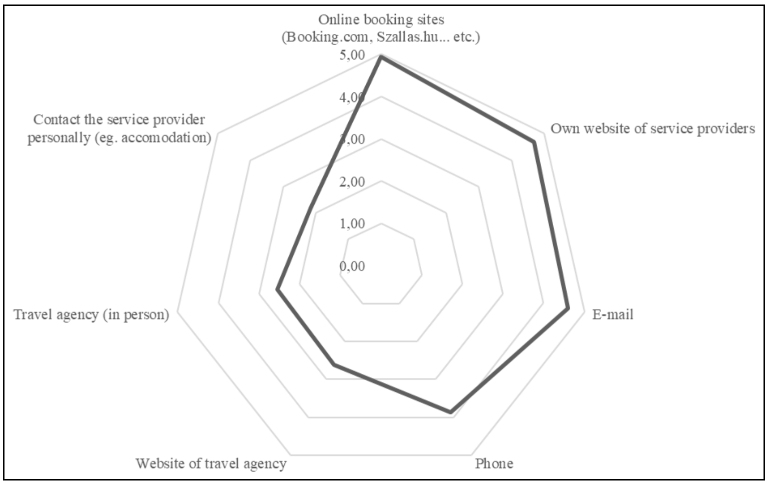

Figure 4. Preferences of different direct and indirect, online and offline sales channels (n=539)

6. Marketing Communications

The influence of marketing communication channels on consumer travel decisions was measured by scaling questions in the survey. The reliability of the scale was confirmed by a Cronbach alpha value of 0.725.

When making travel decisions, respondents are most likely to consider service evaluations, but the own website of service providers is also an important factor. The research also confirmed the need for providers to pay attention to consumer ratings, as travel planners typically read online reviews when organising a trip. That is why it is very surprising that only 63% of the accommodation providers are prepared, and those who are behind, have inadequate or no website, thus 73% of the bookings that have been started are lost.

Feedback is essential for all service providers, as it facilitates important, perceptible improvements to the consumer and help in the correction of errors (Molnar and Moraru, 2017; Moraru, 2017). The questionnaire survey shows that the easier it is to express an opinion, the more likely people will use it. While usually 73.3% of respondents, 393 people, evaluate the service with scoring, only 33% (177) are willing to give a rating in writing, only one quarter (25, 7%) write in the guest book, and 22.8% complete the local questionnaire.

The reverse is also true, mostly numerical ratings influence the travel decisions of the respondents (Figure 5). Opinions shared in forums and word of mouth advertising are also important, but the scoring of the services is paramount. We found a significant correlation between the gender of respondents and the extent to which they are influenced by online opinions in their travel decisions. It can be observed that women are much more likely to read and take into account the opinions of others about a service.

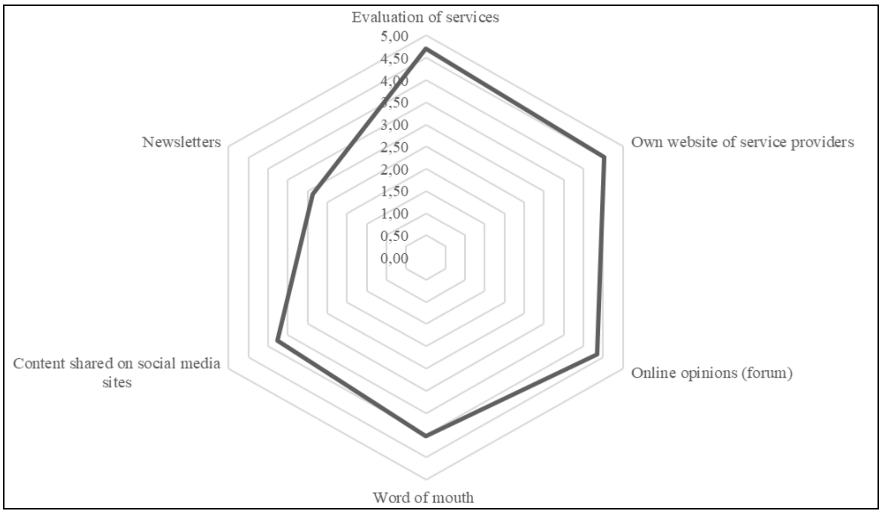

Figure 5. Influence of travel decisions (measured on a 1-5 scale) (n=539)

7. Examination of the human factor

The presence of man in services, as we have already written, is essential in some areas of the service process, and although there are attempts to fully replace human work, there are several questions that can demonstrate that this is not yet feasible.

The attitudes of tourists regarding the different opportunities of e-tourism were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The reliability of the scale, according to Cronbach's alpha value (0.773) is satisfactory. Results showed that respondents were reluctant to try an unmanned hotel and would not stay in a hotel where robots help in the workload of the staff.

The age of the respondents significantly influenced the answers when judging online activities. Statistical analyses revealed that for some services, the importance of personal contact is perceived differently by respondents of different age categories. Requesting a quote and using a service are two factors where personal contact is clearly important for the older generations. In line with the demands of the Y and Z generations, personal contact is key when getting information, but it is also essential in sales and problem management.

VR glasses are very popular with young people, but it is reassuring that respondents would still watch the attractions live even if they were available in virtual form as well. According to the research of Korinth et al. (2019) the vast majority (approximately 2/3) of the respondents claim that following a virtual tour of a certain place, they are more likely to visit it. However, virtual reality has not yet gained much ground in our country. This can be attributed to the alienation of the technology and the small amount of VR in tourism available. There is already a significant correlation with age - of course, towards young people, they prefer to use "virtual walks".

CONCLUSION

In our work, we examined e-tourism based on our previously published model (Happ and Ivancsóné Horváth, 2018).

First, we introduced the concept of e-tourism and then summarised the digital tools and technologies used in tourism (Table 1). We examined our country regarding Internet penetration and mobile subscriptions compared to Europe, Central Asia and the United States of America. The data of Statista Country Report (Staffa et al., 2019) show that everything is given on the technical and technological side for Hungarian travellers to take advantage of the opportunities provided by e-tourism. According to Statista Country Report (Staffa et al., 2019), young people have already been taking advantage of these opportunities. According to the trends of the Statista Mobility Market Outlook (2019), the proportion of the users of online services and their average spending show a slow, constant increase in Hungary.

Online bookings forecast a growth in all surveyed areas over the next few years, but primarily hotel bookings demonstrate a remarkable growth rate. However, in Hungary the proportion of online hotel bookings (18.3%) is significantly lower than that in the leading countries, similarly to online ticket purchases, which is 20.7% in Hungary compared to 43.7% in Sweden. Statistical data show that online reservation is the most popular among people aged between 25 and 34 (24.6%) as well as those aged between 35-44 (24.7%) in Hungary.

The aim of our primary research was to survey the prevalence of devices and methods used by Hungarian consumers, i.e. to reveal the digital behaviour of consumers with a questionnaire based on the model we created and presented earlier (Figure 1). Our questionnaire was completed by 539 respondents. We have found that the vast majority of people have the digital tools they need to participate in e-tourism. Of these, mobile devices are increasingly preferred among the respondents, so the challenge for service providers is no longer the digital presence, but applications optimised for different devices.

More than half of the respondents organise their entire trip using their digital devices, and the purchase of online airline tickets are also frequent. According to our research, respondents use online payment in a much higher rate than we have expected based on previous literature, but it is also observable that consumers are more courageous to use online activities where payment is not a necessary part of the process. The results indicate that the greater the consumer's risk perception of the activity, the less it is realised online. For some activities, such as making a complaint, personal contact is essential, but in general consumers cannot accept the staff-less robotic hotels yet.

In the area of marketing communication, the service providers' own website plays an extremely important role, as it is still the most used channel following online booking sites. Service providers also need to pay close attention to online reviews, although our survey shows that consumers are reluctant to write lengthy reviews, they are happy to score and most of them are looking at the reviews of others before making their travel decisions. Finally, we have also found that, although virtual reality is very popular, especially among young people, personal experiences cannot be replaced by the virtual world yet.

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CONDITIONS OF TERRITORIAL ACCESSIBILITY OFFERED BY THE NETWORK OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ROUTES THAT ARE PART OF THE COFFEE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE - COLOMBIA

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Abstract: Tourist attraction is related to the provision of services in an urban or rural environment; it is possible to find the relationship between the tourist potential and performance infrastructure that provides access to the points. Aims: Asses accessibility of the routes that make part of the Coffee Cultural Landscape (CCL). Method: accessibility models based on isochronous curves obtained in the analysis of travel time, which allows the determination of population covered by the curves. Results: There is no direct relationship between the sociodemographic and socioeconomic variables, due to the low participation of the tourism in the GDP of the CCL.

Key words: Coffee Cultural Landscape, Accessibility, Transport Models, Tourist Routes

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INTRODUCTION

The Coffee Region is part of the so-called Andean Region and is located in the center of western Colombia, 5-28-18" north latitude and 75-40-54" west longitude (Figure1). Risaralda, Caldas, Quindío, and northern Valle del Cauca are the departments that make up Colombian Coffee Cultural Landscape, which are between 1,200 and 2,200 meters above sea level. This region is home to a total of 3,282,702 inhabitants (NADS - National Administrative Department of Statistics, 2019), in an area of 19,834 km^2, of which 17.56% corresponds to the territory declared as Coffee Cultural Landscape (CCL) of Colombia. The climatic conditions of the study area are between -8°C and 29°C, due to the existence of snow and tropical forests in the region (Ministry of Culture, 2011). This wide variability, along with the geology of the area, gives way to the production of high-quality coffee in short harvest periods, which has placed the region as one of the worldwide best-known territories for its grain quality and how its production process is carried out. This, together with the communities' architectural values, customs, and traditions, has positioned the region as a tourist-friendly territory.

The Coffee Cultural Landscape corresponds to a territory comprised of 47 municipalities and 411 villages (geographical unit corresponding to the minimum territorial division of Colombia). This takes place in a territory of more than 141 thousand hectares in the main area and 207 thousand in buffer zones, which consist of villages that surround the main area of the landscape, allowing the conservation and protection of the Exceptional Universal Value of the declared heritage zone (Ministry of Culture, 2011, http://paisajeculturalcafetero.org.co/static/files/cartillaministerio.pdf.pdf).The Coffee Cultural Landscape has been worthy of this declaration for being an example of a sustainable and productive landscape. It has been adapted to difficult geographical conditions developing coffee cultivation on hillsides and mountains, establishing exceptional models of collective work to cope with difficult economic situations. The construction techniques in both urban and rural areas stand out, which corresponds to the cultural heritage architectural material and the large number of fairs, festivals, and events that are held around the cultivation of coffee as an intangible cultural heritage (Ministry of Culture, 2009, http://paisajeculturalcafetero.org.co/contenido/Plan-de-Manejo-del-PCC).

Despite efforts to raise awareness of the region's tourist attraction, it is hypothesized that the current transport infrastructure provides deficient geographical accessibility to the region. This directly impacts domestic tourism development, which has shown a steady increase in recent years due to the varied cultural, gastronomic, and landscape opportunities.

The statistical information, shown in the receiving tourism report for the Coffee Region of May 2019 (CCL Tourist Information System - SITUR FONTUR, 2019), indicates that holidays, recreation, and leisure activities are the main reasons for tourists to travel to that territory. Concerning municipalities in May 2019, Pereira was placed as the most visited city (19.3%), followed by Salento (14.5%), Manizales (14.3%), Filandia (13.2%), Montenegro (11.6%), Armenia (10.5%), Santa Rosa de Cabal (6.9%), Quimbaya (3.7%), Calarcá (2%), others (4%); Also, 89.6% of surveyed visitors were born in another department in Colombia, followed by 7.6% born in the Coffee Cultural Landscape region and 2.8% born abroad, with a total of 26,064 visitors in the Coffee Axis Region between January and May 2019.

From the above statistical information, it is possible to observe that the highest visitors percentage of the Coffee Cultural Landscape region are national, however, only 7.6% correspond to the population that inhabits the Coffee Region (CCL Tourist Information System - SITUR FONTUR, 2019), which could represent some degree of inequity in terms of accessibility conditions to the regional tourist environment for the locals ; it is also observed that the largest percentage of visited municipalities corresponds to those of Quindío department, leaving aside the tourist attraction offered by Caldas, Risaralda, and Northern Valle del Cauca municipalities, except their capitals.

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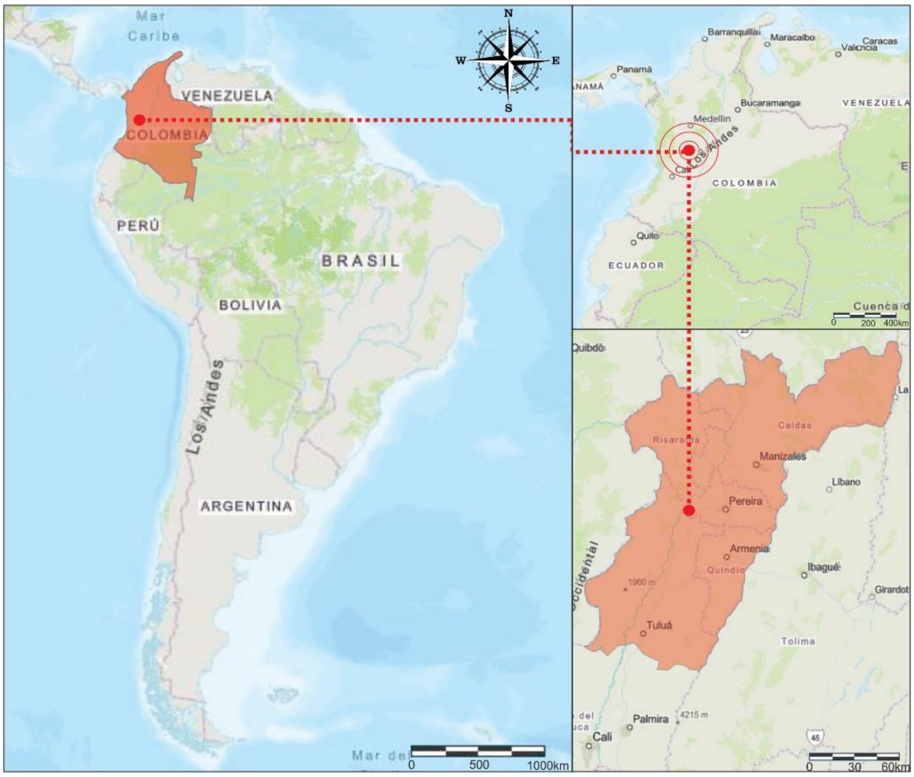

Figure 1. Geographic location of the area

This research seeks to identify the territorial accessibility conditions currently offered by the tourist routes that are part of the Coffee Cultural Landscape, which have been set by the Colombian Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism. So that it is possible to establish the relationship between the tourist potential of the region, the infrastructure characteristics that provide access to the different tourist points of interest, and the Coffee Region and Northern Valle del Cauca inhabitant socio-economic conditions. It is based on the hypothesis that tourist attraction is directly related to the provision of goods, equipment, services, and accessibility in either an urban or rural environment.

One of the first technical definitions of the term accessibility emerged in 1959, linked to the activity distribution measurement concerning their location, in agreement with the willingness and ease that both people and companies have to overcome the spatial barrier (Hansen, 1959). This concept can also be observed with an approach to access to opportunities, defined as "the degree of adjustment between mobility opportunity structures and the resources available to households to take advantage of them" (Hernández, 2012). The research carried out by Ingram (1971) is based on the application of the concept of accessibility in urban environments; the author establishes the difference between the relative accessibility from two points and the integral accessibility at one, identifying the operational modes of these definitions, applied to the urban area of Hamilton, Ontario and obtains, as a result, that the Gaussian curve is the one that best fits the integral mobility calculation, which is given as the degree of interconnection of one point with others in the same area or territory, such as measuring the connection of a fire station or hospital, with the other nodes that comprise a city's network (Ingram, 1971).

Additionally, the concept of global average accessibility arises, which is considered in terms of time or distance from all the network nodes to all nodes. Dijkstra's graph theory and the minimum path algorithm is used to calculate it (Dijkstra, 1959), which consists of obtaining the travel matrix from minimizing the variable time or distance (Delling et al., 2009; Bauer et al., 2010).

The analysis of territorial accessibility widely used at the international level can be addressed from such diverse angles as tourism development (López et al., 2011), problem-solving of inequity and social exclusion (Lucas, 2012; Lucas et al., 2016; Oviedo et al., 2019), generation of public policies (Beria et al., 2017; Hernandez et al., 2018; Xiao et al., 2017), analysis of road safety (Tiwari and Jain, 2012), economic development, and transport systems (Yigitcanlar et al., 2007), and also access to services such as libraries (Higgs et al., 2018), education (Walsh et al., 2017), and health (Rosero-Bixby, 2004). In recent years, this concept has been applied in case studies that have allowed the decision-making supported technically. In Colombia, this methodology implementation for the territorial accessibility calculation has gain strength from research that has shown that its use can withstand decision-making regarding the introduction of road infrastructure interventions, since it allows us to determine the areas that need to optimize their accessibility to improve the region's inhabitant's quality of life, according to land uses (Escobar and García, 2012; Escobar et al., 2013).

At a regional level, research has been carried out to evaluate the application of accessibility concepts, which may reflect needs in the operational changes of a transport service (Escobar et al., 2018; Guzman et al., 2018; Montoya et al., 2017). The authors Escobar García and Urazán Bonells (2014) describe the state-of-the-art accessibility at a worldwide level and show the general methodology of application, to demonstrate the different possibilities offered by this territorial planning instrument, based on the geostatistical analysis of geographic location data, operational and topological characteristics of the analyzed network (Escobar and Urazán, 2014).

Currently, several studies have been focused on the empirical analysis of the correlation between territorial accessibility, transport, and tourism development of regions. One of these is carried out by Celata (2007), which evaluates the case of the southern Italian region known as Mezzogiorno, to set the extent to which accessibility can represent a limit for the development of tourism in peripheral and remote areas. This is to establish a basis that tourism is linked to the transport system development and the reduction of economic distances (Celata, 2007).

Kastenholz et al., 2012 show in their research applied to a small tourist area called Louso in Portugal, that tourist destinations face intense and growing competition worldwide with increasingly demanding consumers who require not only service quality, but also socially responsible and sustainable locations. Therefore, tourism development with a focus on the accessibility provided can contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the destination area and create a culture of social responsibility.

The use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for the calculation of territorial accessibility is based on the ease of these tools to process spatial and socioeconomic information involving complex computations (Liu and Zhu, 2004).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research methodology is shown in Figure 2. This consists of 6 consecutively developed stages, which are described below.

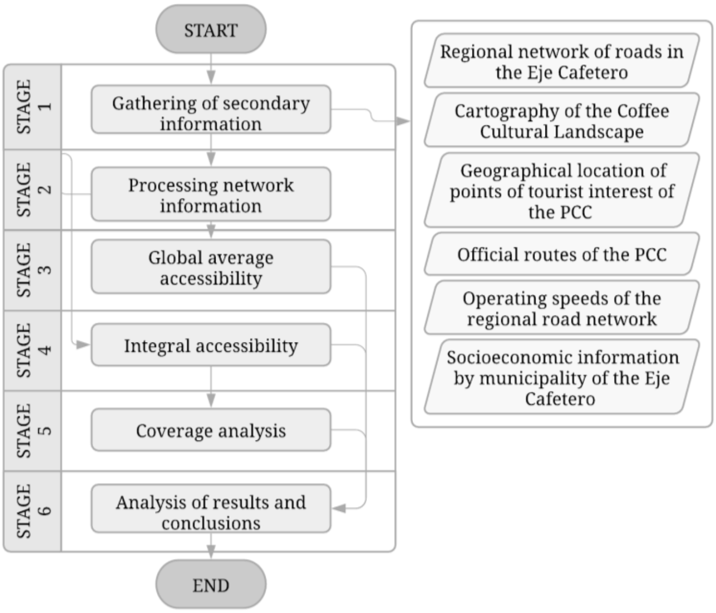

Figure 2. Research methodology

Collecting secondary information: In this stage, the necessary secondary information is collected for the development of the research, which consists of a regional network of roads in the Coffee Region and Northern Valle del Cauca, geographic delimitation of the Coffee Cultural Landscape, georeferencing of the points of interest and official routes of the Landscape, operating speeds of the primary and secondary roads in the region, sociodemographic and socioeconomic information by the municipality. The sociodemographic information of the municipalities of the Coffee Region and Northern Valle del Cauca is obtained from the population projections 2018 - 2020, municipal total by area of the National Administrative Department of Statistics, for a total of 3,282,702 inhabitants in the departments of Caldas, Quindío and Northern Valle del Cauca (NADS - National Administrative Department of Statistics, 2019). The road network in the study area has a total length of 5,464 km, of which 1,269 km (23%) are primary routes, and the remaining 4,195 (77%) are secondary roads. Figure 3 shows the regional transport infrastructure network and the location of the official Coffee Cultural Landscape routes and airports in the region.

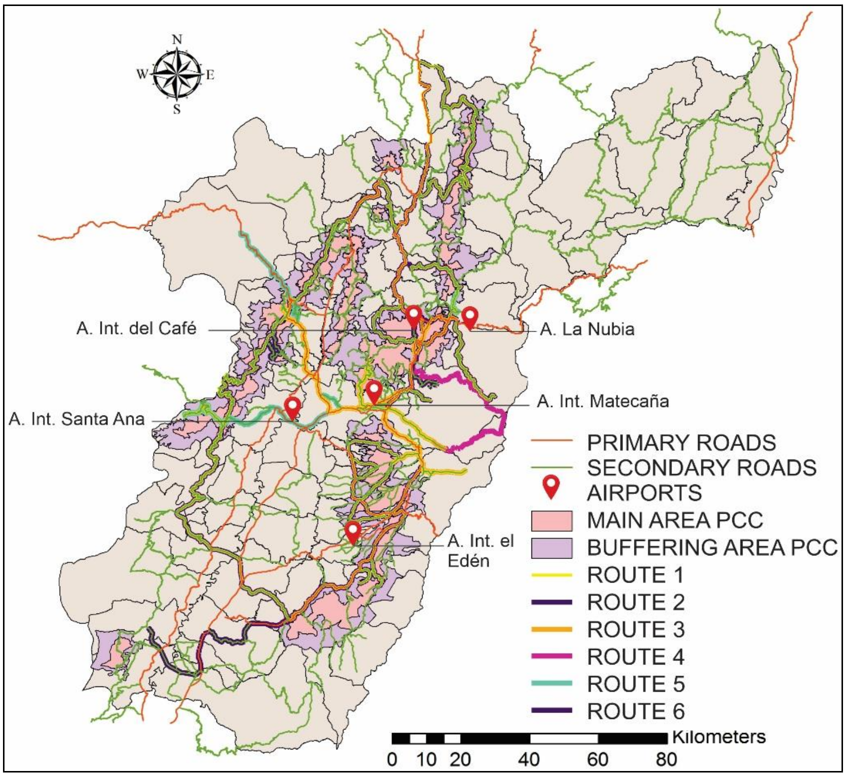

Figure 3. Road network and Coffee Cultural Landscape routes

Processing network information: From the collected information, the road network and its operational characteristics (speeds, lengths, coordinates) are verified, obtained in the initial stage according to the graph theory (Cardozo et al., 2009) for the calculation of global average accessibility and integral average accessibility to the interest points of the Coffee Cultural Landscape routes.

In geostatistical calculations carried out in previous research, the average operating speeds on the roads corridors are assumed according to the category of the track as follows: Main 60 Km/h, secondary 40 km/h and tertiary 30 Km/h assuming that the operating speed on such roads corresponds to the 85th percentile of velocity in each road category (Zuluaga and Escobar, 2017).

This research uses the Google Maps tool™" Street view" to get the geographical points of the location of regulatory speeds along the main road network corridor Figure 4. They are validated by using real-time modelling tools of the transport system such as Waze and Google Maps, so the estimation of operating speeds is oriented in the operation of light vehicles.

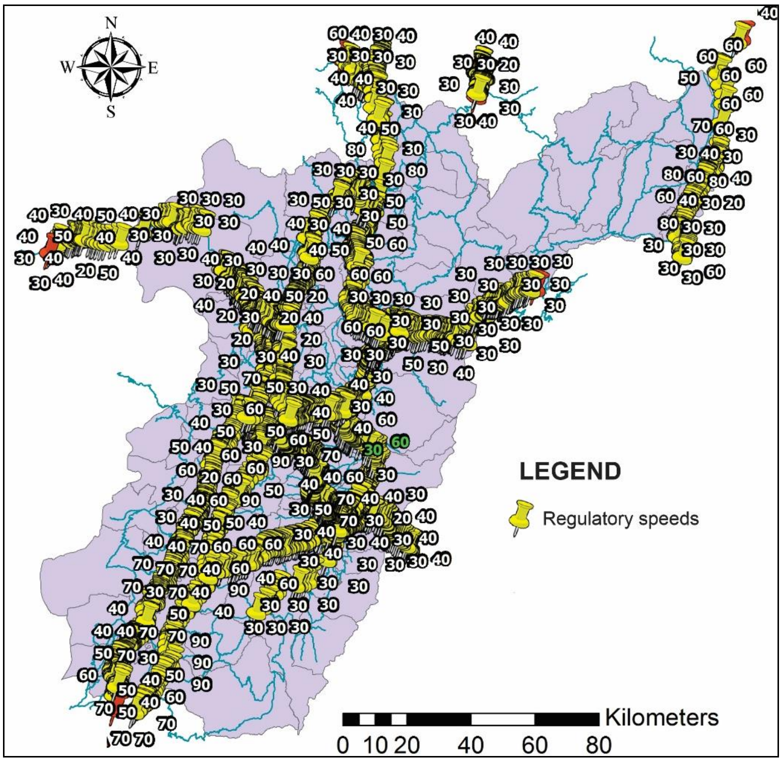

Figure 4. Geographical location of regulatory speeds on the primary road network

Global Average Accessibility Calculation: To estimate the respective global average accessibility isochronous curves and determine the percentage of population coverage that each route has in general concerning the municipalities that make up the Coffee Cultural Landscape, the average travel times from each network node to all the nodes that make up the network are calculated in this stage. For the overall average accessibility calculation, the medium travel time vector must be calculated, using the minimum road algorithm developed by Dijkstra (Dijkstra, 1959), which consists of determining the shortest path between two points by connecting in the form of arcs, in this representation, the road network is made up of nodes and arcs with a given length, so there must be at least one path to reach a node.

The travel time matrix obtained from the implementation of Dijkstra's algorithm contains all minimum routes between each network node (Zuluaga and Escobar, 2017). This matrix allows the calculation of the average travel time vector through the use of Eq. (1), where ($\overline{Tv_i}$) is the travel time average that represents the time that a vehicle takes to travel from the node (i) to the node (j), and (n) is the number of nodes in the network (Moncada et al., 2018).

$$\overline{Tv_i} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n} tv_{ij}}{n-1} \qquad i = 1,2,3,\ldots,n \quad j = 1,2,3,\ldots,n$$

1, (Source: Zuluaga and Escobar, 2017)

To perform the geostatistical calculation, the Ordinary Kriging model is used (Simpson et al., 2001). This model estimates and models a function that reflects the spatial correlation of data by linearly combining random variables, starting with the Linear Semivariogram Eq. (2) function, where ($\overline{\gamma_{(h)}}$)represents the linear semivariogram function, ($Z_{(x)}$) variable value in a place with x, y, ($Z_{(x+h)}$) coordinates indicates a sample value separated by a distance h, and n is the number of pairs separated by that distance. Stressing that, at a shorter distance, the similarity or spatial correlation between observations is greater (Perilla et al., 2018).

$$\overline{\gamma_{(h)}} = \frac{\sum (Z_{(x+h)} - Z_{(x)})^2}{2n}$$

2, (Source: Perilla et al., 2018)

The ordinary Kriging method proposes that the variable value can be predicted by a linear combination of n random Eq.(4) variables, where (λ_i) is the weight of the original weighting values.

$$Z_{(x0)} = \lambda_1 Z_{(x1)} + \lambda_2 Z_{(x2)} + \cdots + \lambda_n Z_{(xn)} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \lambda_i Z_{(xi)}$$

3, (Source: Perilla et al., 2018)

Integral Accessibility Calculation: In this stage, the average travel times of all nodes to each of the routes of the Coffee Cultural landscape are calculated and also to each of its tourist attractions to determine the integral accessibility from the isochronous curves. The procedure for the calculation of integral accessibility follows the same methodological line used for the calculation of global average accessibility, with the conceptual distinction in which the aim is to obtain the minimum average travel times between each of the network nodes and the particular reference or analysis node. In this case, the points of interest that are part of the official routes of the Coffee Cultural Landscape. The average travel time vector obtained corresponds to the average time ratio between a specific node and the other nodes that make up the analysed transport infrastructure network. From this, geostatistical calculations are performed to obtain the isochronous curves of average integral accessibility.

Coverage Analysis: The population coverage analysis is carried out from the isochron curves obtained from the calculations of global and integral average accessibility and the number of inhabitants of the municipalities of the Coffee Region and Northern Valle del Cauca. In this way, it is possible to determine the percentage of population covered by each isochronic curve and establish the accessibility conditions offered by the tourist routes of the Coffee Cultural landscape to the inhabitants of the coffee region.

Analysis of Results and Conclusions: Based on the results obtained from the overall and integral average accessibility calculation, the analysis is carried out for each of the tourist routes that are part of the Coffee Cultural Landscape. This follows the methodology described above, reaching specific conclusions regarding the accessibility conditions they offer to the Coffee Cultural Landscape.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Global Average Accessibility: The global average accessibility isochronous curves for the Coffee Region and Northern Valle del Cauca road network are shown in Figure 5, in time intervals of every 5 minutes. The Coffee Cultural Landscape area was covered with average travel times between 162 and 405 minutes.

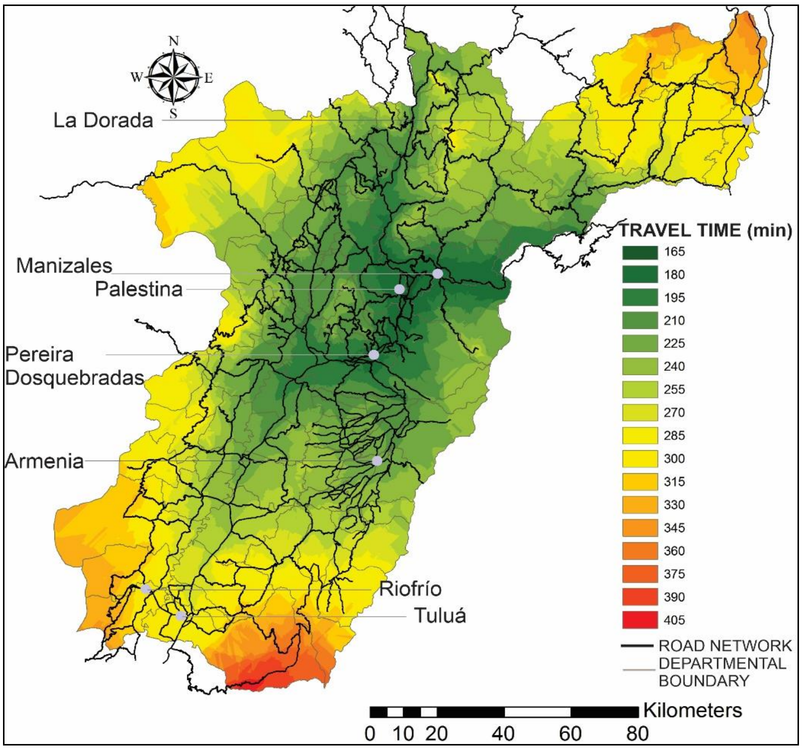

Figure 5. Global average accessibility

The area between the municipalities of Palestine, Manizales, and Pereira shows the best levels of accessibility since the average travel times are between 177 and 183.2 minutes, which represents benefits for the inhabitants of these areas by promoting economic development and enhancing the tourism projection of that region.

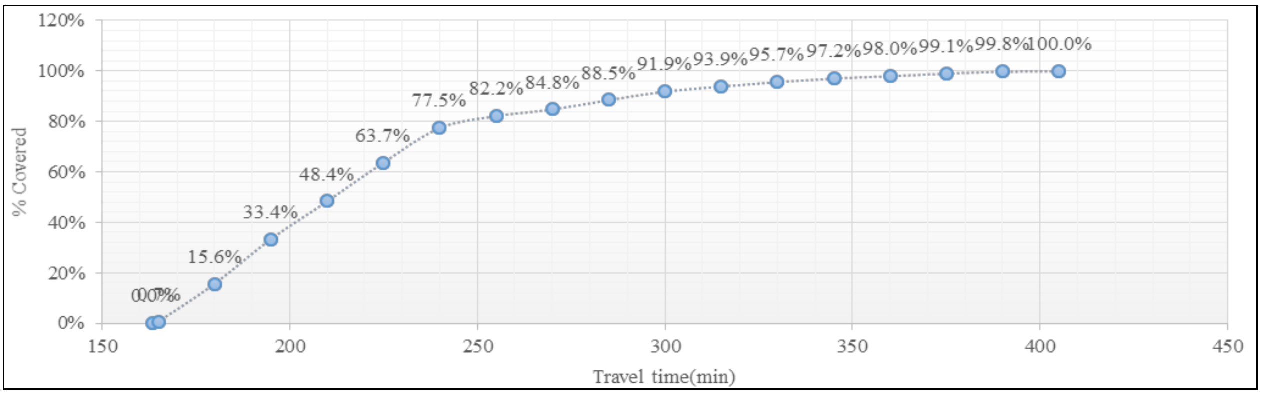

Figure 6. Isochrones curves vs. covered percentage in population

The shortest average travel time recorded was 162 min, covering a minimal part of the municipality of Manizales. It was also found that for the 227-minute isochronous curve, 3.7% (121,433 inhabitants) of the study region is covered, being this the curve that covers the largest amount of population. From the overall coverage for the territory that makes up the Coffee Cultural Landscape, it is observed in Figure 6, the cumulative percentage warhead of population. 50% of the Coffee Cultural Landscape region population is covered with average travel times of up to 212 minutes (three and a half hours), and only 0.67% of the population reaches times less than 165 minutes.

Figure 7 shows the cumulative percentage warhead of the population by each department of the analysis region. From this, it can be observed that the department with the highest population coverage is Risaralda, followed by Caldas, Quindío, and finally Northern Valle del Cauca. From the figure, it can be determined that 50% of the population is covered for the departments of Risaralda and Caldas in less than 195 minutes, Quindío in less than 225 minutes, and Northern Valle del Cauca 270 minutes.

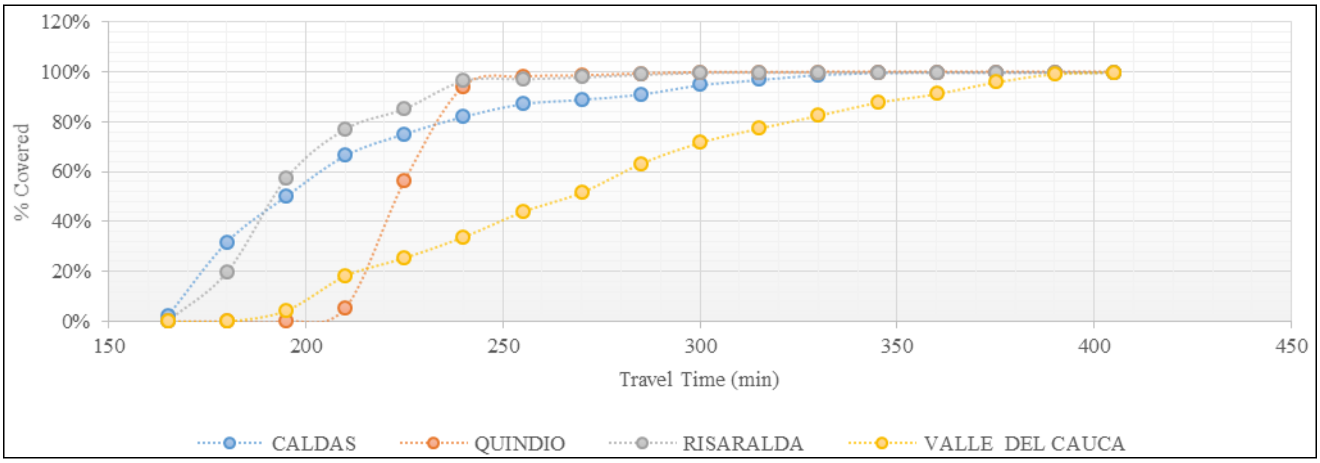

Figure 7. Isochrones curves vs. covered percentage in population by department

It is possible to establish, from the analysis of accessibility by municipalities, that Palestina, Dosquebradas, and Manizales have the best accessibility levels with average travel times between 177 and 179.7 minutes and La Dorada, Riofrío and Tuluá have the worst accessibility indicator with average travel times between 307.5 and 332.3 minutes.

Global Average Accessibility Routes in the Coffee Cultural Landscape: The weighted global average accessibility calculation summary for each of the tourist routes that are part of the Coffee Cultural Landscape is shown in Table 1. It can be seen that route No. 3 shows a better accessibility indicator since the average travel time is shorter than the others, while route 6 shows the longest.

Table 1. Weighted average global accessibility times per CCL tourist route

Route	Name	Total length (km)	Average travel time (min)
1	Charming coffee villages and landscapes	1151.46	217.14
2	Journey to the origin of the best coffee in the world	315.95	200.04
3	Exuberant nature and coffee landscape	269.31	188.54
4	Landscape hiking from 1,000 to 4,000 m	119.45	199.29
5	Bird watching in the central-western Andes	318.27	199.04
6	Special coffees, from origin to revelation	728.43	232.55

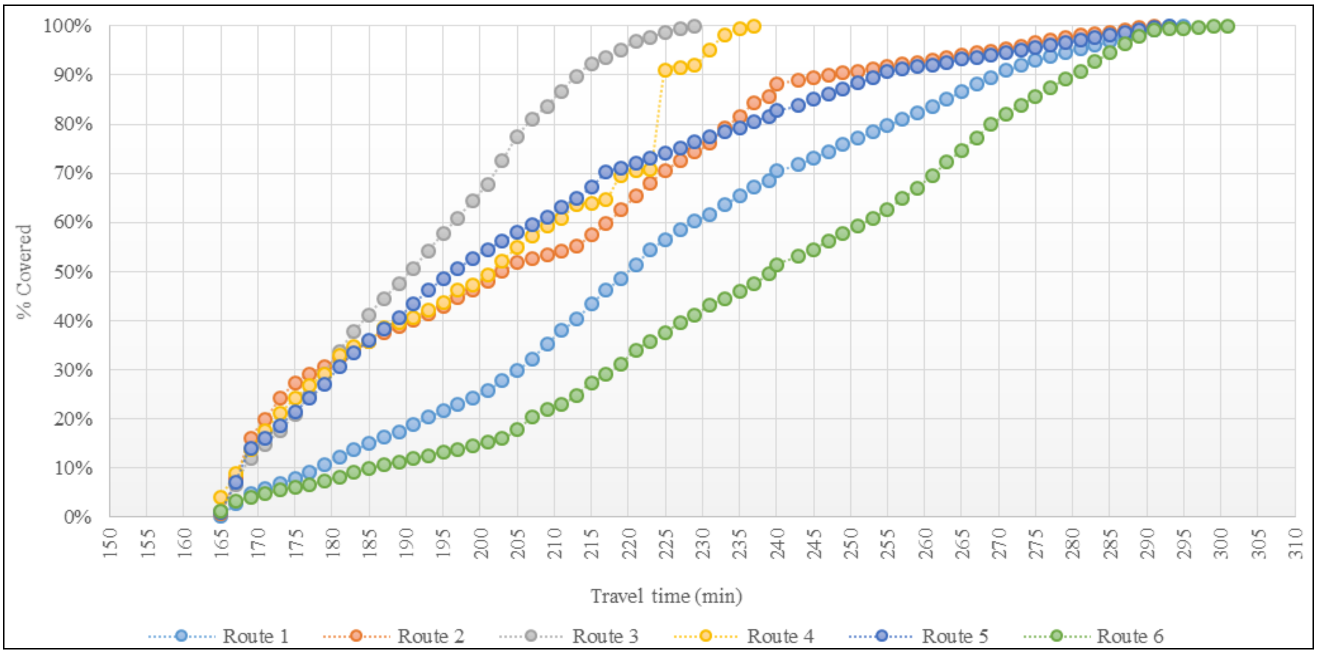

Figure 8. Isochrones curves vs. covered percentage in length by route

The above can be supported in Figure 8, which represents the cumulative percentage warhead of coverage in terms of route length, for each of the isochronous curves obtained from the global average accessibility analysis.

Integral Average Accessibility: The isochronous curves of integral average accessibility for the points of interest of route No.3 - Exuberant nature and coffee landscape- are shown in Figure 9 in travel times at 10-minute intervals, for private vehicle users traveling to each of the points of interest of the analysis route, with travel times prevalence of fewer than 140 minutes.

The cumulative warheads of population coverage, for each of the points of interest in the tourist routes and lodgings of the Coffee Cultural Landscape, are shown in Figure 10, obtained from the integral average accessibility calculation, from which it can be observed that the points of interest that have better coverage and therefore better territorial accessibility are those found on route No.6 and No.3, while points indicated as lodgings within the Coffee Cultural Landscape show the lowest population coverage with longer average travel times.

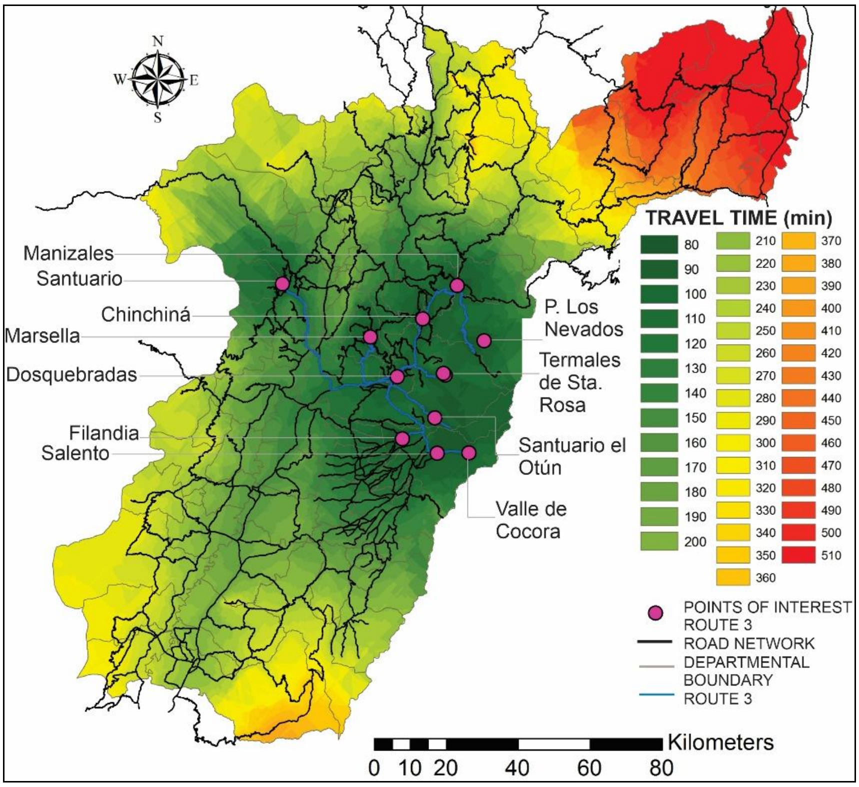

Figure 9. Integral accessibility points of interest in touristic route No.3

The pattern that can be identified from the graphs of percentage warheads accumulated by population and area in the integral accessibility analysis, for each of the routes and farms of the Coffee Cultural Landscape, shows that in a small area, greater coverage is reached in terms of population. This is due to the close location of the urban centers concerning the points of analysis or points of interest on the route. That is, those located in areas of high population density.

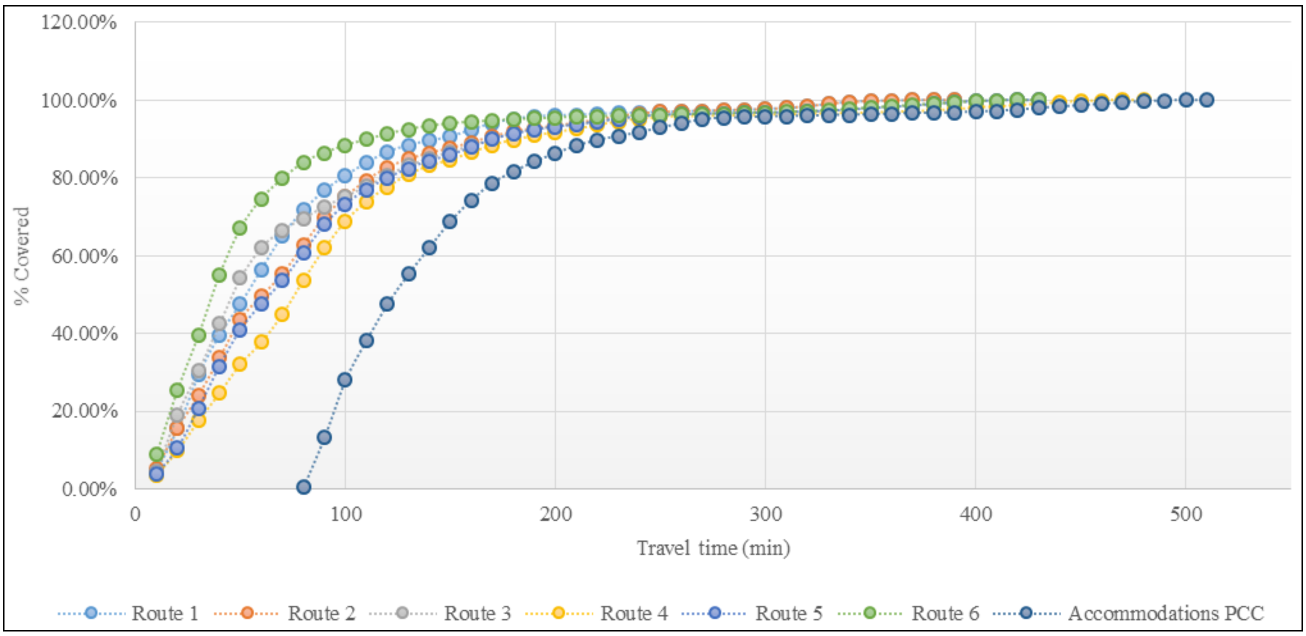

Figure 10. Isochrones curves vs. covered percentage in population for the points of interest on the CCL routes

There is a comparison in terms of average travel time in Figure 11, obtained from the calculation of average global accessibility and the Gross Domestic Product of the four departments that are part of the Coffee Cultural Landscape, based on information collected from the National Administrative Department of Statistics for the year 2018 (NADS- National Administrative Department of Statistics, 2018, https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/estadisticas-por-tema/cuentas-nacionales/cuentas-nacionales-trimestrales).

A correlation coefficient equal to -0.288 is obtained for a 95% confidence level from the multi-varied statistical analysis used to establish the relationship between the average travel time and Gross Domestic Product variables at the departmental level. Indicating that there is a relatively weak relationship between these two variables. In Figure 11, it is possible to observe a direct correlation between Gross Domestic Product and average travel times for the departments of Caldas and Risaralda. However, this connection is reversed by analysing the case of Quindío and Northern Valle del Cauca departments, since the former shows a better indicator of accessibility (resulting in less average travel time) despite counting the worst economic indicator of the four departments.

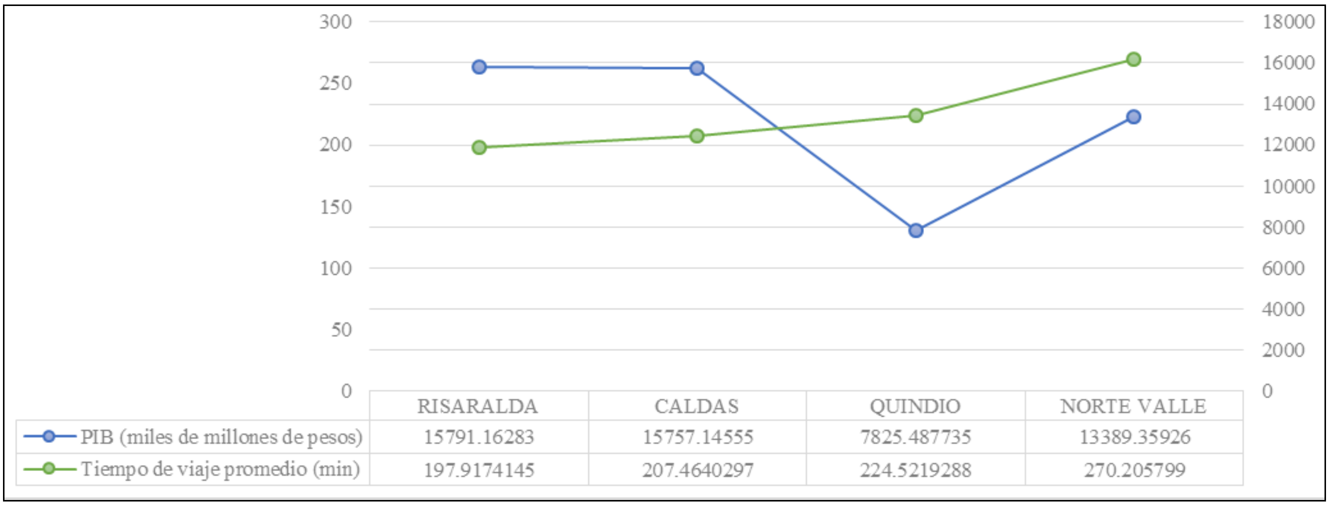

Figure 11. Comparative accessibility - gross domestic product by department of CCL

CONCLUSION

Based on the results obtained from the statistical analysis between the average travel time and GDP variables, it is concluded that there is a weak relationship between them; when observing at the case of Caldas department where GDP is the highest, the shortest travel time of the four departments analyzed is obtained, this shows that the design of having a better quality of road infrastructure results in better accessibility and positively impacts on economic indicators; however, Quindío and Northern Valle del Cauca this correlation is reversed.

In the search for a connection among the region's tourism potential, the infrastructure features that provide access to the different points of tourism interest and the economic indicators of the Coffee Cultural Landscape region, the hypothesis is that tourism attraction responds directly to the provision of goods, equipment, services and the level of accessibility of the study area; however, when comparing the results obtained in the research between GDP, accessibility and tourism, it can be determined that there is no direct relationship between these variables for the departments of the Coffee Cultural Landscape, since the departments of Caldas and Risaralda show better accessibility and economic indicators, have less tourism development in relation to the department of Quindío which has a greater development of tourism in the sector, with lower levels of accessibility and economic indicators (GDP); the above is explained by the low participation of the tourism component in the GDP of the departments of the Coffee Cultural Landscape, with a percentage of 3.7% of the regional total (Office of Economic Studies, 2020, https://www.mincit.gov.co/getattachment/estudios-economicos/perfiles-economicos-por-departamentos/perfiles-regionales/region-eje-cafetero/oee-fp-perfil-region-eje-cafetero-25jun20.pdf.aspx).

Finally, for future research, it is proposed to conduct a project to establish the variables and attributes of the road network of the Coffee Cultural Landscape, which influences both the calculations of accessibility and the development of tourism in the region, so those policies can impact positively on this sector.

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TELL ME WHO YOU ARE AND I WILL TELL YOU WHERE TO GO: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF BIG FIVE PERSONALITY IN SOFT-ADVENTURE TRAVELING TYPE

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Abstract: When choosing travelling activities, individuals have the freedom to choose what type of travelling they are interested in, in this case, the interest is thought to tend to reflect and be influenced by personality. This study aims to look at the role of trait big five personalities on the tendency of individual interest in soft-adventure travel by using a quantitative approach and multiple-regression methods. The sample involved was 1558 Indonesian citizens who were at least 18 years old and liked travelling activities that were taken using purposive sampling techniques. Measurements in this study use the Big Five Inventory 44 item. The results showed that the big five personalities had a simultaneous role in the tendency of soft-adventure interest and partially the traits that had a role were conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness.

Key words: Big five personality, Soft-adventure travel, Traveling Type

* * * * * *

INTRODUCTION

Travelling has become a necessity for some people because these activities can eliminate boredom, increase creative power and provide relaxation for individuals (Kalebos, 2016). Tourism activities in Indonesia are starting to develop and have become a lifestyle in its own right. The Central Bureau of Statistics of the Ministry of Tourism said that there was an increase in the number of trips compared to the previous year, in which there were more than 270 million trips to various provinces carried out by the Indonesian population during 2017 (Badan Pusat Statistik Kementrian Pariwisata, 2018). Tourism has various types in describing its activities and adventure travel is the type that experiences the fastest growth in the field of tourism.

The global adventure travel tourism market is valued at 444,850 million dollars in 2016 and is projected to reach 1,335,738 million dollars in 2023 (Doshi and Das, 2018). Adventure travel is a tour or trip with a specific purpose to explore new experiences, meet places and unknown people, involving perceived risks or controlled hazards associated with personal challenges, in natural environments or outdoor settings (Buckley, 2007; Sung et al., 1996). Scott and Mowen (2007) identify adventure travel into four categories. The first is luxury travel, which is defined literally as luxury travel or travel style (Popescu and Olteanu, 2014). Second is camping travel which is a trip to an outdoor location to interact with nature. Third, hard-adventure travel defined as a trip to gain extreme experiences that have a high level of potential risk in the external environment. Finally, soft-adventure travel is a trip that has a low level of risk to moderate and includes a comfortable environment (Scott and Mowen, 2007; Hill, 1995).

When compared to other categories, soft-adventure travel is the most popular activity. As a sector that is experiencing rapid improvement, soft-adventure travel is demanded to consider potential market tastes (Taruna, 2012). Market tastes can be known by studying the needs and desires of consumers through psychographic segmentation by classifying the lifestyle or personality of the traveller (Jannah et al., 2018). That is because individuals tend to like destinations that are compatible with their personalities (Aaker, 1997) so that the higher the suitability of the two things, the greater the likelihood of tourists responding positively (Sir gy and Su, 2000). Although the use of personality elements in reflecting the activities carried out in the destination has not been confirmed. Few studies have discussed this, even though personality factors that are stable and believed to be universal (Scott and Mowen, 2007), such as the Big Five Personality (BFP) theory, can be used to understand tourists better and predict their travel possibilities. Several empirical studies convey that each trait tends to like different travel activities, such as the tendency of openness which described as liking new and unconventional things will be compatible with high-risk travelling activities (Breivik, 1997).

Conscientiousness tendencies which are described as regular individuals and be careful about matching predictable and safe travelling activities (Jani, 2014). Individuals with active, energetic and adventurous extraversion tendencies will love outdoor activities (Tran et al., 2015). Trait agreeableness will vary according to activities that make it possible to gain closeness with their travelling partners (Fluker and Turner, 2000). Trait neuroticism is predicted to prefer activities that have a high exclusive because individuals with a tendency to neuroticism are described as easily feeling anxious and not too fond of gathering in with many people (Popescu and Olteanu, 2014). However, unfortunately, this trend of travelling behaviour is not followed by the understanding of tourism entrepreneurs to facilitate the needs of tourists according to their personalities and travel styles. Tourism entrepreneurs generalize tourists and build tourist areas and facilities according to current trends, not according to the needs and psychological conditions of tourists. This research becomes interesting, involving the interests and needs of tourists in developing tourist destinations.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study aims to see whether there is a role for big five personalities (BPF), which consists of trait openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism, towards the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel. The research analysis uses multiple

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regression methods to look exploratively at the relationship between the two variables and how strong the role of the predictor is. This research involves the BFI 44-item scale (Ramdhani, 2012) to measure the personality of the traveller and soft-adventure propensity scale to measure traveller's interest in soft-adventure travel. The sample in this study amounted to 1558 who are Indonesian citizens, aged at least 18 years and like travelling activities. The sample selection is taken using a purposive sampling technique based on the criteria mentioned.

The researcher made the adaptation and modification on the scale of the type of soft-adventure travel propensity. The process of trans adaptation refers to Beaton (2000). Researchers conducted an additional process namely focused group discussion (FGD) by involving examples of subjects who have the research criteria as participants, to see whether the results of the adaptation and scale modification that had been done could be well understood by prospective subjects research.

The FGD process produced input in the form of a number of reviews regarding the preferences on how to fill and display the scale, location and activities depicted on the scale (which are considered still quite unfamiliar to FGD participants) as well as adding content to make it easier for the subject to imagine the location or activity intended on the scale.

Data Description

Subject description by gender, more female respondents contributed to this study, amounting to 84%. The dominance of these numbers is in line with research conducted by Tilley and Houston (2016) whereas the more we get old, women are more often travelling or travelling compared to men.

Table 1. Subject description based on age
(Data source: Personal original data)

Age	Amount	Percentage
18 – 24	1277	81.96%
25 – 34	212	13.61%
35 – 44	57	3.66%
45 – 54	12	0.77%
55 – 64	-	-
> 64	-	-

Table 2. Subject description based on work
(Data source: Personal original data)

Activity	Amount	Percentage
College students	978	61.2%
Government employee	23	1.4%
Employee	381	23.9%
Entrepreneur	95	5.9%
Housewife/ husband	39	2.4%
Other	42	5.2%

Researchers used an age range that was also used by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism to help categorize respondents' age groups. Travellers in the age group 18-24 dominated respondents in this study. This condition happened because according to a report from the Canadian Tourism Commission, Millennials or individuals born in the 80s and 90s travelled more frequently and further than other age groups (CTC Reserch, 2015). UNWTO (2010) also estimates that around 20% of the 940 million international tourists who travel the world are young people.

As stated by Hermawan and Hendrastomo (2017) that currently travelling has become a student's lifestyle, where the activity is carried out to fill the free time that is on the sidelines of the lecture routine. A study of recreational activities and travelling habits in college students, found that 92% of students travelled at least once a year (Mosonyi et al., 2013). So it is not surprising that the respondents who contributed the most to this study were students with a percentage of 61.2%. Subject description based on income.

Table 3. Subject description based on income (in IDR)
(Data source: Personal original data)

Income	Amount	Percentage
< Rp. 500,000	495	31.8%
Rp. 500,000 – Rp. 1,000,000	251	16.1%
Rp. 1,000,001 – Rp. 2,000,000	307	19.7%
Rp. 2,000,001 – Rp. 3,000,000	158	10.1%
Rp. 3,000,001 – Rp. 5,000,000	218	14%

Table 4. Way to travelling
(Data source: Personal original data)

Way to Travelling	Amount	Percentage
Solo Travelling	229	14.7%
Group Travelling	1226	78.7%
Open Trip	103	6.6%

The majority of respondents in this study are students who are generally still part-time workers or do not even have income and still depend on pocket money given by parents, so the majority of subjects in this study are in the income group below Rp.500,000. The subject description is based on self-image in travelling.

Table 5. Description of research (Data source: Personal original data)

Variable	Value Decision	Categorization	Number of Subjects%
Openness	X < 20	Low	0.32%
	20 ≤ X 30	Moderate	61.1%
	30 ≤ X	High	38.5%
Conscientiousness	X < 18	Low	0.96%
	18 ≤ X 27	Moderate	53.7%
	27 ≤ X	High	45.3%
Extraversion	X < 16	Low	0.12%
	16 ≤ X 24	Moderate	61.8%
	24 ≤ X	High	37.9%
Agreeableness	X < 18	Low	0.06%
	18 ≤ X 27	Moderate	16.8%
	27 ≤ X	High	83%
Neuroticism	X < 16	Low	14.3%
	16 ≤ X 24	Moderate	68.4%
	24 ≤ X	High	17.2%
Soft-adventure travel	X < 10	Low	0.06%
	10 ≤ X 15	Moderate	1.86%
	15 ≤ X	High	98%

Respondents in this study were dominated by subjects who chose to travel together with the group rather than travelling alone or open trip. As in the Holiday Habit Report conducted by ABTA in 2018, it is known that 51% of travellers prefer to travel together with a partner, 33% choose to travel together with close family, and 4% of travellers choose to travel with colleagues or friends. This can be explained by a survey conducted by CWT (2017), the reason individuals tend to travel with groups is that the current millennial generation has the characteristic of being happy to interact with others when travelling compared to previous generations. The subject description is based on self-image in planning traveling. Respondents in this study were dominated by subjects who preferred to plan travelling independently, as many as 1427 subjects or 91.6% of the total respondents, compared to those who chose to use the services of a travel agency that only amounted to 8.4%. The value of the flexibility will be obtained when planning the trip as desired by the traveller. Currently independently planning the trip to be carried out is also supported by the ease of accessing the internet that provides information to visually present various tourist destinations that may not be entirely accessible to travel agencies (Bhati et al., 2013).

The tendency of openness in the subjects in this study was in the medium categorization with 964 subjects. Likewise with the tendency of conscientiousness, extraversion and neuroticism, each of which amounted to 837, 984 and 1066 subjects. While the tendency of agreeableness and tendency of the type of soft-adventure travelling in this study were dominated by respondents with high categorization totalling 1294 and 1528 subjects.

RESULTS

Simultaneous Test

Table 6. Test Results F (Data source: Personal original data)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1002.631	5	200.526	42.077	.000
Residual	7396.427	1552	4.766		
Total	8399.058	1557			

Based on the analysis it is known that the coefficient F is 42,077 with p equal to 0.00 (p> 0.05), so it can conclude that there is a simultaneous role of the big five personalities on the tendency of soft-adventure travel.

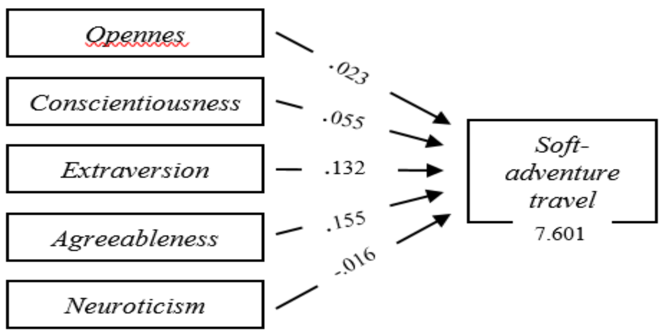

Figure 1. Beta Coefficient (Data source: Personal original data)

The analysis produces the following regression equation:

Y = 7.601 + 0.023x1 + 0.055x2 + 0.132x3 + 0.155x4-0.016x5.

The regression equation above means that if the value of the independent variable is controlled or considered to be 0, then the Y value is 7.601. This means that the value of the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel without big five personalities is 7,601. Openness variable regression coefficient (X1) of 0.023 means that if the value of other independent variables fixed and openness has increased by 1 unit and other X variables are 0, then the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel will increase by 0.023.

The regression coefficient of the conscientiousness variable (X2) of 0.055 means that if the value of the other independent variables fixed and openness has increased by 1 unit, and the other X variable is 0, then the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel will increase by 0.055. Extraversion variable regression coefficient (X3) of 0.132 means that if the value of other independent variables fixed and extraversion has increased by 1 unit and other X variables are 0, then the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel will increase by 0.132. The regression coefficient of agreeableness variable (X4) of 0.155 means that if the value of other independent variables fixed and agreeableness has increased by 1 unit, and the other X variable is 0, then the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel will increase by 0.155. While the regression coefficient of the neuroticism variable (X5) of -0.016 means that if the value of the other independent variables fixed, and neuroticism has increased by 1 unit, and the other X variable is 0, then the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel will decrease by 0.016. The t-test is used to look at the role of the trait (or other more appropriate terms) partially namely openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism on soft-adventure travel.

Following are the results of testing the role of each trait partially:

Table 7. t-Test (Data source: Personal original data)

Trait	t	Sig.
Openness	1.360	.174
Conscientiousness	3.015	.003
Extraversion	5.108	.000
Agreeableness	7.609	.000
Neuroticism	-.995	.320

t-test results with Multiple-Regression analysis shown in the table show that; Trait openness and neuroticism have at the value of 1,360 and negative 0.995 with p> 0.05, so it can conclude that partial openness and neuroticism do not have a significant role in the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel. Trait conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness have t values of 3,015, 5,108 and 7,609 are positive with p <0.05 so it can be concluded that conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness partially contribute to the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel.

Coefficient of Determination

Table 8. Coefficient determination (Data source: Personal original data)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.346[a]	.119	.117	2.18306

The coefficient of determination (R^2) Big five personality is 0.119. This can be interpreted that the big five personality variable can explain the dependent variable (the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel) by 11.9%, while the rest is explained by other factors not examined.

DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis show that big five personality plays a role simultaneously on soft-adventure travel, which means that together trait in big five personalities can predict the tendency of individual interests towards soft-adventure travel. The results of the study are following the statement of McShane and Von Gilinow (2010) which revealed that the five personality traits do not stand alone in isolation which means that the traits of one another trait affect each other's behaviour, interests and abilities. This description is in line with the findings of Tran, Nguyen and Nguyen (2015) who found that travel business owners can attract customers and expand their tourism business by studying the five personality traits and identifying according to marketing targets. While partially the results of the study show that there are three traits of big five personalities that contribute to the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel, with trait having the biggest role being agreeableness, while the other two traits do not show a significant role. The first trait that has a role is the personality trait of conscientiousness. Trait conscientiousness has a positive role in the tendency of soft-adventure travelling types, which means that the greater the tendency of conscientiousness, the greater the individual's tendency to like soft-adventure travel. This is reinforced by the facets of conscientiousness personality tendencies, namely individuals with conscientiousness personality tendencies are described as controlled, thoughtful and careful individuals (McCrae and Costa, 2003).

This is consistent with the characteristics of the type of soft-adventure travelling that has a low level of risk, has definite results, can be arranged in detail, and is located in a safe and controlled environment (Scott and Mowen, 2007; Swarbrooke et al., 2003). The elaboration is also in line with Jani's research (2014) which shows that individuals with high conscientiousness tendencies like safe and comfortable family travelling activities, while individuals with low conscientiousness tendencies like travelling activities related to sports or massive games. The next personality trait that has a role with a positive predictive value of the type of soft-adventure travelling is extraversion trait. This explains that the higher the tendency for someone extraversion, the greater the tendency for individuals to like soft-adventure travel. Individuals with extraversion personality tendencies described as individuals who enjoy and like relationships with many people, full of enthusiasm and adventurous (McCrae and Costa, 2003; Cervone and Pervin, 2012). This is in line with the tendency of soft-adventure travel that is often part of group travel and is an activity with opportunities to socialize in a controlled environment (Scott and Mowen, 2007; Swarbrooke et al., 2003). This explanation is supported by research on the effects of BFP on the type of recreation by Tran, Nguyen and Nguyen (2015) who found a significant relationship between personality traits of extraversion and social interactions, including travelling long distances, interacting, socializing and gathering with other tourists.

The personality trait that also has a decisive role with a tendency to interest in soft-adventure travel is agreeableness trait. Just like the previous trait, this explains that the greater the tendency of individual personality trait agreeableness, the higher the individual's tendency to like soft-adventure travel. This is in line with the facet of the agreeableness personality described by individuals who have high intimacy and altruism, compliance and always try to avoid conflict (John and Srivastava, 1999 in Wulandari and Rehulina, 2013). This is in accordance with the characteristics of soft-adventure travel which is often a part of group travel, consisting of safe activities that are safe and far from violating existing values or norms, as well as offering greater comfort for individuals to obtain quality gathering with their groups (Scott and Mowen, 2007; Swarbrooke et al., 2003). The results obtained are in line with research conducted by Scott and Mowen in 2007, which obtained similar results for American travellers. This explanation was also supported by the findings of Fluker and Turner (2000) which state that the motivation to engage in adventure travel includes 'to be with my friends' and 'to enjoy group experiences' while personality trait that has no role in the tendency of interest in soft-adventure travel is openness trait.

Individuals with openness personality tendencies ware described as liking new things, full of curiosity, looking for varied and different and unconventional experiences (Schneider and Vogt, 2012). According to research conducted by Breivik (1997) on the sensation-seeking and risk-taking personality of mountaineers Everest, individuals with these characteristics are more likely to engage in adventure activities with high or extreme risk levels. This is not appropriate or contrary to the characteristics of soft-adventure travel that is prioritizing security in low-risk activities. Another personality trait that does not have the role of interest in soft-adventure travel is trait neuroticism. Neuroticism Personality traits describe the level of emotional stability an individual has (Cervone and Pervin, 2012). Research conducted in India in looking at intentions to visit the Green Hotel also obtained similar results which showed only personality trait neuroticism which was not significant in predicting visit intention (Verma et al., 2017). The possibility that can explain this is due to the tendency of high trait neuroticism of individuals to describe individuals who are prone to stress and anxiety, and have unrealistic ideas, tend to have maladaptive, shy, impulsive and lack of confidence coping responses (Cervone and Pervin, 2012; McCrae and Costa, 2003). This does not match the characteristics of soft-adventure travel that involves participation in new activities in the outside environment and often becomes part of group trips that require socializing (Scott and Mowen, 2007; Swarbrooke et al., 2003).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of research on the role of the Big Five Personality towards the tendency of the Soft-Adventure traveling type, it concluded that Big Five Personality plays a role simultaneously in the tendency to choose the Soft-Adventure traveling type. As a partial result that the openness to experience trait does not have a significant role in the tendency to choose the soft-adventure traveling type. Conscientiousness personality trait has a role in the tendency to choose the type of traveling soft-adventure. Extraversion personality trait has a role in the tendency to choose soft-adventure traveling type. Agreeableness personality traits have the strongest role in the tendency to choose the soft-adventure traveling type compared to other personality traits and the last personality traits, neuroticism personality trait does not have a significant role in the tendency to choose the soft-adventure traveling type. Tourism managers, such as the Ministry / Office of Tourism, can consider the personality traits of the Big Five Personality to be used as a basis and reference in helping to develop and market tourist destinations that have long existed and new destinations that have similar characteristics to soft-adventure travel.

Trait conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion can be used as reinforcements that persuade travelers to choose the soft-adventure type of traveling. This strengthening can be applied by making the facet of personality as the basis for choosing words in making slogans to attract travelers to visit the intended destination.

For tour service providers, such as travel agencies, they can consider the Big Five Personality trait to be used as a strategy in marketing their agency. This can be applied by adjusting the facilities that will be provided when visiting destinations that have soft-adventure travel characteristics with the facets of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism personality traits.

Travelers can consider the tendency of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism personality traits when choosing a tourist destination with soft-adventure travel characteristics and adjusting traveling activities with personality facets in order to get satisfaction from the activities that will be undertaken.

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE CSÍKSOMLYÓ SHRINE BASED ON THE TOURIST LIFE CYCLE CURVE

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Abstract: The Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage is a tradition that also has a history hundreds of years long, and one of the examples stressing the importance of religious tourism known by many even today. The goal of this study is to research the story, touristic importance and ever-changing role of the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage, mainly from the perspective of the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage being a touristic product, what phase of its life cycle it is currently, what way it's developing right now, and what future it's heading towards. According to the examination on the tourist life cycle curve, the farewell to Csíksomlyó is currently in the phase of development and consolidation. All stakeholders agree that it is necessary to develop the tourism infrastructure for renewal.

Key words: religious tourism, pilgrimage, pilgrim, shrine, Csíksomlyó, Csíksomlyó Shrine

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INTRODUCTION

Csíksomlyó, as a fundamental place for Szeklerland's sacred practice has a history of hundreds of years, and also became one of the most important shrine area for the Hungarian nation. The Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage is a tradition that also has a history hundreds of years long, and one of the examples stressing the importance of religious tourism known by many even today. On a regional scale, the shrine of Csíksomlyó also became one of the most well-known brand, which offers its services – beyond spiritual pleasures – to approximately 250.000 visitors each year. Csíksomlyó is the largest pilgrimage site of the Hungarian people, and became a positive example of religious tourism for everyone in the last 30 years. This year it was included in the collection of Hungaricums. The Csíksomlyó pilgrimage has a significant role in strengthening beliefs and the national self-awareness, furthermore, it has a major effect on Transylvania's and Hungary's touristic development, since it generates a huge customer traffic, and consuming. Given that, according to expert estimates, up to 60% of the 1.2 million tourists who travel to Transylvania each year may be Hungarian (Nagy, 2013), an important objective is to evaluate the impact of the event, which has great significance for the attractive tourism of Csíksomlyó and Csíkszereda.

The Csíksomlyó pilgrimage has a significant role in strengthening beliefs and the national self-awareness, furthermore, it has a major effect on Transylvania's and Hungary's touristic development, since it generates a huge customer traffic, and consuming. Given that, according to expert estimates, up to 60% of the 1.2 million tourists who travel to Transylvania each year may be Hungarian (Nagy, 2013), an important objective is to evaluate the impact of the event, which has great significance for the attractive tourism of Csíksomlyó and Csíkszereda.

The goal of the research is to examine what value the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage has as a touristic product, what effect it has on the tourism of the region, and what are its economic effects in Transylvania. This required us to use the method of data evaluation to examine the volume of the pilgrimage's traffic, use the life cycle phase curve to measure the scale and orientation of current development, and to conduct interview with the Franciscan provincial chief of Transylvania. During the research, we made the following hypothesis: the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage is still mainly considered an important asset for experiencing religious beliefs by the church, but its function as strengthening the self-awareness of Hungarians, and experiencing their unity also became a strong motivational factor.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

During our research, we used both primary and secondary methods.We processed literary sources of this topic: that shed light on the connections between religious and cultural tourism (Bona et al., 2020; Bond et al., 2015; Mintel, 1992; Santos, 2003; Smith, 1992; Stausberg, 2011; Suntikul and Dorji, 2016; Vukonic, 2002; Irimiás and Michalkó, 2013; Mester, 2006; Raffay et al., 2014; Varga, 2011; Fábián, 2010), the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage, and the spiritual and national charm (Harangozó, 2003; Harkányi et al., 2011; Mohay, 2006; Mohay, 2009; Tőzsér and Bánhidai, 2016; Vörös, 2005).

Using the methodology of document analysis, we evaluated the prior research that exists for the topic: sociological context of the pilgrimage's ever-changing role, statistical research on the number of participants, and the research papers looking at the product palette of the pilgrimage as a tourist destination, and its development state. We examined the Csíksomlyó farewell according to the tourist life cycle curve. An interview was conducted with Erik Urbán, the provincial leader of the Transylvanian Franciscans and the church director of the Franciscan monastery of Csíksomlyó in order to integrate the opinions and experiences of the expert of the topic into the results of the research on the changing role and economic significance of the Csíksomlyó farewell.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interpretation and importance of religious tourism

Religious tourism is a form of touristic product continuously in development within the tourism sector. This is mainly due to how the most influential beliefs in the world are on the rise currently, and secondly due to how many tourists include spiritual locations in their touristic goals when they travel (Mintel, 2012). The growth of religious tourism also brought the expansion of visitor numbers with it. Mintel (2012) estimates that in 2015, 46 million religious tourists began their pilgrimage to sacred sites. The amount religious tourists spend on average is estimated to be around 1.000 $, which can be tens of billions of dollars for the entire business. Therefore, religious

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tourism is a significant product within the tourism sector, which uses its attractiveness to make specific and exemplary tourism attractions a target for research, like the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage. Religious tourism doesn't have a unified definition. Experts determine the phenomenon with significant differences, but multiple unified and constant connections can also be found.

The most important general perspective of interpreting religious tourism is that most authors' consensus suggests that religious tourism itself must have some sort of spiritual, cultural interest and respect of varying intensity to the religious tourist (pilgrim), which they put into action by visiting a spiritually important destination (architectural heritage or natural treasure site).

UNWTO (2011) describes religious tourism as any kind of travel to destinations outside of our milieu which is taken due to beliefs or spiritual initiative. Domestic literature suggests the first examined definition may also be the one that's the easiest to interpret. It goes as follows: religious tourism is when people visit a place, building, or shrine, because they consider it to be sacred (Mester, 2006). The author categorised religious tourism into three groups based on the definition:

- Pilgrimage;
- taking part in a spiritual event;
- cultural religious tourism (visiting a temple or a shrine, not due to reasons of beliefs, but because of its cultural, historical and architectural importance).

In this definition, we can consider how the author differentiates between tourists visiting the sacred place based on their motivational reasons to be one of the cornerstones. The basis of interpreting religious tourism is the motivation of travellers visiting the shrine (which may be either spiritual or cultural). Furthermore, the author differentiates between travellers with spiritual motivation as well, and breaks them down into further groups (those attending a spiritual event, and those taking part in a pilgrimage).

Mintel's definition (2012) also shows the many facets of religious tourism, which states religious tourism is the occasion when someone visits buildings, locations or shrines considered to be holy. This activity was categorised into the following groups:

- pilgrimages;
- visiting spiritual areas due to them being considered sacred;
- travelling to spiritual events;
- "temple treks" (visiting a temple's shrine due to the cultural, historical and architectural importance, instead of reasons related to beliefs).

Based on the opinion of authors who wrote another report dealing with religious tourism (Raffay et al., 2014), religious tourism basically consists of services and touristic products reserved for visitors with a spiritual and cultural motivation, that are based on spiritual values.

Varga (2011) considers the definition of religious tourism an attribute structure, where the word refers to tourism and the message is of spirituality and beliefs. The author expands on the explanation's duality when making the definition itself, because the religious nature carries an implicit sacred meaning on the one hand, and since it means a profit-oriented activity due to the nature of tourism on the other hand. She smoothly calls this duality the question of "business or content".

We can see *general connections* when defining religious tourism which are present in all definitions. These are mainly apparent when describing the interests of the religious (or cultural) tourist: a common basis for different definitions is that there is the presence of belief, but on varying levels. And the *main difference* between definitions interpreting religious tourism should be searched for in the subjective factors impossible to measure, and common to tourism, since these are the source of differences. This difference appears in the different natures, levels, and the actual motivations of travellers, of the interest we talked about before. Different authors categorise tourists into different groups based on their motivations and preferences. And this means the spiritual or cultural pilgrimage to sacred sites due to respect or interest, as we're talking about religious tourist (Mester, 2006; Mintel, 2012; Raffay et al., 2014; Santos, 2003; Smith, 1992; Stausberg, 2011).

This is exactly why determining the goals of visitors, which can't be objectively measured, questions the problems of making a definition apparent. Different studies handle people taking part in religious tourism in different ways. The stricter perspective says that only events where memorials or buildings of the Church are visited by people with strong beliefs, due to religious faith-related reasons can be considered religious touristic events (Mester, 2006; Mintel, 2012), while the more lax approach believes that either travellers with or without strong beliefs visiting well-known spiritual sites counts as religious tourism (Raffay et al., 2014; Vukonic, 2002).

As for the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage, we had to focus on the fact that though Whitsun as a Christian holiday bases on Christian values, and the pilgrimage offers this holiday worthy exposure, during the definition's wording, we found that choosing the more lax approach is beneficial due to the different motivations of visitors, in case visiting the pilgrimage and sacred locations is considered religious tourism, regardless of the existence or intensity of beliefs.

Researching the Whitsun Pilgrimage is a special question due to how the holiday persists for four days, and this fact significantly changes the results of the research, in light of who we consider to be a member of the pilgrimage. The height of the pilgrimage is considered to be the mass on Saturday, and the so-called cross tread route going under banners and settlement name signs. As the interview conducted in the Grey friar monastery of Csíksomlyó also suggested, the number of members partaking in the pilgrimage can't be generalised from the Church's perspective either, as the Church considers pilgrimage to be the result of a religious process, which includes the spiritual placation, repentance, and forgiveness. In most cases, this means that most of the pilgrims only spend a single day on Whitsun in Csíksomlyó.

Connections between religious and cultural heritage tourism

Prior decades brought a change in the nature of religious tourism based on the changing needs of travellers, due to the technological development and social changes. Religious- and cultural tourism's borderlines are introduced in Figure 1, which was modelled by Smith (1992) during his research into religious tourism.

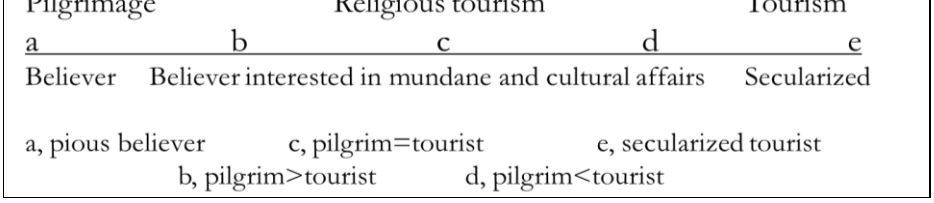

Figure 1. Connections and differences between religious and cultural heritage tourism (Source: author, based on Smith, 1992)

As the illustration also suggests, pilgrimage, religious tourism and cultural tourism don't differ significantly from each other. While the traveller interested in cultural treasures can be called more of a tourist, the traveller in search of God, fuelled by their faith is more of a pilgrim. This transience is what significantly raises the hurdle for researching the topic, and objectively evaluating the precise measurement of results, as faith and spiritual interests due to beliefs are impossible to study from the perspective of total visitor count.

Bona et al. (2020) also found that as secularization has accelerated, a growing number of anthropological studies have illuminated the sacred-secular bipolarity between pilgrimage and tourism and between pilgrims and tourists. The topic of the spectrum from sacred to secular and from pilgrims to tourist remains arguably the foremost issue in research on religious tourism.

Some of the authors also state during their definition that religious tourism is mainly a part of cultural tourism, as those interested in religious tourism are interested in visiting mainly culture historical, art historical, or etymological treasures. These visitors can be categorised into two different groups: either the experience of beliefs and spiritual memories, or the experience of seeing culture historical, art historical, or etymological treasures compel them to visit the given tourist destination (Bona et al., 2020; Bond et al., 2015; Suntikul and Dorji, 2016; Irimiás and Michalkó, 2013; Varga, 2011). Religious tourism in case of the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage is also considered to be a part of the cultural tourism (Tőzsér and Bánhidai, 2016), as those taking part also have the motivation of experiencing the Hungarian cultural background in a belief-related and national context, apart from their relation to faith.

The Csíksomlyó pilgrimage – spiritual and/or national destination?

In Csíksomlyó's case, the problem of designating the boundaries of religious tourism also comes up, since the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage isn't a spiritual experience from the perspective of faith exclusively, but also an important location of experiencing the Hungarian identity in the context of the Church.

The Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage retained its reliance on faith purely for hundreds of years, as a holiday of the Church. Based on sources from said Church, Csíksomlyó has been a location for religious pilgrimages since 1444. This was declared by Pope Eugene IV. in one of his concordats that exists even today. Since 1567, the pilgrimage is a sacramental pilgrimage, which is the point where we can trace the Csíksomlyó Whitsun Pilgrimage back to. The oldest sources place the construction of the Csíksomlyó Shrine to the 15th century. The temple survived the Turkish Occupation, which beliefs and national traditions consider to be the results of the Virgin Mary statue bringing forth miracles, kept in the temple (Vörös, 2005).

Due to the spiritual-physiological healing that often happened in Csíksomlyó, Ignác Batthyány, the bishop of Transylvania declared the Virgin Mary statue a miracle in 1789. The Virgin Mary reverence is further elevated by the Regnum Marianum circle, which stated that King Saint István offered his nation and country to the Virgin Mary in the form of the crown representing it. In light of this, the settlers crowding into the country, and the local Hungarian people found their common Virgin Mary reverence as a point to connect, and the Catholic Hungarian nation was united via this reverence irrelevant to ethnic groups. This is how the statue, and Csíksomlyó became the cultural centre and the symbol of keeping faith for Szeklerland, and later, Transylvania through the years. The century-old tradition of pious Virgin Mary reverence during the Whitsun Holiday was significantly cracked by the political and social changes of the 20th century. In 1949, the reigning Romanian regime prohibited the pilgrimage. Though this prohibition was in effect until 1990, the local settlements kept sending pilgrims in the decades it persisted to Csíksomlyó (Mohay, 2006; Mohay, 2009; Vörös, 2005).

Multiple studies deal with the different motivations for visiting the pilgrimage (Mohay, 2006; Mohay, 2009; Vörös, 2005; Harangozó, 2003; Harkányi et al., 2011). Taking part in the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage changed from its initial form of being an event dedicated to Catholic faith into a modern and popular belief tourism destination, due to the historical changes the 20th century brought about. The Catholic faith still holds a significant role in their motivation, and the pious visits they do to the other Christian believers on the grounds of being ecumenical, but nowadays, visitors with basically no pious belief, but persisting Christian roots have at least this much significance as well, whose main motivation is to experience national self-representation with the Hungarians coming from the Carpathian Basin and other areas of the World. In the following part, we'll summarise perspectives and opinions.

Earlier research suggest that the touristic interest for the event was first caused in the 1970's-1980's, when young intellectuals from Budapest flocked to the Somlyó Pilgrimage because they could meet Csango people there (Mohay, 2006).

In the later 1990's, the fact that people going to the pilgrimage were not fundamentally from a regional, Szeklerlandian region, but from a broader distance, became a more significant fact. Ever since the 1990's, people from the entire area of Transylvania and Hungary have been coming to the pilgrimage, and even other places inhabited by Hungarians, and countries beyond the sea represent themselves (Mohay, 2006).

The international popularity of the pilgrimage, which rose quickly, was partly due to the reporting of mass communication tools, like newspapers reporting from the pilgrimage, and radio- and television programmes. This process brought forth the changes in the Church's holiday. This is how the self-representation in national categories became the main reason for those participating, taking over motivation resulting from faith (Vörös, 2005).

Based on the results of prior research also featured in this study, we can say that the Whitsun Pilgrimage in Csíksomlyó is also communicated as a national holiday by politics and the media, even though it's basically a holiday of the Church, which is how they advance the visitation of Hungarians en masse. Despite this, the emotional relation of the masses visiting the holiday to the message of the holiday isn't only due to this, as it's more of a collective national community experience of the mass of people present. The national symbols, like the signs and flags held up by people during the march are a significant means to this (Vörös, 2005).

Therefore, we can state that the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage went through various changes in meaning since the time of 1990, which made it differ from its spiritual meaning, and these changes represent national elements in the design of the holiday. However, this shouldn't solely be searched for in the changes the holiday's meaning went through. Beliefs play a significant role (both catholic and protestant beliefs) in keeping the Hungarian identity in Transylvania, mostly due to historical reasons, which is why it's hard to differentiate between motivations fuelled by faith and national aspect when comparing people visiting the pilgrimage. Based on the experience of the interview, we can say that experiencing faith is significant in the motivation to visit the pilgrimage, which lets us believe that the opportunity of experiencing their faith in a region housing a strong Hungarian community 500 kilometres from the border is what attracts the mass of visitors (Mohay, 2006; Mohay, 2009; Vörös, 2005; Tőzsér and Bánhidai, 2016).

Analysing the Csíksomlyó pilgrimage destination using the lifecycle curve

Tourism destinations have differing attributes, which is why the nature of tourism and the changes caused are very different for each one, but similar processes can be seen for all tourism destinations. This process is what the destination lifecycle model wants to represent on a theoretical level, which starts from the fact that the demand for the local tourism destination is in relation with the attitude locals have towards tourism, and the current development state of the tourism sector (Butler, 2011; Palancsa, 2007).

The most well-known tourism lifecycle curve is Butler's model (1980). Butler believes the tourism lifecycle curve consists of six consecutive phases. The various phases bring different amounts (each more or less than others) and types of visitors, and have different development levels and tourism-brought effects (Butler, 2011; Palancsa, 2007) (Figure 2).

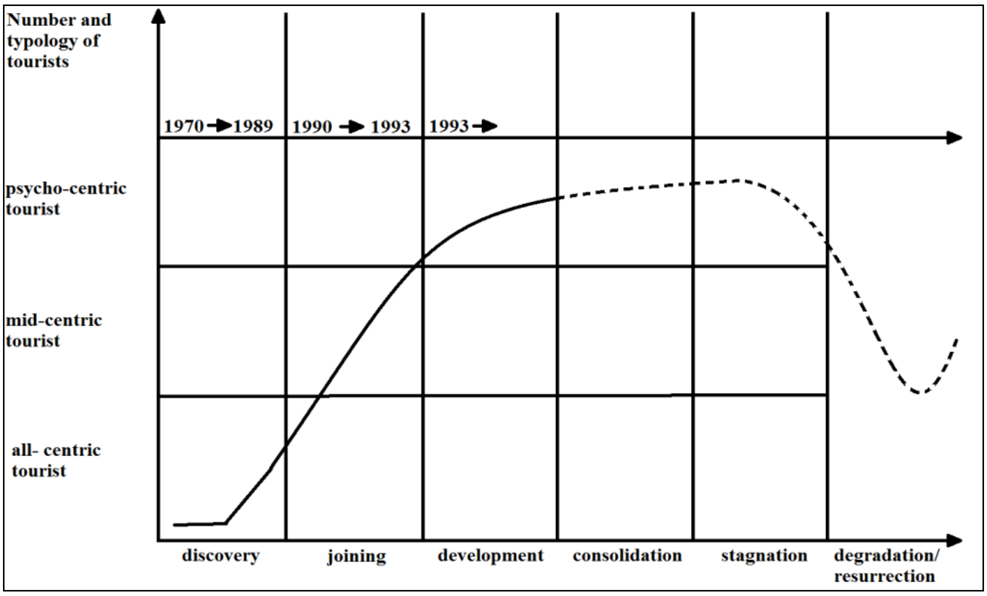

Figure 2. Tourism destination lifecycle curve model (Source: author, based on Palancsa, 2007)

The theory of the lifecycle curve has multiple weaknesses. One of these is that the exact number of visitors is unknown, or that there is no data for the structure of visitors, which makes precise illustration impossible.

To familiarise ourselves with the lifecycles of the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage, we have to briefly introduce the tourist types in the model using Plog's tourism research perspective (Plog, 2001).

Plog's analysis can be considered ground-breaking with its starting point, as it researched tourists as it would a population. The fundamental questions of the analysis are openness, acceptance, interest in new and unusual experiences, and how much tourists are attracted to known, familiar experiences. Based on these points, Plog differentiated between three types of tourists (Plog, 2001).

1. Allo-centric type: those wishing for entirely new experiences, and visiting completely unknown destinations, tourists representing one end of the spectrum. They are a risk-taking type, searching for areas, people and situations which differ from their usual lifestyle.
2. Psycho-centric type: the other end of the spectrum. Tourists searching for the absolutely known, the feeling of "just like home".
3. Mid-centric type: the tourist type placed between the two ends of the spectrum, which represents the most generic traveller's perspective. Looks for new experiences, but in home-like environments if possible.

As all models, the Plog-type tourist-types also have problems: the interpretation and experiencing of "new experiences" and "home-like environments" can be different for people with differing cultural and social backgrounds. However, since the actual topic of our research is the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage and its visitors, we can generally say that there are no significant differences thanks to the identical or similar pious and cultural background. Szeklers and Hungarians taking part in the pilgrimage have similar preferences, and their motivation is basically to experience their national identity in a religious context.

Today, the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage is one of the most well-known element of Transylvania's tourism offers, and hundreds of thousands of visitors arrive here annually. The seasonal tourism influenced by the pilgrimage as well also has an economic effect in the region: Harghita County accepts the highest number of tourists in the main season of summer.

The tourism lifecycle curve suggests *the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage is currently on the border of the development and consolidation phases.* The research conducted on-site also supported that the number of visitors coming to the pilgrimage can only be estimated, and this number is on the rise, becoming higher each year. The basis of using the tourism destination / product model for the analysis is that the theoretic starting points of the model are cross-referenced with data at hand.

According to the theoretical model, the first phase is the timeframe of *discovery* in a destination's (currently, a tourism product's) life.

This timeframe, based on the Butler thesis (Butler, 2011) means that a small number of generally all-centric tourists visit. These tourists are here in the name of exploration, and are interested in novelties. As the tourism destination doesn't have a tourism infrastructure, tourism itself has no significant economic, social or cultural effects. The area is hard to approach, and the interest is generated basically by natural treasures.

In the case of the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage, the phase of discovery was the timeframe between 1970 and 1989. In the phase of discovery, theory and practice were almost perfectly aligned. Interest in the pilgrimage became more apparent from the 1970's, when intellectuals from Budapest with a wanderlust were the main visitors, coming to meet Csangos (Mohay, 2006).

The next phase of the model is the phase of *joining.* Based on the theory's description, developing the tourism infrastructure begins in this phase, mostly for lodging and guest services. The first investors appear, and the tourist season, which means the highest visitor count is also determined. Tourists come into direct contact with locals.

The timeframe of joining happened between *1990 and 1993* for the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage. After the year of the political change, the amount of visitors that come to take part in the pilgrimage was on the rise. From the few university students visiting the event until 1989, a huge crowd grew that became interested in it, and it was so numerous that the shrine wasn't able to welcome visitors anymore. After the Romanian Communist Regime fell, most of the people appearing at the first pilgrimage were from Transylvania. The mass and the pilgrimage were first held on the square before the shrine where the visitors were, and were later re-directed to the valley of Mt. Somlyó, where the open-area shrine's construction begun. "The mass of people was so huge that the entire area was crippled. The mass was on the square before the temple at that time, and there were too many people that we had to take it out to the valley" (Erik Urbán's interview).

The phase of joining is followed by the phase of *development,* which is in the process of happening, and started in 1993, based on currently available data. Based on the theoretic description of the model, this timeframe is basically when the mass of visitors grow: the number of people visiting increases beyond the number of locals. At the same time, the number of local entrepreneurships also increases, and the intensity of marketing-communications is also on the rise. Attractions made by man exchange the primary function of natural and cultural interests.

During the development phase of the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage, pilgrims from the entirety of Hungary and Transylvania arrive, while the Carpathian Basin's Hungarians and other countries from beyond the sea also represent themselves. As the interview conducted in the Grey friar monastery of Csíksomlyó also suggested, the development of touristic products can also be dated here. By relocating the pilgrimage from the shrine to the valley of Mt. Somlyó, the Church made the conditions applicable to accepting hundreds of thousands of visitors, but the open-area shrine planned by architect Imre Makovecz was also constructed to this end in 1996. Based on the opinions of expert asked during the interview, we can say that the capacity of hotels, hostels and private housing was also made during these years, which is expanding even today, and is capable of serving the hundreds of thousands of people arriving for the pilgrimage.

The phase of *consolidation* is described by a decelerating growth, and the search for new markets. To keep visitor number high, an intense marketing-communication activity is happening. Psycho-centric tourists appear between the visitors, and investors from abroad also start appearing in the economic life of the destination. The life quality of locals deteriorates, and resentment towards tourists also appears.

Today's Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage can be described with the developing tourism infrastructure, the continuing construction of the Virgin Mary Road, the partaking in the Recultivatur international religious tourism project, and the expansion of the Church's programs. According to the interview, making Csíksomlyó an attractive place even outside of the pilgrimage became the focus. Accepting visitors, and offering them programs, spiritual placation and practices not only at the Whitsun holiday, but during the entirety of the year also became important. This process is evident, thanks to the online communication (blogs of grey friars, websites of Hungarian travel agencies), and the programs of the Virgin Mary Road Community.

The next phase of Butler's thesis is the *stagnation.* This is where the number of visitors reaches the limit of the area's capacity. The most notable effects are from insufficient exploitation and strong seasonality. The appearance of mass tourists signifies that the destination became an outdated fad. The dependence on returning tourists becomes strong, and entrepreneurships often change leaders.

Based on the interviewee's experience, the increase in numbers visiting the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage is still happening, but a kind of deceleration can be felt. The increase in marketing intensity can be felt in print and online media, lodgings that are open are reserved for the pilgrimage months before the event itself happens. The popularity of the destination persists. We can feel a strong seasonality, and pilgrim programs aren't significant yet.

The last phase of our analysed model is *degradation.* In this phase, mass tourists choose not to visit, entrepreneurships cease to function, and the touristic infrastructure deteriorates. Seasonality becomes relevant for the entire year, while tourists search for new destinations.

Degradation isn't in effect for the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage, as a touristic product currently, but for this to persist, the renewal of the event is necessary, which came into the planning phase last year.

Based on the analysis, *the Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage shows both the attributes of the development and those of the consolidation phases of the lifecycle curve analysis at the same time.* The increase in visitor count is still significant, but shows a decelerating tendency. The number of visitors is many times over that of locals, tourism sprouts more and more entrepreneurships, but many opportunities are still buried within the destination's attributes, to which the region seems to react, in the form of development plans for the time being.

The product palette of the pilgrimage is constant, its contents stagnate, but all persons of interests agree on how the touristic infrastructure has to be developed for the renewal process, which mainly consists of summarising capacities at hand, and collecting the local stakeholders of tourism.

CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this research is basically to evaluate the changing form, and the national and touristic importance of the Csíksomlyó Whitsun Pilgrimage. Summarising the research, we can say that the 30 years that went by since 1990, the year that brought popularity to the pilgrimage organised for the 453rd time in 2020, can be considered insignificant compared to the historical frame of the shrine's existence. However, 30 years is more than enough to prove that the holiday attracting hundreds of thousands for four days is on the rise, and its popularity is ever-increasing, even today. This process is long-term, and worth investing in.

The data collected during the analysis, and the tourist destination lifecycle curve model employed for using said data both suggest that the increase in interest is continuous, even if it's following a slightly decelerating tempo. This practically means that since 1990, people visiting the event are more numerous every year, but we can't talk about an exponentially increasing mass of visitors anymore.

During the on-site research, once again, we were able to prove that though the Grey friars deal with organising the pilgrimage alone, the huge volume of the event doesn't make it unsuccessful, both from a sacrilegious perspective (as pious believers have four days to experience spiritual practices), and from a touristic perspective (as both guests and locals accept the mass coming to the pilgrimage with persistent hospitality each year). The pilgrimage is also successful from an economic perspective, so to say: though we don't have precise data on this, during the interviews, the focus turned to how SMEs can also profit from the visitors that come during Whitsun; supported by both the leaders of the mundane and the religious worlds during their respective interviews.

As for environmental effects, we didn't find any negative impact either. The nature of the event guarantees that visitors behave themselves appropriately, and this also develops in the proper way.

During the on-site research, our hypothesis which suggests that the pilgrimage re-orientated to a mundane, national event didn't hold true. Based on the experiences, the original nature and goals of the pilgrimage were kept intact, moreover, the Church's primary goal – experiencing faith – is still the most notable factor. Due to the occupation of the Church, this event isn't handled as a touristic product, which is why touristic validation isn't a primary condition.

The Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage, as a touristic research topic doesn't have a long history. In recent years, multiple media products and organisations tried to measure the number of people visiting the pilgrimage using some sort of method. The research planned to continue from the current point requires that a methodology for measuring the visitor count is made, and used to conduct measurements.

Based on the experiences from Transylvania, local demands prioritise a well-thought out touristic infrastructural development. The shrine and its direct constructed environment are under national heritage protection, meaning implementing construction projects on a large scale is practically impossible. As for developments, the main demand is to renovate Church-owned buildings, and the construction of a Grey friar museum, which could introduce the 500-year history of the Grey friars to visitors, and their amassed spiritual and physical treasures.

All significant actors (friars, civilians, municipality) consider awakening the interest incoming tourists have in Csíksomlyó the most important task, not only during the pilgrimage, but beyond that as well, and to keep people who visit the area in place for as long as possible. In order to realise this, they try to increase the interest in religious tourism using events of the Church, and organising spiritual practices, and via different projects and the initiatives of civilian organizations.

Csíksomlyó, as a touristic destination depends significantly on the Whitsun Pilgrimage for its development. In order to avoid falling into the trap of seasonality, and to make the area a religious goal of tourists during the entire year, a more intentional, professional and thought-out marketing practice is needed (mainly product development, and marketing-communications). Other than the pilgrimage, many other Church holidays should be advertised, which would increase the balanced popularity of the shrine itself.

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CONSUMERS' INTENTION TO STAY IN GREEN HOTELS IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE EFFECT OF ALTRUISM AND GREEN SELF-IDENTITY

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Abstract: The aim of the study was to investigate the effect of the extended Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) model that included two personal factors (altruism and green self-identity) on consumer intention to stay in green hotels. First, the study examined how the individual construct of the TPB model affected consumer intention to stay in green hotels. Second, the study investigated how the extended TPB model that included two personal factors (altruism and green self-identity) affected consumer intention to stay in green hotels. Third, the study examined if attitude towards green hotels mediated the relationship between altruism and green self-identity and intention. The study adopted the quantitative research design and the cross-sectional survey method was used for data collection. The Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS SEM) was used for data analysis. Based on a dataset of 416 respondents, the results confirmed the applicability of the TPB model in predicting consumer intention to stay in green hotels in South Africa. The inclusion of altruism and green self-identity increased the predictive power of the TPB model. Additionally, the study found a partial mediation effect of attitude in the relationship between altruism and intention. The mediating effect of attitude in the relationship between green self-identity and intention is insignificant.

Key words: Theory of planned behaviour, green hotels, altruism, green self-identity, South Africa

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INTRODUCTION

Rapid economic growth in many developing and developed countries has led to many negative effects such as the overuse of resources, pollution and environmental degradation. There is a growing acceptance that one of the most important challenges faced by the world is climate change (Alvarado and Toledo, 2017; Ali and Oliviera, 2018). Individual and business behaviour and action related to consumption are one of the causes of these ecological issues (Noor et al., 2014; Constant, 2019; Rahman, 2020). Growing awareness of sustainable development is driving individuals and businesses to shift to sustainable consumption and business models. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal number 12 focuses on the use of sustainable production and consumption by individuals, businesses and governments to increase resource efficiency, promote sustainable lifestyle and reduce environmental degradation (Pradhan et al., 2017; Folarin and Adeniyi, 2020).

Despite their positive contributions, hotels are associated with high emissions of greenhouse gases, heavy consumption of natural resources and substantial production of waste with damaging effects on the environment (Alipour et al., 2019; Karim and Islam, 2020; Kurniawati et al., 2020). Hotels have started to pay attention to environmental issues due to increased stakeholder pressure especially from customers and governments. Subsequently the implementation of green initiatives is increasing in hotels in order to reduce negative environment impact and associated costs, attract and retain customers, sustain competitive advantage and ultimately improve financial performance (Chan et al., 2018; Mbasera et al., 2018; Chivandi et al., 2020). This has stimulated the development of green hotels described as lodging establishments that are committed to ecologically sound practices (Han et al., 2010). Green hotels are a growing niche in the current South Africa's competitive hospitality industry but progress is limited and many hotels are still conventional (Hoogendoorn et al., 2015). One of the ways to distinguish green hotels from conventional hotels is certification which can be described as a voluntary process by an organisation that assesses and gives written assurance that a product, process or facility meets specific standards and awards a marketable logo (Honey and Rome, 2011).

Spenceley (2018) in a study on sustainable tourism certification in the African hotel sector finds that only 153 hotels in South Africa have been awarded green certification. According to Nimri et al. (2019), consumers have displayed conflicting interests in green hotels. Although there is a high media publicity about environmental issues and green hotels, many consumers still consider environmentalism as an issue of low importance and are reluctant to voluntarily change their consumption choices (Burke et al., 2018). In addition, empirical studies that focus on consumer/traveller behaviour in relation to green hotels are limited. A review of green research in hospitality (2000-2014) by Kim et al. (2017) revealed that out of 146 empirical papers, only 37 (25.3%) focused on consumers while the majority 61 or (41.8%) were management cantered. Furthermore, Nimri et al. (2019) remark that a theoretically-driven perspective to exploring the formation of consumer behaviour towards staying in green hotels is limited and should be expanded. This will help to advance knowledge about the determinants of consumer intention to stay in green hotels.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) is the dominant model of intention formation and has been used by studies on intention to stay in green hotels (Chen and Tung, 2014; Manosuthi et al., 2020). The TPB is open to modification and can be deepened and broadened by the addition of new variables as long as they will improve the explanatory power of the model (Ajzen, 1991). The extended versions of the TPB have been to explore the intention to stay in green hotels (Suki and Suki, 2015; Verma and Chandra, 2017). One of the criticism of the TPB is that it does not include, personal norms, affects and emotions (Wolff et al., 2011). Altruism is related to personal norm as it involves the act of doing something good for other people without expecting anything in return (Nguyen et al., 2017). Furthermore, self-identity is a personal factor that can be used explain pro-environmental intention and behaviour (Gatersleben et al., 2014). However, studies that have used altruism and green self-identify to investigate consumer intention to stay in green hotels in developing countries are scarce. In addition, Carlo et al. (2005) point out that the relationship between personality traits (e.g. altruism) and behaviour can be better explained by examining the role of a mediating variable. Attitude may mediate the relationship between personality variables such as altruism and pro-environmental behaviour because some unique psychological resources of an individual

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may lead to behaviour modification. Gatersleben et al. (2014) remark that although researchers have used self-identity to extend the TPB, however, research is inconclusive about the role of self-identity in the TPB structure. There are conflicting findings about whether self-identity has a direct effect or an indirect effect on intention and behaviour through attitude (Sparks and Shepherd, 1992). To the best of the author's knowledge, this is the first study that will examine the mediating effect of attitude in the relationship between altruism and green self-identity from the context of consumer intention to stay in green hotels.

Therefore, the objectives of the study are threefold. First, the study will examine how each construct of the TPB model affects consumer intention to stay in green hotels. Second, the study will investigate the effect of the extended TPB model that includes altruism and green self-identity on consumer intention to stay in green hotels. Third, the study will examine if the relationship between altruism and green self-identity and intention can be mediated by attitude.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

Green hotels

Verma and Chandra (2017) point out that the hospitality industry has adopted ecologically-friendly initiatives because of growing concern about the environment by customers and other stakeholders. This has led to the development of green hotels. Chen and Chen (2012: p 212) describe a green hotel as a hotel "with the goal to introduce the idea of environmental protection into either hotel hardware or software in order to save energy and reduce wastes". Hardware refers to the construction of the hotel and the main physical facilities while software describes the employees and the operational processes. According to Han et al. (2010), green hotels are lodging establishments that are committed to ecologically sound practices Some of the features of a green hotel include green construction, green purchasing, energy saving, recycling and well trained employees and management about eco-friendly practices (Chen and Chen, 2012; Verma and Chandra, 2017).

Theory of planned behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Ajzen, 1991). The TRA contends that an individual's intention to perform a behaviour is the main determinant of whether he/she actually performs the behaviour. This is because such behaviours are volitional and under the control of intention. The TRA argues that behavioural intention is influenced by two factors namely attitude towards performing the behaviour and subjective norms (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). The TPB extends the TRA by adding perceived behavioural control as one of the predictors of intention (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB stipulates that the performance of a specific behaviour by an individual is determined by the intention which depends on attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude towards the behaviour measures the degree to which an individual has a favourable or an unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour being measured. Subjective norms measure the likelihood that important reference individuals or groups such as friends and family will approve or disapprove the performance of a particular behaviour. Perceived behavioural control can be described as the perceived difficulty or ease of conducting a behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Farrow et al. (2017) point out that after a general explanation of what constitutes subjective norms, the difference between injunctive and descriptive norms becomes an important area of distinction. Injunctive norms describe what significant others think that an individual ought to do while descriptive norms refer to what significant others themselves do (Doran and Larsen, 2016).

The TPB has been used to examined consumer intention to visit green hotels. Han et al. (2010) used the TPB to examine the intention of customers to visit green hotels. The population for this study was lodging customers in the United States of America (USA). The findings of the study indicated that the TPB model has a good predictive power with the three TPB constructs positively affecting the intention to stay in a green hotel. Teng et al. (2015) in a Taiwanese study also find that customer behavioural intention to stay in a green hotel is predicted by the three TPB constructs with subjective norms having the biggest effect. The findings of a study by Shen (2017) on consumer intention to dine in green restaurants in Taiwan also support the applicability of the TPB model with the three constructs having significantly positive effects. The study by Suki and Suki (2015) explored the relationship between returning tourists' propensity to stay in green hotels in Malaysia and find significant positive effects of attitude and perceived behavioural control.

However, the impact of subjective norms is not significant. In addition, Verma and Chandra, 2017 in an Indian study and Nimri et al. (2019) in an Australian study strongly validate the applicability of the TPB model and find significant positive relationships between the three TPB constructs and consumer intention to stay in green hotels. An examination of the empirical studies discussed above showed that they have focused mainly on USA, and Asia. There is a dearth of studies with an African focus. However, on the basis of theoretical and empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are developed.

Hypothesis 1: Attitude towards green hotels has a significant positive effect on customer intention to stay in green hotels.
Hypothesis 2: Subjective injunctive norms have a significant positive effect on customer intention to stay in green hotels.
Hypothesis 3: Subjective descriptive norms have a significant positive effect on customer intention to stay in green hotels.
Hypothesis 4: Perceived behavioural control has a significant positive effect on customer intention to stay in green hotels.

Altruism and intention to stay in green hotels

Altruism is a personal value structure with significant influences on behaviour and it involves concern about the welfare of society and others (Teng et al., 2015). The norm-activation theory by Schwartz (1977) depicts altruism in the context of environmental concern. The theory argues altruistic individuals tend to internalise responsibility for the welfare of others and this can affect attitude towards pro-environmental behaviour. The findings of empirical studies on the relationship between altruism and pro-environmental behaviour are inconclusive. Ryan (2017) in a study on the effect of altruism on the intention to purchase green products in the USA finds a positive but insignificant direct relationship. Ojedokun (2011) investigated the effect of altruism on responsible environmental behaviour in Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed a significant positive relationship between altruism and responsible environmental behaviour. In the context of the intention to visit green hotels, Teng et al. (2015) in a Taiwanese study used altruism to extend the TPB. The findings indicated that altruism has a positive and significant effect on consumer intention to visit green hotels.

Some studies have examined the indirect effect of altruism on the intention to stay in green hotels. Tan et al. (2020) argue that when altruistic consumers find the stay in green hotels compatible with their altruistic value, they can develop a strong reason for patronage and this can drive behavioural intention. The study conducted in Malaysia found that reason for patronage mediates the relationship between altruism and consumer green hotel patronage intention. Ojedokun and Balogun (2010) in a study conducted in Nigeria find a significant positive relationship between altruism and attitude towards littering. In addition, Carlo et al. (2005) point out that the relationship between personality traits (e.g. altruism) and behaviour can be better explained by examining the role of mediating variable. Attitude may mediate the relationship between personality variables such as altruism and pro-environmental behaviour because some unique psychological resources of an individual may lead to behaviour modification. Ojedokun and Balogun (2010) find that attitude towards littering partially mediates the relationship between altruism and responsible environmental behaviour. Consequently, the following hypotheses are developed.

Hypotheses 5: There is a significant positive relationship between altruism and intention to stay in green hotels.
Hypothesis 6: Attitude towards green hotels positively mediates the relationship between altruism and intention to stay in green hotels.

Green self-identity (GSI) and intention to stay in green hotels

According to Lalot et al. (2019), green self-identity, describes the extent to which an individual perceive him/herself as an environmentalist. Self-identity is one of the constructs that can explain human behaviour and can be used to extend the TPB (Gatersleben et al., 2014). Research is inconclusive about the role of self-identity in the TPB structure and whether self-identity has a direct or an indirect effect on intention and behaviour through attitude (Sparks and Shepherd, 1992). Charng et al. (1988) argue that self-identity is already covered by attitude and the causal link from an individual's self-identity to behavioural intention cannot be independent of attitude. Other studies (Granberg and Holmberg, 1990) assert that self-identity can offer meaning to a behaviour that is independent of attitude towards performing the behaviour as long the behaviour supports the self-identify of the individual. Individuals with GSI may purchase environmentally friendly products and services because they are in congruence their self-definition needs (Qasim et al., 2019). Barbarossa et al. (2017) find that the effects of GSI on pro-environmental behaviour can be direct and indirect. GSI can have a direct impact on pro-environmental behaviour and individuals that perceive themselves as green consumers are more likely to engage in specific pro-environmental actions and behaviour that support their green self-identity role. With respect to the indirect effect, individuals that perceive themselves as green consumers are more likely to be concerned about the ecological effect of their consumption choices and more likely to perceive the moral obligation of pro-environmental behaviour leading to a stronger intention to use eco-friendly alternatives. Empirical studies (Carfora et al., 2017; Qasim et al., 2019) find a significant positive relationship between GSI and green intention and behaviour. An individual on the basis of expectation of him/herself can consume a product or service that aligns with their perceived identify. Therefore, GSI may significantly affect behavioural intention and behaviour. It is hypothesised that:

Hypotheses 7: There is a significant positive relationship between GSI and intention to stay in green hotels.
Hypothesis 8: Attitude toward green hotels positively mediates the relationship between GSI and intention to stay in green hotels.

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual model of the study.

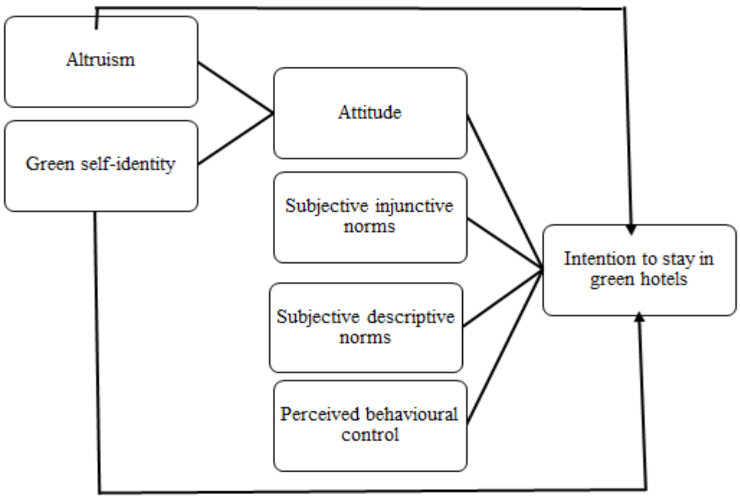

Figure 1.The conceptual model (author's conceptualisation)

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study adapted the quantitative research design and the cross-sectional survey approach was used to collect data from the respondents. The respondents were random customers that came to stay in selected conventional hotels in Pretoria and Johannesburg and Polokwane in the Gauteng and Limpopo Provinces of South Africa. The Gauteng Province is the economic hub of South with Johannesburg being the largest city and Pretoria the administrative capital of the country. Many hotels are located in the two cities with many visitors. Polokwane is the economic hub of the Limpopo Province. The sample for the study includes all South African travellers who have stayed in conventional hotels and are aware of green hotels. The convenience sampling method was used to select hotels that are graded by the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa in the study area. The managers of seventy hotels were formally contacted through e-mailed letters to solicit for the participation of their hotels and visitors in the survey. Twenty hotels agreed to participate and fifty questionnaires were allocated to each hotel. Three trained field agents assisted with data collection. The privacy of hotel visitors was respected and only willing hotels and visitors were selected. To aid participation of hotels, the purpose and benefit of the study to the tourism industry were explained in a covering letter. Respondents were recruited by intercepting those visiting hotels.

Additional questionnaires were left in agreed places (dining rooms and reception halls) and collected after completion. Telephone numbers of contacts in the participating hotels were obtained. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured and the names of the hotels and visitors were not requested and not included in the questionnaire. The cover page of the questionnaire included a detailed description of a green hotel in order for respondents to get a good understanding of the concept. The survey was conducted between September and December 2019. Before actual data collection, the questionnaire was pretested with thirty respondents and the pilot study led to minor adjustments to improve content validity. The questionnaire was divided into two sections demographic and determinants of intention to visit green hotels. The Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS SEM) was used for data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response rate and biographical details

1000 questionnaires were distributed and four hundred and sixteen questionnaires were returned and usable by the end of December 2019. Eighteen questionnaires were not usable because the respondents failed to complete significant questionnaire items. There were 231 male and 185 female respondents. The age distribution was as follows: 18-20 years, 17 respondents, 21-30, 62 respondents, 31-40, 145 respondents, 41-50 136 respondents, 51-60, above 60. 348 respondents have post Matric qualifications (diplomas and degrees) and 86 respondents have Matric qualification.

Structural equation modelling

The evaluation of the measurement model

The study followed the criteria by Hair et al. (2019) for the evaluation of the measurement model. These include the examination of factor loadings (>0.708), composite reliability (between 0.790 and 0.900), Cronbach's alpha (> 0.700) and the AVE (minimum 0.500). Also, the square roots of the AVEs should be greater than the correlations amongst variables. The results as indicated by Table 1 showed that the composite reliability values for the constructs ranged between 0.811 and 0.875. In addition, the Cronbach alpha coefficients for all the construct range between 0.728 and 0.826 indicating a satisfactory internal consistency of measures.

Table 1. The measurement model Data source (author's data analysis)

Construct	Measurement items	Item loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Attitudes (ATT) For me, staying in a green hotel when traveling is good	ATT1	0.836	0.826	0.857	0.600
For me, staying in a green hotel when traveling is desirable	ATT2	0.724			
For me, staying in a green hotel when traveling is pleasant	ATT3	0.804			
For me, staying in a green hotel when traveling is wise.	ATT4	0.729			
Subjective injunctive norms (SIN) Most people who are important to me would want me to stay in a green hotel when travelling	SIN1	0.821	0.728	0.811	0.589
Most people who are important to me think that I should stay in a green hotel when travelling	SIN2	0.753			
Most people who are important to me will want me to stay in a green hotel when travelling even if it might be more expensive	SIN3	0.726			
Subjective descriptive norms (SDN) Most people whose opinion I respect will stay in a green hotel when travelling	SDN1	0.802	0.712	0.813	0.592
Most people that I consider important will stay in a green hotel when travelling.	SDN2	0.779			
Most people that are important to me will stay in a green hotel when travelling even if it might be more expensive	SDN3	0.726			
Perceived behavioural control (PBC) Whether or not I stay at a green hotel when traveling is completely up to me.	PBC 1	0.866	0.746	0.831	0.623
I am confident that if I want, I can stay at a green hotel when traveling.	PBC2	0.769			
I have resources, time, and opportunities to stay at a green hotel when traveling.	PBC3	0.726			
Altruism (ALT) I think that staying in a green hotel helps decrease pollution	ALT1	0.808	0.808	0.864	0.615
I think that staying in a green hotel helps conserve natural resource	ALT2	0.771			
I think that staying in a green hotel helps to mitigate global warming	ALT3	0.826			
I think that staying in a green hotel helps to protect the environment	ALT4	0.728			
Green self-identity (GSI) Acting environmentally friendly is an important part of who I am	GSI1	0.882	0.802	0.875	0.638
I am the type of person who acts environmentally friendly	GSI2	0.831			
I see myself as an environmentally friendly person	GSI3	0.744			
I can make significant changes in my lifestyle for environmental reasons	GSI4	0.727			
Intention (INT) I am willing to stay at a green hotel when traveling	INT1	0.842	0.728	0.834	0.623
I plan to stay at a green hotel when traveling.	INT2	0.801			
I will make an effort to stay at a green hotel when traveling	INT3	0.728			

This implies an acceptable level of construct validity. The AVEs ranged between 0.589 and 0.638 suggesting a good convergent validity of the scales. The Fornell and Larcker criteria was used to assess discriminant validity. The results as depicted by table 2 showed that the square roots of AVEs are depicted on the diagonals are greater than the corresponding correlation coefficients within the constructs. It can be concluded that the measurement model is satisfactory.

Table 2. Discriminant validity Data source (author's data analysis)

Construct	Mean	Standard deviation	INT	ATT	SIN	SDN	PBC	ALT	GSI
INT	3.95	0.86	**0.789**						
ATT	4.12	0.81	0.548	**0.775**					
SIN	3.58	0.84	0.403	0.505	**0.768**				
SDN	3.25	0.77	0.206	0.424	0.471	**0.769**			
PBC	3.42	0.81	0.508	0.601	0.627	0.555	**0.789**		
ALT	4.05	0.93	0.604	0.619	0.526	0.618	0.574	**0.784**	
GSI	3.69	0.88	0.624	0.613	0.716	0.508	0.602	0.422	**0.798**

Diagonals in bold signify the square root of the AVE while the other figures depict the correlations

Structural model assessment

The assessment of the structural model includes the examination of the common method bias, the $R^{2,\text{ the}}$ Q^2 and the evaluation of the path coefficients (Hair et al., 2019). The VIFs for the constructs of the study ranged from 1308 to 2.540 suggesting that that the model is free of CMD. The R^2 shows the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable. R^2 values are 0.25 (weak), 0.50 (moderate) and 0.75 (substantial) (Kock, 2011). The original TPB model accounted for 38.8% of the variance in intention. The extended model explained 45.1% of the variance. This indicates that inclusion of two constructs (altruism and green self-identity) increased the explained variance by 6.9%. To determine if the model adequately explains the empirical data, the goodness of fit test (GOF) was used. The values of the GOF range from 0 to 1 with 0.10 considered small, 0.25 medium and 0.36 large. The GOF is 0.537 suggesting that the empirical data satisfactorily fits the model and has a good predictive power in comparison to baseline values. In addition to the size of the R^2, a recommended test is the predictive relevance of the model (Q^2). The two prediction techniques for the Q^2 are the cross validated communality and cross validated redundancy with Chin (2010) suggesting the use of the former. A $Q^2 > 0.5$ is considered a predictive model and a Q^2 of 0.66 obtained by this study is indicative of a highly predictive model. The effect size (f^2) shows the effect of one construct on another construct and values are 0.02 (small), 0.15 (medium) and 0.35 (large). The effect size, f^2, ranged from 0.108 to 0.136 indicating that the effect sizes of different endogenous constructs on the exogenous constructs ranged from small to medium. The results path coefficients and T-statistics and mediation are depicted in tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Path coefficient and T-statistics Data source (author's data analysis)

Hypothesised path	Standardised Beta	T-statistics	Decision
H1 ATT→INT	0.311	4.088*	Accepted
H2 SIN→INT	0.127	2.580**	Accepted
H3 SDN→INT	0.104	2.305**	Accepted
H4 PBC→INT	0.247	3.802*	Accepted
H5 ALT→INT	0.184	3.201**	Accepted
H6 ALT→ATT→ INT	Partial mediation (table 4	-	Accepted
H7 GSI → INT	0.118	2.404**	Accepted
H8 GSI→ATT→INT	No mediation (table 4	-	Rejected

*P<0.01; ** <0.05

Table 4. Mediation results Data source (author's data analysis)

Mediation path	Indirect effect	Total effect	Bootstrap 95%		Decision	VAF
			Bias-corrected	Percentile		
H6 ALT→ATT→INT	0.092**	0.271** (4.885)	[0.042;0.110]	[0.044;0.116]	Accepted	33.95%
H8 GSI→ATT→INT	0.024	0.114 (1.183)	[0.061;0.124]	[0.066;0.129]	Rejected	

*P<0.01; ** <0.05

The results H1 (β =0.311, T= 4.088, p<.001), H2 (β= 0.127, T= 2.580, p<.005), H3 (β =0.104, T= 2.305, p<.005), H4 (β =0.247, T= 3.802, p<.001), H5 (β =0.184, T= 3.201, p<.005), H7 (β =0.118, T= 2.404, p<.005) support significant positive direct relationships between attitude, subjective injunctive norms, subjective descriptive norms, perceived behavioural control, altruism and green self-identity and consumer intention to stay in green hotels. Thus, hypothesis one, two, three four, five and seven are accepted. Mediation considers the presence of an intermediate variable or mechanism that transmits the effect of an antecedent variable to an outcome According to Nitzl et al. (2016), mediation involves two main phases: (1) the significance of indirect effects and their magnitude should be determined. (2) the definition of the type of effect and/or mediation that exist. Thus the existence of full or partial mediation (which can be complementary or competitive partial mediation). In a complementary partial mediation, both the direct and indirect effects point in the same direction (e.g. both are positive or negative) while in a competitive partial mediation, they point in different directions (e.g. one is positive and one is negative). The Variance Accounted For (VAR) can be used to determine the existence of full or partial mediation and a mediation is close to zero if the VAF value is less than 20%. If the VAF value is between 20% and 80% (partial mediation) and VAF value above 80% full mediation (Hair et al. 2019), Table 5 depicts the results of mediation. The indirect path between altruism, attitude and intention is positive and significant (β =0.271, T= 4.885, p<.005). In addition, the VAF is 33.95%. Thus a complementary mediation partial is confirmed and hypothesis six is supported. The indirect path between altruism, attitude and intention is not significant (β =0.114, T= 1.183, p>0.05). Therefore, there is no mediation and hypothesis eight is rejected.

The findings support the applicability of the TPB model in predicting consumer intention to stay in green hotels in South Africa. Attitude, subjective injunctive norms, subjective descriptive norms and perceived behavioural control have significant positive relationship with consumer intention to stay in a green hotel. The results indicated that individuals with a positive attitude towards green hotels are likely to stay in green hotels. The findings showed that the effects of subjective injunctive and descriptive norms on the intention to stay in green hotels are significantly positive. The results indicated that the opinions of people that are important to the consumer can influence the intention to visit green hotels. In addition, the findings support a significant positive relationship between perceived behavioural control and intention to visit green hotels. This suggests that if individuals have the opportunities and resources to choose green hotels, will be more inclined to stay in green hotels. The findings of this study are supported by the results of prior empirical studies. Han et al. (2010), Teng et al. (2015) and Verma and Chandra (2017) find that the three TPB constructs positively affect consumer intention to visit green hotels and that the TPB model has a good predictive power. Nimri et al. (2019) also find a significant positive relationship between travellers' injunctive norms and intentions with the effect of descriptive norms being insignificant. However, the findings of the study by Doran and Larsen (2016) on intention to choose eco-friendly travel options indicated a significant positive association between descriptive and injunctive norms and behavioural intention.

The study added two constructs altruism and green self-identity to extend the TPB. Also, the mediating effects of attitude in the relationship between these two constructs and intention were examined. The findings indicated a significant positive relationship between altruism and the intention to stay in green hotels and are consistent with the results of previous empirical studies. Ojedokun (2011) finds a significant positive relationship between altruism and responsible environmental behaviour while Teng et al. (2015) used altruism to extend the TPB and find a significant positive relationship between the construct and intention to visit green hotels. The findings of the study also support a significant positive relationship between green self-identity and intention. This suggests that individuals that perceive themselves as environmentalists are likely to stay in green hotels. Studies by Carfora et al. (2017) and Qasim et al. (2019) also find a significant positive relationship between green self-identity and intention and behaviour. The findings of the study indicate that attitude partially mediates the relationship between altruism and intention to visit green hotels. Ojedokun and Balogun (2010) find that attitude towards littering partially mediates the relationship between altruism and responsible environmental behaviour. The mediating effect of attitude in the relationship between green self-identity and intention is insignificant. The findings of this study is supported by Sparks and Shepherd (1992) that self-identity can contribute to behavioural intention independently of attitude and that the influence of self-identity on intention is not mediated through evaluative attitude. Finally, the findings of the study support the view by Ajzen (1991) that the addition of appropriate constructs can improve the explanatory power of the TPB.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated the predictors of consumer intention to stay in green hotels in South Africa by extending the TPB. The results indicated significant positive relationships between attitude, subjective injunctive and descriptive norms, perceived behavioural control, altruism and green self-identity and consumer intention to visit green hotels. The mediating effect of attitude in the relationship between altruism and intention is significant. Theoretically, the research confirms the applicability of the TPB model in predicting the intention to stay in green hotels and the usefulness of the extended model that included altruism and green self-identity. The results of the study indicated that ttitude, subjective injunctive norms and perceived behavioural control positively affect intention to stay in green hotels. To improve attitude, the hospitality industry and hotel management should create awareness about the contribution of green hotels to environmental protection through electronic, social and print media. Green hotels should provide information to customers about the amount of resources that are been saved by their activities and how they are protecting the environment.

This can help to shift the behaviour of consumers towards sustainable consumption. Previous consumers that have visited green hotels should be used in marketing campaigns various media platforms to share the benefits and encourage potential visitors. To improve perceived behavioural control, green hotels should be made affordable to consumers as there is the perception that they are significantly more expensive than conventional ones. In addition, creating the impression that green hotels are family friendly with facilities that are geared toward family comfort can help to improve subjective norms. Altruism and green self-identity also influence the intention to stay in green hotels. Therefore, governments, non-governmental organisations and media should continue to emphasise the need for people to protect the environment for today and future generations. This can help to create altruistic feelings and promote green identity in individuals. The study has some limitations and also proposes some areas for further study. The study focused on the predictors of intention and not actual behaviour. Intention does not always predict behaviour and other studies can investigate the determinants of green hotel staying behaviour. The inclusion of other personal variables such as response efficacy, anticipated guilt and moral norms can help to improve the explanatory power of the TPB model in the context of the intention to stay in green hotels.

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SUSTAINABLE MARINE ECOTOURISM MANAGEMENT: A CASE OF MARINE RESOURCE CONSERVATION BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM OF BAJO MOLA COMMUNITY IN WAKATOBI NATIONAL PARK

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Abstract: Wakatobi National Park has much tourism potential, so management and protection are needed to maintain its sustainabilit. The purpose of this study was to review local wisdom of Bajo Mola community to manage sustainable marine ecotourism in the Wakatobi National Park Area. This study used descriptive qualitative method. The data was collected through observation, in-depth interviews, documentation and literature review then analyzed using the triangulation models. The results of this study found that the conservative tradition which still survives and applies in Bajo community was duata sangal, parika and pamali. That local wisdom must be maintained for the sustainability of marine ecotourism in the Wakatobi National Park area. For bajo people, living on the sea means not only as income sources but also as tradition.

Key words: Local Wisdom, Bajo Mola, sustainable tourism, Wakatobi National Park

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INTRODUCTION

Human life cannot be separated from its environment. It is because of humans and the environment always has an emotional or functional relationship that can affect both components. The relationship between humans and their environment has formed a system of local knowledge to manage the environment and their natural resources (Mutia et al., 2019). Human action, either passive or active, can be a determining factor for the continuity and sustainability of natural resources that have been provided by the gods. One action could affect the increase or decrease of the environmental quality and directly impact on human life itself. When the environment is not maintained, it can give a negative impact on humans, but if maintained, it can provide welfare for humans (Suprayogo, 2013).

The role of local wisdom is needed to manage the environment as an act of sustainability. Local wisdom is a form of environmental wisdom on social life in a place or region (Wahyuni and Hasanah, 2016), which is always related to humans and the environment. Local wisdom is mostly influenced by traditional values such as how a social group implements the principles of conservation, management and exploitation of natural resources (Masita, 2012). Those contain lessons to maintain and utilize natural resources in a sustainable manner. There are many examples of the local wisdom in the community about managing coastal and marine resources, such as the local wisdom of Madurese fishermen to utilize fisheries products called "Onjem" which is made of ropes, coconut leaf stems, and buoys, and mounted using weights to the deep sea. Therefore, it attracts fish to gather even during the dry and starving seasons (Sumarmi et al., 2019).

Along with the rapid modernization, concern for the conservation of natural resources continued to decline. It is caused by high exploitation and inappropriate use to meet human needs. Environmental issues in the 21st century are triggered by the indiscretion of development, the application of science and technology and the lack of environmental knowledge that causes negative impacts in all aspects of life (Sumarmi, et al. 2019). As an example was the rise of various cases in the Wakatobi National Park area such as destructive, illegal fishing, sand mining, lack of management synergy (visitors and the fishing businesses), as well as ineffective management of tourism, excessive exploitation of resources and other technical problems such as government policies in conservation have not been resolved to this day (Dirhamsyah, 2016; Sopari et al., 2014; Khasanah, 2019; Lewin et al., 2010)

Tourism is also affected by human activity even though it contributes to the state revenues. It is caused by the lack of communication and coordination between related parties that involved publishing information about the ecotourism development, also the lack of understanding of ecotourism by the public, as well as the existence of internal political dynamics (Nasrun, 2016). Piartrini (2018) revealed that tourism involves the interaction of individuals from different regions and cultures from the local community then creates a social and economic relationship.

Local community involvement is needed in creating local wisdom to realize sustainable tourism development. Albrecht (2010) stated that community involvement in tourism planning determined by the community's perception of the tourism development plans itself, including how the potential for economic, social, and environmental impacts on the community livings. Sustainable tourism is a tourism approach that emphasizes the importance of the host community and also aims to optimize the economic benefits of tourism for the host community. Management of the park with the Bajo culture is expected to be effective to maintain the Wakatobi National Park (Elliott et al., 2010).

Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

Local wisdom is human intelligence in utilizing nature. Local wisdom is similar with human behavior related to God, natural signs, agricultural environment, home construction, education, marriage and birth ceremonies, food, life cycle, health and disaster management (Wagiran, 2012). Sartini (2014) stated that local wisdom functions as (1) the conservation and preservation of natural resources, (2) the development of natural resources, (3) the cultural and scientific resources, and (4) the advice, beliefs, literature, and restrictions in the community.

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It is necessary to know the function of local wisdom so that sustainable marine ecotourism management could run as expected for the area that makes tourism as the main asset. One region that makes tourism as the primary income is Wakatobi Regency. The improvement of Wakatobi tourism was made through community-based management strategies. Maritime tourism is the main sector developed by the Wakatobi regional government. Tourism is developed through community-based management that integrated into the concept of ecotourism. The principle of management is to improve the welfare of the community independently and maintain environmental sustainability. This management system involves the government, the foreign private sector and the community. To realize community-based tourism management in Wakatobi, the Government and National Park Offices then formed a Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) (Dilwan and Astina, 2019).

As an area with a lot of natural resources potential, the conservation of Wakatobi National Park urgently needed to be done. Wakatobi is one of the national parks and biosphere reserves (UNESCO, 2012) in Indonesia. It showed that Wakatobi has strategic role in the Eastern of Indonesia. Along with the opinion of Turak (2003) that stated Wakatobi as a biodiversity hotspot functions as a larval supplier for fish resources (Sumber Daya Ikan) and marine biodiversity resources (Keanekaragaaman Hayati Laut). The population of Wakatobi in 2018 reached 94,985 (BPS, 2019) and fishing was the main source (94%) of the community livelihood. The great potential of marine and fisheries is seen from the large number of people who depended on this sector.

Living around the Wakatobi National Park area gave blessings to the Bajo Mola community because of the rich sources of marine products. The life of Bajo people who live in coastal areas and survive with marine resources has shaped their behavior to depend on marine products. It was proved by almost 98% of the community working as fishermen to such as tuna, coral, squid and others. Therefore, the role of fisherman gave a diverse economic impact on the community.

With a fairly large number of people in the Bajo Mola community currently at 7,035 people (BPS, 2019) can have an impact on resource exploitation. Bajo people viewed that sustainability could be realized with belief in Gods and have encouraged their self-conscious to manage existing resources. Another study analyzed that the Bajo community has a good arrangement to capture the location based on group behavior (Bahtiar, 2012). The continuation of the Bajo community in preserving marine resources was supported by regulating fishing time and using a traditional boat called "Leppa or Sopek" (Artanto, 2017).

Integrating the management of the Wakatobi National Park area with the local wisdom of the community can improve sustainable marine ecotourism. It was supported by how the Bajo people interpret the meaning of a sea. For Bajo culture, the sea is not seen only as a place to live and income sources, but it is also a place for the spirits of their ancestors. Bajo people have a unique maritime culture system, which if traced, studied and developed can be adapted in the management of coastal and marine resources (Wani and Ariana, 2018; Bennet, 2019).

If Wakatobi tourism management runs well, tourism can be beneficial for the community, not only for the current time but also in the future. The Wakatobi National Park management plan for the next ten years (2018 - 2027) is directed to optimize the potential of the natural environmental services through the development of destinations while maintaining the integrity and conservation of existing resources as the primary assets aligned with the vision of Wakatobi National Park, which is "Wakatobi National Park as The World's Best Maritime Ecotourism Destination" (RPJP TNW, 2018-2027). Based on these considerations, the role of local wisdom is very much needed.

METHODOLOGY

Population and Participants

Bajo Mola residence in Wakatobi Regency is administratively divided into five villages, namely Bakti fishing village, South Mola village, Mola Samaturu village, North Mola village and Mola Bahari village. The five villages are better known as Mola Village or Bajo Village located in the south of Wangi-Wangi sub-district area. The geographical position of Mola Village located on the coast with an area of ± 8.3 Km² and the boundaries are followed; (1) the north is bordered by the sea, (2) the east is bordered by Mandati III village, (3) the south is bordered by the sea and (4) the west is bordered by the Strait of Oto Uwwe Island. The research location can be seen in Figure 1 below.

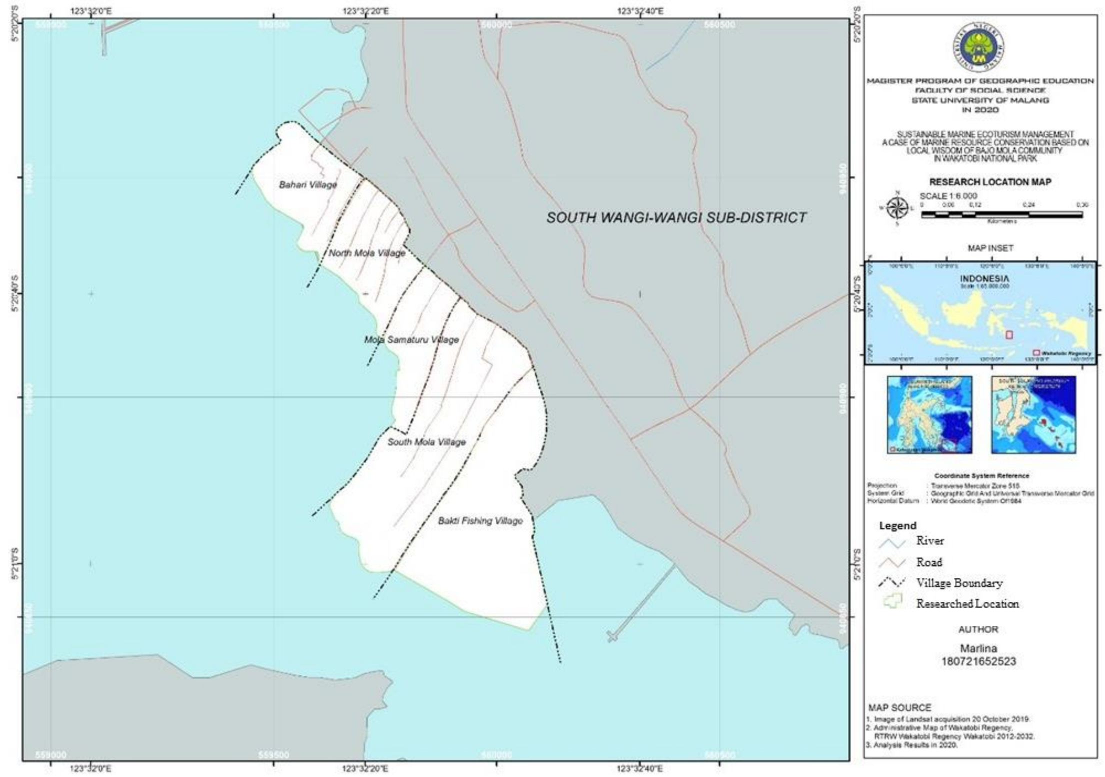

Figure 1. Bajo Mola Village, Wakatobi Regency (Source: Rencana Pengelolaan Jangka Panjang Balai TNW, 2018)

Physically, Bajo Mola Village is a village formed above the sea and located on the coast of Mandati. As a result of reclamation, the Mola village has an evenly distributed topography in the entire region of around 1-2 meters above sea level, which is relatively flat (between 0% -5%). The climatology conditions of Mola Village are divided into two seasons: the dry season (also called the east season) which runs between April - August and the rainy season (called the west season) which lasts from September to April with a daily temperature of 19°-34°C (RPJP, 2020). The geographical condition of the Mola village is influenced by the Flores Sea and the Banda Sea. In the west season, the waves and streams can be quite large, while in the east season are relatively calm.

As the bio-ecological status, the Mola seaside consists of several essential ecosystems, like seagrass and coral reefs in which live various types of marine creatures such as baronang fishes, crabs, sea cucumbers, shellfishes and other small fishes. Recent data showed the rapid growth of Bajo people in Mola village so that it is proposed to become a new sub-district of Wangi-Wangi island. Bajo Mola people have experienced many changes in their lifestyles, jobs, and rituals in daily life. Though the Bajo community is divided into five villages, their characteristics as Bajo people remain the same in every village. This division is only an attempt by the government to facilitate the administration process. The condition of habitation of Bajo people can be seen in Figure 2.

Figures 2. Bajo Community Habitation above the Sea

Data Collection Methods

This study used descriptive qualitative method. The data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, documentation and literature review. This study was conducted in five Bajo Mola villages in Wakatobi Regency, Indonesia. The data were obtained from key informants, namely Bajo traditional leaders and supporting informants from the Wakatobi National Park office, local government, and Bajo Mola community leaders. The key informants were traditional leaders called Mbo 'Daseng / Sandro from Nelayan Bakti Village and Mr Hakir from the north Mola, then supporting informants were Mr Salahudin as the head of the north Mola village and Mr Hartono as chairman of the Padakuangsama community in the north Mola village. There are also several community leaders in the five Bajo Mola villages as the informants.

Data Analysis

The data analysis used the triangulation model to study the local wisdom of Bajo Mola community for the sustainable marine ecotourism management around Wakatobi National Park. Moleong (2016) stated that triangulation is a data validity technique that uses something other than the data to check or partially compare the data. Researchers first conducted a literature study from various sources and then checked the data by conducting observation and in-depth interviews with traditional leaders, the government, the community and with the officials of Wakatobi National Park. Interviews conducted with traditional leaders, local government and communities related to the meaning of the sea for the Bajo people, the local wisdom of Bajo used to protect the sea, also on how the Bajo people assess the existence of Wakatobi National Park. Furthermore, interviews were also conducted with Wakatobi National Park officials related to community involvement, especially the Bajo Mola community to manage the Wakatobi National Park. The data were obtained from the informants later.

RESULTS DISCUSSIONS

The Local Wisdom of Bajo Community

For the Bajo people, living on the sea gives a special meaning as it feeds and provides for the house. The meaning directly formed a unique culture. Even the modernization is very fast, but it was not necessarily abandoned the culture of ancestors. Bajo Mola people still highly respect and support the culture and customs of their ancestors, proved by how local wisdom affect every marriage procession and the procession before going to the sea. The type of conservative tradition that still survives and applies in Bajo society can be explained as follows:

1. Duata Sangal

Duata sangal is an activity to put betel nut off the sea. It consists of two words, "Duata" means request and "Sangal" means a dish for the ancestors of Bajo people (also known as "the sea people). The ritual is carried out if they get obstacles or difficulties during fishing in the sea. The duata ritual is generally the peak ritual of the Bajo people, which is taken when the traditional healing rituals, such as kaka, tuli, kutta, or kadilaok kadara did not find results. Therefore, a wealthy family that was classified will continue to the last stage, the duata ritual. Implementation of the ritual requires a high cost because it was held for about three days. Mbo 'Daseng, a special sanro who lead this ritual, stated that the preparation of ritual equipment, materials for offerings, and any preparation before the ritual begin, as well as the dancers who would be present at the ritual, making this ritual more expensive.

This ritual also presents a variety of arts such as music which is played using drums and gongs. There are also dance arts that involved sick people or one of the duata descent (the Bajo whose parents have performed this ritual) who can dance and feel the spirits enter his body. Furthermore, there is the performing art played by the sanro, who leads the ritual.

The duata ritual also performed before going to the sea called the sangal duata. The process of this ritual looks simpler than other rituals such as the duata ritual for treatment. The ritual is carried out over the sea by folding 4 pieces of betels (luppiseba) crosswise that has been filled with stuff such as areca nut, lime, gambier and tobacco with the position of betel leaves should face upward. The folds of the betel leaf (also called sangal) are then sent down to the sea after certain prayers have been read. Then it is observed how the movement of the sangal, overlapped or separated, following the sea wave. The contain of betel can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The contain of *Sangal*

Bajo people believe that the movement was not caused by the sea wave, but sangal is an indication from the Bajo ancestors before going out to the sea. It provides clues about how much luck will be gained that day. Mr HK explained that if the movements move away then gathers again, and then the fortune that will be obtained will be very large, such as the catch result will be much. Meanwhile, if the movement is silent and slow gathering, it shows that the luck gained is little or nothing. Sangal is used as a greeting for fishing. Another meaning is as a request from the Bajo to God for all the catch that has been given.

The four betel crosses in the sangal ritual means the four characteristics of human direction, namely the right, left, front and back sides. It also means that the nature of human physical perfection consisting of four senses, namely the eyes, ears, nose and mouth, which if the four senses owned then the human is considered perfect. The ritual has a condition interpreted as a way for the Bajo people to be grateful for the natural resources that God has created to be managed wisely as a form of obedience. For the Bajo, the sea is a resource that can be owned by permission from God and must be maintained from damage.

2. Parika

The relationship between humans and their environment can indirectly affect the knowledge system and the models of human life. The existence of the knowledge system as a result of the adaptation process to nature has formed the local wisdom. Local wisdom is knowledge or way of life that shows as the activities of local communities such as customs, religion, science, economics, communication, and art, which functions to answer various problems in maintaining, repairing, developing elements of their needs by paying attention to ecosystems, and human resources (Marfa'i, 2012; Sumarmi, 2019; Sumarmi, 2020). For the Bajo Mola community, the knowledge system of the sea is a gift from the Gods that have had it from their ancestors.

The knowledge had by the Bajo to keep marine resources can be seen in their parika (a fisherman leader). Parika is the chairperson, leader, and coordinator who has the authority and responsibility to lead the marine activities under the authority of a punggawa (the owner). The knowledge is believed by Bajo fishermen to be able to regulate and direct the activities of fishing to get much catch. Parika has a big task so that to be a parika must meet certain requirements. The requirements are: (1) having extensive knowledge and enough experience to lead the sea activities, (2) having the leadership, (3) responsible and (4) trustworthy.

Bajo people think that parika is a smart person who has had many catches. According to Mr HK, the ability of parika to manage marine resources can be seen from his knowledge to arrange the right time to go to the sea, to know the nature of fish, the time of fish to lay eggs and hatches, the fishing spots, and others. The knowledge about the sea owned by Bajo fishermen is no doubt because for the life of Bajo people are very close to the sea. Parika knew the right time to go to sea in a certain area every year. Parika managed all activities at a certain time. Within a year, parika could be managed six months to fishing on the reef and the rest six months on the deep sea. Fishing on the reef started in October-April (the west season). The reef fish caught are sunu and grouper fish. Fishing for sunu fish was best done in October-December, while for grouper fish was in January - April. Then from April to October (the east season) was the right time to fishing the tuna.

The parika knowledge of fishing on the coral was based on the calculation of the moon cycle. One cycle takes 29.5 days so that this period is the right time for fish to lay eggs and hatch. The reef fish such as grouper and sunu fish spawn from the 15th day to the 26th. On the night of the 27th day is a time for fish to lay eggs. The method used by the fish is to jump to the surface of the sea and spray the eggs. During this time, fish eggs will scatter on coral reefs until they hatch and become small fishes. Then, on the 28th day to the 29th day is the right day to catch the reef fish, because at that time the fish enter the hunger phase after laying eggs, so it has a high possibility for fishers to get much catch. The process of breeding such the reef fish lasts for up to 6 months. In the breeding season, parika gives fishers time to catch other marine animals such as octopus, shellfish and others.

Fishing activities are mostly influenced by weather and climate conditions. Parika knows certain times, such as during the transition season (around April-May) can affect the fish activity. Some reef fish prefer strong waves compared to other types of fish that prefer calm waves. Usually, tuna will find food during that time or when they are carried by the waves followed by a crowd of dolphins is a sign that they are rising to the surface. At the same time, seabirds will come to look for food. Fishers use this condition as a guide to fishing in that zone. Fishermen observe dolphin activity on the surface while throwing bait, but sometimes the bait is eaten by seabirds. If the bait gets maximum results, the tuna caught can even reach tens of kilograms. According to Mr HK, the tuna fishing season is often constrained by the strong waves. At that time, the Bajo people asked for guidance from their ancestors by putting betel nuts in the sea (duata sangal). In certain conditions, Bajo people even give their foods, such as rice or others.

The decision made by parika to catch fish was based on the consideration that fish must be given space to lay eggs and hatch and to limit fishing activity on a certain time agreed by traditional leaders and community leaders. This method intended so that fish can lay eggs and hatch without interference from humans. Parika taught how to manage and use wisely the coastal and marine resources.

3. Pamali

Pamali means a prohibition, which is a restricted area to catch fish that has been determined by the traditional leader. Fishing activities in these zones acted as a violation and were banned under regulations. Pamali for Bajo people is the rules that must be obeyed by all communities, especially for fishers who were fishing at sea.

Pamali locations known by Bajo Mola are around the Kapota reef. There are 3 locations of pamali namely “maduangalo” (means the front of the house), “mabulisapa” (means the back of the house) and torosapa (a large rock shaped like a fisher on a boat). Maduangalo is located in the northwest of the Kapota reef while mabulisapa in the southeastern part of the Kapota reef until it borders the tip of the Kaledupa reef. Pamali location of maduangalo and mabulisapa based on the zone map is the Wakatobi National Park tourism zones. Then the torosapa at the southern end of Wangi-Wangi Island or in the eastern part of Kompoone Island is the marine protection zone of Wakatobi National Park area. The zone map can be seen in Figure 4.

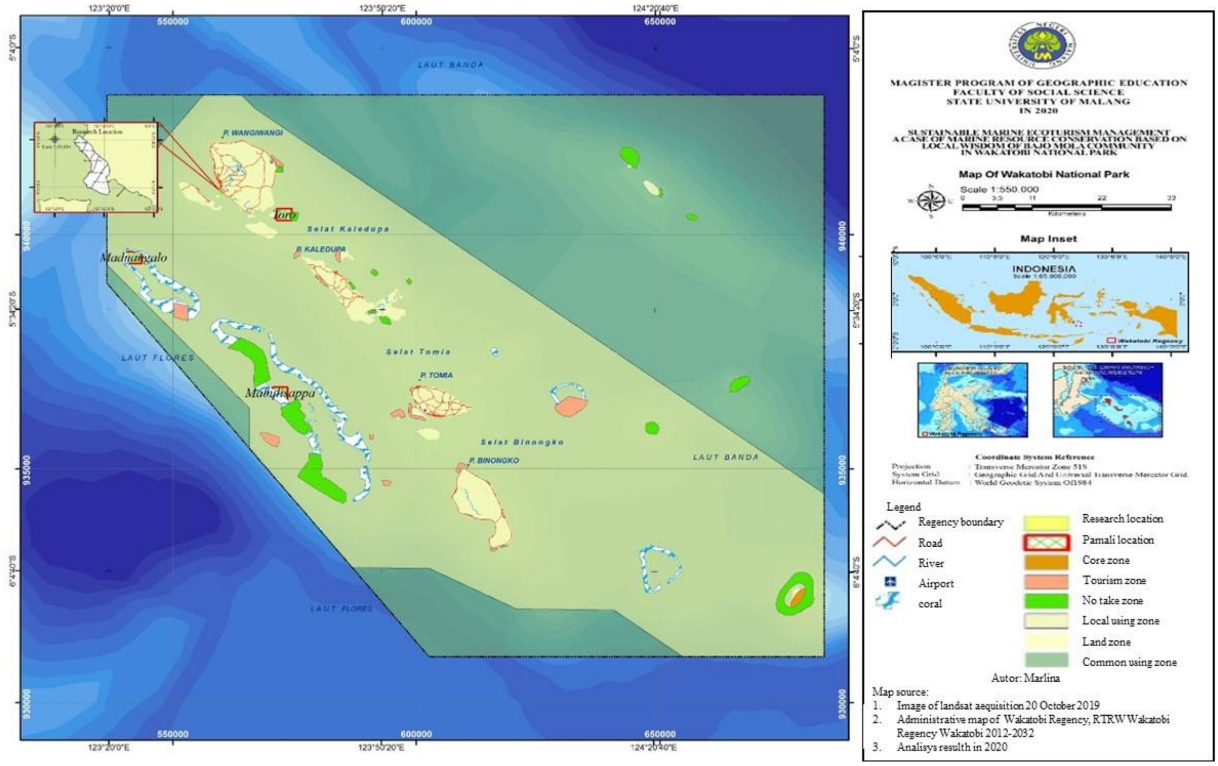

Figure 4. The Zone Map of Wakatobi National Park (Source: Rencana Pengelolaan Jangka Panjang Balai TNW, 2018)

Activities are forbidden to do in pamali locations such as cursing, shouting, immoral and littering. Although the Bajo people know that the pamali area is a zone that has a lot of fish, they do not dare to do activities that are prohibited in that zone. They considered shouting as a violation as well as booming, using potassium or anesthesia. The zone consists of the core zone, protective zone, rehabilitation zone, utilization zone, and traditional utilization zone.

For Bajo people, the pamali is a very sacred area and is feared because there lives a guardian to protect the place. Bajo people believe that pamali is a gathering place for fish, just like humans who gather and then return to their homes. Pamali means that the natural potential and resources are a gift from God, but humans are given knowledge and moral to limit them and use wisely so that the next generation can enjoy it.

Integration of Wakatobi National Park Management with Bajo Local Wisdom

Humans have used natural resources in various ways, especially in the tourism area. In the last few decades, tourism has developed into a sustainable tourism activity by making nature and culture as the main objects (Firdaus et al., 2019). Integrating the management of tourism areas with culture is an act of mutual support and can add economic benefits. Tourism is one of the most effective solutions to overcome rural poverty. The economic benefits received from the diversity of occupancies are reasons for people to preserve the environment through the tourism management of community group (Purnomo et al., 2020; Kurniawati et al., 2020; Sumarmi, 2020). Even the Wakatobi National Park planned as the leading destination for marine ecotourism in the world, but it can decrease if it is not managed optimally. It occurred because human needs are increased but not followed by conservation awareness. For this reason, the integration of sustainable tourism management with community involvement is needed.

Wakatobi National Park has a lot of potential so that the development was increased. The government has launched a program of 10 Indonesian Tourism Leading Destinations for 2015-2019 (Dilwan et al., 2019). Wakatobi Islands and the surrounding within an area of ± 1,390,000 Ha are designated as National Parks based on Minister of Forestry's Decree No. 393 / Kpts-VI / 1996, on 30 July 1996 (MENHUT, 1996), and has been settled based on Minister of Forestry Decree No. 7651 / Kpts-II / 2002, 19 August 2002 (MENHUT, 2002). This area consists of four large islands, namely Wangi-Wangi Island, Kaledupa Island, Tomia Island and Binongko Island and then divided into five districts which are included in the Administrative District area of Wakatobi, province of Southeast Sulawesi. Wakatobi National Park (TNW) is managed by a zoning system, which is determined based on Decree of the General Directory of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation No. 198 / Kpts / DJ-VI / 1997 on 31 December 1997 (MENHUT, 1997).

The long-term management plans and strategies for Wakatobi National Park in 2018-2027 were based on the vision, mission, goals, the SWOT analysis results, strategic issues and the scope of management. The scope of management was focused on three aspects, namely regional management, natural resource management and environmental services also institutional management. Strategies to be used in the long-term management plan for 2018-2027 include: (1) adding socialization area and management area to stakeholders in the park; (2) doing collaborative management, community empowerment, and security with various parties including the law enforcement officials, regional governments, communities and indigenous peoples in the park; (3) improving the management of natural resources and their ecosystems, also the recovery of plant or animal ecosystems; (4) utilizing environmental services and developing marine ecotourism to empower communities around the area; (5) ensuring surveys, studies, research, and activities that produce innovative breakthroughs in waste management; (6) increasing institutional capacity through adding the number of staff, doing education and training, managing human resource placement system, funding, and improving management facilities.

The support given to Wakatobi National Park can be seen from the Spatial Plan of Buton District (before the formation of Wakatobi District) which states that Wakatobi National Park area is classified as a special area to preserve the environment. It means that the existence of Wakatobi National Park has received support from local governments and communities. Unfortunately, the conditions on the area have not fully demonstrated the integration between related parties. The Wakatobi National Park management realized that there are still weaknesses in the adoption process, so it is considered to have not gone through the consultation process at various levels. Also, the space division is not aligned with the designation functions and needs, so the determination of the old zoning causes a lot of conflict in the area.

There are three main principles of the management on Wakatobi National Park area, namely preservation, protection and utilization. Preservation, especially the preservation of protected animal species such as preserving the existence of turtle species. Protection is an effort to manage and protect coral and fish species by continuous monitoring. Then the utilization is the management effort to manage the community wisely so then be able to use the environmental-friendly fishing gear. For more than a decade, Wakatobi National Park office has been trying to socialize to the community the importance of preserving Wakatobi National Park by involving them in monitoring, such as being a forestry police partner. Also, Wakatobi National Park continues to monitor the quantity and quality of resources.

These efforts need to be appreciated as an effort for Wakatobi National Park conservation. Another fact was shown that there are still cases of violations committed by irresponsible people. The Wakatobi National Park officials said that the patrol done was not enough to punish the vandalism. They understand the many needs for the community, as well as the lack of personnel to oversee the park, remained unresolved obstacles. For this reason, sustainable management requires collaboration between many parties as human responsibility for nature. It can be done by managing sustainable marine ecotourism based on the local wisdom of the community. The sustainable tourism development based on the community can be carried out in two stages namely, the exploration of the tourism sector and the management that focuses on economic benefits for the communities such as supporting and educational development (Purnomo et al., 2020).

The role of the Bajo people is needed to be able to maintain the coastal and marine resources. Collaborating to manage local wisdom with the Bajo Mola community is a way to achieve the continuation of Wakatobi National Park. Sustainable ecotourism can be done with the role of local communities and their understanding of sustainability (Eshun and Tichaawa, 2020). Bajo people were not only used as forest police partners, but the knowledge of Bajo local wisdom can be the basis for planning the management policies later. Bajo people consider that Wakatobi National Park needs to learn about Bajo culture and their local wisdom further in order to be able to maintain sustainability. Then the suspicion and accusation against the Bajo as a marine destroyer can be dropped. Involving the Bajo Mola community was proof that the Bajo people have a great sense of responsibility towards marine conservation.

For more than ten years, the Bajo people felt that the zoning system limited the community to make a living. They also assumed that the Wakatobi National Park had paid less attention to the fulfilment and welfare of the community. Several people claimed that it is uneasy for the Bajo people to be actively involved in the sea due to patrols and others. They also claim that most of them were labelled as naughty, overly consumptive and not considerate of sustainability, and often selfish and not thinking about the future. However, Bajo people were well aware that the sea is a garden, a place to live, and such as a very close relative. They realize the importance of protecting coral reefs. For Bajo people. The reef was one of the marine resources that needs to be maintained over generation

The local wisdom of Bajo Mola community such as the duata sangal, parika and pamali showed that the Bajo people have been guarding the sea for a long time. They even said that they are ready if they were asked to be supervisors of the security. The way to preserve the local wisdom was by asking the Wakatobi National Park to monitor when the fish lay eggs, provide communication between the fishers and the officials by providing handy-talk or other communication tools, ask the policies to ban buying fish from booming or anaesthesia to the collectors or business people, and continue to provide information about the importance of Wakatobi National Park. Besides, the involvement of the local government and traditional leaders is expected to continue to improve socialization so that the Bajo culture about managing marine resources will not be lost over the times.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study concluded the importance of integrating the local wisdom of the Bajo Mola community in the management of the Wakatobi National Park area. The local wisdom of the Bajo community such as duata sangal, parika and pamali was as an effort to manage marine ecotourism areas by considering the fulfilment of community needs and welfare without leaving the preservation and sustainability of the Wakatobi National Park. The beauty and resources in Wakatobi National Park are the main assets as the world best marine ecotourism destination.

Aknowlegments

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS, SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY IN GASTRONOMIC FESTIVALS

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Abstract: Currently, the organization of gastronomic festivals is an opportunity to rescue the culture and development of a destination. The present study was carried out in the city of Naranjal, Ecuador at the "Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab" and its objectives are: (i) to identify the relationship between the level of education and income, as sociodemographic variables as well as the level of satisfaction of people attending a Gastronomic Festival. (ii) identify the influence of satisfaction on the probability of revisiting a Gastronomic Festival. Two hundred valid questionnaires completed on-site by national and international visitors during the event were used. Pearson's Chi square and Spearman's Correlation were applied for data analysis. The results show that the level of satisfaction of the attendees is influenced by their level of education and income. Furthermore, the probability of revisiting the event is influenced by the level of satisfaction of the attendees. The results will contribute to the academic literature and the information will be used for service providers to develop products according to demand.

Key words: Festival, gastronomy, satisfaction, sociodemography, loyalty

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INTRODUCTION

A gastronomic festival is a set of recreational events where regional food is presented (Lee and Arcodia, 2011). Hence, local inhabitants in diverse destinations have created food festivals (Horng et al., 2013). As a celebration of cultures and values, festivals enrich the knowledge that surrounds the participants (Goldblatt, 2011). Food festivals can represent cultural values and regional identities (Meneguel et al., 2019). Hence, events are an important motivating element of tourism and one of the keys in the development of many tourist destinations (Getz, 2008). In this sense, destination marketing organizations should pay attention to the link between the destination image and food events (Privitera et al., 2018). In this framework, Ecuadorian gastronomy has its origins with the arrival of the Spanish, who later created typical dishes in the different regions: coast, highlands, amazon region and insular region. The Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab is celebrated annually in August in Naranjal, Ecuador. Since 2014, this gastronomic event is held on the first Sunday of August each year. The festival is an event where national and foreign tourists attend to taste a variety of dishes made from the Red Crab and, visitors also recreate with artistic and cultural activities. Within this context, studies on the demand for gastronomic festivals are scarce, and no concrete cases have been found that analyze the relationship among satisfaction sociodemographic variables and the probability of visiting a gastronomic festival. Therefore, the present study focused on studying the Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab in Ecuador and generalizing the results. Hence, the objectives were: (i) to identify the relationship between the level of education and income, as sociodemographic variables, and the level of satisfaction of attendees in a gastronomic festival and (ii) identify the influence of satisfaction on the probability of returning to a gastronomic festival. The results contribute to the academic literature on gastronomic festivals and as information for service providers and destination administrators to improve the satisfaction of the event.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Festivals or events present fundamental advantages for destinations based on economic growth opportunities by providing new life to existing companies, developing new businesses and generating revenue for governments (Dwyer et al., 2005; Huang et al., 2010). In this regard, the importance of wine and food in the tourist experience is one of the most prominent aspects in studies on tourist destinations (Harrington and Ottenbacher, 2010), which makes local food an important tourist resource (Björk and Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2016). For Contreras and Gracia (2011), the kitchen is the set of representations, beliefs, heritage, knowledge and practices and / or learning that are associated with food and shared by individuals of a culture or social group. In fact, food is increasingly recognized as a vital element of the cultural tourism market, and it has become a relevant factor, especially for rural places (Hall and Mitchell, 2001; Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Lee and Arcodia, 2011). Furthermore, events favor differentiation among destinations, and it shape the destination's image and brand (Getz, 2000; Hall et al., 2004; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Allen et al., 2008; Hall and Sharples, 2008). Thus, the organization of festivals allows

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community exhibitions to larger audiences, including regional, national or international visitors (Kim et al., 2010). In fact, events are a source of entertainment to satisfy the wishes of a community (Popescu and Cobras, 2012). Kim et al. (2010) pointed out that festivals allow the host city to create a desirable image through the exposure of resources and also offer families the opportunity to demonstrate their mutual commitment. Moreover, food-related events present opportunities to promote culinary products and increase the attractiveness of the destination (Getz, 2000). The impact of these small festivals is not only relevant for the tourism sector and the sustainable positioning of the destination, however it is also relevant for the local economy due to the consumption of local gastronomic products (Folgado-Fernández et al., 2019). Therefore, rural communities are using food festivals to promote local products (Çela et al., 2007). In this sense, local food is a marker of openness and balance between fine palate and sustainability (Lin and Bestor, 2020).

Festivals are often classified into four categories of interest: leisure and participation, sociological development, community development, and tourism perspective (Okech, 2011). Among the various types of festivals, food festivals are one of the most popular (Wan and Chan, 2013). In addition, there are three key elements in the design of a gastronomic festival: flavor, place and tradition (Organ et al., 2015). A food festival is always a good opportunity for tourists to enjoy local cuisine and have new experiences, and also a way to promote the destination (Wu et al., 2014). Festivals are a good place to reinforce regional / local identity and allow the community to display its products (Hubbard et al., 2012). Research aimed at determining visitors' perceptions of food festivals include studies aimed at identifying the benefits of visiting a food festival (Meretse et al., 2015); visitors' perceptions of local foods (Mgonja et al., 2016); visitor motivations (Park et al., 2008; Chang, 2011); visitor satisfaction (Kim Y.G. et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2011); behavioral intentions (Horng et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2014); and a measurement scale for food in the festival visitor experience (Ding and Hoffer, 2017).

The information on the sociodemographic profile of the visitors of a festival can be essential to determine the set of actions necessary to manage the event (Bonet et al., 2009; Cerezuela, 2005). Regarding the origin variables, the majority of festival goers are national tourists (Kim S.S. et al., 2010). Also, the majority of visitors come from the surrounding municipalities, motivated by the preservation of traditions and countryside (Stojanović et al., 2020). Additionally, for Kim et al. (2015) there is a high educational level of those attending gastronomic festivals. Previous studies on festivals show that the gender variable has a great influence on the attendance of a festival (Carvache-Franco et al., 2018; Yolal et al., 2009). The activities available at food festivals provide easy entertainment for all demographic groups due to the close association between the daily lives of individuals and food (Hu, 2010; Wan and Chan, 2013).

Moreover, attempts to understand the motivation and satisfaction of festival goers derive mainly from past behavioral studies (Kim Y.G. et al., 2010; Kim S.S. et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2010) in which the primary objectives were to identify the levels of satisfaction of festival attendees, motivational factors, or revisit intentions. The behavioral intentions of visitors play an important role in predicting future benefits at the food festival (Wu et al., 2014). In this regard, for Piramanayagam et al. (2020) tasting local gastronomy in tourist destinations provides a memorable tourist experience, satisfy visitors and promote their intentions of revisiting. The referred elements have a positive relationship with the loyalty of destiny. For Tichaawa and Idahosa (2020), satisfaction levels significantly influence returning intentions to festivals. Along the same lines, Folgado-Fernández et al. (2017) revealed that loyalty to gastronomic events is positively correlated with the event's brand and the destination's brand and image. Consequently, the mentioned elements have a positive relationship with fidelity to destiny.

Since the literature is scarce on the relationship between sociodemographic variables, loyalty and satisfaction in gastronomic festivals, the present study raises the following research questions about the demand for attendees to these events:

RQ1: What is the relationship between the level of education and satisfaction?

RQ2: What is the relationship between income and satisfaction?

RQ3: What is the relationship between satisfaction and the probability of visiting the festival again?

The Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab from Ecuador

The Municipality of Naranjal, under the auspices of the Guayas Prefecture Ministry and the Ecuadorian Chefs Association, organizes the Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab. This gastronomic event is held annually on the first Sunday of August. In this destination, thousands of visitors attend the event to taste the cuisine based on red crabs. The project was created in 2014 to promote tourism and local economic development. In 2019, 40,000 visitors attended this cultural event whose folkloric dances represent the production of the land and sea. The festival includes foods based on crab, shrimp, banana and cocoa as well as a live music show, entertainment programs, handicrafts, and exhibition of the crustacean capturing, reproducing and selling processes. Naranjal is located in the Guayas province, and its main economic activities are agriculture, commerce, livestock, fishing and the aquaculture. Within the gastronomic offer based on red crab or guariche (*Ucides occidentalis*) you can find: Creole crab or Chinese crabs, crab salad, encocado crab, garlic sauce, crab soup, rice with crab, crab casserole and shrimp, stuffed carapace, and crab ceviche. These dishes of the local gastronomy were identified by Carvache-Franco et al. (2020) who argue that typical Ecuadorian cuisine is a mixture of flavors and knowledge that fuse the pre-Hispanic diet with Spanish cuisine.

The Guayas Province Prefecture, and the Tourism Department of Naranjal Municipality train the owners of food and beverage establishments and teach them culinary techniques, good manufacturing practices and development of new products to revalue the local gastronomic culture. There are 2,500 fishermen dedicated to the collection of the red crab. Thus, Naranjal is recognized as the Capital of the Ecuadorian Red Crab. In the festival the inhabitants promote the tourist attractions of this destination such as: The Churute Manglares Ecological Reserve, the Seven Waterfalls located in Cerro de Hayas, the Shuar commune and the Hot Springs (Figure 1).

METHODOLOGY

The present study had the following objectives: (i) to identify the relationship between the level of training and the income level, as sociodemographic variables, and the level of satisfaction of those attending a Gastronomic Festival. (ii) identify the influence of satisfaction on the probability of revisiting a gastronomic festival. The present empirical research was carried out in situ at the Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab in Ecuador. Thus, a questionnaire based on different previous studies on satisfaction of gastronomic festivals was used (Folgado-Fernández et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2015). The instrument consisted of 12 questions, and it was technically organized into two sections: the first section dealt with the sociodemographic information of the visitors, while the second focused on the satisfaction and loyalty of the gastronomic festival attendees. For the present study, the researchers used closed questions and Likert scale ones, which were designed to obtain sufficiently reliable results. The data collection was carried out on Sunday, August 5, 2018, during the Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab in Naranjal, Ecuador. The survey was completed by national and foreign visitors over 18 years of age, who were the population under study. The information gathering was carried out at the sites within the festival. Attendees were asked to fill out the questionnaires independently after they had tasted the local cuisine. For this purpose, the pollsters were ready to answer any question. The pollsters were students of the Gastronomy Degree of the University of Guayaquil (Ecuador), who were trained by the authors of this article to obtain the sample in the field work. To analyze the effectiveness of the questionnaire, a pilot test was carried out during one day, reaching 10 surveys to validate the tool.

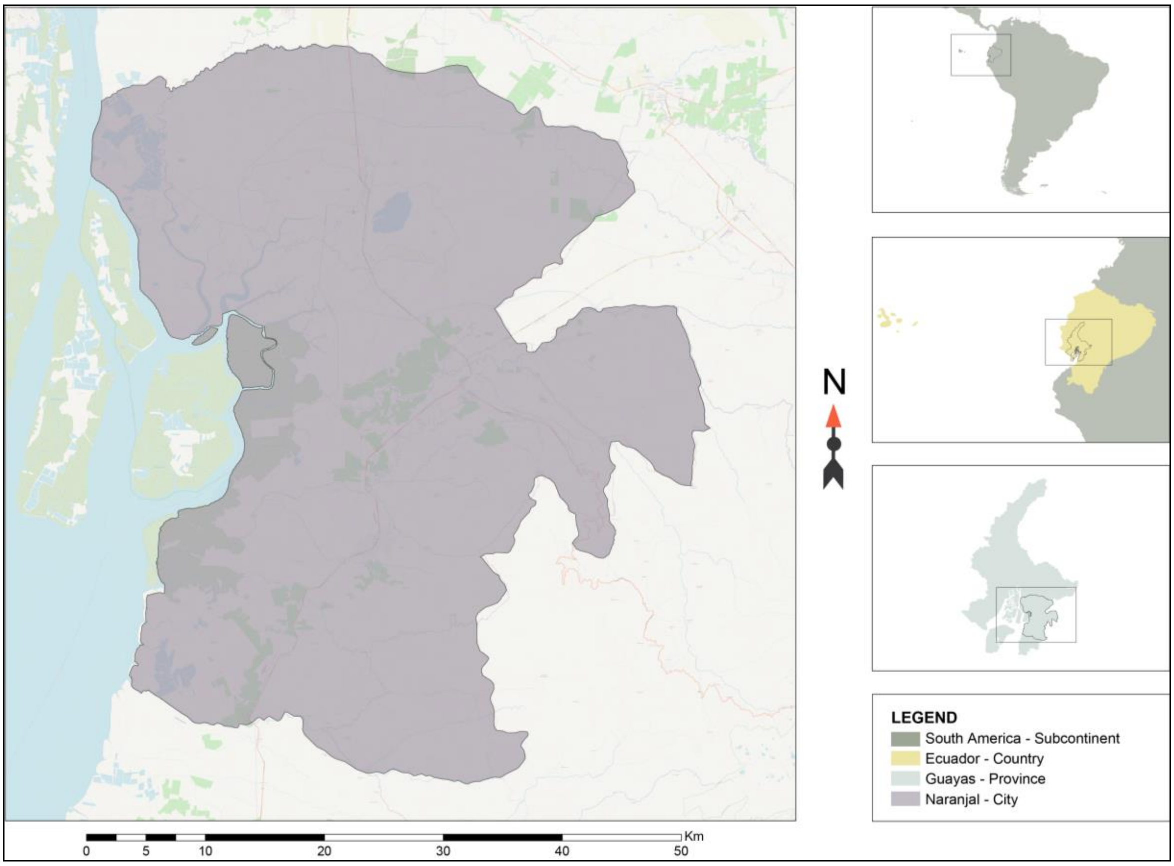

Figure 1. Geographical location of Naranjal, Ecuador

The convenience method was used. Thus, for which 240 questionnaires were applied to, obtain a sample size of 200 valid surveys. For this study, the researchers used the finite population equation considering the 35,000 Festival attendees in 2018. The calculations included a margin of error of +/- 6.9%, a confidence level of 95% and a variance 50%, (Table 1). To analyze the relationships between the variables, Pearson's Chi square coefficient and Spearman's Correlation coefficient were used. These calculations allowed finding significant correlations between sociodemographic variables and satisfaction, as well as between satisfaction and the probability of returning to the festival. In this research, the data collected were analyzed and tabulated using the SPSS Version 22 program. Also, statistical tools such as Pearson's Chi square were used to obtain valid results.

Table 1. Research methodology

Population	National and foreign visitors
Geographic area	Naranjal city (Guayas, Ecuador)
Period	August de 2018
Process	Convenience sampling
Confidence level	95%
Error range	+/-6.9%
Valid questionnaires	200

RESULTS

Sociodemographic aspects and characteristics of the trip

The results of the sociodemographic variables such as origin, sex, age, level of education, professional activity and income are found in Table 2. Two percent of the respondents were foreigners and 98% were nationals. Hence, most of the attendees were national tourists (Kim S.S. et al., 2010; Stojanović et al., 2020). Regarding gender, 43.5% were men and 57.5% women. In the total sample, 38.51% were between 20 and 29 years old and 19% were in the 40-49 age range. Sixty four percent of the respondents had undergraduate studies, 26% had secondary education and 7.5% had postgraduate education. Regarding the attendees' occupation, the respondents were mainly students (28.5%), private employees (25%) and public employees (10%). Concerning family income, most of the surveyed people, that is, 39.5% had an income level of 500 to 1,000 dollars, 36.5% earned less than 500 dollars, and 14.5% from $ 1001 to $ 1,500. Regarding the characteristics of the visit, 76.5% of the visitors attended the festival for the first time and 14% for the second time. In addition, 54% of the tourists attended with their family and 32.5% with friends. On the subject of expenditure, 30.5% spent less than $ 20 and 25.5% from $ 20 to $ 30.

General satisfaction and loyalty level

Respondents rated the level of satisfaction and loyalty of the food festival using a Likert scale of 5 points (1 meant a little and 5 a lot). According to Table 3, the general satisfaction obtained an average of 4.30, which is a high level of satisfaction. The question: Are you to visit this event again obtained an average of 4.29, which indicates a high loyalty of the attendees.

The level of education and general satisfaction

To analyze the significant relationship between the level of education and satisfaction with the gastronomic festival, the researchers used the Pearson's Chi-square coefficient (Table 4).

Table 2. Sociodemographic variables and aspects of the visit.

Category	**Demographic**	**N=200**	**%**
Nationality	National	196	98.0
	Foreign	4	2.0
Gender	Male	85	42.5
	Female	115	57.5
Age	< 20 years old	12	6.0
	20 - 29 years old	77	38.5
	30 - 39 years old	36	18.0
	40 - 49 years old	38	19.0
	50 - 59 years old	24	12.0
	>59 years old	13	6.5
Level of education	Primary	5	2.5
	Secondary	52	26.0
	Undergraduate	128	64.0
	Postgraduate/ Master/ Ph.D.	15	7.5
Occupation	Student	57	28.5
	Researcher/ scientist	3	1.5
	Businessman	16	8.0
	Private Employee	50	25.0
	Public Employee	32	16.0
	Housework	7	3.5
	Unemployed	1	0.5
	Retired	7	3.5
	Informal worker	2	1.0
	Others	25	12.5
Monthly income	< 500$	73	36.5
	501 - 1000$	79	39.5
	1001 - 1500$	29	14.5
	1501 - 2000$	5	2.5
	2001 - 2500$	8	4.0
	2501 - 3000$	3	1.5
	> 3000$	3	1.5
Frequency of visit	First time	153	76.5
	Twice time	28	14.0
	Three times	10	5.0
	More than three times	9	4.5
Companion	Alone	12	6.0
	family	108	54.0
	friends	65	32.5
	the couple	11	5.5
	Others	4	2.0
Average daily food expenditure	Under $20	61	30.5
	$20.1-$30	51	25.5
	$30.1-$40	26	13.0
	$40.1-$50	18	9.0
	$50.1-$60	22	11.0
	More than $60	22	11.0

Table 3. General satisfaction and loyalty

Variables	**N**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**
What is the general satisfaction level	200	1	5	4.30
I think I made the right decision	200	1	5	4.47
Attending this event was the correct choice	200	1	5	4.41
Are you likely to visit this event again	200	1	5	4.29
If I wished to attend a food event next year, I would select this one.	200	1	5	4.31

Table 4. Relationship between the level of education and general satisfaction

Variables		**Primary (%)**	**Secondary (%)**	**Undergraduate (%)**	**Postgraduate/ Master/ Ph.D. (%)**	**Total (%)**	χ^2	**Sig.**
General satisfaction	1			2	7	2	17,466	0.04
	3		8	9	20	9		
	4	100	35	48	20	44		
	5		58	41	53	45		
Total		100	100	100	100	100		

According to Table 4, there is a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) between the level of training and satisfaction with the festival. Therefore, the level of satisfaction of the attendees is influenced by their level of education. In this regard, attendees with a postgraduate degree revealed a high level of satisfaction with the festival. Thus, results that respond RQ1: What is the relationship between the level of training and satisfaction? Showed that the higher the level of education, the higher the level of satisfaction in gastronomic festivals.

Income level and general satisfaction

To analyze the significant relationship between income level and satisfaction with the gastronomic festival, Pearson's Chi-square coefficient has been used (Table 5).

Table 5. Relationship between income level and general satisfaction

Variables		< 500 (%)	501 -1000 (%)	1001- 1500 (%)	1501- 2000 (%)	2001- 2500 (%)	2501-3000 (%)	>3000 (%)	Total (%)	χ²	Sig.
General satisfaction	1	2.7			20	12.5			2	28,907	0.049
	3	8.2	10	6.9		12.5	33.3		9		
	4	52	32	48.3	60	50	66.7	33.3	44		
	5	37	57	44.8	20	25		66.7	45		
Total		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100		

According to Table 5, there is a significant correlation (p <0.05) between the income level and the satisfaction of the attendees. Therefore, the level of satisfaction of the attendees is influenced by their income level. Accordingly, attendees with high income levels have a high level of satisfaction with the festival. These findings answer the second research question RQ2: What is the relationship between income and the level of satisfaction? Thus, the higher the income level the higher level of satisfaction in gastronomic festivals.

General satisfaction and likelihood of revisiting the food festival

To find the relationship between the probability of revisiting the event and satisfaction, a Spearman correlation was performed. According to Table 6, there is a significant correlation (p <0.05) between satisfaction and the probability of revisiting the gastronomic festival. This result shows that the probability of returning to the festival is influenced by the satisfaction of the attendees. Therefore, as the satisfaction level of attendees increases, the chances of revisiting the festival increase. When analyzing the most satisfied group of attendees, 84.4% had a high probability of revisiting the festival. In summary, these results answer the third research question. RQ3: What is the relationship between satisfaction and the probability of visiting the festival again? Therefore, the results revealed that the greater the satisfaction, the greater the chances of returning to the gastronomic festival.

Table 6. Satisfaction and probability of revisiting the festival (Spearman correlation)

		Satisfaction level				Total	Correlation	Sig.
		1	3	4	5			
Probability of revisiting	1	100.0%	16.7%	2.3%		4.5%	0.58	0.000
	2		27.8%	4.5%		4.5%		
	3		16.7%	9.1%	1.1%	6.0%		
	4		22.2%	44.3%	14.4%	28.0%		
	5		16.7%	39.8%	84.4%	57.0%		
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Gastronomic festivals promote the culture of a destination and its culinary resources to enhance the tourist destination. The present study carried out at the Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab in the city of Naranjal in Ecuador objectives were namely, to identify the relationship between the level of education and the income of the visitors, as sociodemographic variables, and the level of satisfaction of attendees of a gastronomic festival. In addition, the researchers aimed at identifying the influence of satisfaction on the probability of visiting a gastronomic festival again. Therefore, the researchers conclude that domestic tourists outnumber foreign tourists. Moreover, the level of satisfaction of the attendees is influenced by their income and level of education. In addition, the probability of revisiting the event is influenced by the level of satisfaction of the attendees. As theoretical implications, the authors found that most of the attendees are national tourists (Kim et al., 2010; Stojanović et al., 2020). Among the relationships of the variables we found that the higher the level of training of the attendees, the greater their satisfaction with the festival. These results are similar to Kim et al. (2015). Likewise, the higher the income of the attendees, the greater the satisfaction of the attendees. In addition, attendees with high levels of satisfaction have a high probability of revisiting the event. These results coincide with (Folgado-Fernández et al., 2017; Piramanayagam et al., 2020; Tichaawa and Idahosa, 2020). The contribution to the academic literature is the significant relationship between the level of education and income sociodemographic variables, and the satisfaction of gastronomic festivals. The findings also show the influence of satisfaction on the probability of returning as part of tourist loyalty to gastronomic festivals.

Consequently, the practical implication in the case of Naranjal is a recommendation to improve the satisfaction levels of the visitors at the restaurants where local food dishes are offered during the Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab. Hence, the quality of the dishes, furniture, food handling and customer service in restaurants are essential details to achieve the goal. In addition, recreational activities should be implemented for visitors to boost satisfaction. Meticulous training of the destination managers is recommended. Moreover, biosecurity measures should be adopted for the coming festivals.

Finally, the main limitation of the present study was the temporality of the sample because the demand can vary. Future research should focus on measuring the satisfaction attributes of food venues in the city of Naranjal during the Gastronomic Festival of the Red Crab.

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REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE LEVEL OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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Abstract: This article presents an analysis of the level of tourism development across the Russian Federation. The study explores Russian regions by considering the key characteristics of tourism: the number of accommodation facilities, international visitors staying in accommodation facilities, the number of people employed in tourism and hospitality, and the value added created by these sectors of economy. An aggregate index is used to assess levels of tourism and recreation development and compare administrative units on this measure. An original methodology is employed to track shifts in Russian tourism, identify regions specialising in tourism, and forecast tourism development at a regional level.

Key words: tourism, value added, tourism potential, tourism regional typology, Russian regions, tourism specialisation, regional economy

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INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, tourism in Russia has experienced considerable growth. Tourism infrastructure has been rapidly developing: for example, as far as accommodation facilities are concerned, from 8,581 units in 2002 to 28,302 in 2019 (Rosstat, 2019a). The total number of bed-places in accommodation establishments increased from 1,097 thous. to 2,946 thous. over that period (Rosstat, 2019b), or to 17 beds per 1,000 residents. This ratio is similar to that in EU countries with moderately developed tourism (21), Romania (17), and Serbia (16). The EU's highest (273) is observed in Croatia – a country specialising in tourism (Eurostat, 2019).

Tourism in Russia has the following typical features. In terms of arrivals, domestic tourism far outstrips international tourism. In 2019, the number of check-ins at various accommodation establishments showed year-on-year growth of 0.6% – from 70,106 to 70,558 thousand people. Although the number of Russian tourists increased from 59,952 to 60,429 thous. people, that of international tourists fell from 10,154 thous. to 10,129 thous. The percentage of the latter declined from 14.47% to 14.35% (Rosstat, 2019c, 2019d). The Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation estimates the number of international arrivals as 2.4 times that of check-ins. This situation owes to a developed peer-to-peer accommodation sector, which neither keeps guest records nor registers international tourists with the migration services (registration is not required if a foreign national stays in the country for fewer than seven days). The number of people using peer-to-peer accommodation services is calculated using sample survey results, which are extrapolated to the total number of visitors.

In 2018, the number of arrivals was estimated at 24,551 thousand people; in 2019, at 24,419 (Russia tourism, 2018; 2019). On the number of international tourists, which was very insignificant in the Soviet period, Russia ranks high (16th) in the world.

Outbound tourism numbers are comparable to those of domestic tourism. In 2018, 41,964 thousand trips were taken; in 2019, 45,300 thousand. Former Soviet republics accounted for 38% of the travel; Turkey, Finland and China, for 28%; Germany, Italy, Thailand, Poland and Spain, for 13% (Rosstat, 2019e). Russian ranks sixth in the world for outbound tourism (according to the Knoema World Atlas database, which treats Hong Kong as a separate entity) (World Data Atlas, 2019). A few Russian regions boast a large number of visitors: 41% of those who stayed outside their place of residence in 2019 opted for five (out of 85) Russian regions: the Krasnodar region (the Black Sea coast), Moscow and the Moscow region, St Petersburg and the Leningrad region. Moscow and St Petersburg account for 68% of international arrivals.

METHODOLOGY

Spatial differences in tourism development across Russia will be analysed at a regional level (Figure 1), using available statistics, particularly the information on:

- the number of bed-places in accommodation establishments;
- the number of people employed in the tourism and hospitality industry;
- the number of people accommodated in accommodation establishments;
- the value added by accommodation establishments and the food service industry;
- the number of international visitors staying in accommodation establishments.

Tourism development in Russia as seen by national and international researchers

Russia as a destination

Most publications deal with general reviews of Russia as a destination, and they are in effect country studies. For example, Pshtyka and

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Tolkach (2014) in Springer's *Encyclopedia of Tourism* limit the information to widely known facts, such as: 'The most popular destinations are Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Major routes in Russia include a journey around the Golden Ring of ancient cities, Volga River cruises, and Trans-Siberian Railway journeys. Other important destinations include Kazan (the capital of Tatarstan portraying a mix of Russian, Orthodox and Muslim Tatar cultures), Sochi (the most popular Black Sea resort and the site of the 2014 Winter Olympics), and Northern Caucasus (which contains popular ski resorts). The most famous natural destinations include Lake Baikal, the deepest lake in the world, Kamchatka with its volcanoes and geysers, Karelia with its lakes and granite rocks, the Altai Mountains, and the steppes of Tyva'.

In their analysis of tourism development in Russia, Givental et al stress that, since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many regional authorities have promoted national resorts by touting local resources such as thermal springs, lakes, rivers, and mountains. A lack of investment in tourism infrastructure, insufficient support from local authorities, and poor promotion hamper tourism development. Another obstacle is residents' concerns about the rising number of visitors (Givental et al. 2019).

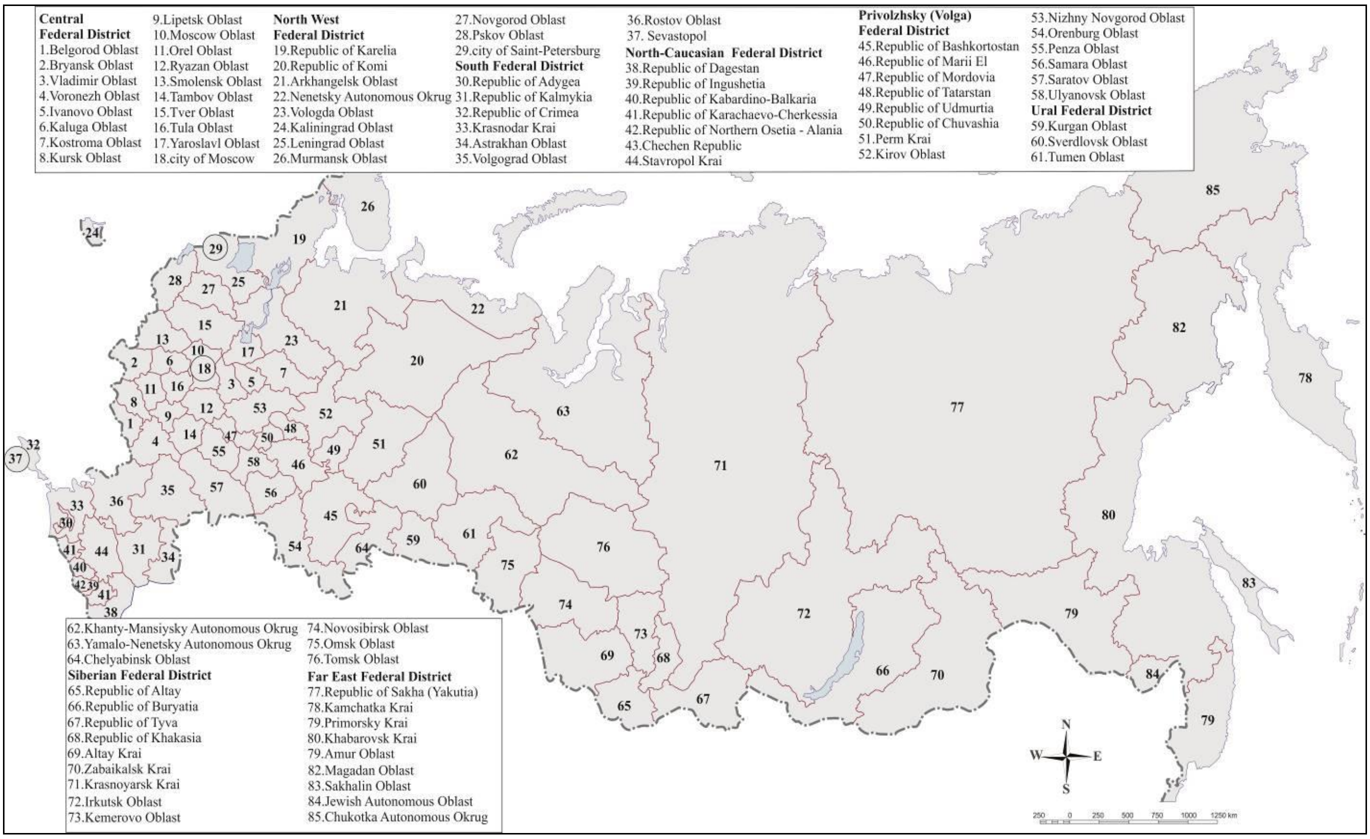

Figure 1. Russian regions

A. Aleksandrova identified five main types of tourism of countries used different socio-economic indicators and characteristics of tourism sector. As a result Russia was put into the third group of countries, which "includes moderately developed countries of the periphery of the world's touristic space, with a polyfunctional system of international tourism in the stage of transformation and formation of a civilized travel market, a profitable relationship of the price and quality of touristic services, and the intraregional orientation of tourist flows" (Aleksandrova, 2016). That means that the country does not fulfil its tourism potential, mostly due due to the fact that development had largely an extensive character and, until very recently, was proceeding mainly through a direct growth of the volumes of inbound and outbound tourist flows. Most researchers emphasise that tourism can boost national socio-economic development. This is especially true for the border regions that offer joint tourism products (Katrovsky et al., 2017; Manakov and Golomidova, 2018; Stepanova and Shlapeko, 2018; Deac et al., 2019; Spiriajevas, 2019; Azhayev et al., 2020; Ilies et al., 2020;) Kropinova, 2020 and impact the regional innovation growth (Gorochnaya et al., 2020).

Lukhovskaya et al (2019) consider various tourism development models that appeared before 2017 and make explicit comparisons between levels of inbound, domestic, and outbound tourism development as well as the economics of the industry. It is concluded that Russian tourism services imports have been growing since 2014 when the exports plummeted. The dynamics of indicators is still so small that it cannot be called a significant component of the innovative development of Russia. A special role was played by the second wave of the crisis and sanctions against Russia. Strategic decisions on domestic tourism development in Russia should be modelled based on the management of cultural potential – a system of measures for including elements of this potential in the tourism product and making effective use of it whilst preserving the balance between the national cultural tradition and the radical renewal of regional cultural potentials.

In *Tourism Leadership in Russia: Regional Capacity Estimation*, authors analyse current trends in tourism development in Russia (Murtuzalieva et al., 2018). They argue that despite the enormous tourism potential and many natural and artificial wonders and beauties, Russia is still struggling to boost inbound tourism and make it more attractive to international visitors. In this study, the authors explore why some Russian regions are not attractive as destinations and propose a methodology for evaluating regional potentials. The methodology was tested on the North Caucasus Federal District (NCFD). The efficient functioning of available resources requires effective management of a region's potential. Evaluating regional potential makes it possible to locate hidden reserves of a territory. This evaluation should rely on a system of measures, which have been divided by researchers into five groups: economic, social, environmental, demographic and resource availability- and use-related. There are no highly developed areas in the NCFD: none of its regions has a score of three. The Republic of Dagestan, the Chechen Republic, and the Stavropol Krai (region) fall in the top category in terms of labour and natural resources and investment opportunities. The other regions are classified as having poorly developed regional opportunities (Murtuzalieva et al., 2018).

Common reasons for the low competitiveness of some Russian regions include insufficient public and private investment in tourism and lack of experience in public-private partnerships. Rogach et al write that the tourism potential of Russian regions remains untapped because a systemic end-to-end cycle of production and sales of goods and services has not been created, integration of science, education, and business has not taken place, and the problems of industrial and agricultural areas have not been solved (Shomanova et al., 2017; Rogach et al., 2020; Suleimenov et al., 2020).

Intra-regional differences and tourism development in Russia

Regional differences in tourism across Russia as well as tourism zoning have been extensively studied in the 1970-80s. The Russian school of social and economic zoning developed a comprehensive theoretical framework for region-building, which made it possible to identify regions specialising in tourism and recreation. Recreational zoning was developing from the second half of the 1970s when there was increased attention to research in the services sector, including rapidly developing tourism and recreation.

A major contribution to the theory and practice of recreational zoning was the research of leading Russian geographers working on the topic in 1960s-1980s (Zorin, 1969; Preobrazhensky, 1975; Vedenin, 1982; Mironenko and Bocharova, 1986; Mironenko et al., 1989). In our opinion, the four zones and 20 districts distinguished by the founder of recreation zoning, Preobrazhensky (1975), and his followers constitute a hierarchy with four first-level zones comprising 20 subzones specialising in tourism and recreation. Although the number of zones and subzones changed later, the approach to identifying them remained unchanged. In a market economy, this approach not only is important as a research tool but also can be used to produce recommendations for tourism businesses as regards creating tourism and recreation facilities. Many Russian researchers share our opinion. Pogodina and Matveevskaya (2017) note that the methods used earlier in recreational geography have been applied in the geography of tourism to regional systems of tourism planning. Of particular interest here is their study conducted in the European part of Russia and published in the multi-authored monograph *The Geography of Tourism of Central and Eastern European Countries* edited by Widawski and Wyrzykowski (2017). Although the materials used in the article, including cartographic ones, date back to 2010-2011, this research can aid in analysing the situation within a ten-year interval.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: LEVELS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Spatial variations in tourism development measures

The results of this study and key measures of tourism development were used to compute cartograms of levels of tourism development in Russian regions according to the key indicators of tourism development. The cartograms (Figure 2–6) show the measures from the Methodology section as a per 1,000 population rate. Each indicates the state of tourism and related sectors since traditional accommodation establishments provide services to both tourists and other visitors, and restaurants are frequented by locals as well as non-locals. Moreover, some tourists prefer peer-to-peer accommodations or staying with family and friends. Not all of them eat out. To discriminate between these groups one has to conduct costly surveys, which nevertheless do not fully guarantee the accuracy of data. Thus, we will use five indicators tracked by national statistics services. We believe that, combined, they provide a sufficiently precise picture of tourism development in regions.

Bed-places in traditional accommodations

We will dwell upon the evaluation of bed-places available from traditional accommodation providers per 1,000 population since this measure is both an indicator of demand and a factor in destination attractiveness.

The number of beds per 1,000 population ranges from 1.1 in the Republic of Ingushetia (North Caucasus) to 81.3 in the Krasnodar Krai (region at the Black Sea coast in the Caucasus). Most Russian seaside resorts are located in the latter region, which accounts for 457,000 beds, or 19% of the national total. The Krasnodar Krai is Europe's renowned beach destination. Its highlight and largest resort is Sochi. A nearby location, Krasnaya Polyana, is home to Russia's biggest ski resort. In 2014, Sochi hosted the 2014 Winter Olympics. Only nine European countries have a higher ratio of beds per 1,000 population than the Krasnodar Krai does.

Another region where this measure is high is the Republic of Altai, whose major tourist attractions are unique mountain landscapes. Its ratio is explained, however, by the republic's small population rather than the abundance of beds. Natural sites are an equally important factor in the tourist attractiveness of the Republic of Karelia, the Kamchatka Krai and the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, all of which are sparsely populated and thus have a high ratio of beds per 1,000 residents (Figure 2).

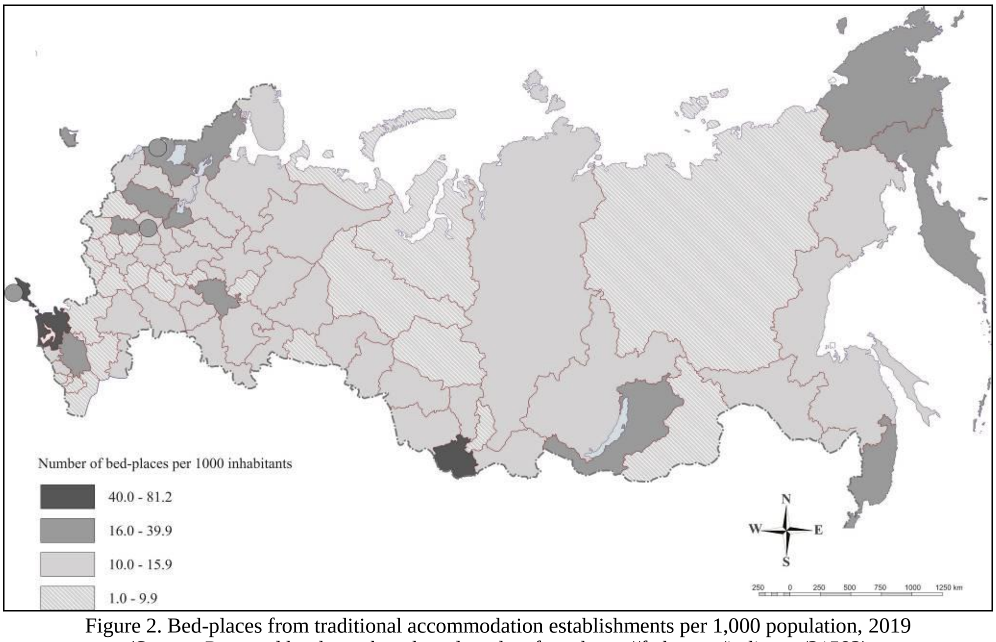

Figure 2. Bed-places from traditional accommodation establishments per 1,000 population, 2019
(Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from https://fedstat.ru/indicator/31583)

Among regions with a substantial number of beds are the megalocities of Moscow and St Petersburg as well as the Kaluga, Tver, and Yaroslavl Oblasti (regions), which border on Moscow, and the Leningrad Oblast, which borders on St. Petersburg. These four regions are Muscovites' and St Petersburgers' favourite vacation destinations. They are home to cultural and historical sites that attract Russian and international visitors. Popular cultural, historical, and natural sites are located in the middle reaches of the Volga in the Republic of Tatarstan, whereas wellness and health resorts are found in the Stavropol Krai and the North Caucasus. Strong inbound tourism and the nation's leading resorts translate into a considerable number of hotel beds in border areas such as the Republic of Buryatia, the Primorsky Krai and the Kaliningrad Oblast. A low number of beds (ten or fewer per 1,000 population) is typical for territories in the north (the Republic of Yakutia, the Tomsk Oblast, Nenets, and Khanty-Mansiysk, Autonomous Okruga/regions and the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug) and east of the country (Republic of Khakassia, Transbaikal Krai and Kurgan Oblast).

The situation is pretty much the same along the borders with Belarus and Ukraine (the Smolensk, Bryansk, Kursk, Belgorod, Voronezh, and Rostov Oblasti/regions, from north to south) and in the neighbouring Orel, Tambov, and Tula Oblasti/regions. Republics of Mordovia, Chuvashia, Udmurtia, and the Penza Oblast are no different in this respect. The number of hotel beds is rather low in the southern republics of European Russia – Adygeya, Dagestan, North Ossetia-Alania, Ingushetia, and the Chechen Republic. An almost uninterrupted belt from the Murmansk, Pskov, Astrakhan, and Volgograd Oblasti/regions in the west to the Magadan and Sakhalin Oblasti/regions in the east performs somewhat below the national average. The same can be said of the republics of Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachay-Cherkessia in the North Caucasus, which are known for their ski and spa resorts.

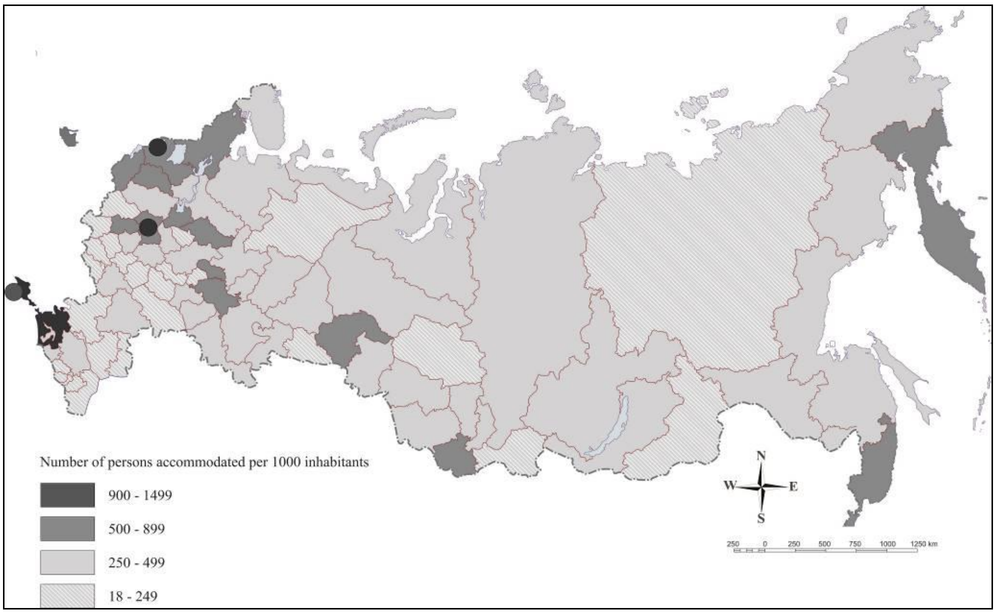

Figure 3. The number of persons accommodated in traditional accommodation establishments per 1,000 population
(Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from fedstat.ru/indicator/31560)

The number of people accommodated in traditional accommodations

The number of people staying in traditional accommodations closely correlates with the number of available bed-places (Spearman's correlation coefficient is 0.75), yet they do not exactly coincide, as Figs. 2 and 3 show.

The highest ratio of people staying in traditional accommodations per 1,000 population as well as that of beds is observed on the Black Sea coast, in Moscow, and St Petersburg. They are followed by Russia's northwestern territories bordering on the EU (the Republic of Karelia, the Kaliningrad, Leningrad, and Pskov Oblasti/regions, and the adjacent Novgorod Oblast), the Kaluga, Yaroslavl, and Kostroma Oblasti/regions near Moscow, and the Republic of Tatarstan. The Tyumen Oblast (where oil and gas workers from the Khanty-Mansiysk and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okruga/regions stay at hotels), the scenic Republic of Altai and Kamchatka Krai, and the Primorsky Krai, which is often visited by inbound tourists, stand out in the east of the country.

The number of people employed in the tourism and hospitality industry. The regional distribution of people employed in the tourism and hospitality industry (Figure 4) differs substantially from the patterns shown in Figures 2 and 3 because it takes into account not only accommodations but also places to eat, which are visited by locals. Spearman's correlation coefficient between people employed in the hospitality industry and the number of bed-places at traditional accommodation establishments is 0.47; that between the number of people employed in the hospitality industry and the number of people staying in traditional accommodations, 0.56. In all the three cases, high figures are observed in Moscow, St Petersburg, and the Krasnodar Krai, followed by the Republics of Karelia and Tatarstan, and the Primorsky Krai, Kaliningrad, and Kaluga Oblasti/regions. The lowest-performing territories are:

- the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in the far East;
- the Transbaikal Krai in Siberia at the Chinese border;
- the South Ural region of Kurgan at the border with Kazakhstan;
- the Republics of Mordovia and Chuvashia on the banks of the Volga;
- the Republics of Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Chechnya in the North Caucasus;
- the western border regions of Smolensk, Kursk, Belgorod, and Rostov, and the adjacent Lipetsk and Tambov Oblasti/ regions.

The value added by hotels and food service organisations

Just as the previous measure, the value added is considered as created by both hotels and food service organisations, which do not cater exclusively to tourists. Besides, it correlates with regional prices, which are higher in the north and east of the country and relatively low in the south of European Russia. The correlation coefficient between this measure and the number of beds per 1,000 population is only 0.44. The highest value added per 1,000 population (Figure 5) is created in the north in the sparsely populated gas-producing Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug/region (17,000 roubles in 2018). The Krasnodar Krai ranks second with 14,6 thousand roubles and Moscow third with 12,8 thousand roubles. The national average is 5,8 thousand roubles. The worst performing region is Ingushetia with 338 roubles. Figure 5 shows the regional differences.

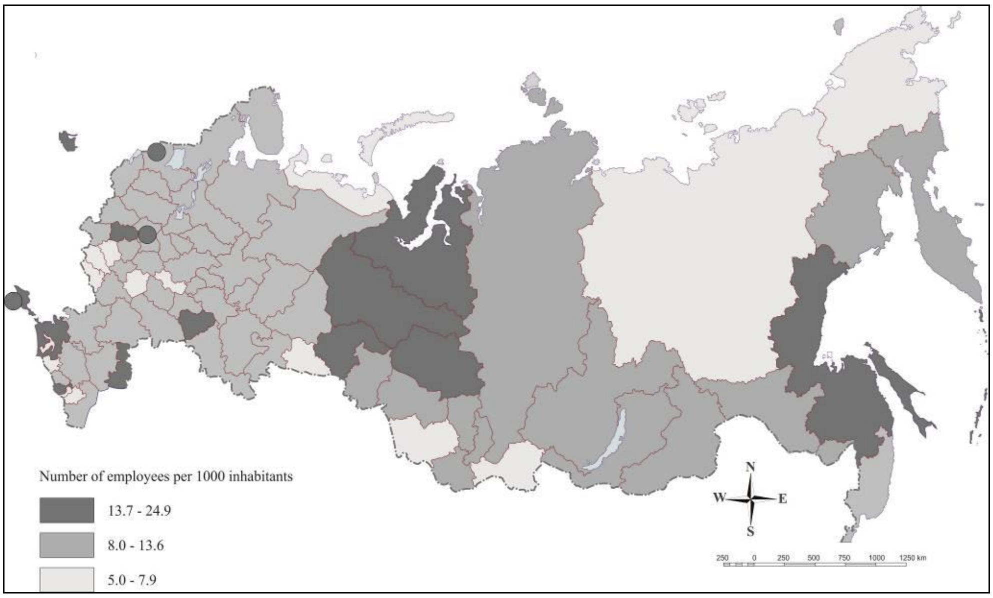

Figure 4. The average annual number of people employed in the tourism and hospitality industry per 1,000 population, 2018
(Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from https://fedstat.ru/indicator/58994)

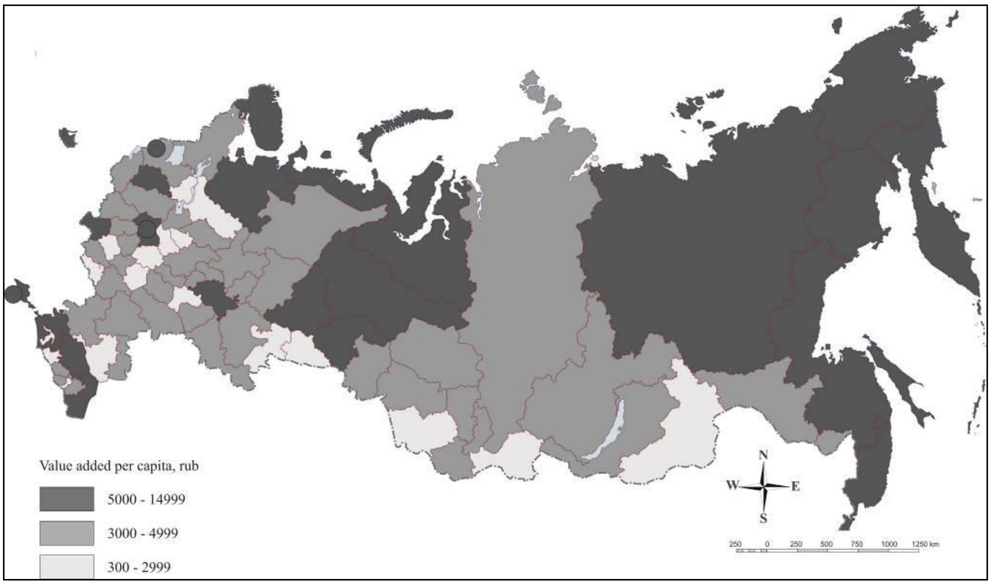

Figure 5. The value added by hotels and food service organisations per 1,000 population, 2018
(Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from https://fedstat.ru/indicator/42928 (Gross regional product per capita. *Unified Interdepartmental Statistical Information System*); https://www.fedstat.ru/indicator/59450 (Composition of gross regional product. OKVED 2)

The number of international visitors staying in traditional accommodations

Over two-thirds of international visitors visit only two cities – Moscow (45%) and St Petersburg (24%). The Moscow region accounts for 5.6% of international visitors; the Primorsky Krai, Krasnodar Krai, and Irkutsk Oblast, for 2-3% each; the Sverdlovsk Oblast, for 1%. The other regions welcome even fewer tourists from abroad. Figure 6 shows the international visitors per capita ratio. Moscow, its neighbouring regions, where the historical cities of the so-called Golden Ring of Russia are located, St Petersburg, the regions bordering on the EU, and the adjacent Novgorod Oblast with its slew of cultural attractions perform the best on this measure. In the east, the front runners are the Primorsky Krai and Amur Oblast (they border on China – the home country of most international visitors coming there), the Kamchatka Krai famous for its geysers and volcanoes, and the Republic of Buryatia and the Irkutsk Oblast abutting Lake Baikal.

An aggregate index of spatial differences in the level of tourism development in Russia

Based on their summed up ranks on the five measures, we divided Russian regions into five groups (Figure 7).

As Figure 7 shows, the leaders are Moscow and St Petersburg, major urban tourism destinations, and the Black Sea coast, which offers a lot when it comes to health and beach tourism. At the top of the index are the Moscow Oblast and Kaluga Oblast, which are located near Moscow, Republic of Karelia and Kaliningrad Oblast, which are on the north-west of Russia, the Republic of Tatarstan on the banks of the Volga, and the Primorsky Krai, Kamchatka Krai, and Sakhalin Oblast on the Far East. A number of regions located near Moscow and St. Petersburg demonstrate the indicators as above average. That could be explained by the fact that many residents of the two megalopolises as well as residents of other regions of the country and foreigners visit this destinations thanks to the numerous cultural and historical monuments located here. Among other territories that perform well on this measure is the Stavropol Krai, which abounds with wellness establishments. The same holds for the Samara, Sverdlovsk, and Tyumen Oblasti/regions. The Republics of Altai and Buryatia and the Khabarovsk and Magadan Oblasti/regions perform above average. The above assessment of tourism development in Russian regions is rather similar to the ranking developed by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. The evaluation was prepared in collaboration with Moscow State University and the expert and business communities. When developing the ranking, mechanisms for tourism support, promotion campaigns, and other regional factors were taken into account along with statistical data. The correlation coefficient between the rankings of Russian regions on these two ratings is 0.60. For instance, Moscow, St Petersburg, the Krasnodar Krai, and the Republic of Tatarstan rank first to fourth respectively on the ranking by the Ministry of Culture (Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, 2020). The same territories are at the top of our ranking as well. The most poorly tourism performing regions (ranking 82^{nd}–85^{th}) are the Transbaikal Krai, Kurgan Oblast, Jewish Autonomous Oblast, and Chukotka Autonomous Okrug. The first two regions from this list in the assessment presented in this article are also included in the group with low indicators. However, the last two regions were in the group with average indicators.

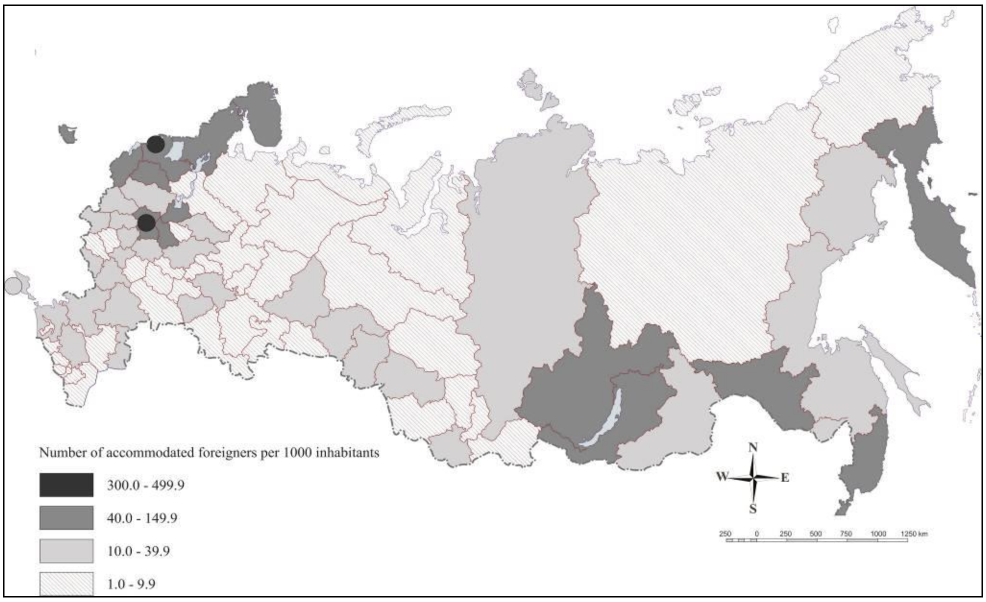

Figure 6. The number of international visitors staying in traditional accommodation per 1,000 population, 2019
(Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from https://fedstat.ru/indicator/44042)

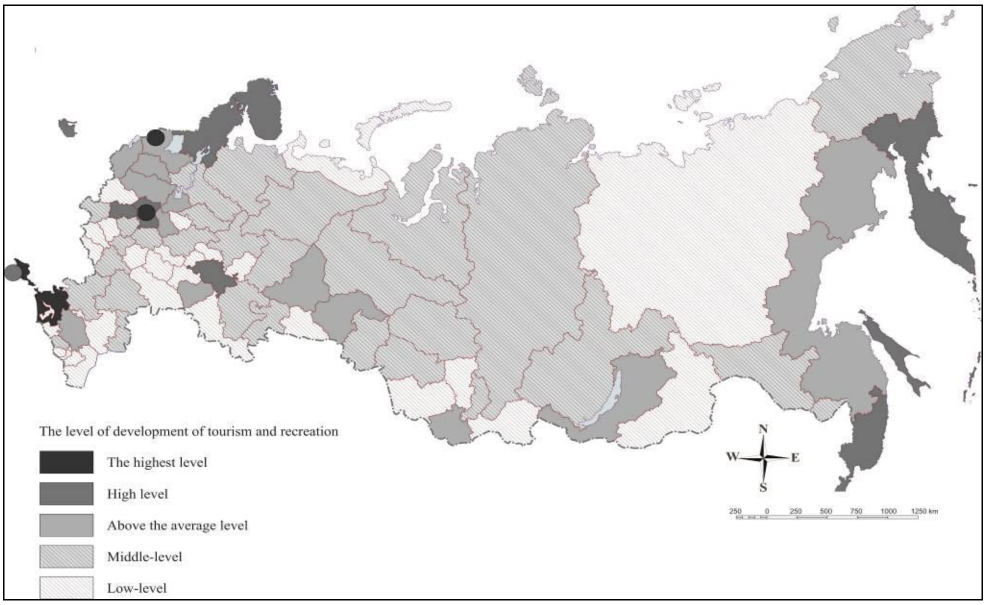

Figure 7. An assessment of the tourism performance of Russian regions, based on the five measures
(Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from Figures 2–6; The tourism index of Russian regions. Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation URL: https://www.mkrf.ru/press/news/reyting-subektov-rossiyskoy-federatsii-po-razvitiyu20171006160552/)

CONCLUSION

Tourism is an economic development priority for many Russian regions. The undisputed leaders are the capitals – Moscow and St Petersburg (cognitive domestic and inbound tourism) – and the Black Sea coast (beach and health tourism). Among the front runners are the Republics of Tatarstan and Karelia, the Primorsky Krai, Moscow, Kaluga, Murmansk, and Kaliningrad Oblasti/regions. Many regions that are rich in natural beauty lack the necessary infrastructure for effective tourism development.

In 2010–2019, Russia and its regions witnessed significant advances in tourism infrastructure. Overall, the number of hotel bed-places increased by 98% across the country. By 2019, this number more than doubled in many regions with a high, average, and low level of tourism development, as compared to 2010. The most substantial change – a threefold rise – was observed in Moscow. St Petersburg, the Republics of Altai and Tatarstan, the Krasnodar Krai, Khabarovsk, Kaliningrad, Kaluga, and Yaroslavl Oblasti/regions, which are popular destinations, saw the number of hotel beds increase more than twofold. The growth, however, was similarly high in some regions with an average (the Astrakhan, Voronezh, and Chukotka Oblasti/regions) and low level of tourism development (the Republics of Adygea, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Tyva, the Belgorod, Kursk, Orel, and Penza Oblasti/regions). Traditional destinations are rapidly developing and new tourism centres are emerging. Tourism is playing a growing role in the Russian economy.

To ensure the comprehensive development of domestic and inbound tourism, the Tourism Development Strategy for the Russian Federation 2035 was designed and approved. Its goals are favourable conditions for the development and promotion of high-quality tourism products, competitiveness in the domestic and global markets, a stronger community role of tourism, and the availability of tourism, recreation, and wellness services for all residents of the Russian Federation (Strategia razvitia turizma v Rossijskoy Federazii do 2035, 2019). The strategy holds that its successful implementation will result in the value added by tourism increase at the rate of national economic growth as early as 2025. Special attention will be paid to identifying priority territories and unlocking their potential. The approach proposed in this study may aid in devising strategies and spatial planning documents as well as providing necessary information on tourism development for Russian and international investors.

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THE GEOTOURIST ATTRACTIVENESS OF ŁAGOWICA RIVER VALLEY (HOLY CROSS MOUNTAINS, POLAND) – A PROJECT OF A GEOTOURIST TRAIL

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Abstract: Geotourist evaluation of thirteen small geological, geomorphological and mining heritage objects was carried out in a small valley of the Upper Łagowica River and in its surroundings (Holy Cross Mountains, Poland). The point grading method was used, which is functional in the case of evaluation of small geotourist objects. It was shown that the analysed objects are characterized by high and medium geotourist attractiveness. When analysed together, they strengthen their own individual values. They are suited to mark out geotourist trails (geotrail), and additionally become a source of information about spatial changes of geodiversity. They also determine the uniqueness of this type of small river valleys of the Holy Cross Mountains on a regional and supra-regional scale. The evaluation of these objects and the proposal of a geotourist trail in the Upper Łagowica River valley may contribute to the activation of local communities and government authorities in the promotion of geoeducation and geotourism, draw their attention to the need for preservation and protection of the geodiversity of small valleys of the Holy Cross Mountains, and, what is especially important, may give information about the investment attractiveness of the area.

Key words: geotourist attractiveness, fluvial valley, geotrail, Holy Cross Mts., Poland

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INTRODUCTION

Holy Cross Mountains (south part of Poland) (Figure 1a) are characterized by a high degree of geodiversity (Wróblewski, 2000; Urban and Gągol, 2008), understood primarily as the diversity of the Earth's heritage (geoheritage), i.e. geological heritage (Najwer and Zwoliński, 2014) and geomorphological heritage (geomorphodiversity according to Zwoliński, 2004; Panizza, 2009). Paleozoic massif of the Holy Cross Mountains has diverse lithology – coexisting clastic and carbonate rocks and fold-block structure (e.g. Kotański, 1959; Stupnicka and Stempień-Sałek, 2016). The geological structure of the Holy Cross Mountains determines the features of their relief, unique in Poland, i.e. parallel pattern of ridges separated by depressions (Wróblewski, 1977; Urban, 2014) of tectonic and erosion-denudation origin (Kowalski, 2002; Ludwikowska-Kędzia, 2018). These morphostructural conditions determined the development of concentric river network, with picturesque gorge sections. It is also the area where various mineral resources occur (e.g. iron and lead ore), the tradition of mining and processing of which dates back to ancient times (e.g. Kowalczewski, 1971; Orzechowski, 2007).

These facts allow us to regard the Holy Cross Mountains as an attractive geotourist area, where numerous geological and geomorphological objects, both natural and anthropogenic, appropriately prepared and adapted (cf. Prosser et al., 2006), can be a local and/or a regional geotourist product (e.g. Kaczmarek et al., 2010; Dryglas and Miśkiewicz, 2014).

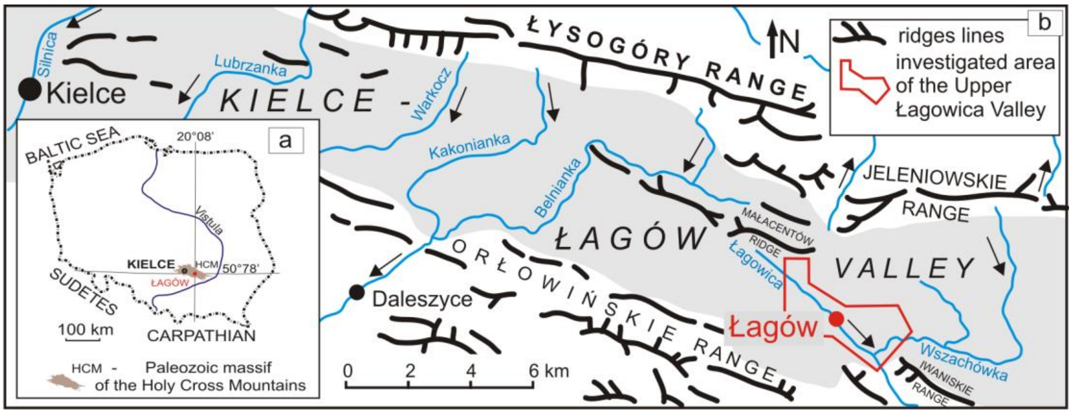

Figure 1. Location of the study area in Poland (a) and in relation to relief features of the Kielce-Łagów Valley (after Wróblewski 1977) (b)

Geological and geomorphological objects, successfully adapted for a wide range of tourists in the Holy Cross Mountains and often covered by legal protection, are closed quarries, for example Kadzielnia, Śluchowice, Wietrznia, which are located within the city limits of Kielce (e.g. Nita, 2012; Nita and Myga-Piątek, 2014) or karst caves, e.g. Raj Cave (Rubinowski, 1974). Such objects and methods of their

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adaptation are the subject of special attention in the region, and are promoted, among others, as part of the planned activities and initiatives for the creation of geoparks, thus the development of geotourism in the Świętokrzyskie region (Strzyż and Wójtowicz, 2011).

However, it is worth paying attention to the geotourism potential of equally valuable, natural geological and geomorphological objects located in small river valleys of the Holy Cross Mountains (Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012). The lengths of these rivers range from 30 to 36 km, and the areas of their catchments – from 190 to 280 km^2. These objects can be examined individually, as geosites and geodiversity sites (Alexandrowicz and Alexandrowicz, 2002; Dowling, 2011; Brilha, 2016) and/or geomorphosites (Panizza, 2001; Reynard and Panizza, 2005; Mucivuna et al., 2019). It was assumed that, due to their small size, concentration in the valleys, and location in close proximity to each other, these objects, when analysed together, have a chance to strengthen their own individual values and additionally become a source of information about spatial changes of geodiversity (sensu ANHC 2002; Najwer and Zwoliński, 2014). Therefore, they need geotourist evaluation, the more so because the evaluation of geotourist attractiveness of the objects located in small river valleys of the Holy Cross Mountains is sporadic (Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012). An additional argument for the need for evaluation is poor knowledge and lack of awareness among local communities about the value of the aforementioned geological and geomorphological objects in river valleys. This fact, as well as overexploitation of mineral resources, construction of hydrotechnical facilities (e.g. sewage treatment plants in zones of picturesque river gorges or ravines), and pollution with various types of waste, hinder an integrated and holistic approach in the management policy of the inanimate nature resources and mining heritage of the Holy Cross Mountains (e.g. Kowalczyk and Szrek, 2011). It seems that this problem also applies to other areas of Poland and the world, where geotourist evaluation is carried out mainly in the valleys of greater rivers (e.g. Kot, 2006; Hełdak, 2016).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The aim of the study is to evaluate geotourist attractiveness of thirteen small geological, geomorphological and mining heritage objects, which are located in the Upper Łagowica River valley belonging to the category of small river valleys of the Holy Cross Mountains (Figure 1, 2; Table 1), and to suggest their transformation into geoproducts in the category of trail (according to Dryglas and Miśkiewicz, 2014; Jawecki and Tarka, 2017). The Upper Łagowica River valley is located in the southern part of the Holy Cross Mountains, in the eastern part of the Kielce-Łagów Valley (Wróblewski, 1977) (Figure 1b). The source of the Łagowica River is located at the foot of the southern slopes of the Małacentów Ridge (330 m a.s.l.).

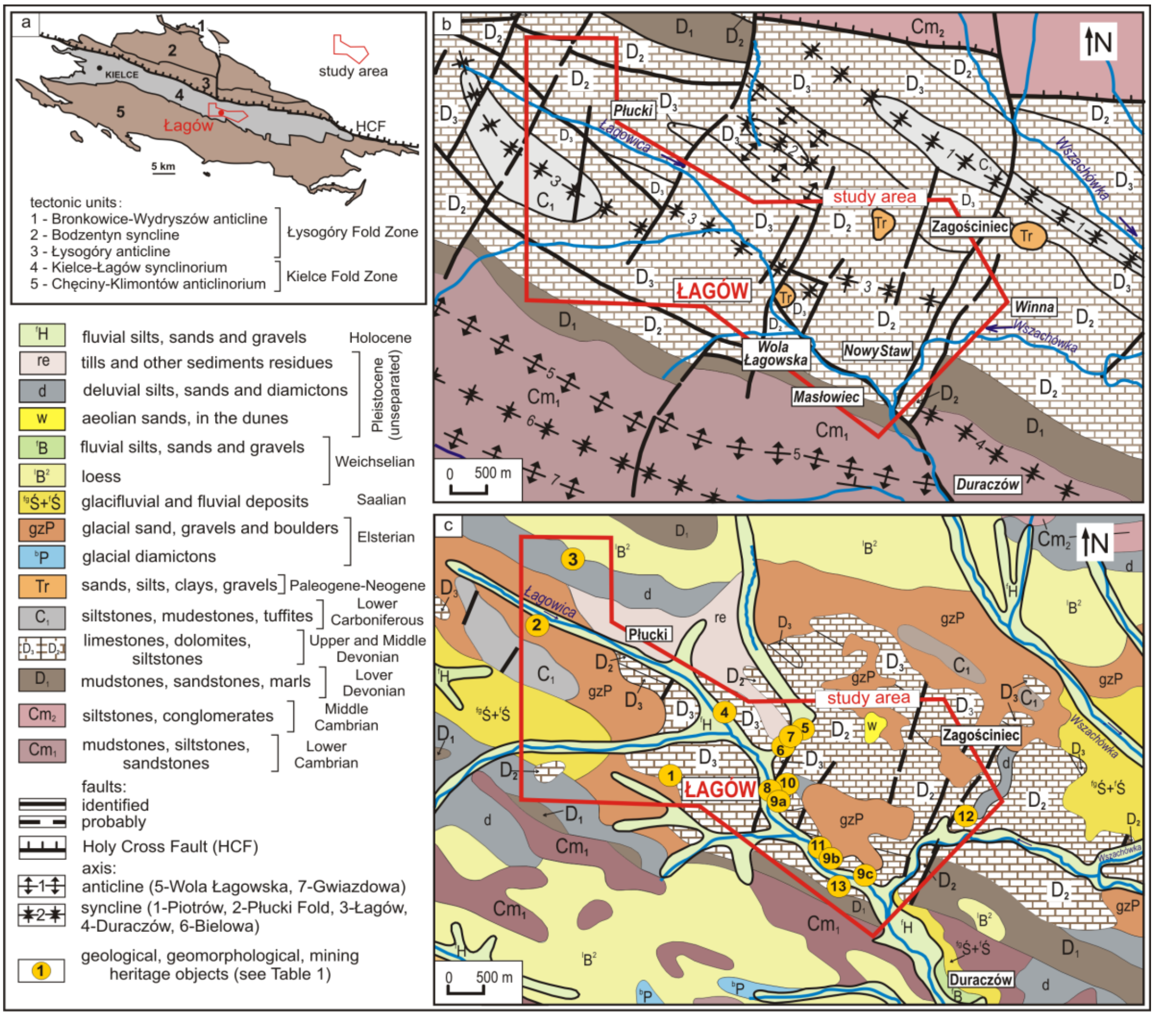

Figure 2. Location of the study area in relation to tectonic units of the Paleozoic massif of the Holy Cross Mountains (based on Znosko 1962; Konon 2008) (a), geological map of study area: without the Quaternary deposits (based on Romanek and Złonkiewicz, 1992) (b) and with the surface sediments (based on Janiec et al., 1992) (c)

Administratively, the Upper Łagowica River valley is located in the Świętokrzyskie Province, Łagów commune. The Łagów commune has a good communication location, numerous bicycle and tourist routes. The protected landscape areas, the natural landscape complexes, the Natura 2000 area and nature monuments occur in the Upper Łagowica River valley and its surroundings (Ludwikowska-

Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012). The Upper Łagowica River valley and its surroundings have been selected for the research due to the following features, which particularly predispose this area to the development of geotourism: (1) unique geological structure (fold-block structure; the Middle and Upper Devonian dolomites and limestones adjacent to the Lower Cambrian, Lower Devonian and Lower Carboniferous clastic rocks – mainly sandstones and siltstones; polygenic cover of the Quaternary deposits) (Figure 2 a-c), (2) relief (with the preserved features of karst landscape, i.e. sinkholes, ponors, karst ribs, karst springs and caves) (e.g. Fijałkowska and Fijałkowski, 1971; Urban and Rzonca, 2009; Urban et al., 2019) and (3) mining history (i.e. the period of Roman influence with the iron mining and metallurgy, and late Middle Ages (14th - 16th century) with lead and iron mining, pottery and glassworks) (e.g. Kowalczewski, 1971; Fijałkowska and Fijałkowski, 1971; Hadamik, 2004; Kubicki and Saletra, 2013).

Table 1. Main information about small geological, geomorphological and mining heritage objects in the Upper Łagowica River valley

Object No.	Information about the objects	Example references (and references ibid)
1-2	**Nawrocki shaft in Łagów** (depth of 23 m, 3 levels of galleries) and **Traces of galena mining in Plucki** (e.g. bowl-shaped hollows) – lead mining post-exploitation areas	Kowalczewski, 1971; Rubinowski, 1971; Fijałkowski, 1972
3	**Polygenic depressions in the Małacentów Ridge** – an example of reproduced karst forms controlled by tectonic and lithological boundaries of the Paleozoic bedrock (Figure 3a); their development was also affected by suffusion and surface wash processes and deflation of material from the Quaternary covers	Ludwikowska-Kędzia et al., 2019
4	**Exposure of the Frasnian-Famennian (F–F) limestones in Plucki –** the geological profile contains a layer of black limestone, until recently considered to be a record of the worldwide anaerobic episode at the end of the Frasnian and corresponding to the Upper Kellwasser Horizon (Figure 3b); it contains invertebrate fauna: e.g. *Bivalia* (Figure 3b-1), *Nautiloidea* (Figure 3b-2), *Goniatitida*, *Brachiopoda*, and *Chordata* (e.g. Placodermi, Tetrapodomorpha)	Szrek and Salwa, 2020
5	**Dule karst gully in Łagów** – the origin of this form can be related to the gradual collapse of roof of cave corridors or the joining of several sinkholes; one of the most distinct forms in the landscape of the Łagów-Klimontów karst subregion of the Holy Cross Mountains	Kotański, 1959; Walczowski, 1962;
6	**Exposure of the Famennian limestones –** the geological profile contains unique and species-rich cephalopod fauna with new species of *Nautiloidea, Goniatitida* and *Clymeniida*; for some of these cephalopods, it is the only place of their occurrence known in the Holy Cross Mountains	Wróblewski, 2000; Dzik, 2006
7	**Zbójecka Cave in the Dule gully** – the form of karst-collapse origin, which was formed in Neogene (Figure 3c,d,e); typical carbonate dripstone formations and unique rock formations; fauna of troglobionts, troglophiles, trogloxenes and several species of bats live in the cave; the fragments of medieval pottery from the 13th and 14th centuries have been found there	Kotański, 1959; Urban, 1996; Urban and Rzonca, 2009; Hadamik, 2004
8	**Ravine of the Łagowica River between Łagów and Nowy Staw** – the form developed within a tectonic zone and a contact zone of limestones and dolomites with sandstones; it was formed as a result of the erosion activity of constantly flowing surface water or the emerging of underground river, e.g. due to the collapse of cave roof	Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012;
9a-c	**Exposure of the Devonian carbonate series between Łagów and Nowy Staw** – the only place in the Holy Cross Mountains with the natural exposure of a complete profile of the Devonian carbonate series, from Eifelian to Famennian (Figure 3f); rocks represent a carbonate platform formed in shallow water and contain a variety of benthos fauna, *Stromatopora* (Figure 3g), *Amphipora* (Figure 3h, i-1), *Anthozoa* (Figure 3h, i-2), *Brachiopoda* and *Crinoidea*	Czermiński, 1960; Grabowski et al., 2006
10	**Lisia Dziura Cave** in the slope of the Łagowica River ravine – a form conditioned by the occurrence of two faults, joint fissures, and layer jointing in the Givetian limestone (Figure 3j); the cave developed probably in the Cenozoic (Pleistocene) karst period	Czermiński, 1960; Urban, 1996; Urban and Rzonca, 2009
11	**Karst spring in Masłowiec** – the discharge of this spring (10-50 l/s) is the highest among the other karst springs feeding the Łagowica River; its water temperature of 9°C is constant	Walczowski, 1968; Wróblewski, 2000
12	**Mining area near Winna and Komorniki** – geological profile shows the arrangement of the Middle Devonian dolomite layers (Figure 3k), fault surfaces with mineralized slickensides, veins and nests (mainly of calcite and dolomite) and sinkholes (filled with the Miocene kaolinite-illite clays containing lenses of sand and quartz gravel) (Figure 3l,m); near Winna there is a heap from the 1930s – the remnant of a closed pyrite mine	Uberna, 1962a,b; Fijałkowska and Fijałkowski, 1971; Ludwikowska-Kędzia, 2013; Kasza and Król, 2019
13	**Profile of Quaternary deposits in Masłowiec** – geological profile situated in a closed sandpit is a record of the Plenivistulian stage of aggradation, in which fluvial and slope (mainly slopewash, rarely solifluction) processes cooperated, and which took place in the narrow bottom of the Łagowica River valley (Figure 3n)	Ludwikowska-Kędzia et al., 2006; Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012

The usefulness and importance of geotourist evaluation conducted in small river valleys of the Holy Cross Mountains has been already assumed at the initial stage of the promotion of geoeducation idea in the Łagów region (since 2010) (among others Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2010). The research carried out at that time showed that the studied geotourist objects were characterized by high and medium educational value and geotourist attractiveness. Dissemination of the research results among the local community and the authorities of the city and commune of Łagów took place in the form of lectures and all-Poland conferences as well as educational meetings in Łagów. Based on the assessment of the importance and effectiveness of this preliminary evaluation, we decided to continue the research and to expand the geoeducational – geotourist offer with other objects, and thereby to modify the geotourist trail (cf. Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012). This decision was also dictated by the need to protect the geodiversity of this unique area in the Holy Cross Mountains, taking into account the constantly increasing exploitation of dolomites and limestones in the Łagów region.

The evaluation of geotourist attractiveness of small geological, geomorphological and mining heritage objects in the Łagowica River valley was carried out again using the method published by Dmytrowski and Kicińska (2011) (Table 2). They proposed the evaluation of a given object according to 20 criteria constituting the substantive value (I), location value (II), cultural value (III) as well as availability and accessibility of information about a given object (IV), which together allow us to evaluate its educational (didactic) value (EV).

In addition, it is possible to assess the level of geotourist infrastructure development, that is, to determine the infrastructure value (V) according to Dmytrowski and Kicińska (2011). The educational value (EV) and the infrastructure value (V) determine the geotourist attractiveness (GA) of a given area.

This method is intended for evaluation of small geotourist objects. It takes into account the main groups of criteria for geotourist evaluation of geological heritage objects – geosites (cf. Brilha 2016) and geomorphosites (e.g. Mucivuna et al., 2019), which have been proposed in other methodological solutions (e.g. Alexandrowicz et al., 1992; Reynard et al., 2007; Bruschi et al., 2011; Fassoulas et al., 2012; Kubalíková, 2013; Brilha, 2016; Mucivuna et al., 2019), and additionally it draws attention to the aspect of development, management and aesthetic (visual) values of the studied objects.

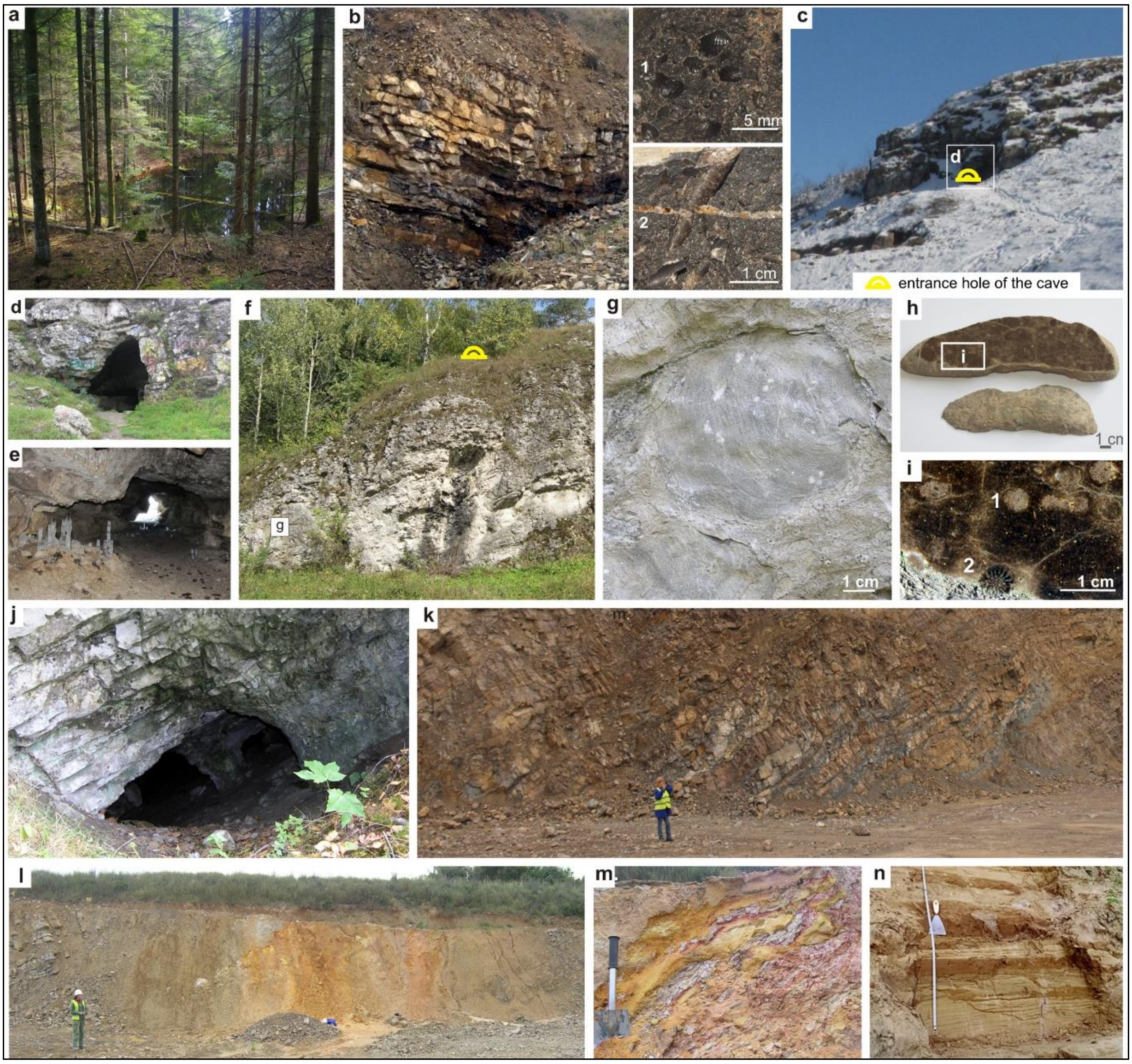

Figure 3. Geological and geomorphological objects in the Upper Łagowica River valley: a - closed depression forms on the slope of the Małacentów Ridge, b - exposure of the Frasnian-Famennian (F–F) limestones in Płucki with fossil fauna: *Bivalia* (1), *Nautiloidea* (2), c - slope of the Dulle gully with the Zbójecka Cave; d - entrance hole of the Zbójecka Cave, e - ice stalagmites in Zbójecka Cave corridor, f - exposure of the Givetian limestones in the ravine of the Łagowica River Valley with the location of the Lisia Dziura Cave entrance, g - the massive colony of *Stromatopora* in the Givetian limestones, h - a cut of limestone and weathered limestone with fauna; i - cross-sections through the skeletal elements of *Amphipora* (1) and *Anthozoa* (2) of the Devonian carbonate series, j - the Lisia Dziura Cave entrance, k - layers of dolomites in the Winna Quarry, l - sinkhole in the Winna Quarry, m - Paleogene-Neogene filling with clays containing lenses of sand and quartz gravel, n - Quaternary deposits series in the Łagowica River valley near Masłowiec. Photos by Małgorzata Ludwikowska-Kędzia (a, b, d-g, j, l-n), Jan Urban (c), Małgorzata Wiatrak (b1-2, h, i, k)

Table 2. Evaluation and score range of individual geotourist values after Dmytrowski and Kicińska (2011)

Values	Elements of evaluation	Evaluation and score range		
		High	Medium	Low
I substantive	Score range: 1-3 points a) significance of a given object in the geological structure and geomorphology of the region, b) occurrence of unique geological structures, c) occurrence of rocks with unique petrographic-mineralogical characteristics, d) readability of geological structure and processes, e) state of a given object, f) size of a given object, g) aesthetic values, h) concentration of objects of the same type in a given region.	**I=Ia+…Ih**		
		>17	17-10	<10
II location	Score range: 1-3 points a) location relative to transport routes, b) location relative to tourist trails, c) location relative to tourist centres; d) the degree of difficulty of exploring.	**II=IIa+…IId**		
		> 8	8-5	< 5
III cultural	Score range: 1- yes; 0-noconnection of a given object with: a) the history of a given region, b) the history of mining exploitation, c) regional legends.	**III=IIIa+…IIIc**		
		3	< 3	< 2
IV information	Score range: 1-3 points a) availability and accessibility of information about a given object in non-specialist and specialist literature and on the Internet.	**IV=IVa**		
		3	< 3	< 2
EV educational value		**EV= I +II+III+IV**		
		>31	31-24	<19
V geotourist development	Score range: 1-3 points a) administration and management of a given object, b) information board next to a given object, c) geotourist trail, d) accompanying development.	**V=Va+…Vd**		
		>8	8-5	5
GA geotourist attractiveness		**GA=EV+V**		
		> 39	39-24	< 24

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation of geotourist attractiveness of the objects in the Upper Łagowica River Valley

The results of geotourist evaluation of thirteen objects occurring in the Upper Łagowica River valley, i.e. partial evaluation (separately each value) and final evaluation (educational value, geotourist attractiveness) of each object (Table 3), lead us to the following conclusions:

Table 3. Geotourist evaluation of the objects in the Upper Łagowica River valley (after Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012; partially modified)

Geological, geomorphological and mining heritage objects	**Points awarded according to the accepted criteria (I-V) of geotourist evaluation** by Dmytrowski and Kicińska (2011)																										**EV - educational value**	**GA - geotourist attractiveness**
	I substantive values									II location values					III cultural values				IV inf	V geotourist development								
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	∑	a	b	c	d	∑	a	b	c	∑	a	a	b	c	d	∑				
	Partial and final evaluation (points awarded) H - high M - medium L - low																											
1. Nawrocki shaft in Łagów	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	3	**20** H	2	3	3	2	**10** H	1	1	0	**2** M	**3** H	1	1	1	1	**4** L			**35** H	**39** M
2. Traces of galena mining in Płucki	3	3	3	3	1	2	1	3	**19** H	3	1	2	2	**8** M	1	1	0	**2** M	**3** H	2	1	1	1	**5** L			**32** H	**37** M
3. Polygenic depressions in Małacentów	2	3	1	2	3	2	3	3	**19** H	3	1	2	3	**9** H	0	0	0	**0** L	**1** L	1	1	1	1	**4** L			**29** M	**33** M
4. Exposure of the F–F rocks in Płucki	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	**24** H	3	2	2	3	**10** H	0	0	0	**0** L	**3** H	1	1	1	1	**4** L			**37** H	**41** H
5. Dule karst gully in Łagów	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	**20** H	3	3	3	3	**12** H	0	0	1	**1** L	**3** H	2	2	1	2	**7** M			**36** H	**43** H
6. Exposure of Famennian rocks in the Dule gully	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	**23** H	3	3	3	2	**11** H	0	0	0	**0** L	**3** H	2	1	1	2	**6** M			**37** H	**43** H
7. Zbójecka Cave in the Dule gully	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	**22** H	3	3	3	1	**10** H	1	0	1	**2** M	**3** H	2	2	1	2	**7** M			**37** H	**44** H
8. Ravine of the Łagowica River	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	**20** H	3	3	2	2	**10** H	1	0	0	**1** L	**2** M	2	2	1	1	**6** M			**33** H	**39** M
9. Exposure of the Devonian carbonate series	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	**22** H	3	3	2	3	**11** H	0	0	0	**0** L	**3** H	2	2	1	1	**6** M			**36** H	**42** H
10. Lisia Dziura Cave	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	**15** M	3	2	3	1	**9** H	0	0	0	**0** L	**2** M	2	1	1	1	**5** L			**26** M	**31** M
11. Karst spring in Masłowiec	3	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	**14** M	3	1	2	1	**7** M	0	0	0	**0** L	**2** M	2	1	1	1	**5** L			**23** M	**28** M
12. Mining area near Winna and Komorniki	3	3	3	3	1	2	3	1	**19** H	3	1	2	3	**9** H	0	1	0	**1** L	**2** M	1	1	1	1	**4** L			**31** M	**35** M
13. Exposure of Quaternary deposits in Masłowiec	2	2	2	3	1	1	1	2	**14** M	3	1	2	2	**8** M	0	0	0	**0** L	**3** H	1	1	1	1	**4** L			**25** M	**29** M

(a) four objects (4,6,7 and 9) have the highest substantive value (I) (22-24 points out of 24 possible). They can be considered as geosites (cf. Brilha, 2016). The second place (19-21 points) is taken by six geomorphological and mining heritage objects (1-3,5,8 and 12). The substantive value of the remaining objects (three) ranges from 14 to 15 points (objects 10, 11, 13), i.e. it is average.

The common feature of most objects (eleven out of thirteen evaluated) is the maximum evaluation according to the criterion of significance of a given object in the geological structure and geomorphology of the region (objects 1, 2, 4-12), and according to the criterion of the state of a given object (objects 1, 2, 5-13). This indicates high rank of these objects. It is necessary to look after them so that their substantive value remains high.

(b) ten objects has a high location value (II), within the range of 9-12 points (objects 1, 3-10, 12), which results, among others, from their location near the road (up to 1 km) with a place to stop for cars, in the city of Łagów (a tourist centre in the eastern part of the Holy Cross Mountains) or on its outskirts. Only three objects have an average location value (7-8 points; objects 2, 11 and 13).

(c) only three objects have average cultural value (III), i.e. these connected with former galena mining (objects 1-2) and settlement (object 7). The cultural value of other objects is low.

d) only one object (object 3) has low information value (IV), while for the others this value is high (eight objects) or average (four objects). This is due to the fact that the investigations and making accessible the object 3 are in the early phase, while the other objects are known from the literature presenting the history of over two hundred years of geological and geomorphological research conducted in the Holy Cross Mountains region.

(e) eight analysed objects (objects 1, 2, 4-9) have high educational value (EV = 32-37 points) and five have average value (EV = 23-31 points). These results indicate that the educational potential of these geotourist objects is high and fully justifies the need for their promotion.

(f) infrastructure value (geotourist infrastructure) of eight analysed geotourist objects is low (4-5 points; objects 1-4, 10-13), in fact it does not exist. The other objects have average value (6-7 points, objects 5-9) because they meet three criteria at the same time: (1) clear legal status resulting from the fact that they are protected by law as nature monuments, natural-landscape complexes or parts of area of protected landscape, (2) existence of didactic boards though the content of them needs to be revised, and (3) planning and implementation of investment works *by* the local authorities of the city and commune of Łagów in the last five years.

(g) in the case of geotourist objects in the Upper Łagowica River valley, five objects (4-7, 9) are characterized by high (40-44 points) geotourist attractiveness (GA), and the remaining eight (objects 1-3, 8,10-13) have average attractiveness (28-39 points).

(h) none of the objects has low educational value (EV) and low geotourist attractiveness (GA). The lowest number of points (EV = 23-26 points, and GA = 28-31 points) were given to three objects (10, 11, 13).

The number of points in the category of educational value (EV) of the analysed objects is so high that poor or non-existent geotourist infrastructure (V) does not significantly affect the evaluation of their geotourist attractiveness (GA). Therefore, it is worth considering the importance of the infrastructure value (geotourist infrastructure) of an object for the evaluation of its geotourist attractiveness. Certainly, each object should be evaluated in terms of all values that constitute its geotourist attractiveness. If we evaluate the geotourist objects that already exist and have geotourist infrastructure, then we evaluate the *real geotourist attractiveness*, and in fact this evaluation leads to the creation of their ranking list, and can be used to determine the directions of their modernization etc.

In the case of preliminary evaluation of geotourist objects with poor or non-existent geotourist infrastructure we can evaluate their *potential geotourist attractiveness*. In such a situation, the evaluation of the educational value (EV), i.e. the educational potential of an object, is of particular importance. The analysis of this value, together with the infrastructure value, will allow us not only to evaluate the potential geotourist attractiveness of the analysed objects, but also to select those objects, for which the potential geotourist attractiveness will turn into the real geotourist attractiveness after building geotourist infrastructure. In the case of the objects in the Upper Łagowica River valley, which have high educational value (e.g. the Dule gully, the Zbójecka Cave, the Łagowica River ravine, the exposure of carbonate series in its slope between Łagów and Nowy Staw), already a low number of points in the category of infrastructure value makes them attractive for geotourists. This fact suggests that when geotourist infrastructure will be complete, these objects certainly will obtain the status of the actual geotourist attraction of the area. On the other hand, in the case of objects with lower educational value (e.g. the karst spring and exposure of Quaternary deposits in Masłowiec, Lisia Dziura Cave) only a high number of points in the category of infrastructure value would make them objects with high geotourist attractiveness. These suggestions are confirmed by the comparison of the research results obtained for the objects 1 and 2 in the years 2010-2011 and recently (cf. Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012). The high geotourist attractiveness of these objects has decreased and nowadays it is average.

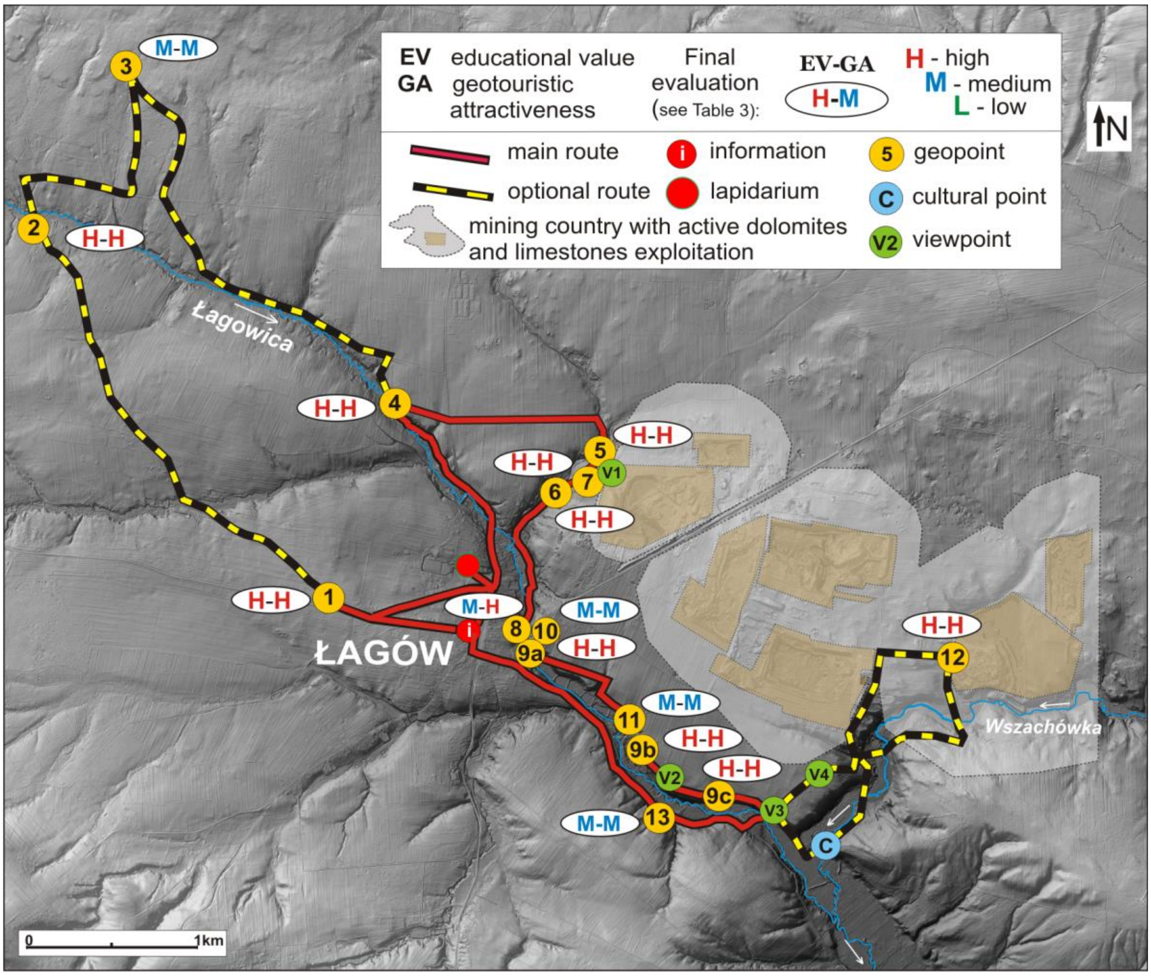

Figure 4. The project of geotourist trail “Upper Łagowica River Valley” (Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012; partially modified)

It is interesting to notice that in the proximity of the Upper Łagowica River valley there are not only the objects that threaten its attractiveness and existence, but also the areas very promising as for extending the geotourist offer of the region. These are vast areas of exploitation of the Devonian deposits: limestone (5 mining areas), dolomite (2 mining areas), dolomite and limestone (1 mining area)

(Szuflicki et al., 2020). The quarries irreversibly change the natural landscape features of these areas and the neighbouring, legally protected areas (Kowalczyk and Szrek, 2011). However, the post-exploitation areas (whole quarries or their fragments) do not have to be perceived as "wounds in the landscape" (Chwastek and Janusz, 1991). The mining managers as well as the local city and commune authorities should only change the formalistic way of thinking, already at the planning stage of liquidation of mining works and required reclamation of excavations and lands after mining activities. This stage is the right moment to see the chance of enriching the geotourist attractiveness of the area with new fascinating places, which illustrate on a large scale the effects of geological processes, and are located in the quarries of the Devonian limestone and dolomite near Łagów that will be closed in the future.

Many of these objects, appropriately adapted, can become extremely valuable geotourist, recreational (walking routes, bicycle paths, amphitheatres) or sports (climbing walls, football pitches) objects (cf. Nita, 2012). The results of geotourist evaluation clearly indicate very high geoeducational potential of the analysed small geotourist objects in the Upper Łagowica River valley, and thus confirm the idea of further promotion of geotourist development of the Łagów commune area, among other things by making the offered geoproduct more attractive, i.e. extending the proposed geotourist trail (cf. Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012).

Proposal of a geotourist trail in the Upper Łagowica River Valley

Geotourist trail is a special kind of the route along which there are geotourist attractions, which are the main tourist cognitive motif (Kicińska-Świderska and Słomka, 2004) (Figure 4). The proposed geotourist trail in the Upper Łagowica River valley (Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012) includes nineteen points. Thirteen of them are geological, geomorphological and mining geoheritage objects. Besides the above-mentioned objects, it was proposed to include: (1) information point (i), (2) cultural point on the Zamczysko Hill (C) with the remains of a medieval stronghold, which functioned from the end of the 11th century to the 13th century (Hadamik, 2004), and (3) four viewpoints – on the rock platform with the Zbójecka Cave entrance (V1), in the highest part of the slope of the Łagowica River ravine (V2), on the slope of the Łagowica River ravine, near the mouth of the Wszachówka River (V3), and on the road to Nowy Staw (V4) (Figure 4). These viewpoints are important for highlighting the variability of relief of the analysed area, its natural aesthetic values (points V1, V3) and transformation of the natural landscape as a result of mining activities (points V1, V2, V4).

The proposed geotrail begins at the information point on the market square of Łagów, which received town privileges in 14^{th} century (Hadamik 2004). In this information point the history of mining and settlement in Łagów and the surrounding area could be presented as well as the general issues concerning the location, geological structure and relief of the Upper Łagowica River valley. Before setting off on the route, it will be worth stopping in the lapidarium, which is planned to be open by the city and commune authorities in the coming years (Figure 4). Starting from point 1, the trail runs successively through the evaluated objects. However, the objects 2 and 3 (in Płucki and on the Małacentów Ridge), due to their location outside the main course of the proposed geotrail, can be treated as alternative to the object 4 (Figure 4). Similarly, the objects C and 12 (the Zamczysko Hill near Nowy Staw and the mining area near Winna and Komorniki) are alternative to the object 13 (the profile of Quaternary deposits in Masłowiec).

The proposed geoutourist trail in the Upper Łagowica River valley can be classified using the criteria published by Kicińska-Świderska and Słomka (2004):

(a) thematic criterion – specialist, geological and geomorphological trail, aimed at understanding the specificity of depositional conditions in the environments of shallow Devonian sea over the carbonate platform and deeper intrashelf basin, the conditions of development and features of karst relief (forms of surface and underground karst as well as reproduced karst), the Quaternary stage of the valley development, and the history of lead ore mining (Table 4). Different substantive issues, represented by the objects along the geotourist trail, are divided into six thematic groups: mineralogy, petrography, tectonics, palaeontology, mining and geomorphology (mostly karst, fluvial and denudation relief). In particular points of the trail, more than one thematic group is usually presented.

Table 4. Subject matter of the substantive issues represented by the objects on the geotourist trail in the Upper Łagowica River valley (after Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012; partially modified)

Thematic group	Substantive issues	Trail object
mineralogy	symptom of hydrothermal processes – galena	1, 2
	secondary minerals in the Devonian carbonate rocks – calcite and dolomite	9a-c, 12
petrography	mineral composition, structure and texture of limestones, dolomites, breccia	4, 9a-c, 12
tectonics	geological profile of the Łagów syncline	4, 9a-c
	transverse faults in the southern wing of the Łagów syncline	9a
	strike-slip faults and slickenside	12
palaeontology	site with skeletal elements of the Late Devonian Placodermi	4
	site of the Late Devonian benthos and nekton invertebrate fauna	
	site with the remains of bony fishes from the Sarcopterygii group representing Tetrapodomorpha	
	site of the Late Devonian cephalopod fauna – *Goniatitida* and *Clymeniida*	6
	site of the Givetian *Stromatoporoidea-Anthozoa* fauna	9a
mining	traces of historical ore mining – lead and pyrite ore	1, 2, 12
	transformation of the natural environment caused by modern mining of rock raw materials	7, 12
geomorphology	profile of the Quaternary deposits illustrating the coexistence of fluvial and slope processes, and aggradation of deposits in the bottom of the valley	13
	forms of surface, underground and reproduced karst	3, 5, 7, 8, 9a, 10-12
	symptoms of cooperation of fluvial, karst and denudation processes in the formation and functioning of the valley system	3, 5, 7-11, 13
	lithological and tectonic conditions of the development of karst relief forms	3, 5, 7-11, 12

(b) range criterion – local route, but showing the unique in Poland features of geological structure and relief of the southern part of the Holy Cross Mountains.

(c) spatial criterion – land, surface-underground route, which runs both along the bottom of the valley, on its rocky slopes, and on flat denudation surfaces. Locally, at the points of cave occurrence and at the point with the Nawrocki shaft, it can run underground, but after adaptation of these objects.

(d) criterion of the number of tourists – route intended for individual tourists and small groups of tourists (maximum 10-15 people).

(e) criterion of the way of moving – pedestrian or bicycle route.

(f) length criterion – one-day or two-day route; length – 10 km (about 22 km as an alternative).

In respect of educational content, the objects represent a large variety of issues from the categories of knowledge, skills and attitudes (Table 5), which can be presented during geoeducational classes for various groups of interested, i.e. school students, students, geotourists, tourist guides. The application nature of the conducted research in the Upper Łagowica River valley and its surroundings was confirmed by the activities of the Łagów commune authorities aimed at the promotion of geoeducation, organizing scientific conferences, popularizing meetings, field symposia or school workshops, and by the investment plans of the authorities of the city and commune of Łagów (establishing a lapidarium, making the Zbójecka Cave accessible to physically handicapped persons, and developing tourist infrastructure in the cave surroundings in the Dule gully).

Table 5. Category of educational and didactic issues implemented at the points of the geotourist trail in the Upper Łagowica River valley (after Ludwikowska-Kędzia and Wiatrak, 2012; partially modified)

Issues by category:	**Object number**
KNOWLEDGE	
chemical composition, internal structure, morphology, mechanical and optical properties of the galena, calcite and dolomite crystals	1, 2, 9a-c, 12
features of the environment of the Devonian organogenic limestone formation in the Holy Cross Mountains	6, 9a
dolomitization process in the Devonian rocks of the Paleozoic massif of the Holy Cross Mountains according to different authors	9c, 12
features of the environment of the Devonian syngenetic dolomite formation	9c
Variscan tectonic deformations in the Holy Cross Mountains	4, 5, 9a, 12
causes of mass extinctions in Phanerozoic	4
importance of fossil *Stromatoporoidea-Anthozoa* fauna in the reconstruction of the features of palaeoenvironments	9a
Late Devonian nekton fauna of intrashelf basin	4, 6
importance of conodont microfossils in the Devonian stratigraphy	4, 6
fossilization process of marine organisms and the types of fossils associated with it	4, 6, 9a,c
historical and modern position of the Łagów region in the ore mining in the Świętokrzyski region	1, 2
conditions of formation and age of hydrothermal ores in the Paleozoic massif of the Holy Cross Mountains	1, 2
conditions of formation and age of ores formed by weathering in the Paleozoic massif of the Holy Cross Mountains	2
ways of the former exploitation of ores in the Holy Cross Mountains	1, 2
modern mining of rock raw materials in the area of Łagów and its importance in the Świętokrzyskie Province	12, V1, V2, V4
lithological and structural conditions of karst processes	3, 5, 7-9a, 10-12, V1
history of mining and geological researches and relationship of the former settlement with the natural environment	i, 7, V3, C
record of aggradation in the bottom of the valley – the effect of cooperation of fluvial and slope processes	13
SKILLS	
describing macroscopic properties of galena, calcite, dolomite	1, 2, 9a,c, 12
identification of mineral composition, structure and texture of carbonate rocks	4, 9a,c, 12
describing macroscopic properties of breccia	9a,b
drawing of geological profile	4, 12
determining the position of layers in space, based on the measurement of strike and dip angle of layers and determining the direction of their dip	4, 6, 9a,c, 12
application of rules of determining the relative age of rocks and geological processes in accordance with the principles formulated by Nicolaus Steno (1699)	4, 6, 9a-c, 12
identification of fossils of benthos and nekton invertebrate fauna	4, 6, 9a,c
identification of the types of fossils according to the way of formation	4, 6
identification of anthropogenic forms resulting from the extraction of ores	1, 2
identification of anthropogenic forms resulting from the extraction of rock raw materials	12, V1, V2, V4
identification of surface and underground karst forms, explanation of the conditions of karst relief formation and karst process course	3, 5, 7, 8, 9a, 10-12, V1
identification of the remains of former human settlements	C
determining the type of interfingering boundary of slope and fluvial deposits	13
reading depositional conditions, type and intensity of secondary processes that transform the Quaternary deposits	13
ATTITUDES	
respect for the principles of legal protection of geological heritage	5-11
respect for nature and its unchanging rights, and cultural heritage	1-11, 13, V1-4, C
recognition of the achievements of knowledge in the field of earth sciences	1-13
cooperation in a group during practical classes	4, 6, 9a,c, 12
regeneration of physical and mental forces through active rest	1-13,V1, V3

CONLUSIONS

1. The small-scale geological and geomorphological objects as well as traces of former mining activities located in the Upper Łagowica River valley can be considered individually as geodiversity sites. However, their concentration in the valley, location in close proximity to each other as well as the accompanying viewpoints and culture points cause that these objects, when analysed together, strengthen their individual values. They are then attractive not only for an educator (e.g. teacher, tourist guide) and geotourist, but they are also promising for a potential investor.

2. The results of geotourist evaluation of the objects located in the Upper Łagowica River valley indicate their high and medium geotourist attractiveness, which justifies the marking out the proposed geotourist trail "Upper Łagowica River valley". This trail may become a showpiece promoting geotourism not only in the region, but on a supra-regional scale, it may increase the investment attractiveness of the area and at the same time arouse interest in the problem of changes and protection of the geodiversity of river valleys.

3. Geotourist evaluation of small objects in small river valleys, presented using the example of the Upper Łagowica River valley in the Holy Cross Mountains, together with the proposal to make out a geoturist trail in it, has application significance. It may help the local community to perceive the value of geodiversity and draw attention to the need for preservation and conservation of valuable geological and geomorphological objects in river valleys, may promote local and regional geotourism and increase the investment attractiveness of the area.

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MOTIVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES CONCEPTS IN THE TRAVEL DECISIONS OF DOMESTIC TOURISTS OF THE „HUNGARIAN GREAT PLAIN"

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Abstract: From the point of view of successful tourism product development and destination management it is important to identify the travel motivations that determine the expectations of the experience and hence the satisfaction. The large-scale survey among domestic tourism participants reveals ideas, knowledge and motivations as determinants of tourism consumer habits, explores the relationship between domestic travel characteristics, destination awareness and the suggestibility of travel decisions. The results obtained, especially the general openness to domestic travel. Based on the research results, the tourism-specific motivations of the destination can be identified, on which further product development and experience management methods can be based.

Key words: travel decision, tourist motivation, experience management, destination management, Hungarian Great Plain

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INTRODUCTION

In addition to utilizing the unique features of the region, addressing as many segments as possible is one way of managing tourism with developing experience packages offered by destinations for domestic tourism. Among the destinations of the Great Plain, the tourist position of the region known as the „Heart of the Great Plain", which can be identified with Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County (JNSZC), justifies a rethinking of the emphasis and a stronger communication of the experience points, as well as the development of destination management appropriate for the specific segments. The situation assessment document (Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County Regional Development Program 2014-2020) identifies tourist attractions and programs as scarce, with low capacity occupancy, number of guests and length of stay, and significant seasonality. Therefore, the county Territorial Development Operative Programme (TOP Plan) to contribute to the increase in visitor numbers and time spent by eliminating bottlenecks, with the aim of improving hospitality, developing attractions and services directly, to generate income, sustainability, and multifunctional recreational and community spaces, indirectly.

The increase in tourism performance in most of the Great Plain depends mainly on the willingness of domestic tourists to travel, therefore, from the point of view of both product development and destination management, it is necessary to examine the actual travel habits of domestic tourists and to assess certain factors influencing travel decisions. Based on these, the research set out two complex goals: first, to explore the travel education, knowledge and motivation of the participants of domestic tourism, thus to identify the factors determining the destination's tourism travel habits; with a view to extending the period of stay: on the one hand, to explore the travel notion, knowledge and motivation of the participants of the domestic tourism of the destination region, on the other hand, to explore the relationships between domestic travel characteristics and the suggestibility of travel decisions, in particular with regard to the extension of stay. We intended to achieve the research objective outlined above by analysing the results obtained using a combined query (completed by interviewer or self-filled). The analysis also extends to the examination of relationships, and the evaluation of research seeks to analyse in depth, segment by segment, and to explore relationships between factors. The research can serve as a support for the tourism project ideas of the county; it can contribute to the utilization of the tourism capabilities of the county, and to the development of the tourism experience base and experience generation areas.

Theoretical Background

When planning domestic and international tourism development, it is necessary to consider both subsystems of tourism (Lengyel, 2004; Dezsi et al., 2014; Bujdosó et al., 2013, 2015), on the one hand, these are the essential material subsystem, i.e. resources. On the other hand, the essential element of the subject-matter subsystem of tourism should be examined with regard to the tourist's perceptions, attitudes, feelings, values, motivations and consumer habits, in a broader sense. These result the travel decision, that is, in terms of resources, the realization of tourism (Dávid et al., 2012, Soldić, 2018). Tourism demand is based on needs driven by different motivations. The main travel motivations for tourists are stress-free relaxation, the need for activity, the need for intensive experiences and networking, which appear in

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different proportions and priority levels in individual decisions. No destination, such as the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County under investigation, can do that it does not respond to any of the four main motivations, nor does it provide a satisfactory supply element.

On the one hand, potential motivations in tourism include physiological motivation (relaxation, physical regeneration, healing, health recovery, sports), psychic motivation (outbursts of everyday life, entertainment, desire for experience), social motivation (visiting friends and acquaintances, cheerful company, escape into nature), cultural motivations (learning about other habits, traditions, artistic interests, religious practice), tourism resources, e.g. mountains, lakes, rivers (Vasvári et al., 2015; Ilieș et al., 2020; Marcu et al., 2020) and status and prestige motivations (personal development, desire for recognition) (Haedrich et al., 2010; Ilieș and Grama, 2010; Ilieș et al., 2017). On the other hand, there are different levels of activity among tourists' motivations (holidaymakers, or those looking for an experience, or looking for movement, or sports, or adventure, or knowledge seeking). Thirdly, the needs of tourists grouped according to leisure and lifetime motivations are also present (active trolling, tendency-sensitive, family-friendly, resting only) (Haedrich et al., 2010). Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County as a tourist destination (Kozak, 2002) is able to provide a relaxation, an experience of nature, a way of life and activity for certain segments, and understanding of their customs and traditions. Usually it is suitable for trying out some sports, for cheerfulness, for fun, but needs based on artistic, cultural, religious, entertainment and experience motivations can also be met. Self-actualization motivation in business and conference tourism is based on the travel decision of participants, which is below average in the county in general.

A theoretical grouping of motivations is to distinguish between "push" and "pull" types (Pesonen et al., 2011). „Push" motivations make the traveller move away from everyday life, „pull" is more impulsive, the attraction of the destination influences the potential tourist. These features must also be taken into account when generating a travel decision. Motivation is influenced by the tourist's attitudes and orientations, which are determined by personality and needs (Hofmeister-Tóth, 2006; Suleimenov et al., 2020). The need, as the central category of consumption fulfils the motivating function by triggering action to eliminate the feeling of want (Törőcsik, 2016). Consumers' behaviour while meeting needs is about decisions in the consumption process and consumer behaviour (Fodor et al., 2012; Indrie et al., 2019).

Due to the determinants of both main constituents, which are influential but multifactorial (economic, demographic, psychological, sociological, anthropological, geographical), a continuous analysis is needed (Lehota, 2001). Therefore, for reasons of sales efficiency, it is important to examine the motivations underlying the needs, to examine the mental and emotional processes of consumer behaviour (Kiss, 2016) and to ensure appropriate directions for their development. This may appear in the complex development of the destination or in product development, which is a kind of selective development (Lengyel, 2004; Shomanova et al., 2017; Ilieș et al., 2018) regarding the tourist infrastructure or the supra-structure. Motivations can also be deduced from Cohen's tourist categories (wanderer, explorer, individual mass tourist, organized mass tourist). Tourist typing also follows changes in the market (Kovács and Kiss, 2018), i.e. demand and supply trends, of which Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County, due to its characteristics, may be influenced by the priority of experience-based travel, the promotion of culture as motivation, the importance of human contact, the frequency of short trips and adventure-seeking trends (Mester, 2004; Azhayev et al., 2020). However, the mechanism of travel decision making is essentially unchanged in terms of its phases (pre- and post-decision, future decision-making, ex-post evaluation) and need fulfilment (motivation, cognition, learning) (Cohen et al., 2013).

From the point of view of the process, the traveller decides on the location, the mode of travel, the accommodation, the duration, the time and the way of organizing (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2007), and takes into account the product elements and experience content offered. By narrowing the main determinants of travel to three (discretionary income, motivation, leisure), their relationships with consumer behaviour, environmental, psychological, "push" ("internal") and "pull" (external) factors can be modelled (Lőrincz et al., 2017). According to these, the tourist is motivated either by being away from home or by satisfying the need (push factor) or by the sights of the destination he wants to discover or by the experience of travel itself pull or attract him to participate in tourism (pull factor). Both factors seek to reduce the gap between experience expectation and satisfaction (Maghsoodi Tilaki et al., 2017). Thus, the tourist interpretation of motivation does not differ from the general interpretation as a "driving force"; can based on e.g. instinct, lack, urge, need, interest, desire, an impulsion that drives him away from home, so travel is an inner urge (Cooper et al., 1998).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Questionnaire research had been from 27/06/2019 to 01/08/2019 with the self-completion method and with the assistance of interviewers on the SURVIO online interface. The questionnaire filling page was visited by 1656 people, the completion rate was 62.6%, so the research database was created from a complete sample of 1037 respondents. Among the statistical methods used, the frequency analysis shows the distribution of response rates for both single and multiple responses. It can also be used for ranking. The crosstab is the first element of the association tightness analysis and can be used to examine the relationship between two non-parametric variables. The cells in the table contain the values obtained for each combination of the two variables (column and row variables). The data obtained provide information on the relationship between the two variables. This is complemented by the measures of association strength (Freedman et al., 2005) as a Cramer V indicator, which shows that at $p <0.05$, the relationship can be considered significant (Wagner, 2013).

The Kendall's W index indicates the opinions concordance of the opinion of the segments of sample. Seven questions in the questionnaire related to socio-demographic identification, asking for the respondent's education, age, labour market status, income status, gender, place of residence (2 questions). The results are used for grouping and filtering. The 14 substantive questions related to the topic are basically suitable for producing descriptive statistics. Questions about domestic travel patterns (branching into question 3, also asking about the characteristics of shorter and longer trips) measure the characteristics of actual and planned travel, especially attitudes, motivations, and respondents' booking habits. Among substantive questions in the questionnaire, there is one scale question, one alternative, branching question and two simple, single-choice questions. There are two types of the 6 multiple-choice questions, 2 questions limit the number of answers, 4 questions do not limit the number of answers. The respondent is given the opportunity to explain the "other" answer in 4 questions. Apparently, the questions also include the "don't know/don't answer" option. Statistical analyses of variables were performed with Excel 2013 and PSPP statistical analysis software. The path to the filling platform: https://www.survio.com/survey/d/J5V7D5P7Z4R9T1S1Y. The self-completed questionnaire was distributed via e-mail and community portals via link sharing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The key findings of the research are presented individually on travel attitudes, propensity to travel and journeys made, characteristics of domestic travel, travel attitudes, planned journeys and the correlation between primary variables. The sample was overrepresented among women (75.0%), men representing only 24.9% of the respondents. The distorting effect of female overrepresentation is mitigated by the greater role that women play in domestic households in travel decisions. The age composition of the sample is evenly distributed. The majority of respondents aged 40-49 completed the questionnaire (22.8%), followed by the age group 31-39 years (19.8%), and then followed by the age group 50-59 years. The proportion of those aged over 60 was 16.1%, compared to 15.2% of those aged 25-30. The lowest proportion was 6.1% of respondents, namely the 18-24 age group.

The willingness to travel is significantly influenced by income status. 20.8% of the respondents did not answer the income question, even though it was a scalable technique. The majority of the 821 respondents feel they belong to two income-categories 5 (27.5%) and 6 (22.5), ranging from very poor to very rich (on scale from 1 to 10). There is no significant shift in income distribution, with the income scale averaging 5.5. By labour market status, 71.8% of the respondents are active workers. Educational attainment is also closely related to the willingness to participate in tourism, and the average education of the respondents is good. It can be stated that the composition of the sample is suitable for the achievement of the objectives of the research, for testing of targeted consumer habits. However, two sub-populations of respondents in the county and outside the county (73.0% and 27.0%) have to be formed regarding the recognition of the county.

Travel attitudes

As a basis for travel decision, the first unit of the questionnaire examined travel motivation and attitude. One of the questions asked preferences for the duration of domestic travel in the form of a scale question, while the simple choice question claimed the perceived comparative advantages of travelling. The preferences for short, medium, and longer travels show a balanced result (Figure 1).

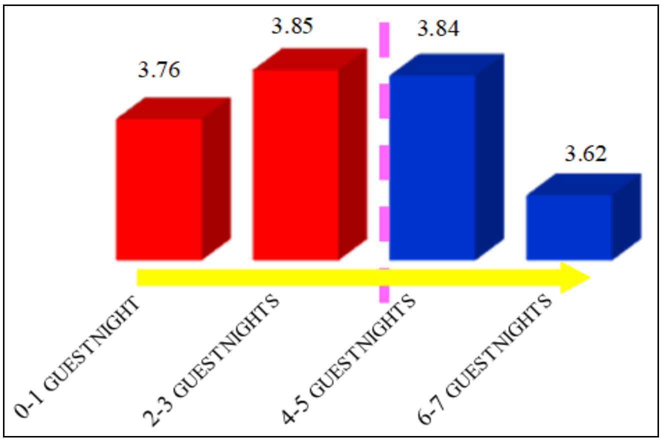

Figure 1. Purified preference average (Source: authors' construction)

With a slight difference, longer trips were chosen by a larger proportion of respondents, 43.0% is the level of attractiveness of travels with at least six guest nights and 42.8% of travels of 4-5 guest nights. Shorter travels attract 38.9% (1 night) and 40.5% (2-3 nights) of respondents. Negative preferences, on the other hand, are highest for the longest and shortest categories, 13.6% (minimum six guest nights) and 9.2% (one night). The rate of answer refusals was higher, so the negative preference for 2-3 and 4-5 night trips was 6.9% and 8.1%. The preference averages (3.76; 3.85; 3.84; 3.62; respectively, cleaned from negative respondents) show a preference for 2-3-night trips, but the minimal difference indicates the tourists' willingness to stay a bit longer at a destination.

An adequate form of tourism management (attraction management, capacity management, product management, visitor management, destination management, experience management) can set the task of winning travellers with programs that are sufficiently attractive for the fourth guest night, as the sights are expected to be seen in the previous days. Any finding of answers to questions aimed at comparing domestic and foreign travel was generally considered to be true for both, most of all in terms of experience seeking (Figure 2).

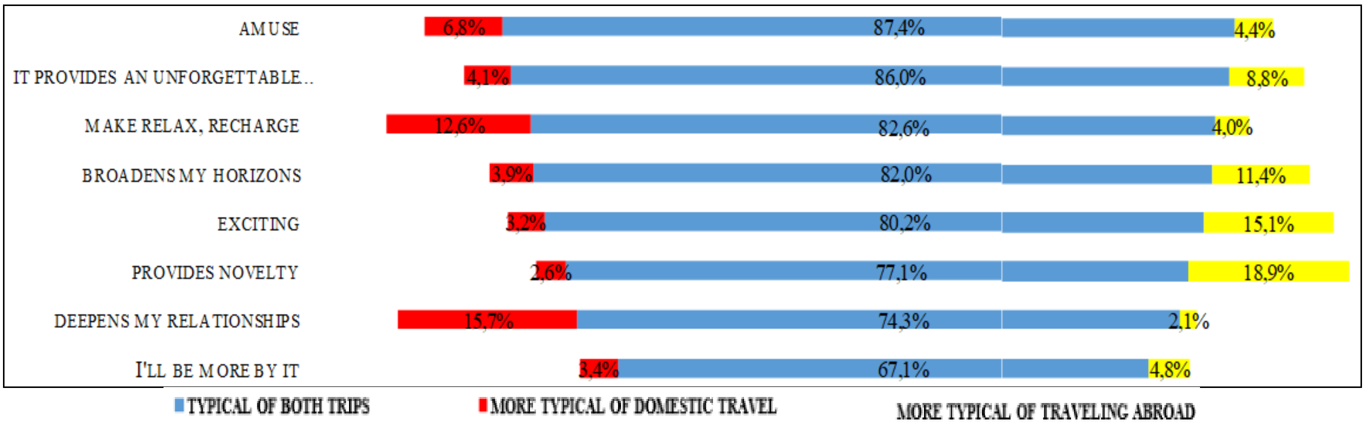

Figure 2. Comparison of domestic and foreign travel motivations (Source: authors' own compilation, 2020)

For both domestic and foreign travel, answers “I will be more by the travel” and “learn about myself” were considered to be the least true for the respondents' journeys, indicating a lower level of Maslow's need for travel than self-actualization. Respondents considered more the “deepening of friends and family relations” and the “to make me relaxed, rested and energized” motivation factor being a characteristic of domestic tourism. Respondents are less likely to find domestic travel exciting as providing them less novelty, and believe they widen their horizons to a lesser extent. It is clear from the answers that the opportunity to gain experiences is an outstanding motivator (86.0% for both domestic and foreign travels). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the proposed domestic experience promises and, during the stay, to apply experience management methods and further increase the experience content of domestic travels. The county results are almost identical to the national sample; in the latter the desire for experience plays a bigger role (Hungarian Tourism Agency, 2017, 2018). These opinions also justify the need to improve the efficiency of domestic communication and product development.

Willingness to travel and realized trips

Three of the questionnaire questions are linked to the studied subject matter. The sample can be divided into subgroups of respondents in terms of the participation or alternative of a one-day or multi-day trip for the last 12 months for tourism purposes by a single-answer question. The majority of respondents (63.9%) travelled within one year. As the survey was conducted in the middle of the season, it is likely that over 12 months, but even during the summer, more respondents will participate in a domestic main trip. In addition to the purpose of selection, the question also plays a role in the validation of the questionnaire; the high travel attendance rate also confirms the authenticity of the answers and the existing travel experience of the sample. Of those who did not take at least one overnight trip (34.4%), 14.3% only travelled for one day but did not spend the night at the destination, while 1% is a resident of a tourism resort (Figure 3).

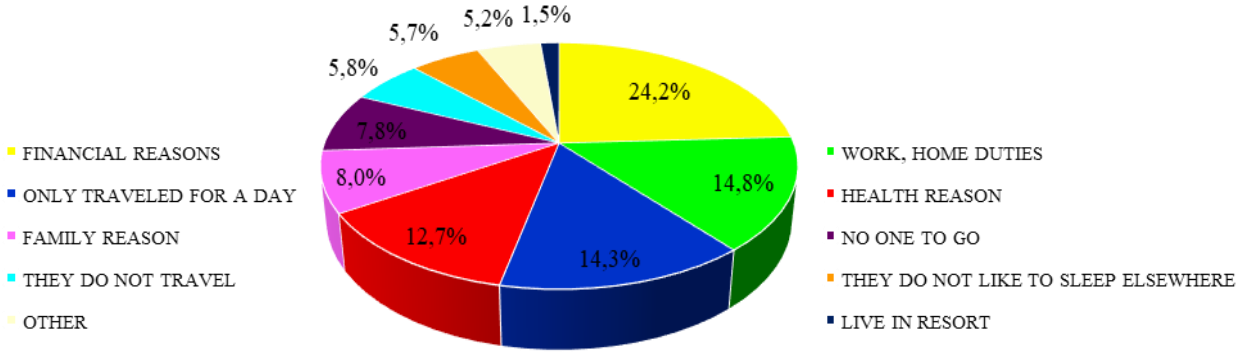

Figure 3. Reasons for failure of respondents who did not participate in tourism travel (Source: authors' own compilation, 2020)

Most of the respondents (28.7% of the sample answered to this question) mentioned financial reasons as the cause of not to travel being a meaningful and measurable reason. Further reasons for not to travel were lack of time due to work at the workplace or at home (17.6% of adequate respondents), health problem (11.1%) family reasons (9.5%) and 9.3% had no one to travel with. Nearly the same group of respondents (6.9% and 6.7%) claimed that they generally do not participate in travels or sleep anywhere else. Only 4.6% do not take part in multi-day trips, and 4.0% justify their absence due to their age. Other reasons were mentioned scarcely (1.3%), however a regularly repeated pattern was dog or other pet keeping as a reason not to travel. In the latter case, or in the case of travelling alone as a handicap, tour operators could fulfil the special needs of travellers by appropriate tourism products.

Characteristics of Domestic Travel

The question group included questions in terms of preferred travel times, motivations, reasons for choosing a destination, and means of arousing interest only the respondents having substantial travel experiences had to fill it out. According to their answers, domestic trips are organized in July, June and August respectively, while the next preferred periods being May, April and September. Before the months being at the end of the travel preferences list (February, November and January) are still October, March and December can be found. The typical high season, middle and low seasons can be recognized and it is pinpointed that propensity to travel is higher in spring than in autumn months.

Since travel is rarely induced by a single motivation, multiple choice questions resulted in the following motivation ranking (Figure 4). 44.2% of all responses indicate the motivation for using health tourism services (spa, thermal bath, wellness, selfness), followed by active leisure activities such as cycling, fishing, hiking, hunting, etc. (36.8%).

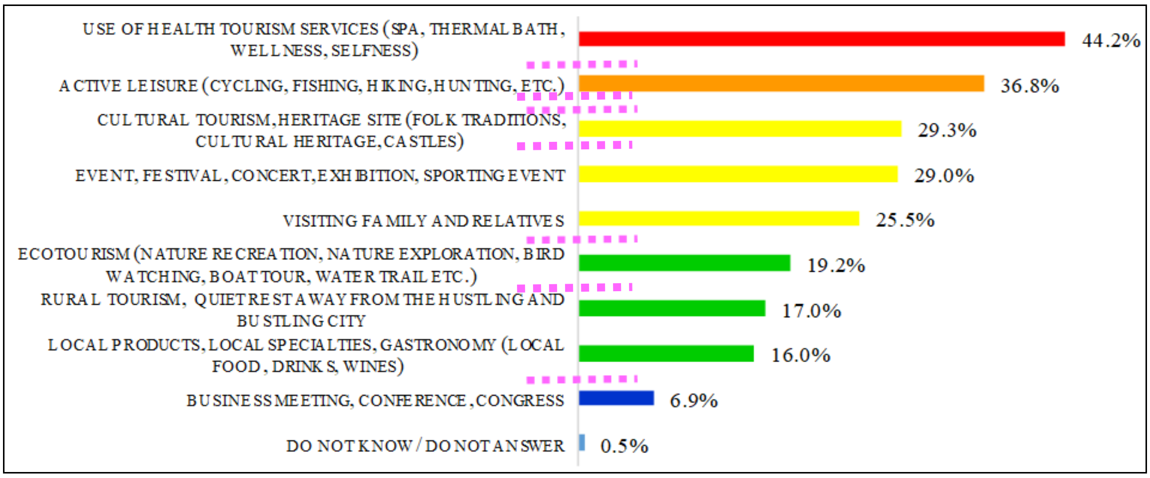

Figure 4. Ranking of domestic travel motivations (Source: authors' own compilation)

A significant proportion of respondents (29.3%) mentioned as motivation to participate in cultural tourism, to visit heritage sites, discover attractions, castles, and manors of the host destinations, to learn about folk traditions and cultural heritage, and to take part in major events, festivals, concerts, exhibitions or sporting events (29.0%) and to visit friends and relatives (25.5%). The next group of answers includes motivations similar to ecotourism, which is characterized by the fact that recreation focuses on nature, e.g. discovery of natural reserves, bird watching, boat tour and water trail (19.2%), rural tourism, tranquil recreation in a place away from noisy cities (17.3%); and discovery of local products or local specialties including gastronomy, local food, and wines (16.0%).

The mention of business tourism rated for only 6.9% of all responses. The proportion of typical motivations is similar to the national survey, despite the fact that the ratio of the characteristics of the county is different in terms of attractiveness. This can be explained by almost the same conceptions of generations. There were eighteen multiple choice reasons to identify as a motive for choosing a travel destination. The number of mentions is extremely high due to the reason of natural endowments and attractions of the destination, which was mentioned by almost every second respondent (44.5%). Price sensitivity of travellers appears as the second most common answer (favourable price, low cost, good value for money - 30.6%) (Figure 5).

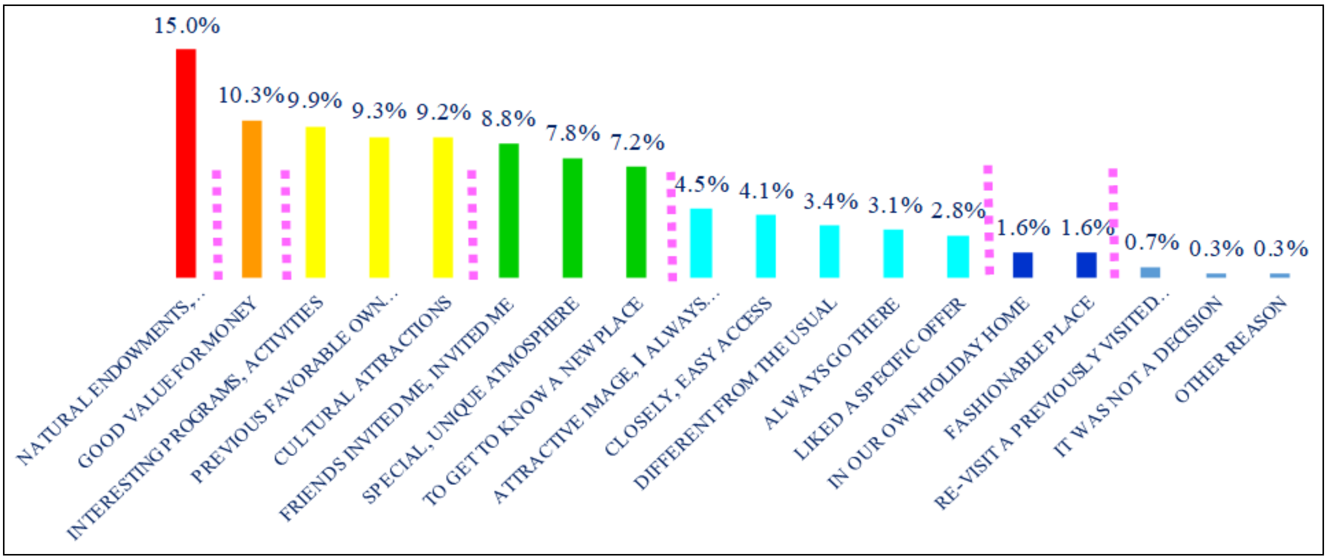

Figure 5. Selecting the travel destination (Source: authors' construction)

Subsequently, the rate of responds of three causes has almost equal proportions. "There were programs or opportunities for activities being interesting for us" has 29.4%, "past positive experiences" reached 27.5% and "cultural attractions of the destination" was mentioned by 27.3% of respondents. As an emotional reason, 23.1% of respondents said that the place has a "unique, unique atmosphere". Even above the 20 percent zone are the proportions of mentions of "invitation of friends and relatives" (22.6%) and "we have never been there and wanted to explore a new place". Interestingly, at the bottom of the list, fashion did not play a significant role in the decisions (4.8%), and site visits related to nostalgia were also insignificant (2.1%). Other answers provide specific motivations, e.g. religious purpose, attending to a festival, and having a large family and multi-generational travel, thus appeared the choice according to the various needs of many family members.

With multiple choices, respondents could choose from nine options for obtaining information. Of all the answers, 43.0% were convinced by the positive experience of previous visits, and presumably at least one of the travellers had already visited the destination. At the same time, the respondents trusted the recommendations of friends and relatives or accepted their invitation (41.8%). The third place in the ranking is the interest raising and persuasive power of read and recommends content on online channels (28.5%). Discounts, coupons and promotions (18.4%) are much less stimulating, which contradicts the previously stated price sensitivity. Tourism-related advertisements attracted interest in 17.6% of the responses, while TV and radio attracted in 10.0%. Travel agency promotion was the least effective (4.4%). Other options include self-resolve, location choice by bucket list, and low-cost workplace vacation. Compared to the national sample, the current respondents identified the two most important information channels in the same way, but in the reverse order.

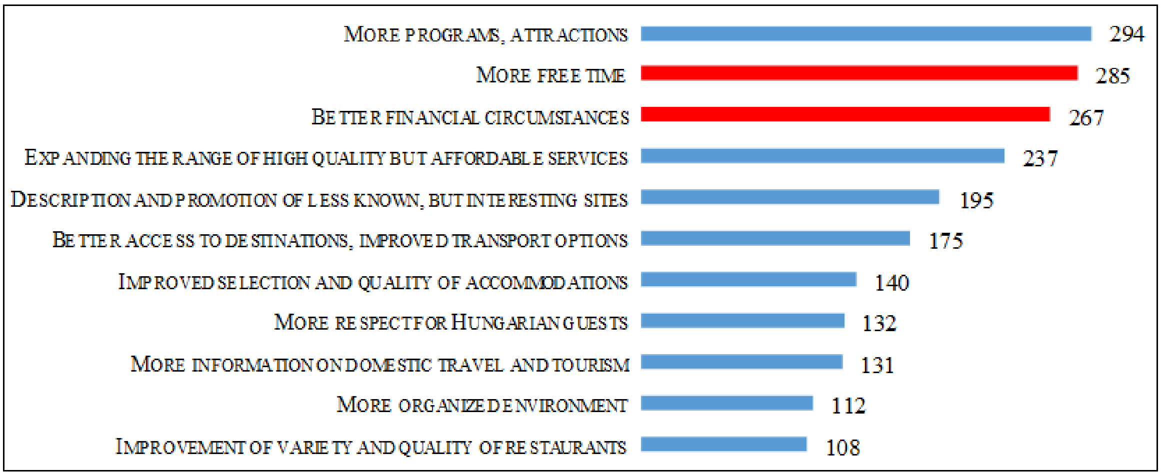

Figure 6. Possibilities for extension of stay (Source: authors' construction)

Travel attitudes, planned trips

The twelfth question, which concerns the possibilities for extending shorter travel times, has a pragmatic approach. The multiple-choice question reveals that both supply and demand factors influence the decision on travel duration (Figure 6). However, the most frequently mentioned (28.4%) answer was the "more programs, attractions", which poses a task for tourism product developers. This is followed by the two main demand factors "more leisure time" (27.5%) and "better financial conditions" (25.7%).

The next two elements of the ranking list are once again useful in terms of development trends as "expanding the range of high-quality but affordable services" (22.9%) and "promoting little-known but interesting sites" (18.8%). The next item (16.9%) considers accessibility as a limiting factor. Transportation and accessibility were identified as a factor to be improved (Tóth et al. 2010, 2013, 2014). Other factors are related to quality, personal services and available information in different contexts (environment, accommodation, hospitality). It is observed that respondents have an inclination to stay longer, which could be utilized, that is, to increase their stay from the critical 3 nights to 4 nights, to move from a shorter to a longer-stay travel category. Limitation factors in other responses include animals left at home, young children, health status, and not to be away from home for long period of time.

Relationships between variables

The main aim of the research was to examine whether there is a demonstrable correlation between the demographic and domestic travel characteristics of the respondents involved in the survey. There is no general, close relationship between the general travel attitudes and socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, but in some cases correlations can be highlighted (based on Cramer's V).

Findings regarding to the length of the journey:

- Longer stays are more attractive to those with higher education and a more favourable income status.
- There is a significant difference in gender preference in terms of one-day trips, women have higher level.

Findings related to the effects brought by tourism travels:

- Respondents with lower income status and those living in smaller settlements have a higher proportion who considers the unique feature of domestic travel to be an unforgettable experience.
- Respondents with higher income status, higher education, and those aged 60 and over consider traveling abroad more exciting. The age group of 18-24 year typically associating excitement with travelling abroad, while there was no response exclusively to domestic travel in this age category.

Findings related to the propensity to travel and tourism travels done:

- There is a moderately strong relationship between the income status, the highest completed level of education and training, the age and the domestic trips taken (Cramer's V=0.34 and 0.27, respectively). According to this outcome, those with higher income status and educational level, as well as those with higher age, were more likely to travel to domestic trips.
- There is no appreciable difference between the responses in terms of gender.

Findings related to domestic travels:

- The higher propensity to travel of respondents with higher education and residence in the capital is evident in every month of the year, with the difference being higher in October, probably due to the autumn bank holidays.
- Positive disparity is identified within socio-demographic groups of respondents in months of April and October in terms of age group 40-49 years, sample group of higher income status and gender group of women.

Findings related to the key tourism motivation factors:

- The reasons for travel can be described with an 84% consistency level of responds. It is less attractive for all age groups alike to make domestic travels to discover local products and regional gastronomy, while event tourism and health tourism is ranked to the first place as a factor to travel in case of younger and elder respondents respectively.
- Respondents living in the capital are significantly more motivated to visit friends and relatives compared to the other categories of residents who have the strongest motivation for health tourism (W = 82%).
- There is a 97% consensus by gender that health tourism, visiting friends and relatives, event tourism and active tourism are ranked first as motivating factors to travel.

Findings related to the reasons for choosing the destination. Five categories were defined for better data collection and comparability. These were based upon the percentages of responses to each variable from respondents in each socio-demographic group:

- As the level of education grows, the criteria for choosing a destination expand, and several aspects become important at the same time. While respondents with a higher level of education consider value for money as an important consideration, the recommendation of friends and acquaintances is more important for the group of respondents having eight primary education qualifications.
- All age categories appraise natural attractions as important, but for the age group of respondents over sixty, further reasons are neutral or irrelevant.
- The study of income status groups shows that people having low incomes want to achieve more goals when they are on a domestic trip: the destination should have several natural and cultural attractions and should offer wide range of programmes; however, the value for money should be also appropriate. For respondents being in a high-income status group, not only the natural and cultural attributes, but the uniqueness of the destination is a key factor in the decision process.

Findings related to the factors that change travel attitudes. Three categories were defined for better data collection and comparability based on the percentages of answers from respondents in each socio-demographic group:

- Respondents with a minimum high school degree expect not just higher quality services but more attractions in the destination in order to extend their travel. Expanding supply for each group of respondents in terms of highest educational level is an important consideration; furthermore, they expect better accessibility, even though it was not seen as a significant requirement in destination choice surveyed in question 6.
- High-quality but reasonably priced services, as well as more programmes and attractions, are factors that need to be developed for all age groups.
- According to the status of employment, the respondent group of the housewives was disagreed the most with the generally given answers.
- Expectations for longer domestic travels increase with income levels. Respondents with high incomes have a remarkable demand for higher quality accommodations, services and expect more supply elements and a more orderly environment.

CONCLUSION

The results of the research support the further need for tourism development in the county, as the propensity to domestic travel can be clearly identified in the sample. However, the propensity to travel for a main travel or for a longer period of time in the region is not considered as much intensive as for shorter travels in the high, middle or low season. Consequently, it is suggested to create tourism packages with guaranteed programs for a 2-3-night hotel stay, including bathing opportunity and presenting the local attractions with an experience-focus. Further differentiation of tourism packages is more advantageous when it comes to the characteristics of the age groups and the travellers travel together, mainly according to their interests, than merely by tourism types. The discovered, unsatisfied niche market needs (parent(s), grandparent(s) with child(ren), guests with pets, solo travellers' needs for social experiences) can be sufficed and developed into specialized supply depending on the resources of the service providers. Further suggestion is the development of event tourism and the promotion of the organization of local festivals. Since visiting friends and relatives is a typical travel motivation, it can be beneficial for both the traveller and the host to schedule a VFR visit at the same time as a local or nearby festival is organized.

A pleasant programme can make the stay more enjoyable, possibly extend the stay and make it measurable in guest nights. Visiting natural and cultural attractions is one of the essential elements of journeys that are made known clearly by the respondents, but relaxation and recreation is one of the most important motivation factors for domestic travels. Domestic sights are considered less valuable, interesting and attractive by the sampled visitors, but they also feel the need to explore a destination, moreover, the latter travel advices encourage them to do so. For short trips, guests are also sensitive to the time factor, so instead of promoting lists of attractions, it is necessary to offer 1-2 hours' local adventure tours with guaranteed programs that can be deepened by the guests' interest during their stay.

The attributes of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County are particularly attractive to the inhabitants of the capital, which, according to their expectations, offer the experience of the countryside and the expected comfort level. Transportation and accessibility were identified as a factor to be improved. The notion of relaxation is also accompanied by a lack of use of one's own car; therefore, the tourist-friendly solution of transportation within the settlement and the region is an emerging challenge. Transport options should be connected to the tourism packages, services between the accommodation and sights and between the sights would be reasonable. In addition to the experience value of the mode of transportation, tour guiding also could have value and experience enhancing function.

The results of the research pointed out the characteristics of the county that should be taken into consideration in the course of destination management, visitor management, and product development at destination and service provider level. Respondents' loyalty and realistic assessment of the county's characteristics are clear, whether they are local residents or tourists. They recommend the development of attractions and make them more interesting but on the appropriate scale.

The development of the visitor centres is much less preferred, despite the fact that these facilities provide much greater comfort to tourists. The satisfaction of the guests' experience needs to be emphasized. The experience evokes emotions that are uncommon in time and intensity; they come mainly from experiencing situations that have not yet been lived. The guest wants to record it (online photo, video) because he feels that it happened only there, then and only with him, it is unique. When designing the services, consideration should be given to whether the service provider has such a supply element and what could be developed with the existing experience base or with the help of experience generators. In other words, it is appropriate to carry out an analysis of the content experience.

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NATURAL RECREATION POTENTIAL OF THE WEST KAZAKHSTAN REGION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

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Abstract: This article is an attempt to assess the natural and recreational potential of the West Kazakhstan region. This technique consists of different stages: assessment of the territory concerning the recreational potential, according to the physical and geographical conditions; determination of administrative districts (units) within each of the recreational development zones; inventory of specially protected natural areas.The main criterion for the quantitative assessment was the presence of specially protected natural areas, their number and occupied area. In the course of the study, the analysis of natural and recreational resources was carried out by zones of potential recreational development, and the highest priority zones of recreational development were identified.

Key words: quantitative assessment of natural and recreational potential specially protected natural areas, the West Kazakhstan region, natural and recreational zones, natural and recreational resources

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INTRODUCTION

As world practice shows, one of the most effective and promising ways to preserve the pristine uniqueness of natural landscapes and geosystems is rational tourism and recreation nature management. In order to optimize the use of natural and recreational resources and with account taken of the anthropogenic load of recreation and tourism, an assessment of the natural and recreational potential of the territory is carried out. Assessment issues were dealt with in different periods by Russian (Preobrazhensky, 1975; Mironenko and Tverdokhlebov, 1981; Kuskov, 2005) and Kazakhstani scientists (Erdavletov, 2000; Berdenov, 2016), and by foreign authors as well (Mitchell, 1979; Page, 2011).

Due to the physical and geographical location, the peculiarities of the geological and geomorphological structure and landscape diversity, the West Kazakhstan region has sufficient natural resource potential for the development of recreation and such types of tourism as ecotourism, "green" (agritourism), water tourism and other types. The works of the following scientists are devoted to the study of the landscape biodiversity of the geosystems of the West Kazakhstan region: Chibilev (1987, 2008); Petrenko and Fartushina (2001); Darbayeva (2020); Ramazanov (1998); Ilieș and Grama, 2010; Ilieș et al., (2017); Dzhanaleyeva and Ramazanova (2012, 2019), Azhayev et al., 2020; Suleimenov et al., 2020. Natural and recreational resources as a basis for the development of tourism and recreation are considered in the works of Akhmedenov and Svanbayeva (2016), Nuruly and Aktymbayeva (2017), Deac et al., 2019; Lincu et al., 2018 and others.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology of assessing the natural and recreational potential of the region allows us to identify the most valuable territories of the region from the recreational point of view. For this purpose, the entire territory is divided into several districts (zones), characterized by a certain number of territorial and recreational features (Wendt, 2020; Beketova, 2019; Ilieș et al., 2018; 2020).

As a methodological instrument for assessing the tourist and recreational potential of the study area, the methodology for calculating the estimated indicator of the natural and recreational indicator of the territory, developed by Yegorova and Motrich (2010) was selected. This technique consists of several stages:

1st stage of the assessment – the differentiation of the territory into zones of potential recreational development according to the peculiarities of physical and geographical conditions;

2nd stage – determination of administrative districts (units) within each of the recreational development zones;

3rd stage – determination of the list of specially protected natural areas;

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4th stage – a quantitative assessment of the natural and recreational potential (Yegorova, 2010);
5th stage – counting and summing up for each of the recreational areas.

STUDY OBJECT

The object of the study is the West Kazakhstan region with an area of 151.339 km^2, which is located in the north-west of the country and borders the Russian Federation in the north. The region was formed at the junction of such large physical and geographical countries and provinces as the Obshchy Syrt (southern part) and the Caspian lowland (northern part), which are the constituent provinces of the East European Plain, and the Podural Plateau (Figure 1).

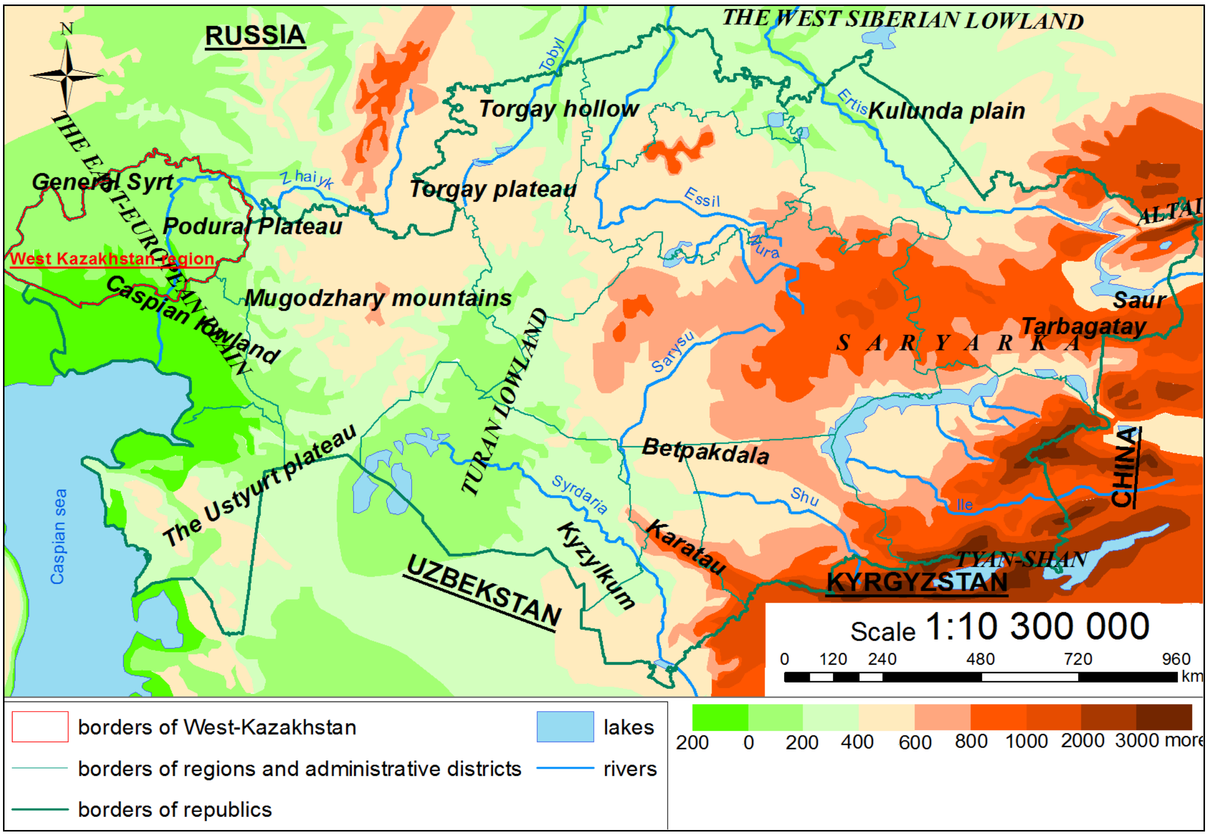

Figure 1. Physical map of Kazakhstan (Source: Compiled by the authors, based on SRTM images from 2018)

In terms of geosystem-basin relations, the main part of the territory of the West Kazakhstan region is occupied by the basin of the middle course of the Zhaiyk River (Ural), which divides the region into approximately equal parts. The length of the river is 781 km within the region, 1084 km within the country, and the total length is 2428 km (Chibilev, 2008; Kabiyev, 2018). The Zhaiyk River is not only the largest waterway in the region, but also one of the main landscape-forming factors, in the basin of which unique natural complexes have been formed, and water areas are the only spawning ground for sturgeon fish in Eurasia (Chibilev, 1987).

The entire floodplain of the Urals is a unique ecological system. A large number of monuments of the South Ural and Caspian nature are concentrated here. The flora and fauna of the Zhaiyk River basin is distinctive and inimitable - there are many relics, endemics, rare and endangered species (Chibilev, 2008; Darbayeva, 2020).

RESULTS DISCUSSIONS

In accordance with the above stated methodology, the study area should be divided into zones with characteristic natural and recreational resources. During the implementation of *the 1st stage of the study*, the geomorphological structure of the territory served as the main principle of division into zones, since the relief, being the result of geological-tectonic processes, serves as a frame of landscape diversity. At the same time, the relief itself determines its further development, influences the formations of natural-climatic, hydrographic conditions, as well as the characteristics of the soil and vegetation cover.

In general, the surface of the region decreases in the direction from northeast to southwest and is rather clearly divided into five large geomorphological regions (Doskach, 1954): the western part of the Podural Plateau, the southern part of the Obshchy Syrt upland, the Predsyrtovy ledge, the northern part of the Caspian lowland and valley of the middle course of the Zhaiyk (Ural) River in figure 2. In accordance with this, the study area is subdivided into 5 recreational zones.

Zone I – the southern part of the Obshchy Syrt in the southeast of the East European Plain, which is characterized by flat, almost undivided watersheds with an absolute height of 200-250 m and flat-topped ridges (Vilesov et al., 2009).

Zone II – the western part of the Podural Plateau (Khobdin province of the East European Plain), represented by a tectonic-denudation ledge. The main types of relief are pre-Quaternary structural plains formed on Cretaceous and Paleogene deposits by processes of salt tectonics and denudation (Vilesov et al., 2009).

Zone III – an intermediate position between the Obshchy Syrt and the Podural Plateau, on the one hand, and the Caspian lowland, on the other, within absolute heights of 50-100 m. The Predsyrtovy ledge is an inclined deluvial-proluvial accumulative plain, which is divided everywhere by valleys of small rivers, oriented almost strictly from north to south (Amelchenko and Galimov, 2006).

Zone IV – the northern part of the Caspian lowland, located below 50 m and gradually decreasing to the south to 0 m, and in some places minus 10 m. Numerous shallow depressions of various origins (swales, limans, sors, depressions, suffusion saucers) and rises (inselbergs, hillocks, ridges) are typical. There are sandy massifs (Amelchenko and Galimov, 2006).

Zone V – the valley of the Zhaiyk (Ural) River. The second largest (after the Volga River), which flows into the Caspian, flows in the sublatitudinal direction in the north, and in the meridional direction to the south of Uralsk. The river flows between the Obshchy Syrt and the Podural Plateau along the Predsyrtovy ledge and enters the Caspian lowland (Amelchenko and Galimov, 2006).

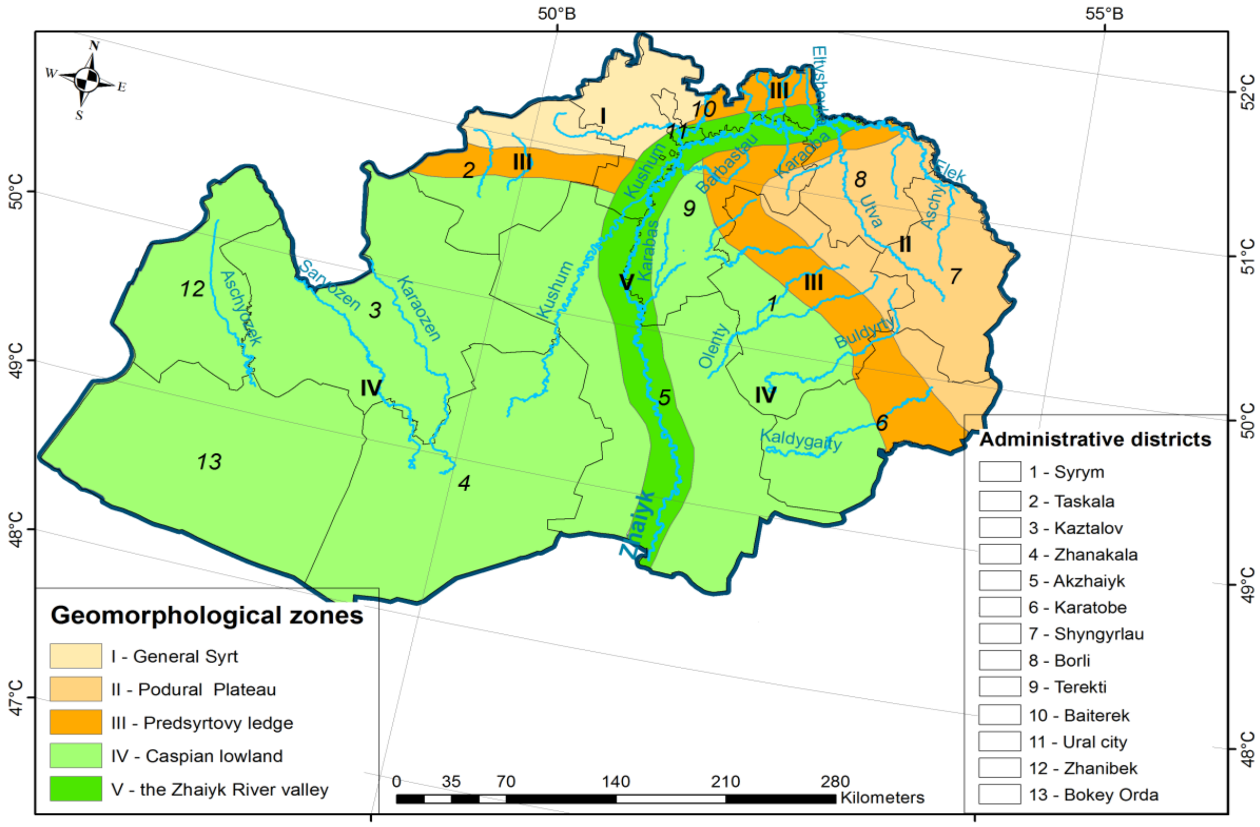

Figure 2. Differentiation of the territory of the West Kazakhstan region by zones
of potential recreational development (compiled by the author according to the method Doskach, 1954)

On the territory of the West Kazakhstan region there are a large number of natural and recreational facilities that have a tourist and recreational potential. The need to include these objects in the list of specially protected areas is reflected in the works of many researchers of the region (Petrenko, 2001; Chibilev, 2006; Akhmedenov, 2015, 2020; Ramazanov, 2003, 2009 and other scientists). In the course of studying the scientific works of researchers, the main natural and recreational resources were identified (Table 1).

Table 1. Natural and recreational resources of the West Kazakhstan region (compiled by the author based on his own research and data Akhmedenov, 2020)

Zone	Natural and recreational resources	Specially protected natural areas	Recreational activity types
Obshchy Syrt (6232,17 km$^{2)}$)	Floodplain landscapes of the Derkul River, outlier forest of Yemenzhara, Kaiynzhara, aspen forests, a standard section of wheatgrass estuaries	Natural monument Mount Bolshaya Ichka	Ecotourism, seasonal sport hunting, local fishing
Podural Plateau (16159.5 km^2)	Floodplain of the Bakanas and Kaldygayty Rivers, Egindikol and Shoshkaly lakes, Almaztau and Kosoba mountains, Karatal woodland, Kandykty, Karaagash, Dadem-agash spring	Akkum landscape reserve, Mirgorodskiy botanical and zoological natural monument	Ecotourism, seasonal sport hunting, local fishing
Predsyrtovy ledge 13770.94 km$^{2)}$	Sandy massif "Petrovskie Peski", black alder forest along the Bykovka River, steppe lakes of the Chizhin freshet	-	Medical tourism, туризм, seasonal sport hunting, local fishing
Caspian lowland (103496.4 km^2)	Steppe rivers and lakes, balneological resources of lakes (Shalkar, Khakisor, Aralsor, Batpak, Alzhansor), Naryn sands, historical and archaeological landscapes (Saka kurgans Akadyr, Koltaban, Akoba), Santas town, Sasai town, Naryn sands, Kyzylshagyl gorge, Meshet-Kum	Zhaltyrkol State Nature Reserve, Shalkar Biohydrological Reserve, Urdinsky Geobotanical Reserve	Fishing, water, summer health-improving, medical tourism (mud therapy, kumis therapy), sport hunting, ecotourism, agritourism, educational and scientific tourism
The Zhaiyk River valley (10904.3 km^2)	Floodplain landscapes, oak forests, elm forests, Lake Sadovskoe, Chalk mountains	Kirsanovsky and Budarinsky State Nature Reserves, lake Sadovskoye, "Selektsionnyi", "Dubrava" Natural monuments	Local fishing, water, summer health-improving, ecotourism, agritourism, educational and scientific tourism

The 2nd stage of the study. The list of administrative districts of the West Kazakhstan region that are part of a particular potential recreational zone is presented in table 2.

The 3rd stage of the study – a list specially protected natural areas by category (Table 3).

Depending on the presence and nature of protection of natural complexes, as well as the status of specially protected areas, 3 main categories are distinguished:

- reserves of republican significance;
- reserves of regional significance;
- natural monuments.

There are 11 specially protected natural areas in the West Kazakhstan region, including 3 - reserves of republican significance (Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, dated September 26, 2017 No. 593 "On approval of the list of specially protected natural areas of republican significance"), 3 - reserves of local significance, 5 - natural monuments.

Table 2. Placement of the administrative districts of the West Kazakhstan region on the territory of the designated potential natural and recreational zones

Zone	Number on the map (Figure 2)	Administrative unit	Number on the map
Obshchy Syrt	I	Baiterek (Zelenovsky) District	10
		Taskala District	2
Podural Plateau	II	Shyngyrlau District	7
		Borli District	8
		Terekti District	9
		Syrym District	1
		Karatobe District	6
Predsyrtovy ledge	III	Taskala District	2
		Baiterek District	10
		Terekti District	9
		Syrym District	1
		Karatobe District	6
Caspian lowland	IV	Syrym District	1
		Taskala District	2
		Kaztalov District	3
		Zhanakala District	4
		Akzhaiyk District	5
		Karatobe District	6
		Terekti District	9
		Zhanibek District	12
		Bokey Orda District	13
The Zhaiyk River valley	V	Baiterek (Zelenovsky) District	10
		Territory subordinated to the city of Uralsk	11
		Terekti District	9
		Akzhaiyk District	5
		Borli District	8

If the reserve is located on the territory of three districts, "1/3" is indicated next to the name of the reserve. This means that this reserve belongs to three administrative districts (Yegorova, 2010).

4th stage. For each of the three categories of specially protected objects, the number and conditional area is calculated in absolute and relative terms (Table 4). Then they are summed for each recreational area in the "Total" lines.

Table 3. Qualitative assessment of the natural and recreational potential of the West Kazakhstan region

Zone	Administrative district	Name of specially protected natural area		
		Reserve of Republican significance	Reserve of regional significance	Natural monument
Obshchy Syrt	Taskala			Mount Bolshaya Ichka – 175 ha
Podural Plateau	Shyngyrlau		Akkum reserve – 9000 ha – 1/2	
	Borli			"Mirgorodskiy" – 3950 ha
	Karatobe		Akkum reserve – 9000 ha – 1/2	
Caspian lowland	Zhanakala	Zhaltyrkol Reserve - 19000 ha		
	Terekti		Shalkar Reserve– 60 000 ha	
	Bokey Orda		Urdinsky Reserve – 16 400 ha	
The Zhaiyk River valley	Baiterek	Kirsanovsky Reserve – 61000 ha – 1/3; Budarinsky – 80000 ha – 1/2		Sadovskoye Lake – 150 ha "Selektsionnyi" – 36 ha – 1/2
	Territory subordinated to the city of Uralsk			"Selektsionnyi" – 36 ha – 1/2
	Terekti	Kirsanovsky Reserve - 61000 ha – 1/3		"Dubravy" - 6 ha
	Akzhaiyk	Budarinsky Reserve - 80000 ha – 1/2		
	Borli	Budarinsky Reserve - 61000 ha – 1/3		

5th stage – the results of the calculation are summarized in a separate table, in which the indicators "Quantity" and "Conditional area" of objects for each category are indicated in percentage (Table 5). Then the indicator "Cumulative rating" is determined by multiplying the percentage indicators "Quantity" and "Conditional area" for subsequent ranking. The higher the value of the "Cumulative rating" indicator, the higher the cumulative recreational potential is.

Further, the zones are ranked according to the "Cumulative rating" indicator in each category of specially protected objects.

In order to identify the most promising areas for the development of tourist and recreational activities, each zone is assigned its own cumulative rank for each category of objects: "Cumulative rank 1" - for reserves of republican significance, "Cumulative rank 2" - for reserves of regional significance, "Cumulative rank 3" - on natural monuments.

The total score of all three cumulative ranks is then calculated for each recreational zone. Based on the obtained values, the level of the recreational potential is determined.

In this methodology, it is proposed to consider 4 levels of recreational potential: high, medium, low and insignificant. As a result, the level of recreational potential is determined for each of the recreational zones differentiated in the region. The assessment of the recreational potential in this methodology is based on taking into account the recreational factors of the area under consideration - those factors that objectively demonstrate the recreational value of the area: the number of specially protected areas located on the territory of the area under consideration and the conditional area occupied by them.

The highest level is obtained in those recreational areas in which recreational factors (such as the quantity and area of 3 categories of protected objects) take on the highest values.

Table 4. Quantitative characteristics of the recreational potential of the West Kazakhstan region in accordance with the regional differentiation of the territory

Recreational zones	Administrative Districts	Reserves of republican significance				Reserves of local significance				Natural monuments	
		Quantity of objects		Conditional area		Quantity of objects		Conditional area			
		Units	Share in total, %	Thousand ha	Share in total, %	Units	Share in total, %	Thousand ha	Share in total, %	Units	Share in total, %
Obshchy Syrt	Taskala	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	20
	Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**1**	**20**
Predsyrtovy ledge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Podural Plateau	Shyngyrlau	-	-	-	-	0.5	16.7	4.5	5.27	-	-
	Borli	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	20
	Karatobe	-	-	-	-	0.5	16.7	4.5	5.27	-	-
	Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**1**	**33.4**	**9**	**10.54**	**1**	**20**
Caspian lowland	Zhanakala	1	33	19	11.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Terekti	-	-	-	-	1	33.3	60	70.26	-	-
	Bokey Orda	-	-	-	-	1	33.3	16.4	19.2	-	-
	Total	**1**	**33**	**19**	**11.8**	**2**	**66.6**	**76.4**	**89.46**	**-**	**-**
The Zhaiyk River valley	Baiterek	0.83	27.7	60.33	37.7	-	-	-	-	1.5	30
	Territory subordinated to the city of Uralsk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5	10
	Terekti	0.33	11	20.33	12.75	-	-	-	-	1	20
	Akzhaiyk	0.5	16.7	40	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Borli	0.33	11	20.33	12.75	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**2**	**67**	**141**	**88.2**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**3**	**60**
Total		***3***	***100***	***160***	***100***	***3***	***100***	***85.4***	***100***	***5***	***100***

The obtained level of the recreational potential shows which of the territories identified in the region are the most promising from the point of view of the recreational development of these territories and their active inflow into the tourist and recreational complex of the region. According to the table, a map of the distribution of the level of recreational development by zones of the studied region has been drawn (Figure 3).

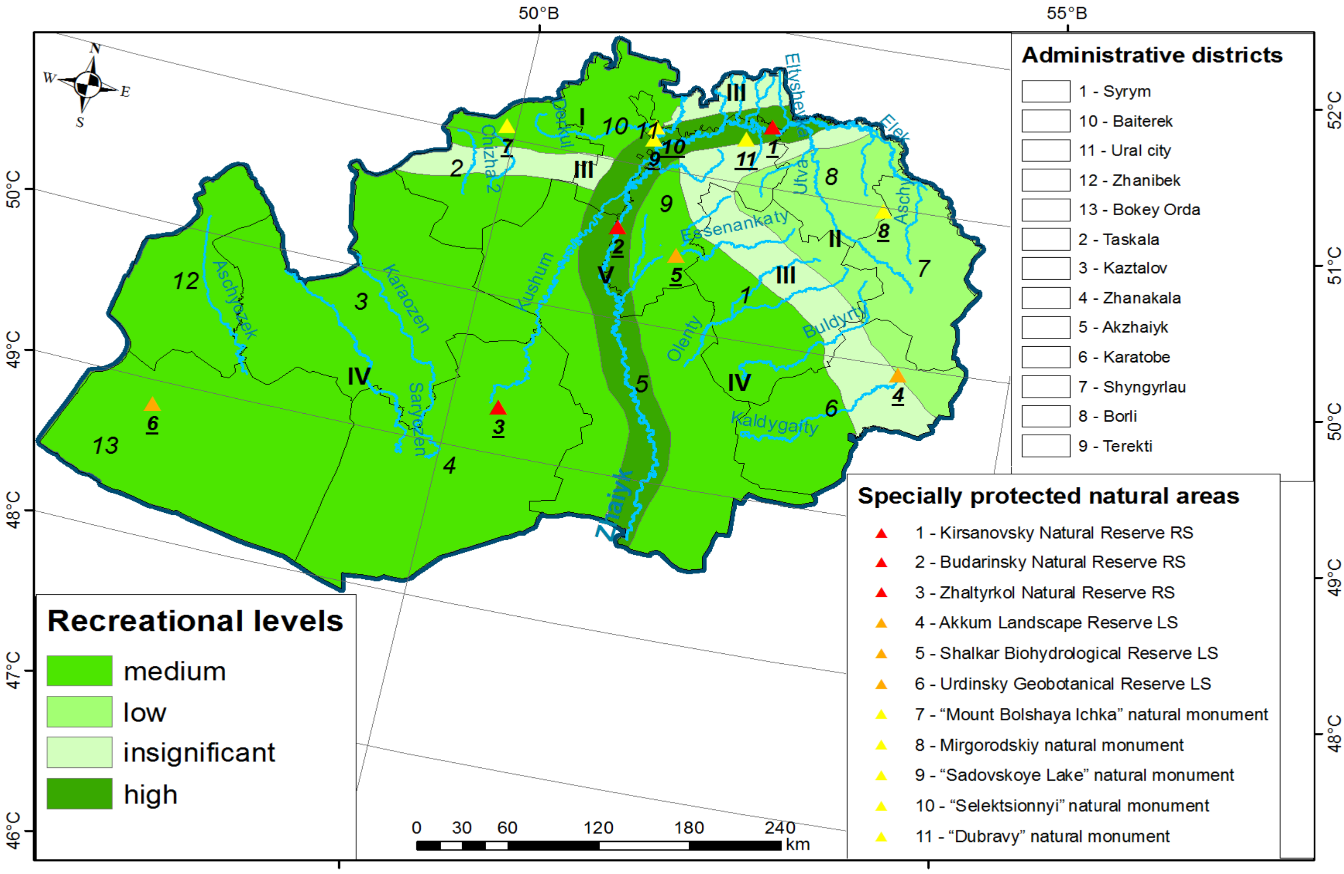

Figure 3. The level of recreational development in the recreational zones of the West Kazakhstan region

Table 5. Assessment of the recreational potential of the West Kazakhstan region in accordance with regional differentiation

Indicator	Recreational zone					
	Obshchy Syrt т	Predsyrtovy ledge	Podural Plateau	Caspian lowland	The Zhaiyk River valley	Total
Reserves of republican significance						
Quantity, %	-	-	-	33	67	100
Rank by quantity	-	-	-	2	1	-
Conditional area, %	-	-	-	11.8	88.2	100
Rank by area	-	-	-	2	1	-
Cumulative rating	-	-	-	389.4	5909.4	-
Cumulative rank 1	-	-	-	2	1	-
Reserves of local significance						
Quantity, %	-	-	33.4	66.6	-	100
Rank by quantity	-	-	2	1	-	-
Conditional area, %	-	-	10.54	89.46	-	100
Rank by area	-	-	2	1	-	-
Cumulative rating	-	-	352	5958	-	-
Cumulative rank 2	-	-	2	1	-	-
Natural monuments						
Quantity, %	20	-	20	-	60	100
Cumulative rank 3	3	-	2	-	1	-
The total number of points for the 3 cumulative ranks	3	0	4	3	2	-
Recreational potential level	Medium	Insignificant	Low	Medium	High	-
Recreational development priority	Effective development	Least development priorities	Possible development	Effective development	Highest development priorities	-

CONCLUSION

As the results of assessment of the recreational potential using this method have shown, a significant part of the nature reserve fund, and therefore the natural recreational potential in this context, falls on the floodplain landscapes and ecosystems of the Zhaiyk River valley. According to the research results presented in Figure 3, the Zhaiyk River valley is characterized by a high level of recreational potential (the total number of points for three ranks is 2) and the highest development priorities. In terms of area, this recreational zone occupies 7.8% of the total area of the West Kazakhstan region. The average level of the recreational potential (3 points) is noted for the ecosystems of the Caspian lowland, which occupies large areas of the region (68.4% of the total area) and the area of Obshchy Syrt (4.1%). A low level of recreational potential is characterized by the territory of the Podural Plateau, which accounts for 10.7% of the region's territory. And zero indicators are noted on the territory of the Predsyrtovy ledge (9%), which is a transitional zone of the Caspian lowland to more elevated areas.

In conclusion, it can be noted that this methodology for assessing the natural resource potential fairly objectively reflects the level of recreational potential. And although this method operates with only one assessment criterion - the presence and nature of specially protected natural areas, it can become one of the criteria for a comprehensive assessment of the tourist and recreational potential of a territory, which include many both natural and socio-economic indicators and factors for development of the tourist and recreational sector of the economy.

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INNOVATION MANAGEMENT IN HOTELS INDUSTRY IN AQABA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY; HOTEL CLASSIFICATION AND ADMINISTRATION AS A MODERATOR

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Abstract: The Paper investigates innovation management in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority: hotel classification and management as a moderator. In order to arrive for the result in factor analysis we used the SPSS version 20 in analyzing 23 items of the Likert scale, before performing axial component analysis, the data's suitability for factor analysis was evaluated. Through by Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings result; we have four items by rotated component matrix was detected the strong loading axial factors. Creativity is one of the most common and prevalent terms in management literature nowadays, moreover, it has become one of the foundations of success and competition between organizations in terms of their ability to excel, create and innovate, which grants the necessity of developing their concepts and administrative methods to set the scene for workers for creativity, and transfer of accumulated knowledge and options.

Key words: Human capital, Integration Capability, Relative advantage, Staff related innovation, Product innovation

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INTRODUCTION

The goals management system focuses on both superiors and subordinates. The system provides managers with information about employees, and the method of their performance periodically and continuously. It also helps subordinates to make decisions correctly through a correct information base, and through the system's focus on individual motivation, this leads to improving the level of performance, and it is measured by linking it to results. Thus, there is an opportunity for creativity and innovation.

The process of creativity and innovation requires senior management to look at the long-term future and to make adequate plans for it based on sound, logical thinking. The long-term view or long-term planning should not be considered a waste of time, as some individuals who tend to practical aspects may think, so they demand daily roles more than the future view.

Since the time the administration takes to think is also a type of giving and investing, may be on a higher and more profitable level, basic steps will arise in the future that secure work, preserve roles, and raise everyone to the best level. In total, it is not a waste of time or energies but rather a deliberate and productive intensification. The challenges that hinder the creativity of workers can also be dealt with through many strategies, including providing support with regard to developing creative ideas, spreading the spirit of taking risks among workers, giving individuals the freedom to express their thoughts and ideas, encouraging constructive competition between individuals and groups, encouraging interaction with others outside the group, encouraging individuals to use creative means to solve the problems facing them, reducing excessive supervision of workers, improving the general environment in organizations and making it more open, exchanging experiences, and accepting other opinions (Griffin and Page, 1996; Qin and Yu, 2015). Tourism and hospitality management innovation studies have been wideranging as researchers have sought to recognize the creative nature ofvarious organizations and business practices, including product, service innovations, prcess innovations, management innovations, management innovations and institutional innovations. Innovation in management is described as the development and introduction of a state-of-the-art management method, procedure, structure or technique that is intended to advance organizational objectives.

Creativity in management is related to new ideas in the field of management, product development, Human capital, Integration Capability, Relative advantage, Staff related innovation, Product innovation, and all known functions of management. In short, administrative creativity is: "Every idea, procedure, or product presented by employees, junior or senior, that is characterized by renewal and addition, and brings administrative, economic, or social benefits for the organization, individuals or society". There is a close relationship between innovation and excellence, and there are recent approaches to innovation that are always linked to achieving the system of excellence for business organizations. This can be done by developing the skills of creators to ensure their ability to transform their ideas into innovative projects, as they are pillars of excellence in quality, leadership and performance development. Despite the fertility of the terms defining creativity and innovation, controversy still exists around differences.the objective of the study is to explore a positive relationship between (creativity associated with employees, integration, comparative advantage, product innovation) and innovation management in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone authority.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The topic of creativity is receiving wide attention these days, especially since modern societies are moving in a steady pace to advance in a very fast and changing world facing many economic, social and scientific problems. The need for creativity has become urgent in various areas of human activity; no matter how small the idea is since it produces distinctive production (Griffin, 1997; Gottfredson and Aspinall, 2005; Rodríguez-Victoria et al., 2017). Creativity is one of the most common and prevalent terms in management literature nowadays, moreover, it has become one of the foundations of success and competition between organizations in terms of their ability to excel, create and innovate, which grants the necessity of developing their concepts and administrative methods to set the scene for workers for creativity, and transfer of accumulated knowledge and options (Ottenbacher and Gnoth, 2005). The need for creativity appears as a result of the conditions imposed by changes in the organization's environment, such as technological changes,

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changing consumer tastes, or the difference between the organization's actual performance and its desired performance, as it tries to bridge or reduce the gap through the creativity provided by workers (Pikkemaat and Peters, 2005). Therefore, organizations must pay attention to the internal business and the way in which they make their employees have a sense of creativity. This requires working to create the appropriate environment for the creativity process. The results of a study conducted by (Hon, 2011) showed that the organization's environment plays an important role in predicting creativity. The culture of novelty and innovation helps in the optimal utilization of material resources by creating a tangible benefit for the employee so that its effects are reflected on the performance of the organization, strengthening the system of governance and good management by giving way to popular participation in decision-making, and reducing the monopoly of a group of senior government employees that may not, necessarily, meet the needs, aspirations and concerns of simple citizens (Parasuraman et al., 1991; Griffin and Page, 1993; Jones,1996; Laurie et al., 2006; Leiponen, 2006).

Promoting the creativity of those creative employees will make them able to apply ideas effectively, and develop government work to contribute to making their organization the most innovative one in the world, in addition to encouraging them to launch their ideas and discuss them with their colleagues and superiors, with the aim of converting them into distinct projects that contribute to the efforts of improving performance and achieving the happiness of dealers. In addition to preparing plans for innovation and excellence based on future scenarios is important to read the variations in a scientific way, and designing integrated systems to foresee the future.

An analysis of the internal and external environment and identifying available opportunities will undoubtedly enhance the trend towards a culture of innovation in planning, following up on business, and developing an effective dynamic system to achieve government excellence as a result of the creative coordination, supporting the quality of work life QWL, and values. The study of the characteristics of the innovative personality and the focus on the importance of innovation lead to achieving administrative creativity. The perception of creative problem-solving skills leads to turning creative ideas into organizational plans, the exclusion of traditional methods for solving coordination problems, figuring up proactive solutions for challenges, and using innovative tools.

Creativity associated with employees

Field studies have shown that there is a relationship between administrative communication and creativity in the different types of organizations dealt with in the studies (García-Morales et al., 2011). It also demonstrated that creative organizations have shown great interest in the administrative communication channels that lead to the creativity of their workers.

In theory, one can say that administrative communication is one of the factors that lead to creativity in the organization, as communication is a means for exchanging ideas, and contributes to finding a common understanding among the members of the organization for their tasks and functions. These results in the coherence of organizational elements let to a commen of the nature of the goals to be achieved (Jahmani et al., 2020). One of the things that must be focused on in organizations is Rewards and Incentives: which stimulate creativity. These are supported by developing a rewards system that fits creativity, and linking the rewards to the creativity systems. Creativity is giving recognition, appreciation and conducting good performance. From the latter developed the so-called "Reward Power" which is one of the sources of organizational strength that has an important role in encouraging the creativity process of individuals within the organization (Jawabreh et al., 2020b; Masadeh et al., 2018).

Integration

The success of some organizations at present times not only depends on the efforts of their corporate boards, but also requires the efforts and support of their employees. Workers in organizations need support from their managers at work, nevertheless, these managers also need urgent ideas, skills and opinions of their employees regarding the issues and problems of the organization so that they can take the right decisions at the right time and before these problems worsen and constitute an impediment in the continuation of these organizations towards developing and growing for longer periods, therefore human resources, or the so-called intellectual capital, are among the most important resources they possess, and an important asset of theirs (Montoya-Weissand and Calantone, 1994; Pfeffer, 1994; Johne and Storey, 1998; Hartline et al., 2000; Mahdav and Pirzas, 2017). The importance of enabling workers to participate in decision-making with managers is evident in the subordinates' sense of their importance, role and value, which raises their morale and makes them more giving, as it works on the optimal exploitation of the human potential available within the facility (Cavagnolli, 2011). A study (Bock et al., 2005) demonstrated that employees often refuse to share their knowledge because they feel uncomfortable doing so, because this may reduce their chances of being promoted or it may be an unpaid effort.

Innovation Management

Soosay and Hyland, 2004 showed that innovation is an important factor in maintaining the organization's competition in the long run, since organizations that compete in dynamic markets with fast mobile technologies must meet the risk of competitors overpowering them, and this can only be achieved through innovation. Innovation is a key to business prosperity, especially after the constant change in the state of knowledge, technologies and consumer demand. The weakness of the innovation process in developing countries as (Awadi, 2015) sees it is due to weak management of innovation and lack of optimal investment for developing countries' organizations in their human and intellectual capital, which made them unable to create, innovate and form added value, which is the opposite of institutions in developed countries whose human resources are a source of creativity and an essential and effective element in creating added value and achieving and maintaining competitive advantage. Administrative innovation relates to the social system of the organization (Rifai, 2012). The social system of an organization refers to everything related to the relationships between individuals who interact together to achieve a specific goal. Administrative innovation includes rules, roles, procedures, structures related to the process of communication, exchange between individuals, and the environment. Therefore, the importance of innovation stems from being run by successful administrations according to (Van and Thaens, 2008).

Comparative advantage

Due to the increase in the number of hotels in Aqaba and the increase in the intensity of competition between these hotels, hotels seek to find methods that help them develop their performance from inside or outside. Therefore, in order for hotels to provide what is better, they must pay attention to internal marketing towards their employees, as internal marketing has been defined as internally connected marketing and works towards employees within the organization as it is considered one of the necessary requirements for the success of the organization's work (Wang et al., 2018). It turned out that among the modern entrances, service organizations and hotel organizations have become dependent on internal marketing in particular, and if properly implemented, it becomes a basic tool that enables hotels to achieve the market goals they want to reach (Sethi, 2000; Selden and MacMillan, 2006; Lee and Jang, 2016). Creativity in management is related to new ideas in the field of management, product development, leadership of work teams, improvement of services to clients, and all known functions of management. In short, administrative creativity is: "Every idea, procedure, or product presented by employees, junior or senior, that is characterized by renewal and addition, and brings administrative, economic, or social benefits for the organization, individuals or society.

Product development

Product innovation as viewed by (Kotler et al., 2002), as providing any good, service, or idea that someone views as a new and unfamiliar thing, the new product is anything that can be interpreted, added, improved, or developed on product specifications and characteristics, whether the physical material, or the services accompanying it. Product innovation leads to satisfying the needs or desires of current or prospective consumers in the targeted market sectors since this product is new to the organization or the market or both of them (Al-Sumaidaie and Youssef, 2014). Developing new products or services continuously is an essential activity for organizations wishing to face competition (Ciappei and Simoni, 2005). In light of the intense competition (Cooper, 1999) believes that organizations have options; either they work to develop their products and services, or exit the market after sometime. The process of providing new goods and services to organizations according to (Kotler and Armstrong, 2002), enables organizations to effectively meet the needs and desires of customers, and it is a basis for the development, progress, and success of contemporary organizations (Jawabreh et al., 2020a).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The current study took place in Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority; Aqaba covers the total Jordanian coastline (27 km), and hosts the 12 seaports of Jordan, an international airport and the historical city of Aqaba. The city is known for its beauty and rich culture and heritage. The ASEZ is regulated by the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), which is mandated with all the authorities to manage, regulate and operate as a municipality for the ASEZ. It also aims to develop the ASEZ as the epicenter of best practices in Jordan (Jawabreh, 2017). All hotel classifications were included in the sample frame as the results and information from the current study would be more generalizable and give a view of the Aqaba hospitality industry as a whole. Because of the time and financial constraints of the research, not all hotels could be approached. A sample was drawn from the population via a systematic random sampling technique.

Hotels were contacted by telephone to identify potential projects for study and the person best able to respond to the questions. The aims of the research were explained to staff that were also promised a summary of the results from the survey in return for completing the questionnaire. When staff confirmed that they had developed new hospitality services during the past 3 years and agreed to participate in the study, a copy of the questionnaire was mailed to potential respondents. The questionnaire sought information of the following issues: (a) the factors influencing Management Innovation, (b) Human capital, (c) Integration Capability, (d) Relative advantage (e) Staff related innovation, and (f) Product innovation. Background information on the respondent and hospitality organizations. Following a pretest with hospitality Staff, the rating scale changed from a 7- to a 5-point scale, because Staff had trouble discriminating and found it easier to respond to a 5-point scale. Furthermore, the pretest indicated that hospitality Staff sometimes had problems answering the Likert-type scales. Exploratory factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha tests were then used to assess the convergent and discriminant validity and internal reliability of the scales. The first version of the questionnaire was prepared in Arabic and then translated into English. The appropriateness of the questionnaire was confirmed through the evaluation by academics knowledgeable about and in pretests with hospitality staff in Jordan. Questionnaires were sent out to 150 hospitality staff in Aqaba.

Study hypotheses

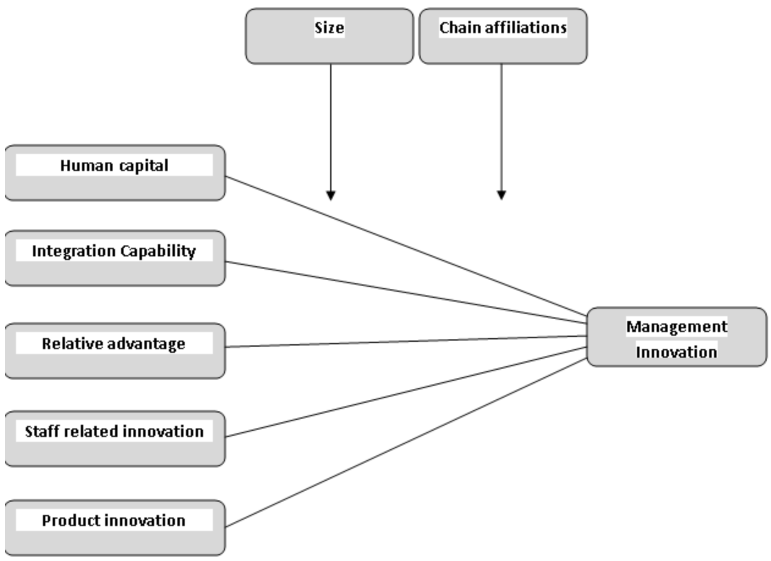
1- The creativity associated with employees positively affects the management of innovation in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone authority

2- Integration positively affects innovation management in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone authority

3- The comparative advantage positively affects innovation management in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone authority

4- Product innovation affects positively the innovation management of hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone authority

5- Hotel classification and management will lead to a positive relationship between (creativity associated with employees, integration, comparative advantage, product innovation) and innovation management in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone authority



Figur 1. The research model

Factor analysis

In order to arrive for the result in factor analysis we used the SPSS version 20 in analyzing 23 items of the Likert scale, before performing axial component analysis, the data's suitability for factor analysis was evaluated. In the correlation matrix we detected the presence of many coefficients of 0.3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin value was 0.922, and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reached statistical significance, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix. Axial components analysis with Varimax rotation was used. Through by Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings result, we have four items by rotated component matrix was detected the strong loading axial factors.

Reliability

To make sure the reliability of the tool we ar using the Cronbach's Alpha equation to sample the original study, so as to know the stability of the internal consistency for each field of study, Table 1 explains that:

Table 1. Results for person correlation between paragraph and items, and Cronbach's Alpha

Paragraph	Factor loading	Cronbach's Alpha
1	0.543	0.72
2	0.851	
3	0.329	
4	0.392	
5	0.529	
6	0.870	
7	0.809	
8	0.592	0.74
9	0.597	
10	0.552	
11	0.802	
12	0.820	
13	0.774	0.78
14	0.857	
15	0.861	
16	0.828	
17	0.771	0.70
18	0.855	
19	0.648	
20	0.662	0.72
21	0.885	
22	0.780	
23	0.461	

The first hypothesis: creativity related to employees positively affects innovation management in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. To confirm this hypothesis, a simple regression analysis test was performed, as shown in the following table
* Statistically significant at the level of statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

Table 2.The results for simple linear regression

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig*	Regression coefficients				
					Domain	β	Std. Error	T	Sig*
0.635	0.403	0.398	79.69	**0.00***	creativity associated with employees	0.635	0.118	8.92	.000*

* Statistically significant at the level of statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

We note from the Table 2 that there is a positive correlation for creativity related to employees with the innovation management in hotels, as the correlation coefficient reached (0.635). Also, the results of the regression analysis showed a statistically significant effect of creativity related to workers, where the value of (P) was (79.693), in terms of A statistic less than (0.00), and this is confirmed by the (T) test. The results also showed that the explained variance reached (0.398), meaning that the percentage of the creativity effect related to the two workers was (39.8%), and the beta value was (0.635). This means that there is a positive impact on the creativity associated with the employees on innovation management in the hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. The challenges that hinder the creativity of workers can also be dealt with through many strategies, including providing support with regard to developing creative ideas, spreading the spirit of taking risks among workers, giving individuals the freedom to express their thoughts and ideas, encouraging constructive competition between individuals and groups, encouraging interaction with others outside the group, encouraging individuals to use creative means to solve the problems facing them, reducing excessive supervision of workers, improving the general environment in organizations and making it more open, exchanging experiences, and accepting other opinions (Zhou et al., 2018).

The second hypothesis: Integration positively affects innovation management in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. To confirm this hypothesis, a simple regression analysis test was performed, as shown in the following table:

Table. 3. The results for simple linear regression

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig*	Regression coefficients				
					Domain	β	Std. Error	T	Sig*
.4380	.192	.185	28.079	**0.00***	Integration	.4380	.1010	5.299	.000*

* Statistically significant at the level of statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

We note from the Table 3 that there is a positive correlation for integration with the innovation management in hotels, where the correlation coefficient reached (0.438). Also, the results of the regression analysis showed a statistically significant effect of the integration, where the value of (P) was (28.079), in statistical terms less than (0.00), and this was confirmed by (T) test. The results also showed that the explained variance reached (0.185), meaning that the percentage of the integration effect amounted to (18.5%), and the beta value was (0.438). This means that there is a positive impact of integration on the management of innovation in the hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. The importance of enabling workers to participate in decision-making with managers is evident in the subordinates' sense of their importance, role and value, which raises their morale and makes them more giving, as it works on the optimal exploitation of the human potential available within the facility (Al-Sabab, 2017). A study (Bock et al., 2005) demonstrated that employees often refuse to share their knowledge because they feel uncomfortable doing so, because this may reduce their chances of being promoted or it may be an unpaid effort.

The third hypothesis: The comparative advantage affects positively the innovation management in the hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. To confirm this hypothesis, a simple regression analysis test was performed, as shown in the following table.

Table 4. The results for simple linear regression

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig*	Regression coefficients				
					Domain	β	Std. Error	T	Sig*
.336	.113	.105	15.027	**0.00***	comparative advantage	336.0	.1010	876.3	.000*

* Statistically significant at the level of statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

From the Table 4, there is a positive correlation for the comparative advantage with the innovation management in hotels, where the correlation coefficient reached (0.336). Also, the results of the regression analysis showed a statistically significant effect of the comparative advantage, where the value of (P) was (15.027), in statistical terms less than (0.00), and this was confirmed by (T) test. The results also showed that the explained variance reached (0.105), meaning that the percentage of the effect of comparative advantages reached (10.5%), and the value of beta was (0.336). This means that there is a positive impact of the comparative advantage on innovation management in the hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. In order for hotels to achieve excellence, diligent work must be done on developing its services and focusing on external factors; such as the advertisement provided by the hotel service provider, the level of the prices announced, the experiences of friends, acquaintances, internal influences which include decoration, the surrounding atmosphere, service methods, the types of services used in the guest rooms, reception halls, banquet halls, parties, conferences and service technologies to draw a positive picture in clients' minds and achieve satisfaction with those services (Wijethilake et al., 2018). This was confirmed by a study of (Guttentag and Smith, 2017) to pay attention to enhance the guest's mental image through the external and internal influences of hotel organizations, work to add value and diversity of hotel services and their integration to achieve guest loyalty. Chandrakumara and Sparrow, 2004 asserts that hotels that want to achieve an advantage over their competitors should design special programs to develop the quality of hotel services so that the hotel management can have an impact on achieving customer satisfaction, achieve a market share for hotels, work on reducing operating costs, and improve the reputation of hotels amongst their customers. Harrington, 2004; Ofondu, 2018; Zubeltu-Jaka et al., 2018 believe that the hotel organization is forced to keep up with its marketing environment by activating the tourism marketing information system to improve the quality of its services and so that it can locate more and stand in the face of various competitive forces. McDonough, 2000; Karniouchina et al., 2006 showed that the developments in the field of communications and information technology led to creating innovations in the process of providing the service through the use of modern technologies, among these innovations are the design of some rooms in an electronic way so that in the case of a visitor feeling sleepy, the room curtains, TV and lighting will close automatically. The study conducted by (Dzhandzhugazova et al., 2016) showed that the re-engineering of operations affects positively in achieving the sustainable competitive advantage of hotels, which would meet the needs and requirements of employees and guests.

The fourth hypothesis: product innovation positively affects innovation management in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. To confirm this hypothesis, a simple regression analysis test was performed, as shown in the following table:

Table 5. The results for simple linear regression

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig*	Regression coefficients				
					Domain	β	Std. Error	T	Sig*
.292	.085	.077	10.981	**0.00***	product innovation	0.292	0.103	3.314	.000*

* Statistically significant at the level of statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

From the previous Table 5, there is a positive correlation for product innovation with the innovation management in hotels, where the correlation coefficient was (0.292). Also, the results of the regression analysis showed a statistically significant effect of product innovation, where the value of (P) was (10.981), in statistical terms less than (0.00), and this was confirmed by (T) test. The results also showed that the explained variance reached (0.077), meaning that the effect of product innovation was (7.7%), and the value of beta was (0.292). This means that there is a positive impact of product innovation on innovation management in classified hotels in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. With regard to hotels (Laugen et al., 2005) affirmed that there is a strong relationship between the processes of: product innovation, progress, success, and the achievement of a market share for hotels that are interested in improving and providing what is new to customers. Moreover, the success of a hotel depends not only on providing funds, but also on the work and role of the administration, its personnel searched for new services and products. This is the secret of the success of hotels that depends providing high-quality products and services (Song and Parry, 1997; Ottenbacher et al., 2005; Shin et al., 2019). The quality of services and products plays a critical role in the success of enterprises in a competitive environment, as it is the key to accessing markets and attracting customers.

Through improving quality and achieving customer expectations, organizations will be able to reach their goal and determine the price for which they are profitable on the one hand, and which satisfies the customer on the other hand. Most organizations, today, focus on shortening the time required to fulfill customers' requests, so that they can meet the needs that are related to providing the product or service on the set place and time to achieve their satisfaction and gain a new competitive advantage without compromising quality, (Hussein, 2010). It was found, according to a study by (Hashem, 2014), that the Research and Development Department has an effective role in creating new products to achieve a competitive advantage for organizations. Organization in a hotel establishment includes: following the Objective Management System, organizational development methods, and working on managing projects in a flexible manner, in addition to providing a department for quality and quality control. This leads us to talk about the strategy of organizational creativity in order. The fifth hypothesis: the classification of the hotel and management will lead to a positive relationship between (creativity related to workers, integration, comparative advantage, product innovation) and between innovation management in hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. To ensure the validity of this hypothesis, multiple linear regression test was applied. Tables 6 demonstrate this:

Table 6. The result for R Square Change

				Change Statistics				
R	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	**R Square Change**	**F Change**	**df1**	**df2**	**Sig. F Change**
0.680	0.463	0.429	0.47455	0.463	13.794	7	112	0.000*

* Statistically significant at the level of statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

Table 7. The results for multiple regressions

F	**Df**	**Sig***	**Regression coefficients**				
			Domain	**β**	**Std. Error**	**T**	**Sig***
17.794	183	**0.00***	**Chain affiliations**	0.174	0.139	1.810	0.073
			Size	-0.012	0.087	-0.131	0.896
			Human capital	-0.261	0.077	-2.988	0.003*
			Staff related innovation	0.599	0.161	6.208	0.000*
			Integration Capability	0.029	0.135	0.260	0.795
			Relative advantage	0.143	0.098	1.708	0.090
			Product innovation	-0.016	0.096	-0.191	0.849

* Statistically significant at the level of statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

We note from the previous table that the value of the correlation coefficient amounted to (0.647), that the value of the coefficient of determination (2R) has (0.419), and that the value of the modified coefficient of determination (Adjusted R2) (0.399) indicates that the independent variables (creativity related to workers, integration, comparative advantage, and product innovation) were able to explain (39.9%) of the changes occurring in the dependent variable, and upon entering the variables (hotel classification, hotel size, and hotel management) these variables were able to change the correlation coefficient to (0.463) and this indicates an increase.

The relationship between the independent variables (creativity related to two factors, complementarity, comparative advantage, and product innovation) and the dependent variable.

CONCLUSION

Most organizations, today, focus on shortening the time required to fulfil customers' requests, so that they can meet the needs that are related to providing the product or service on the set place and time to achieve their satisfaction and gain a new competitive advantage without compromising quality (Hussein, 2010). It was found, according to a study by (Farah and Qanur, 2017), that the Research and Development Department has an effective role in creating new products to achieve a competitive advantage for organizations.

The results of the regression analysis showed a statistically significant effect of product innovation, where the value of (P) was (10.981), in statistical terms less than (0.00), and this was confirmed by (T) test. The results also showed that the explained variance reached (0.077), meaning that the effect of product innovation was (7.7%), and the value of beta was (0.292). This means that there is a positive impact of product innovation on innovation management in classified hotels in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority.

With regard to hotels, (Laugen et al., 2005) affirmed that there is a strong relationship between the processes of: product innovation, progress, success, and the achievement of a market share for hotels that are interested in improving and providing what is new to customers. Moreover, the success of a hotel depends not only on providing funds, but also on the work and role of the administration, its personnel searched for new services and products. This is the secret of the success of hotels that depend on providing high-quality products and services (Ottenbacher et al., 2005; Al Shaire, 2014). The quality of services and products plays a critical role in the success of enterprises in a competitive environment, as it is the key to accessing markets and attracting customers.

Through improving quality and achieving customer expectations, organizations will be able to reach their goal and determine the price for which they are profitable on the one hand, and which satisfies the customer on the other hand. Most organizations, today, focus on shortening the time required to fulfill customers' requests, so that they can meet the needs that are related to providing the product or service on the set place and time to achieve their satisfaction and gain a new competitive advantage without compromising quality, Grissemann et al., 2013). It was found, according to a study by (Hashem, 2014), that the Research and Development Department has an effective role in creating new products to achieve a competitive advantage for organizations.

The value of the coefficient of determination (2R) has (0.419), and that the value of the modified coefficient of determination (Adjusted R2) (0.399) indicates that the independent variables (creativity related to workers, integration, comparative advantage, and product innovation) were able to explain (39.9%) of the changes occurring in the dependent variable, and upon entering the variables (hotel classification, hotel size, and hotel management) these variables were able to change the correlation coefficient to (0.463) and this indicates an increase. The relationship between the independent variables (creativity related to two factors, complementarity, comparative advantage, and product innovation) and the dependent variable. The results of the regression analysis showed a statistically significant effect of creativity related to workers, where the value of (P) was (79.693), in terms of A statistic less than (0.00), and this is confirmed by the (T) test. The results also showed that the explained variance reached (0.398), meaning that the percentage of the creativity effect related to the two workers was (39.8%), and the beta value was (0.635). This means that there is a positive impact on the creativity associated with the employees on innovation management in the hotels classified in the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. The challenges that hinder the creativity of workers can also be dealt with through many strategies, including providing support with regard to developing creative ideas, spreading the spirit of taking risks among workers, giving individuals the freedom to express their thoughts and ideas, encouraging constructive competition between individuals and groups, encouraging interaction with others outside the group, encouraging individuals to use creative means to solve the problems facing them, reducing excessive supervision of workers, improving the general environment in organizations and making it more open, exchanging experiences, and accepting other opinions (Blomberg et al., 2017).

Organization in a hotel establishment includes: following the Objective Management System, Human capital, Integration Capability Relative advantage, Staff related innovation, Product innovation, in addition to providing a department for quality and quality control. This leads us to talk about the strategy of Innovation Management creativity.

It makes organizations work to expand existing markets and create new ones, which gives organizations and countries the opportunity to invest in new sectors that were not entered by previous organizations, contribute to achieving social prosperity and the well-being of members of the innovative community. Among the things that help in innovation processes is knowledge, as knowledge has a great role and a clear importance on the efficiency and effectiveness of business organizations activities. The study of (Su et al., 2015) emphasizes the importance of knowledge, the results showed that there is a close relationship between knowledge management and innovation, that knowledge management contributes to achieving innovation for organizations through its impact on different dimensions such as individuals, processes and products. Among the things that increased the innovation is the quality processes used and confirmed by a study by (Xu et al., 2018). Quality management applications affect product innovation, process innovation, and management innovation.

There is a close relationship between innovation and excellence, and there are recent approaches to innovation that are always linked to achieving the system of excellence for business organizations. This can be done by developing the skills of creators to ensure their ability to transform their ideas into innovative projects, as they are pillars of excellence in quality, leadership and performance development. Despite the fertility of the terms defining creativity and innovation, controversy still exists around differences.

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INDICATORS IN OPTIMIZING THE PERFORMANCE OF URBAN GREEN SPACE MANAGEMENT (A STUDY OF MASHHAD METROPOLIS)

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Abstract: In recent decades, Mashhad as the second largest city of Iran after Tehran has experienced rapidly physical expansion regardless of the citizens' need for green space. The importance of Mashhad's urban green space is understandable from two dimensions, the first one is the existing population of the area and its increasing trend as the second most populous city of Iran and the other is the religious position of Mashhad, which annually receives millions of domestic and foreign travelers. Therefore, the aim of this paper is the investigation of urban green spaces performance in term of economic and social indicators in the Mashhad metropolis area. This research is an applied study by considering to its goal, and a descriptive-analytical study for respect to its nature. It was also predominantly carried out with a quantitative approach. The statistical population for this research included the total population of Mashhad, and 380 peoples were selected as the sample using Cochran's formula. Also, 20 managers of Mashhad green space were interviewed to obtain more accurate data. SPSS software was used in the form of Cronbach's alpha test and the looseness and elongation index. Data and information reliability were also analyzed by statistical tests. SPSS software was used in the form of Cronbach's alpha test and the looseness and elongation index. Also, data and information reliability were analyzed by statistical tests. Data collection tools included a questionnaire and measurement of items is based on the Likert spectrum and 5-choice options. The research questionnaire includes 15 social questions and 5 economic questions that have been tested and analyzed using SPSS22 software. The results showed that managerial performance in the field of urban green spaces in Mashhad metropolis did not have a significant effect. From the view of citizens and managers, the various dimensions of the social index (communication, education, leisure, access and participation) have been evaluated as desirable.

Key words: Social index, Green Space, Mashhad Metropolis, Urban Management

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INTRODUCTION

Positive perceptions of green and open space are only surpassed by dwelling characteristics as important predictors of high levels of neighborhood satisfaction (Russell et al., 2018). A proper assessment of the role and benefits of green spaces (GS) for urban residents is an important concern in the emerging area of urban ecosystem services (ES). Since the last decennium of the 20th century, the concept of ES has gained an important role in the debate on sustainability and quality of life (Burkhard et al., 2010). Also, on the policy level, more attention and action are directed to the dependence of man on nature and its ecosystems. In urban areas, the aspect of non-material benefits or cultural ES is highly relevant (Qu et al., 2017) and GS quality is a major factor for how people receive cultural ES. To reinforce this link in urban areas, an understanding of the quality and management of urban ecosystem services is required to ensure sustainable urban planning (Lüderitz et al., 2015) and general wellbeing. Urban green spaces (UGS) have been the subject of a wide range of studies, yet correlations with assumed benefits have been often based on their presence or abundance, and less based on their qualities (Kabisch and Haase, 2013). So, Green spaces are a complement of urban physical structure. These spaces are a type of urban land-use that has ecological, social and economic traits. On the other hand, today planning and design are adaption green space networks (Ericson, 2004).

Today, urban green spaces are introduced as an appropriate method for the promotion of life quality due to impressive social and ecological influences. So, urban green space is an important issue due to creating a beautiful landscape, also it is an obstacle to air pollution in cities. The function of urban green space is divided generally into three main groups of city structure, ecological function and social performance. Urban green spaces are valuable not only for environmental reasons but also for its role in the development of spiritual and physical relations of inhabitants of the city (Bonnes, 1999). Thus, city green space is a sort of urban land use covered with manmade vegetation, boasting both social and ecological outputs. Besides, these spaces are the basic elements of the city landscape and the symbols of urban life and environmental health (Razzaghian and Rahnama, 2012). The literature on UGS dynamics has revealed the loss, isolation, and fragmentation of UGS in some countries. On the other hand, Van Herzele and Wiedemann (2003) studied the poor accessibility of UGS in Kortrijk (Belgium) and revealed that many inhabitants of the city do not enjoy even one single green space due to urban barriers. Similarly, according to Lee et al. (2013), a high level of spatial disparity prevents some inhabitants from accessing large parks. This trend has appeared particularly in Asian developed countries. Several recent studies, however, point to the importance of assessing urban green space quality (Velarde et al., 2007; Bertram and Rehdanz, 2015).

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Rather than a biased preoccupation with green-space acreage and tree counts, planners should also consider the geometry of the green network and the quality of the greenery (Heydari et al., 2016) and the various aspects of GS quality (Bertram and Rehdanz, 2015). Good quality urban green improves the quality of life in cities enhancing their attractiveness to residents, employees, tourists, investors, and firms. On these grounds, urban green space can have a positive contribution to the competitiveness of cities (Figure 1).

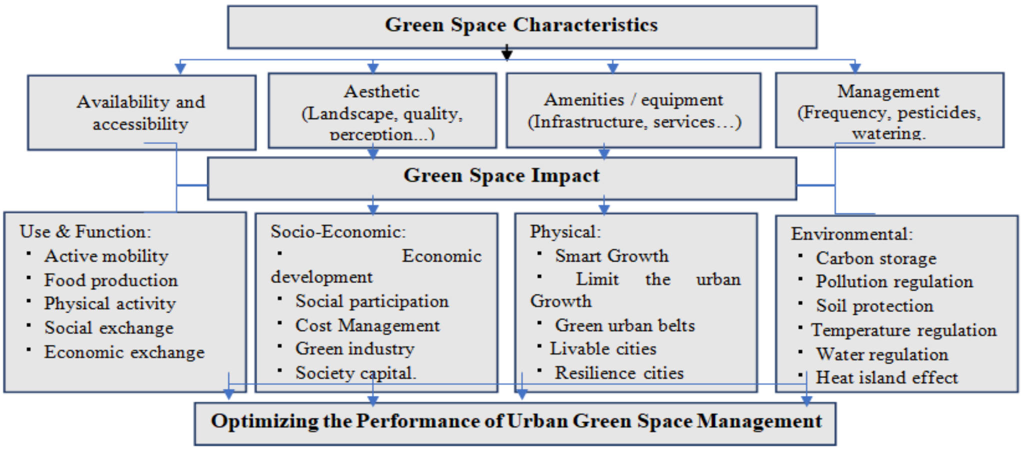

Figure 1. The characteristics and impacts of urban green spaces and its dimensions (Source: Tavakoli and Heydari, 2012)

Alongside these economic effects, however, there are also social and environmental benefits. Parks, gardens, and squares, provide opportunities for relaxation and recreation, as well as for association and social interaction and they help communities to shape their identity and to strengthen their social fabric. In addition, by providing clean air, water, and soil and by helping to stabilize urban temperatures and the urban climate, they support the development of a healthy urban environment in harmony with the natural world. Overall, it can be argued that a good quality of urban green space provides an interacting set of economic, social, environmental and aesthetic benefits and that investing in green spaces can reverse the urban decline and improve the well-being of communities (CABE Space, 2004).

Urban living limits access to nature and can increase exposure to certain environmental hazards, such as air and noise pollution. Many urban areas face increasing pressure from expanding populations, limited resources, social and economic challenges and growing impacts of climate change. These challenges must be addressed in order for cities to provide healthy and sustainable living environments (World Health Organization, 2020). Despite the numerous benefits that urban green spaces provide, there is a considerable lack of studies on the value local residents attach to such spaces (Land Use Consultants, 2004; CABE Space, 2005). This is because urban green spaces are 'public goods' and therefore are not traded in conventional markets (Pearce, 1976, 1999). Their benefits are 'external' to the market and this adds to the difficulty confronted in attempting to assess the economic aspects of urban green. This paper presents the investigation of urban green spaces performance in terms of economic and social indicators in the Mashhad metropolis area. So, the main question of this research is consisting of what is the performance of urban green space management in the Mashhad metropolis according to socio-economic dimensions, and what strategies can be provided to improve or solve the challenges?

The theoretical framework of research

An important role that green spaces play in cities and towns has been acknowledged to various degrees ever since the end of the 19th century (Goede et al., 2000). However, over the last 15 years or so, there has been a resurgence of interest in urban green spaces. According to Swanwick, et al. (2003), this was driven by many factors, including the apparent decline of both quantity and quality of urban green (as a result of low priority in the local authorities' political agendas), the key position green space holds in the concept of 'compact city' which has seen increasing attention in the literature (Burton, 2000) and the growing emphasis on brownfield development which exerts pressure on the urban green land to be given to alternative uses. The term green space appeared in the literature of city-planning from less than half a century ago. Urban green space is referred to a city land with a human-made vegetating covering that yields both ecologically and socially. Ecologic yield means beautification of city parts, reduction of environmental temperature, production of oxygen, an increase of soil penetration against rainfall, and conservational green spaces constitute living parts of the city's physical structure. The increase of population, growth of cities, the birth of metropolis and conversion of the traditional and natural bodies of cities are always driving the need for green spaces (Heydari and Bakhtar, 2018). According to Pourahmad (2009), the green spaces cause human mental health and security and, in many cases, they are the most important factors in mediating environmental pollution burden. Green spaces fulfill aesthetical needs of citizens and they are also important in meeting urban society's health, environmental, psychological and social wishes and expectations. To set forth the issue of green space is necessary for city- dwelling, because it has a direct role in city beautification and citizens comfort level, in addition to its' unique environmental values such as air-conditioning and temperature modification (Khosh-Khui, 2002). These spaces are very important, firstly because of their environmental roles, and secondly because they serve as cultural and recreational places for free time (Chehrzad and Azarpishe, 1992).

The economic and ecological benefits of urban green spaces are undeniable. The green industry is one of the fastest growing segments of the nation's agricultural economy and has produced roughly 1,964,339 jobs, according to a USDA-funded research report. The green industry is made up of green roof construction, sustainable landscaping, waste reduction services, arborists, garden centers, lawn care services, and many more (Hall et al., 2011). In the most simplistic terms, the green industry are economies striving towards a more sustainable development. Adopting policies that advocate for the green industry and green spaces in Springfield, MA would improve the economy and environmental health of the city and its inhabitants. These policies would act as solutions to some of the environmental problems that municipalities encounter, due to the natural benefits of green spaces (Fontes et al., 2014). Recent research by many scholars has emphasized the significance of open green spaces as an ideal space for people to meet each other, or as a focus for the community, both formally and informally (Woolley, 2003). They also provide space for socializing, political discourse and cultural expression. The existence of trees (and their shade) as well as grass in public areas can be an attraction for people to spend more time outdoors, which improves social interaction among the members of the community (Coley et al., 1997). There is a great potential for social interaction in open green spaces because of the easy access to these spaces, in comparison with the other spaces in a city. Also, there can be greater social unity among the people who interact in leisure activities (organizing public ceremonies, track and field, cycling) which connect them together.

From a social perspective, green space has an impact on a wide range of issues ranging from community involvement and empowerment, to matters of safety, inclusion, equality, civic pride, educations and recreation (Land Use Consultants, 2004). In particular, scholars have pointed out that well managed and maintained green spaces contribute to social inclusion and social justice provide cultural links and opportunities for community events and outdoor association between people, provide an educational resource with regard to environment and nature (Nicol and Blake, 2000) afford recreation, exercise and play for all ages and contributes to the physical, psychological and mental health of the people. Therefore, this paper with emphasize on pervious researches, tries to investigate the status of economic and social indicators in optimizing the performance of urban green space management in Mashhad area.

STUDY AREA

Mashhad is the second most populous city in Iran and the capital city of the Razavi Khorasan Province. It is located in the northeast of the country, close to the borders of Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. Mashhad city population was 2,749,374 at the 2011 census and its built-up area was home to 2,782,976 inhabitants including Mashhad and Torqabeh cities (Heydari and Bakhtar, 2018). The city is most famous and revered for housing the tomb of Imam Reza and every year several millions of pilgrims visit the Imam Reza shrine and pay their tributes to Imam Reza (Wikipedia, 2016; Mashhad Municipality, 2016). It has an area of 148 km^2 in 2016 and it has witnessed rapid growth in the last two decades, mostly because of its economic, social and religious attractions. Since 1987, its population has grown 3.6 times while its extent at the same time period has doubled (Rafiee et al., 2009) (Figure 2). According to our findings in this paper, Table 1 shows the development of urban green spaces in the Mashhad area from 2006 to 2018 (Figure 3).

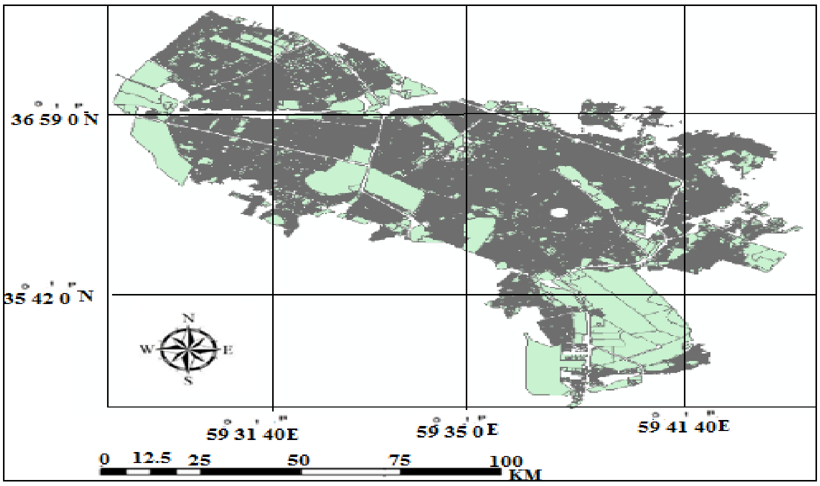

Figure 2. A view of Study Area (Source: Heydari et al., 2019)

Table 1. Urban green spaces in the Mashhad area between 2006 to 2018 **(**Source: Research findings, 2020)

Green spaces	2006	2012	2018
green spaces area (m^2)	68822	82354	102354
The ratio of UGS	11.6	13.5	16.5

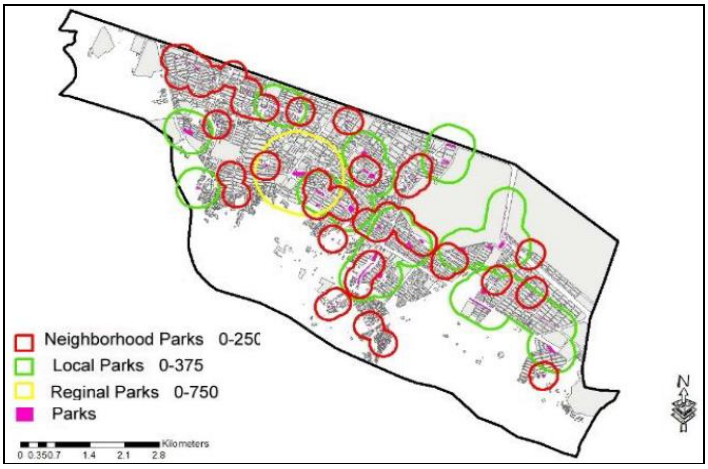

Figure 3. A view of UGS in Mashhad Metropolis
(Source: Aghajani and Razzaghian, 2020)

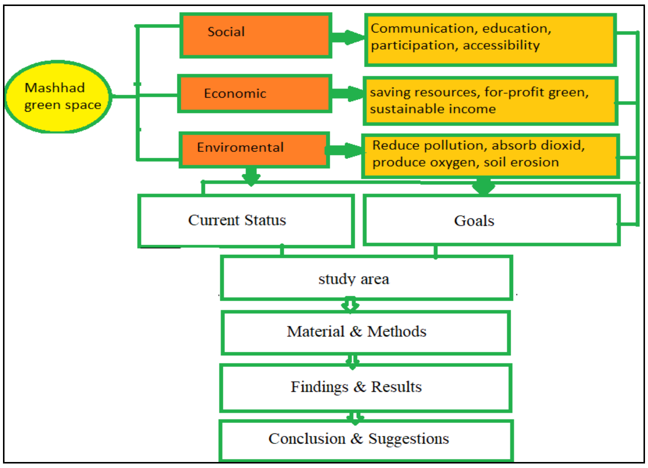

Figure 4. Research conceptual diagram (Source: Authors, 2020)

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The applied methodology based on its nature is analytical and in terms of results is practical. Further on, we have used descriptive-analytical studies, documentary, and questionnaire. The required data, based on theoretical and exploratory principles, was gathered through document analysis and field study considering the distance of the land from adjacent land-uses and its compatibility with and dependency on them along with interviews conducted with green space experts and specialists in the Mashhad municipality.

The statistical population in this study is the total population of Mashhad in 2016 (3,057,679 people) (Iran Statistics Center, 2018). The sample size using the Cochran's formula at the error level of 0.5% is equal to 380 people and according to the number of parks in Mashhad (575), the performance spectrum questionnaire, whose procedure is confirmed by pre-test, the distribution of the questionnaire has been done among the people and relevant experts, as well as interviews with managers. Finally, using the T-TAC statistical model, an independent sample of the final analysis is performed on the data (Figure 4).

RESULTS & FINDINGS

According to the statistics of Mashhad metropolis in 2018, it has 13 regions with over 4 million population, the highest population is related to region 2 and the lowest population is related to the Samen region. According to these statistics, the standard and acceptable per capita urban green space in Iranian cities are between 7 and 12 square meters per person, which in comparison with the united nation' standard (20-25 m^2) shows fewer rates. According to Table 2, by considering the official statistics of 2017, the area of urban green space, including park, square, Lachki boulevard and green belt is equal to 439,564,594 square meters, which means that the per capita green space of Mashhad is about 26,14 m^2 for each person. The metropolis of Mashhad has 575 parks with an area of 809,217,12 square meters, which includes about 28% of the total green space in terms of number (Mashhad Municipality, 2018). Also, the highest number of parks is located in District 10 and the lowest park rate is related to District 4. In terms of area, the largest area is related to District 7 with 2,736,894 square meters and the lowest area is related to the Samen area with 44,736 square meters. The standard of green space per capita which is declared by the United Nations is 20-25 square meters and is related to the green space of the city park and for leisure, and does not include the green spaces of the street, including the Icelanders, boulevards, alleys, etc. The green space of Mashhad per capita by attention global standards will be unacceptable. On the other hand, the distribution of urban green spaces in Mashhad is very unbalanced, which indicates the lack of proper urban studies and planning by consultants, and this is important for unnecessary population relocation and the result will impose more transportation costs and consequently air pollution.

Table 2. Number and area of parks in Mashhad city by region (Source: Research Findings, 2020)

Regions	Total UGS	UG per capita	Number of parks	Area
1	687761	4/12	39	359,377
2	2085614	4/06	74	775,038
3	1867989	4/47	48	840,078
4	1406648	5/37	12	523,966
5	811166	4/62	34	528,886
6	1176353	5/06	44	655,736
7	6922351	27/34	35	2,736,894
8	1749421	18/90	23	1,087,670
9	21936292	67/08	87	2,333,145
10	2227512	7/50	99	966,067
11	1880514	9/40	41	1,087,874
12	773749	7/35	26	278,382
Samen	71094	5/13	13	44,736
Total	43599564	14/26	575	12,217,809

According to the efforts made, the green space of Mashhad per capita in 2019 has increased to 16.62 square meters, which has increased by 2.36 percent. What is important is that the green space per capita of the United Nations is only for recreation, and if we only calculate and analyze the parks that are places of recreation (807/217/129 square meters), the green space per capita will be about 4 square meters, which will be increasing the green space standards in the study area. Mashhad's 4,359-hectare green space budget is 400 million Tomans annually. That is, the cost of each square meter of green space is about 10 thousand Tomans. Annually, one-eighth of the budget of 400 billion Tomans of green space in Mashhad (equivalent to 50 billion Tomans) is spent to welcome Nowruz, which is a very short-term work of 2 months, and according to experts, if we pay 100,000 Tomans per square meter of the urban park, the amount of 50 hectares of one-hectare city park can be implemented. Non-priority and short-term work, which is only in front of people's eyes, not only does not help the sustainable development of green space but also it will be wasting public funds. Although many efforts have been made in recent years to mechanize urban green space, including drip or rain, 133.83% are still flooded and non-mechanized, and 86.17% are mechanized through pressure networks.

Analysis the findings of the questionnaires

After studying the theoretical foundations and background of the research, hypotheses were proposed that were designed to test the hypotheses of the questionnaire containing questions related to the characteristics of the respondents and also questions to test the hypotheses. In this section, SPSS22 software and its tests including Descriptive and Frequencies were used to analyze descriptive and inferential findings to analyze descriptive statistics including calculation of frequencies, percentage of frequencies, cumulative frequency and averages.

Table 3. Economic index in the view of experts and managers (Source: Authors, 2020)

<table>
<tr><th>index</th><th>dimension</th><th>variables</th><th>avg</th><th>Total avg</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="9">economic</td><td rowspan="4">Resource storage</td><td>Right species with the climate</td><td>3/3</td><td rowspan="4">3/2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Right irrigation method</td><td>3/4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Soil type suitable for creating green space</td><td>3/3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Use of urban effluent</td><td>2/7</td></tr>
<tr><td>Profitable green space</td><td>Providing goods needed by tourists</td><td>2/7</td><td>2/7</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Outsourcing and revenue absorption</td><td>Suitable facilities to attract foreign tourists</td><td>2/9</td><td rowspan="3">2/5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Attract private investors to expand green space</td><td>2/7</td></tr>
<tr><td>Taxes and levies</td><td>2/1</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Avg of whole economic index</td><td></td><td>2/6</td></tr>
</table>

1. The status of the economic index in the view of experts and managers

The economic index examined in the present study has dimensioned such as resource storage, for-profit green space, outsourcing, and sustainable revenue attraction for the municipality. Table 3 shows the average of the total in each dimension of the economic index and also the average of each variable in the economic dimension of the whole city of Mashhad. According to this table, the total average in the economic index (2.6) is the highest average in the dimensions of the economic index related to resource storage (3.2) and the lowest average is related to outsourcing and attracting sustainable income for the municipality is (2.5). Also, the lowest mean between the variables is related to the question about the tax, and tolls (2.1), and the highest average in the variables is related to the question of choosing the appropriate irrigation method (3.4).

2. Dimensions of social indicators of Mashhad city parks

The social index of the present study includes five dimensions of communication, education, recreation, access, and participation.

Table 4 shows the average of the total in each dimension of the social index and also the average of each variable in the social dimension of the whole city of Mashhad. According to this table, the total average in the social index (2.02), which the highest average is related to the dimension of the promenade (2.54) and the lowest average is related to the dimension of participation (1.60). Also, the lowest mean in the variables was related to the question of the level of participation in local organizations regarding the preservation of green space (1.60), and the highest average in the variables was related to the place for recreation with a score about (3.36). Table 4 shows the average of social indicators from the view of citizens and managers. It should be noted that the score of the items is between 1 and 5. This means that if we consider the level from 1 to below 3 as low, and 3% as average, and from 3 and above as excellent. According to the table, in terms of managers, social indicators (3.8) are higher than the average level. However, from the citizens' point of view, this index is similarly low (2.02). The biggest difference from the perspective of these two groups is related to the social index in terms of communication and education.

Table 4. Dimensions of social indicators of Mashhad city parks (Source: Authors, 2020)

index	dimension	variables	avg	Total avg
Social	communication	As a good place for daily meetings	2.06	1.83
		As a good place to socialize with people	1.61	
	education	Carrying out cultural activities	1.96	1.81
		Carrying out educational programs for children	1.66	
	recreation	A suitable space for group circulation (picnic)	2.52	2.54
		Suitable equipment for entertainment	1.86	
		A good place to exercise	2.35	
		A good place to walking	3.36	
		A good place to receiving medical services	2.58	
	accessibility	A good walking path to access the park	2.40	2.32
		The proximity of the park to educational centers	2.30	
		Proximity of the park to residential centers	2	
		Traffic situation of urban green space route	2.11	
		Access to public transportation	2.78	
	participation	Participation of local organizations in the maintenance of green space	1.60	1.60
	Avg of whole social index			2.02

CONCLUSION AND HYPOTHESIS TEST

First hypothesis: It seems that the use of irrigation methods and suitable plant species with climate, suitable soil, and the use of effluents in irrigation of green space will also help to improve economic performance and optimize urban green space management. Based on the single-sample T-test, the significance level is 0.004 and less than 0.05. Therefore, the H0 hypothesis, the opposite hypothesis, that is, modification of irrigation methods, suitable plant species, use of suitable effluents and soil, helps to improve and economic performance, is confirmed.

Second hypothesis: It seems that local programs and strengthening people's participation will help improve social performance and optimize Mashhad's urban green space management. According to the results of the p-value test in the social index in the citizens' section (zero), which is less than 0.05, the H0 hypothesis is rejected and the opposite hypothesis, which seems to be local planning and strengthening people's participation to improve social performance and optimize management. Mashhad's urban green space helps, is confirmed.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In recent decades, Mashhad as the second largest city of Iran after Tehran has experienced rapidly physical expansion regardless of the citizens' need for green space. The importance of Mashhad's urban green space is understandable from two dimensions, the first one is the existing population of the area and its increasing trend as the second most populous city of Iran and the other is the religious position of Mashhad, which annually receives millions of domestic and foreign travelers. Therefore, the aim of this paper is the investigation of urban green spaces performance in term of economic and social indicators in the Mashhad metropolis area. This research is an applied study by considering its goal, and a descriptive-analytical study for respect to its nature. Good quality urban green improves the quality of life in cities enhancing their attractiveness to residents, employees, tourists, investors, and firms. On these grounds, urban green space can have a positive contribution to the competitiveness of cities. So, the main question of this research is consisting of what is the performance of urban green space management in the Mashhad metropolis according to socio-economic dimensions, and what strategies can be provided to improve or solve the challenges? The highest number of parks is located in District 10 and the lowest park rate is related to District 4. In terms of area, the largest area is related to District 7 with 2,736,894 square meters and the lowest area is related to the Samen area with 44,736 square meters. The green space per capita declared by the United Nations is 20-25 square meters and is related to the green space of the city park and for leisure, and does not include the green spaces of the street, including the Icelanders, boulevards, alleys, etc. The green space of Mashhad per capita by attention global standards will be unacceptable. On the other hand, the distribution of urban green spaces in Mashhad is very unbalanced, which indicates the lack of proper urban studies and planning by consultants, and this is important for unnecessary population relocation and the result will impose more transportation costs and consequently air pollution. According to Table 4, the total average in the social index (2.02), which the highest average is related to the dimension of the promenade (2.54) and the lowest average is related to the dimension of participation (1.60). Also, the lowest mean in the variables was related to the question of the level of participation in local organizations regarding the preservation of green space (1.60), and the highest average in the variables was related to the place for recreation with a score about (3.36). Therefore, we can offer some suggestions as below:

❖ Providing sustainable water resources and increasing irrigation efficiency due to the special climatic and low water conditions of Mashhad city.

- Use of effluents and gray waters.
- Use of technical and correct methods to irrigation UGS.
- Mechanization of the entire green space system through a pressure network and completion of Mashhad city loop and moving towards drip and rain systems instead of traditional and flooding systems.
- Use of suitable plant species with the climate of Mashhad metropolis.
- Apply the right methods of planting and maintaining urban green space in the study area.

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THE DYNAMICS ACCESS ON TOURISM GOVERNANCE IN WAKATOBI NATIONAL PARK

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Abstract: This research aims to identification actors who compete towards access and how they get, control and maintain the access on tourism governance in Wakatobi National Park. The data collection is conducted through semi-structure interviewed some stakeholders and local communities who involved directly in tourism governance. Moreover, researchers also conducted participant observation in tourism activities. This research showed that there were numerous actors who scrambling to gain, maintain and control access in tourism governance with different mechanisms which have been mediated by authority, capital, markets, technology, social identity and social relations. The Wakatobi National Park Official (BTNW) and Wakatobi Municipality were actors who dominated the access of tourism governance because both of actors have a set of rules which could control the tourism activities. In addition, the private enterprises were actors who obtain and maintain the access in tourism activities because they have network with local government.

Key words: tourism, dynamics, governance, national park, access, wakatobi

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a sector that will continue to grow. Furthermore, this sector has become the flagship of almost entire countries in increasing economic growth both at the macro and micro scale (De Vita and Kyaw, 2017; Kodir, 2018; Lee et al., 2015; Ohlan, 2017; Deac et al., 2019). Moreover this sector also contributes to poverty reduction (Croes, 2014; Medina-Muñoz et al., 2016; Scheyvens, 2014; Spenceley and Meyer, 2012; Vanegas et al., 2015). However, in its development, it requires knowledge, thoughts, application of strengths, resources and rules, as well as coordination and cooperation among many actors. All of these concepts are the main features of governance (Bramwell, 2011).

Governance in the tourism sector is a challenging task because it involves a variety of actors (Carlos et al., 2013) whose interests clash with each other. Tourism is also considered as a fragmented industry of several interests such as large companies operating on a global scale and suppliers of micro, small and medium enterprises (Dredge, 2006). Even the government involvement in tourism management often makes it complicated because conflicting interests between each of these actors (Scott and Marzano, 2015). Although tourism management cannot be separated from competition, tourism governance has also been positioned as a potential aid for understanding, and possibly achieving, sustainable development in tourism (Brouder, 2015; Nunkoo, 2017; Ilies et al., 2017; Tătar et al., 2017).

Tourism governance is one of the issues that is significantly a concern for scholars in the world who have attention to development policies for tourism planning (Bichler, 2019; Jamal and Camargo, 2018; Joppe, 2018; Nunkoo, 2017; Valente et al., 2015; Valente and Bramwell, 2015; Yeh, 2018; Wahyuningtyas et al., 2020). This is considered important because researchers have tried to understand how countries can act best to mediate social, economic, political and environmental policy issues related to tourism. In some cases in various countries, tourism often becomes its own problems such as inequality in the management of tourism resources for local communities (Cole and Morgan, 2010; Kodir et al., 2019, 2020), income (Cingano, 2014; Alam and Paramati, 2016; Seligson and Kuznets, 2019) and access to the water (Cole, 2012, 2014, 2017; Cole and Browne, 2s015; Sinha et al., 2020). Tourism governance is a complex issue which sometimes cannot be brought closer to one approach, especially if tourism management is located in the national park area. This will be a conflict if the goal of tourism management is profit, but at the same time must make conservation efforts. But in its development, tourism and conservation are expected to run in a balanced way (Hewlett and Edwards, 2013; Jaafar et al., 2013, 2015) with model of natured-based tourism (Balmford et al., 2009; Fredman et al., 2012). Because after all the national park has the potential to be a tourist attraction as a regional development effort (Fredman and Wikström, 2018) and economic growth (Karanth et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2010). The consequence is a shift in policy and the role of national parks which initially only as a function of maintaining biodiversity and conservation shifted into a tourism destination (Shultis and Way, 2006; Arnscheidt, 2008; Herman et al., 2019). This shift reflects the rise of liberalist politics in which nature conservation has become more instrumental and market oriented (Puhakka and Saarinen, 2013). Because the existence of tourism in the national park area is greater in terms of economic and political benefits than ecological sustainability (Almeida Cunha, 2010; Kaltenborn et al., 2011).

One of the complexities of tourism governance issues is one of which occurs in the Wakatobi National Park (WNP) area. WNP is one of the national parks in Indonesia whose area of management overlaps between the regional government (Wakatobi Municipality) and Wakatobi National Park Office (BTNW). Both of these actors have legal recognition. However, the complexity of management issues is not only in this aspect. Long years ago, the national park area was a customary community area where there were several tribes inhabiting this area, such as the *Butonese, Cia-Cia, Bugis, Muna*, and *Bajau* tribes. When the Wakatobi Islands were still under the authority of the Buton Sultanate, the sea and forest areas in the islands were managed by *sara kadie* or customary institutions that had the authority (Adimu et al., 2018). However, after the Wakatobi islands were designated a National Park conservation area, people's lives began to change, entire activities in the context of meeting the socio-economic needs and utilization of natural resources contained in the sea are limited by various

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regulations and regulations by the National Park Office (Elliott et al., 2001). In addition, the local government also did not involve the local community in making policies related to the management of Wakatobi National Park, especially related to tourism development.

The study of tourism in the Wakatobi National Park area has been carried out by several researchers. In its development, the management of tourism in WNP requires the right planner or manager to promote tourism that can directly protect protected or conservation areas (Von Heland and Clifton, 2015; Shomanova et al., 2017). One of them is with the development model of Marine Ecotourism. Some researchers try to review that Marine Ecotourism is a model of tourism development that can contribute to improving people's welfare (Syam et al., 2019; Tam, 2019) through involving stakeholders and NGOs (Soedjak, 2012; Dezsi et al., 2014). And also gives explicit recognition to the *Bajau* community who are consistently marginalized (Clifton, 2013). In addition, tourism development in the WNP region has transformed towards a green economy. This is demonstrated by the commitment of local governments to provide strategic direction, especially in budget planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve resource efficiency (Owners et al., 2019; Azhayev et al., 2020; Suleimenov et al., 2020). The diversity of tourism studies in the Wakakobi National Park area shows that this region is one of the interesting research objects. However, there is no study of tourism in the region trying to explain the complexity of actor relations in fighting over the Wakatobi region as a tourism destination. Therefore, this article will contribute to enriching the study of tourism development in the perspective of the dynamics of access and exclusion. As a study, this article adds a new perspective in tourism development planning which is currently oriented towards the development of tourism destinations that ignore political issues.

METHOD AND RESEARCH SITE

This research used qualitative research. The process of collecting primary data is conducted in several ways namely observation and interviews. The observations were carried out by conducting direct observations by visiting several tourism spots, resorts, the location of tourism development projects, and customary territories which are scattered in several groups of islands in Wakatobi National Park (Figure 1). While interviews were conducted with a number of participants including the Office of Tourism and Culture, the Office of Public Works, the Regional Planning and Development Agency (BAPPEDA), Indigenous Communities, Fishermen Groups, Resort Workers, Resort Owners, Local Enterprises, POKDARWIS, Political Elites, and NGOs.

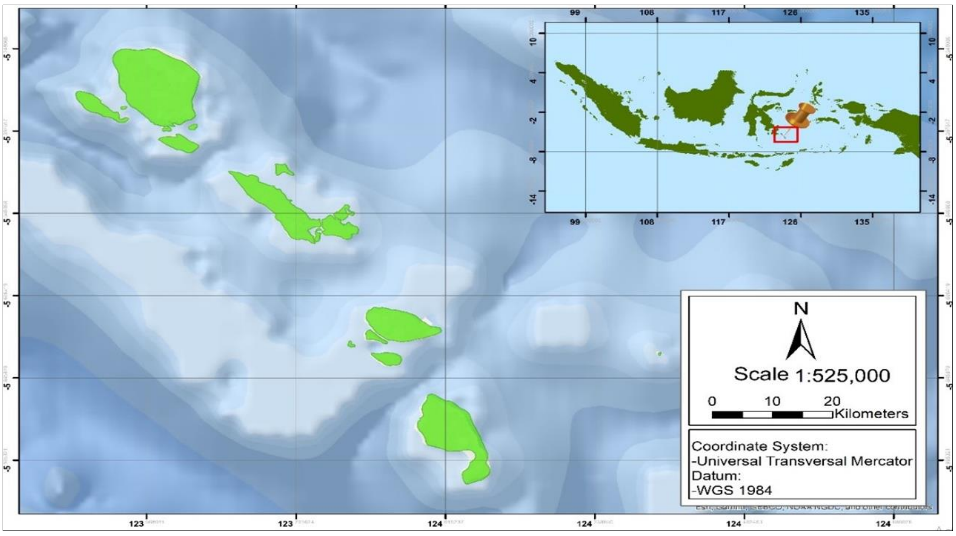

Figure 1. Research Location of Wakatobi National Park

Data analysis in this study uses thematic analysis. This analysis is carried out through several stages (Bryman, 2016). First, examine the results of the interview transcript of some key questions such as before being designated as a national park area, Does the manager of the National Park also have authority in tourism management ?; Who is involved in tourism governance ?; How do they get access to managing tourism? (legal or illegal?); Who is the party that benefits the most in tourism governance? Why?; Who is the most disadvantaged party in tourism management? Why? Then, we coded the results of the interview transcript from a few quotes and grouped the results of the interview based on the topics discussed namely about tourism management in the Wakatobi National Park and the community's response to the establishment of WNP as one of the Strategic National Tourism Area in Indonesia. And the last is interpreting findings from predetermined notions from the perspective of access theory.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Identifying actors and mechanisms who competing for access in tourism governance

The presence of the tourism industry in the Wakatobi National Park area (WNP) since 1996 has a significant influence on people's access to the resources that are the source of their economic income (Soedjak, 2012). Analysis of access to the use of natural resources in Wakatobi National Park (WNP) was carried out to identify how the actors access these resources. The dynamics of the conflict also gave a distinctive colour in opening access and rights to the use of natural resources in the WNP area (Khac, 2018; Von Heland and Clifton, 2015).

Access to tourism resources is contested by interested parties, both government, private, and the people who live in the area. This is because natural resources in the form of contested material objects can provide economic benefits for these parties. When peeled, WNP has a very abundant marine potential, the existence of fish in Wakatobi is estimated to reach 900 species, 750 coral reefs, 32 species of mangrove, 11 species of sea grass, two types of turtle, 12 species of cetacean, and 85 species of birds (Clifton et al., 2010; Dilwan and Astina, 2019; Junaid et al., 2019). This natural wealth causes the parties to fight over it to be managed because it has a high value of tourism commodities. In this arena of contestation, the parties involved have different interests and strengths (Hasan Eldin Adimu et al., 2017; Elliott et al., 2001). As a result, the ways or practices they use to access natural resources are also different. Based on the results of the identification of researchers, each actor has a different access mechanism in obtaining, controlling, and maintaining the flow of profits from tourism resources, and this means the actors have different roles in the struggle for access in WNP. As explained earlier, there are three main actors who have access to WNP tourism governance, namely the community, government, and private sector. Referring to Ribot and Peluso's (2003) access theory, the community is the actor who has the role of maintaining access, the government has the function of controlling access, and the private sector has the role of obtaining and maintaining access.

Local Society and Indigenous People: The actors who are maintaining the access

Before being designated as a National Park area in 1996, people living in the area claimed that access to the use of natural resources and the environment was managed from generation to generation based on customary law (Baskara et al., 2011; Simonin, 2015). Both local communities and indigenous people in the Wakatobi National Park use natural resources to meet their daily needs by catching fish in the surrounding waters. However, after being designated as a conservation area, the territorial waters are protected by the zoning system. Fishers are only allowed to carry out activities in the local use zone. In contrast, the core zone and maritime protection zone are prohibited zones (Firmansyah et al., 2017) because these two zones are only intended to protect flora and fauna, unique ecosystems, biodiversity, and other conservation activities. This causes a decrease in the amount of catch and economic income of the community because fishing locations are increasingly narrow (Sharma and Rajagopalan, 2013). Communities as villagers whose territories are within conservation areas do indeed have limited access to natural resources due to conservation regulations (Clifton, 2013). However, they cannot be broken just like that that they still have the right and ability to exploit the potential that exists at the village scale, especially potential associated with tourism jobs that are in line with eco-tourism destinations. In utilizing the potential of resources, the rights and abilities of the community are guaranteed by the Village Law No. 6 of 2014. Legally regulated that entire elements of the village have the authority to increase basic needs through the utilization of the potential of natural resources and the environment on a village scale (Antlöv et al., 2016).

However, in this study, researchers distinguish between rights and abilities based on the perspective of Ribot and Peluso (2009). According to them, rights and abilities lie in the difference between access and property. Access is more directed to ability, whereas property means ownership is rights. Ability is the same as power; moreover, the ability can be understood as a bundle of power and a web of power that gives space to actors to gain access and maintain access to resources, in this context is the community in the region WNP. When access is a set of powers that enable people to obtain and retain access, communities in the Wakatobi National Park form a power bundle of power to be able to obtain and maintain access to resource management (Ribot and Peluso, 2009). The power association is in the form of an indigenous community which is used as a container for the struggle for access in maintaining resources in its territory. Through this community, they can utilize resources and be involved in their management systems. In this context, indigenous communities that seek to maintain access to natural resources are fishing communities found on the four main islands in the Wakatobi National Park (WNP), namely Wangi-Wangi, Kaledupa, Tomia and Binongko Islands. Communities on these four islands form a common bond or association named after their respective regional names, including; *Komanangi* (Wangi-Wangi Fishing Community) in Wangi-Wangi, *Forkani* (Kaloudupa Forum Toudani) in Kaledupa, *Komunto* (Tomia Fishing Community) in Tomia, and *Foneb* (Binongko Fishermen Forum) in Binongko. In general, these four communities were established to be able to maintain access to natural resources in their villages that are part of the WNP area (Soedjak, 2012).

The four communities above have a uniform mission, which is to protect the sea from damage because it is undeniable that the sea is still one of their sources of livelihood until now. The presence of these four indigenous communities is a form of response to the decline in the number of fish and sea conditions that are increasingly threatened due to tourism activities. The role of these four communities is to understand and voice the wishes, needs, and opinions of the local community, and to provide environmental education that the sea is their main source of livelihood because sea damage will also impact on the community. In responding to environmental issues, *Komunto* then designed several programs to prevent damage and preserve fisheries and marine resources, including creating a fish bank program. Thanks to his efforts, the sea has been successfully conserved and is producing far more abundant fish. In addition to being involved in environmental protection, *Komunto* also initiated the mapping of indigenous areas in Tomia. The mapping plan was carried out through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and field survey aimed at determining the coordinates of the conventional territorial boundaries contained on land and sea.

In maintaining access to natural resources in WNP, Komunto refers to the prevailing customary law. This is because long before it was established as a National Park, this law was implemented by the Wakatobi community (Burke et al., 2011). The management of the sea and the natural resources contained therein have always been managed based on customary law (de Alessi, 2014). Customary marine management is known as *Adati Pasi* or customary coral. The symbol is huma or sea houses. Huma serves as a place to manage the surrounding sea. Like adjusting the capture area based on the use of fishing gear. Fishing using certain tools in places that should not be subject to sanctions. In order for this indigenous community to have the strength of access to resource management in their village, collaboration, and support from other parties who have power in the WNP are needed. In this case, the participation of traditional institutions to protect the sea received a good response from the National Park as the manager by providing support in terms of environmental care. Besides, BTNW and indigenous communities also often collaborate when there are cultural-based activities at WNP. Thus, it can be said that the presence of an indigenous community and the existence of support from the National Park is part of the ability of the community that forms a bundle of power to maintain access to the resources in their area.

Even though they have the support, the access that is gained by the community is not proportional to the power that BTNW has in governing tourism (Armitage and Tam, 2007). The government and the National Park as the manager of tourism in Wakatobi, can be said to have great power in every decision making. While local groups or communities only strengthen this position. Research conducted by Soedjak (2012) states that tourism planning carried out by managers does not fully involve stakeholders. For this reason, the community represented in this case by the adat community is trying to maintain access to continue to contribute to the management of the resources in their area.

Wakatobi National Park Official and Wakatobi Municipality: The actors who are controlling the access

The governance of the Wakatobi National Park tourism area experiences a dualism of authority, between the Wakatobi Municipality and the Wakatobi National Park Official. Both of these state institutions claim mutual rights over the use of natural resources in Wakatobi (Sopari et al., 2014). This is because after being designated as a National Park area based on Minister of Forestry Decree No. 393 / KPTS-VI / 1996 dated 30 July 1996, this area was then designated as a new district, which is a division of Buton District based on Law No. 29 of 2003. After being established as a district, the local government established the Wakatobi Tourism Office in charge of developing and managing tourism assets in the region. Whereas, previously, the National Park was the first ruler and positioned himself as the party entitled to the resources in Wakatobi. As a result of these two institutions, namely BTNW (Wakatobi National Park Office) and Wakatobi Municipality have been competiting each other to access resources in Wakatobi.

In general, there are eight types of biodiversity are controlled by BTNW and Wakatobi Municipality which both of them have similiar way to control. The eight resources are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Biodiversity that managed by the Wakatobi National Park Office and the Wakatobi Municipality (Source: Interviews, 2019)

No	Type of Biodiversity	Governed by Wakatobi National Park Official	Governed by Wakatobi Manucipality
1	Coral reefs	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization, Tourism	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization, Tourism
2	Seagrass	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization
3	Mangrove	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization, Tourism	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization, Tourism
4	Seabirds	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization	Area Security Patrol
5	Cetaceans (Marine Mammals / Dolphins, Whales)	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization	Area Security Patrol
6	Turtle	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization
7	SPAGs (Fish Spawning Sites)	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization	Area Security Patrol
8	Economical important fish	Monitoring, Area Security Patrol, Counseling / Socialization	Area Security Patrol, Capture Fisheries Permit

Based on the table above shows that both BTNW and the Wakatobi Municipality have the authority to oversee natural resources in the WNP area to protect these resources. This causes the actors attempt to control what activities are appropriate or inappropriate carried out in the area by referring to the principles of conservation. To exercise its authority, access controllers need the power to keep access to certain resources open (Berry, 2002). Here it is clear that the management or actors mentioned above are in a dominant position holding control over resources. Certainly, the political economy aspects of these actors become clear when the actors divide social authority into access control. Access control is the ability to mediate the access of others, for that control refers to checking and direction of action, function, or power of directing and regulating free action (Rangan, 1997). At first, the Wakatobi people made a living as fishermen, but when the area was designated as a National Park, the living conditions changed drastically (Carnegie, 2014; Stacey et al., 2017). People are prohibited from fishing at zoning points because it is feared that it will damage the living natural resources and disrupt tourist activities. Instead, the manager deliberately strived for people to switch jobs to the tourism sector. This effort was made to support the notion of ecotourism carried by the Wakatobi municipality and BTNW. One of the steps taken to realize ecotourism-based tourism in the WNP Area, both the National Park and the Tourism Office, is to form a tourism village and Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) (Nugroho et al., 2018; Owners et al., 2019).

There are a large number of assisted villages covered by Wakatobi National Park Official (BTNW). However, many have failed because of the lack of consistency of assistance (Junaid et al., 2019). The government only came to assist without any sustainability of the program. Of the large number of villages in Wakatobi, the National Park has only succeeded in forming two tourist villages, namely Makmur Village and Wali Village, in Binongko District. In Makmur Village, BTNW is focusing its development on improving the community's economic efforts through a marine product processing program, making shredded fish and assisting fishers in the provision of fishing gear. While in Wali Village, BTNW is more focused on turtle conservation and souvenir development programs. Similar to BTNW, the government also did the same thing, namely forming a Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis). The formation of Pokdarwis did not have a significant influence on the development of tourism in Wakatobi (Junaid et al., 2019), because this institution only focused on how to build public awareness of tourism activities, not on how to manage tourism.

The shifting of people's livelihoods from previously fishers to tourism workers, as explained above, is enough to prove how much access control these two actors have. In this context, Ribot and Peluso (2009) in the lens of political economy analysis will help understand access controls leading to the examination and supervision of actions, which serve as the power to control and regulate the benefits of the desired resources. Based on the results of the interview, a statement was obtained from key informants that in controlling access, the government not only has the right as a supervisor and controller of access but also benefits economically from the benefits of tourism resources in the NWP area. This is following the argument of Ribot and Peluso (2009), who say that at the same time, there are meanings and values of resources which always contest between who controls access to resources and who maintains access to resources.

In addition to controlling the community in the technical relations of work to resources, the government also does the same thing to the private sector. The Wakatobi Municipality and BTNK have the right to grant tourism business licenses to the public or private parties. The latter wish to establish businesses within the area. Business licenses through the Regional Government are known as TDUPar (Tourism Business Registration Certificate). Business founders will be charged a registration fee and other costs according to the stipulated regulations. Responding to this regulation, the local community expressed their disapproval, especially the non-governmental organization that had just set up a business. The Chairman of the Wakatobi Tourism Forum believes that the right course of action should be done first is to strengthen the group. When strengthening and increasing the capacity of members has been implemented. The next step that will be taken is marketing. After all, stages are carried out, and the non-governmental organizations are independent, the government has the right to impose business costs on them. In contrast to the legalization of tourism business licenses managed by BTNW. According to the community, the business registration fee set by BTNW is more affordable than the Regional Government. In addition, the licensing process lasted only one day. After obtaining the permit, BTNW provides a guidance form for the permit holders to function if there is a problem.

The policy made by the Regional Government and Wakatobi National Park proves that, in the end, the control over access itself can be converted by the controlling actors into economic benefits for them. According to Marx's notion (Ribot and Peluso, 2009) about the relationship between investors and labor in the context of controlling access to tourism resources, that the relationship between actors who have the capital and those who work with other people's capital or means of production is parallel with the relationship between actors who control the access of others and those who must maintain their access. In the case of access control by the government is in the relationship between two groups of actors sharing the benefits that are negotiated. To maintain access, subordinate actors often transfer several benefits to those who control access. They spend resources to foster relationships or transfer benefits to those who control access to get their benefits. This kind of analysis can exceed class analysis because the control and maintenance strands can be in the same person or shared between actors who work together or compete. Likewise, the community in the area with WNP managers can work together to keep the area functioning as it should, by collecting data on every business permit and tourism activity as well as coaching by the manager to the community to protect the area in the WNP area.

Private Enterprises: The actors who gain and maintaining the access

The private parties who have involvement in various types of businesses in the tourism business in the Wakatobi National Park area needs to be conducted. According to Masoed (1994), there are a variety of interested actors, including: first, there are actors called intermediaries in the tourism business, actors of this type such as tour operators and travel agents in general but their work power is limited to a small scale and not bound in a network of global tourism companies and tourist associations or associations. This type of actor is free to determine the product or tour package according to customer demand from the product offered to the market. Second, corporate or individual actors who invest venture capital in the tourism sector, these types of actors gain access through legal and state-protected legal channels.

Based on the results of the research, it is known that several corporations are included as the second type of actors, including Patuno Resort Wakatobi, Wakatobi Bajo Resort, Mawadah Dive Center, and Operation Wallacea. Patuno Resort Wakatobi was established at the end of 2009 and is located on Wangi-Wangi Island. One of the sahan owners of Patuno Resort is the family of the Wakatobi Regent. Patuno offers diving packages and has certified dive masters and marine biologists. In addition, Patuno also serves snorkeling trips, dolphin watching, and cultural island tours. Patuno resort is also known to monopolize the government agenda. Some important regional activities are often carried out at this resort, such as the holding of the International Seminar on Biosphere Reserves, the General Assembling of Local Government Networks on CTI Country, and the Focal Group Discussion (FGD) of the Indonesian Sail Tourism Association.

The next actor who also has rights to a business permit in WNP is Wakatobi Dive Resort (WDR) (Dilwan and Astina, 2019). Wakatobi Dive Resort (WDR) is owned by Lorenz, which has been operating since 1999 or four years before Wakatobi was established as a district. The company's operating permit is obtained through a Foreign Investment (PMA) permit, which is administered directly to the central government in Jakarta. Whereas other operational licenses were obtained through the Buton municipality. After the PMA was published, WDR built airports, resorts, and prepared human resources. The business license is valid for 30 years and can be refined again. When Wakatobi became a municipality, the business license remained valid. The main problems facing WDR are resort land leasing, airport land compensation, privatization, and beach reclamation. WDR acquires land by renting community property. The leasing mechanism is a new problem because the existing land system is communal ownership, not private ownership, which causes horizontal conflicts. Communal ownership is formed through inheritance of land which is carried from generation to generation from one generation to the next. In addition, land disputes also occur between WDR and the people on Tomia Island. WDR itself is known to have a private airport with flight routes from Bali to Tomia. This airport was built on land owned by 104 families with an area of ± 10 ha. The polemic arose because the community considered that the compensation given by WDR had not yet been completed.

Furthermore, *Mawadah* Dive Center, which is a dive center on Wangi-Wangi Island. Mawadah is an acronym for "*Magnet Wakatobi Dahsyat*," which means great Wakatobi magnets. The center offers diving and snorkeling trips that are guided by certified divers, as well as diving equipment rentals. In addition, they also offer dolphin watching tours and tours to cultural villages. The last private actor who has tourism business licensing rights in WNP is Operation Wallacea. Operation Wallacea is a UK-based research volunteer who operates biological management and conservation research programs in eleven countries around the world (Martin et al., 2012; Ullah et al., 2017). In Wakatobi National Park, Operation Wallacea is based on Hoga Island and has operated a diving and marine research center since 1996. Operation Wallacea organizes and operates voluntary research trips for students undertaking undergraduate and master field study projects. Every year Operation Wallacea sends up to 300 students mostly from England to Hoga Island to conduct research, where students pay a fee. These projects are mostly designed to meet the long-term conservation objectives of the National Park. The third type of actor according to (Masoed, 1994), is the local villagers who are native peoples of the region who are running a tourism business, most of whom run businesses in the field of tourism services and only have limited financial or means, such as travel agents, services homestay, tour boat, etc.

After mapping the private parties who are actors in the tourism business in WNP, it can be said that these actors are very complex so that not entire actors found are used as research subjects. However, there are more or fewer patterns that have similar entity levels in gaining access to the benefits of tourism resources in the WNP area. However, business entities, most of the actors participating in taking advantage of the resources available in the Wakatobi National Park area, are a form of opportunity related to the natural potential that is utilized for tourism that can generate sustainable financial benefits. Actors who have the opportunity to utilize tourism resources in the WNP area must have a business license as specified. Thus, ownership of the permit is a form of the ability of the actors who want to gain access to tourism resources in the WNP area. According to Ribot and Peluso (2009) that in gaining access, there is the ability to benefit from something, including material objects, individuals, institutions, and symbols. In this access formulation, it provides wider space for social relations that can make people able to benefit from resources without focusing on property, but rather on the ability to obtain business licenses (Sikor and Lund, 2009).

Indeed, when actors who have gained access to benefits to tourism resources maintain their access through actors who have control over resources (Rubinson, 2005; Kodir, 2019), such as the government. Then after the actor gets the desired access, he must follow the rules, pay rent tax, establish communication with the government, approve policies made by the government, provide excise, and so on. This is done so that the actor in control (the government) does not cancel or revoke his access permit for resources so that actors who obtain access can use and utilize tourism resources as a form of economic surplus benefits. The strategy undertaken to coordinate the maintenance of access is to form tourism associations such as ASITA (Association of Indonesian Travel Companies). This is in accordance with what is said (Ribot and Peluso, 2009) regarding the formation of a bandle of power to maintain access.

The actors who have dominated access in controlling natural resources in Wakatobi National Park

Power relations between actors can occur in the form of conflict or competition, cooperation (negotiation), and resistance in obtaining benefits from natural resources (Aagesen et al., 2000; Ribot and Peluso, 2009). The form of relations in the way of conflict or competition will undoubtedly be won by actors who have a bundle of power that is greater than other actors. Actors who have more ability can influence other actors in controlling, utilizing, and maintaining resources (Febryano et al., 2015; Priyatna et al., 2015). Based on the analysis above, three actors interact with each other and have access to tourism resources in the Wakatobi National Park, namely indigenous peoples or actors who maintain access, Wakatobi National Park, and Local Government or actors who control access, and private or actors who obtain and secure access.

The governance of WNP tourism resources shows the existence of very complex power relations formation. This is because each actor has different interests in accessing resources. Before being designated as a National Park, indigenous peoples in Wakatobi Municipality. The dweller worked as fishermen to meet their economic needs. However, when tourism began to enter and Wakatobi was designated a National Park, people's lives slowly changed. Zoning systems restrict fishing areas for tourism purposes. This situation causes the community to lose fishing locations, so they have to switch jobs to other sectors. In addition, in 2003, Wakatobi was established as a new district by the local government based on Law No. 29 of 2003. The presence of the National Park and the formation of new districts has made the governance of tourism resources in Wakatobi increasingly complex. Both the BTNK and the Wakatobi municipality are state representatives who provide legitimacy for the presence of tourism in Wakatobi National Park. As actors who have the right to tourism licensing, these two actors give the maximum opportunity for the private sector to participate in the contestation of the management and utilization of natural resources in WNP. If analyzed from the powers held, the National Park and Local Government are the dominant actors who have the most significant access to tourism resources. This is supported by the state, which sets various systems and regulations to strengthen the rights of the actors in power so that these two actors can control the access that is owned by other actors. The following are the legal bases governing the management of Wakatobi National Park owned by the Wakatoby National Park Official and the Wakatobi Municipality (Table 2):

Table 2. Results of Analysis of Regulations in Wakatobi National Park and Wakatobi Municipality

No.	Actors	Legal Basis
1	Wakatobi National Park Official: - SBTU (Sub Division of Administration in Baubau) - SPTNW I (*Wangi-Wangi* Region National Park Management Section) - SPTNW II (*Kaledupa* Region National Park Management Section) - SPTNW III (*Tomia* Region National Park Management Section)	- Law No. 5 of 1990 concerning Conservation of Biological Natural Resources and their Ecosystems - Government Regulation No. 36 of 2010 and the Minister of Forestry Regulation No. 48 of 2010 concerning Exploitation of Nature Tourism in Wildlife Reserves, National Parks, Grand Forest Parks, and Nature Tourism Parks - Director-General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHKA) Regulation No. P. 7 / IV-Set / 2011 concerning procedures for entering the Nature Reserve Area, Nature Conservation Area and Buru Park - Government Regulation No. 59 of 1998 concerning tariffs on the types of PNBP that apply to the Ministry of Forestry and Estate Crops - Monitoring Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 8 Important Resources
2	Wakatobi Municipality: - Regional Development Planning, Investment, Research, and Development Agency - Department of Marine and Fishery - Environmental Agency - Department of Culture and Tourism - Department of Agriculture, Forestry, Plantation and Animal Husbandry - Department of Spatial Planning, Cleanliness, Parks, Cemeteries and Fire Department	- Law No. 27 of 2007 concerning Management of Coastal Resources and Small Islands - Law No. 45 of 2009 concerning Amendment to Law No. 31 of 2004 concerning Fisheries - Law No. 32 of 2009 regarding Environmental Protection and Management (PPLH) - Wakatobi Municipality Regulation No. 5 of 2009 concerning Use of Fishing Tools and / or Tools for Taking Marine Products in the Wakatobi Municipality Water Areas - Wakatobi Municipality Regulation No. 5 of 2009 concerning Use of Fishing Tools and / or Tools for Taking Marine Products in the Wakatobi Municipality Water Areas - Wakatobi District Regulation No. 18 of 2013 concerning Fishery Business Licenses - Wakatobi Municipality Regulation No. 19 of 2006 concerning Research Permit Retribution and Granting Receipt of Notification of Empowerment of Social Organizations, NGOs and Foundations - Wakatobi District Regulation No. 15 of 2013 concerning Recreation and Tourism Sports Levies

Those policies are a legal umbrella to protect the rights of the actors in power in the management of tourism resources in WNP. Any party that will establish a tourism business in WNP must go through the permission of these two institutions. In addition, as the owner of a permit, both the public and private sectors must comply with formal regulations that have been established and mutually agreed upon. This proves that BTNW and the Wakatobi District Government can control the access of other actors. As explained earlier, the Wakatobi National Park and District Government control community access to the sea that is their source of livelihood through the zoning system. The two actors also led the community to work in the tourism sector by establishing a tourism village, the aim being to support tourism activities in the region. Meanwhile, the control of BTNW and the Wakatobi Municipality over the private sector is by providing operational licenses for tourism businesses that are run within a certain time.

CONCLUSION

The determination of the Wakatobi National Park as one of the locations of KSPN is because WNP has the advantage of biodiversity and coral reef ecosystem which attracts domestic and foreign tourists. As a potential tourism location, the existence of tourism encourages several actors to be involved in tourism governance in the region. However, in its governance, several actors involved in tourism governance compete with each other to compete for access with a variety of mechanisms. Indeed, this is mediated by several aspects such as authority, capital, markets, technology, social identity and social relations.

This research has identified several actors involved in tourism governance in the national park area including the Wakatobi municipality, national parks, foreign businessmen or local elites, local communities, and indigenous peoples. With a variety of actors involved in the management of tourism in the national park area shows the formation of complex power relations. In this context, the Wakatobi municipality and BTNW are actors who dominate tourism management because these two actors are supported by a set of authorities and rules. Furthermore, those who also benefit from the utilization of tourism management are foreign entrepreneurs and local elites. They have the freedom to obtain and maintain access not only from the strength of the capital and market they have, but are supported by relations with the local government that makes it easy for them to obtain permits for tourism management. Meanwhile, those who can only maintain access are local people, they only become a small part in tourism management. And even from their limited access to use their livelihoods due to the restrictions on their area of fishing because of the zoning system established by the national park and some privatization of space for tourism. This research has conveyed the complexity of governing tourism in the Wakatobi National Park area. However, this research is limited to explanations relating to policies and contestation of interests in tourism governance which, in the end, local communities or indigenous peoples become disadvantaged actors due to unfair tourism governance.

As a recommendation, further research is expected to be able to explain how local communities, especially those not involved in tourism activities such as fishermen or *Bajau* community, adapt to social changes and ecological vulnerability caused by tourism development massiveness due to the establishment of the Wakatobi National Park as one of the National Tourism Strategic Areas.

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THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN STIMULATING TOURISM IN JORDAN

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Abstract: The study aimed to uncover the relationship between adopting the strategic leadership approach and enhancing the competitive advantage of the tourism sector in Jordan. To meet this goal, the viewpoint of a sample of (20) people who have extensive experience in the field of strategic planning and strategic management was surveyed. The results of the main hypothesis test showed a positive correlation between adopting the strategic leadership approach and enhancing the competitiveness of the Jordanian tourism sector.The study recommended the necessity of training leaders in the Ministry of Tourism on the strategic approach and the necessity of adopting strategic planning as a basic option to enhance the competitiveness of tourism in Jordan.

Key words: strategic leadership, enhancing competitiveness, tourism sector, stimulating tourism, Jordan

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism organizations seek to take advantage of modern administrative methods and models to be able to adapt to the changes occurring in the tourism business environments to be able to discuss the deficiencies in financial capabilities and raise the levels of performance and level of services provided by the organizations to achieve outstanding the success that helps them achieve the progress and achievement that they seek to meet. Boljević, et al. (2014) Tourism is a labor-intensive economic activity that provides more than 200 million jobs worldwide. The share of tourism in global GDP is about 10.5%, through tourism more than 12.5% of the world's total exports and about 30% of global trade in services are generated. Vukotic and Vojnovic (2016) confirm that comprehensive tourism development in the modern era is directed to the maximum extent towards tourists, customers, and their satisfaction, and thus it is one of the most profitable industries in the world and has great economic importance for each country. The higher the general level of development, the more important the position and role of this group of the services sector, and this require the adoption of a strategic management approach to achieve competitive advantage. Strategic management is one of the most prominent modern management models as an organized process that includes evaluation, planning, and implementation designed to support or improve the competitive advantage by analyzing factors affecting the internal and external environments of organizations (Hitt et al., 2012, McGee et al., 2010; Sammut, 2010).

Strategic leadership plays an effective role that affects all activities of the organization, as it contributes to creating the proper organizational climate, which affects employee satisfaction. Consequently, it contributes to providing an administrative environment that helps make individual, group, and organizational goals. Consequently, it affects the effectiveness or performance of individuals, groups, and the entire organization and requires attention to leadership development (Zhang and Li, 2013).

According to (Harrington and Ottenbacher, 2013), the importance of strategic management and strategic thinking in the areas of tourism lies in its ability to deal with the increasing turmoil in the global environment by providing strategic solutions to meet current and future challenges and opportunities. To achieve a competitive advantage in the tourism sector, it is necessary to uncover potential opportunities or potential dangers, in addition to strengthening powers and avoiding weaknesses, all of which could be benefits of planning for future development efforts. This requires tourism planners to take unforeseen circumstances and unforeseen constraints into account when developing the strategic plan (Ketchen and Short, 2011). In Jordan, a strategic planning unit was created to be a source for setting goals related to all aspects of tourism activity, organizing human resources management in particular and following policies to allow workers, accurately characterizing the performance of the tourism business and specific criteria for measuring the performance gap in the tourism sector. The goal of this unit was to adopt strategic planning for the tourism sector in Jordan so that there is a series of operations that the strategic planning unit carries out to define its future vision, then take the necessary decisions to give the required allocations for their implementation and follow-up their activation, taking into account the internal and external environment factors that affect tourism activity. The Jordanian Ministry of Tourism has defined its strategic vision by strengthening tourism marketing, supporting competitiveness and developing the tourism product, enhancing human resources, and providing an effective institutional and organizational framework. The study seeks to know the effect of the dimensions of the strategic leadership in revitalizing the tourism sector in Jordan, as the study tests the following main hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant effect at the level of (α<05.0) of the strategic leadership on the revitalization of tourism in Jordan.

PREVIOUS LITERATURE

Hamtick's, 2002; Covey, 2006; Wagen, 2006; Dalton et al., 2000 management literature agrees that strategic leadership is one of the modern administrative methods as a process by which public administration can define the long-term directions of the organization, as well as performance through the right design, appropriate implementation, and continuous evaluation of the strategy developed, and This process consists of several elements that complement each other and these elements are defining the mission of goals, the field of action, developing and implementing strategies and its evaluation. According to (Olson and Shobe, 2008) strategic leadership reflects the ability of the organization's management to properly align with the driving forces of change in the environment of the Competition Company. This requires a structure capable of monitoring and managing the effective recruitment of resources through a process capable of distinguishing between opportunities add value with the overall goal of achieving a competitive advantage in the market.

David, 2005; Capon, 2008; Enz, 2010; Pisapia, 2009 define that strategic leadership has four main dimensions:

1. The administrative dimension, as this dimension contributes to the investment of material and human capabilities to achieve organizational goals.

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2. Transformational dimension: the importance of this dimension is that it helps the leader achieve goals in unstable environments.

3. The political dimension: this dimension contributes to convincing the higher leaders of the importance of strategic plans in facing the challenges of internal and external environments.

4. The ethical dimension: as the strategy-making, implementation and evaluation includes an ethical dimension, the strategic leader is responsible for establishing ethical principles within the organization.

Despite the importance of strategic leadership in the tourism sector (Harrington et al., 2011) confirms that the summary of administrative literature in the period from (1980-1999) shows that models related to strategic leadership were developed in sectors other than the tourism sector, then it applied to the tourism industry. However, starting in the year 2000, organizations of all kinds began to move towards the application of strategic management in various institutions by adopting new models to reveal the real effects of implementing strategic leadership (Hmieleski et al., 2006; Danneels, 2011; Chatain, 2011). Developments in the strategic literature have had an impact on the literature and research of hospitality and tourism strategy. Hospitality and tourism strategy research is becoming more nuanced and complex with an increased focus on the relationships specific to the hospitality and tourism context while elucidating these relationships. These results are reflected in the following sections using the strategy categories as in the previous timeframe section (Harrington et al., 2011).

Many researchers tried to uncover the relationship between adopting the strategic leadership approach and increasing the competitiveness of the tourism sectors. The study by (Chatain, 2011) confirmed the existence of a strong relationship between adopting strategic leadership and increasing competitiveness in the restaurant sector in the United States of America (Tavitiyaman et al., 2012). The Impact of Competitive Strategies on the Performance of Hotel Companies. The study showed that the strategic leadership of human resources had a direct impact on the competitive performance of tourism companies.

Study Approach

The researcher used the descriptive survey approach, given its suitability for the purposes of the study, and the use of the descriptive approach in this study is clear by collecting data, information, and data to show the relationship between the practice of strategic management and the activation of tourism.

Study participants: They are made up of all employees of the strategic planning unit of the Ministry of Tourism, and given the lack of accurate statistics on preparing workers in that unit, a sample consisting of (20) people who have extensive experience in strategic planning and strategic management was chosen.

Data collection

The researcher relied on collecting data on the following sources:

- Primary data: The field research method was used using the questionnaire to collect data on the study sample individuals to reveal the relationship between the study variables (strategic leadership) and (tourism activation).
- Secondary data: represented in previous Arab and foreign literature and studies that dealt with the relationship between adopting strategic leadership behavior and activating tourism.

Application of statistical methods to test hypotheses

- **Pre-tests:** Before starting the application of multiple regression to test the study hypothesis, some pre-tests were performed, to fit the data to the assumptions of the regression analysis, as shown below:

1. **Normality test:**

The data was confirmed to follow the normal distribution by using the test (One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov), and table1 shows that.

Table 1.Test One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov for independent and variable variables

variable	Test value(One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test)	Statistical significance
The administrative dimension	1.036	233.
The transformational dimension	722.	674.
The political dimension	891.	405.
The moral dimension	764.	604.
Strategic leadership as a whole	919.	368.
Tourism Promotion	847.	470.

It can be seen from Table1 that the value of the statistical significance of (One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test) for all variables was greater than the level of statistical significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), which indicates that these variables follow a normal distribution. Likewise, according to the central tendency theory, which states that if the sample size is greater than (30) and has an arithmetic mean and variance (2σ), then the sampling distribution of the arithmetic mean approaches the normal distribution.

2. **Test the strength of the form:**

To test the strength of the model, several tests were used, namely:

Results of independence test of independent variables:

Pearson correlation coefficients matrix was calculated to find out the relationship between the independent variables, to detect a linear correlation between the independent variables, and Table2 shows the results of the correlation coefficients between the variables as follows: trust, teamwork culture, shared vision, management practices, shared cultural norms. Depending on the results of Table2, it becomes clear that most of the correlations between the fields of study are significant and have statistical significance at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.01$), and the results also show the existence of a positive statistically significant correlation between all the independent variables. Thus, it can be judged that there is no complete correlation between the independent variables and each other.

Table 2.Correlation Matrix for Correlation Variables ** Statistically significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.01$) level

	The administrative dimension	The transformational dimension	The political dimension	The moral dimension
The administrative dimension	1			
The transformational dimension	(**)770.	1		
The political dimension	(**)767.	(**)877.	1	
The moral dimension	(**)677.	(**)805.	(**)672.	1

Linear Correlation Test (Multicollinearity):

The linear correlation test was used to ensure that there is no high correlation between the independent variables. By relying on the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) test and the tolerance test for each of the independent variables, where the independent variables of the model must be independent between them and to make sure of that purpose, we use this test, which is one of the ways to get rid of the problem of linear multiplicity, bearing in mind that the coefficient of variance inflation must not be exceeded for the value (10), and the value of the allowable variance test must be greater than (0.05), and by calculating the previous factors for each independent variable the results obtained were listed in Table 3 as follows:

Table 3. Test of the variance inflation factor and the permissible variance of the study variables

variable	Tolerable variance (Tolerance)	Contrast the amplification factor VIF
The administrative dimension	336.	2.972
The transformational dimension	142.	7.021
The political dimension	160.	6.240
The moral dimension	323.	3.101

The value of the permissible variance test for all variables is greater than (0.05), and thus it can be said that there is no high correlation problem between the variables and this enhances the possibility of its use in the model.Through the aforementioned pre-tests, it was found that there is no complete correlation problem between the independent variables and that there is no internal correlation problem between the independent variables. This allows for the continuation of the next stage, which is testing the hypotheses, and thus the multiple regression model is used to study the effect of the independent variables (dimension the administrative dimension, the transformational dimension, the political dimension, the ethical dimension) on the dependent variable (tourism activation).

Hypothesis testing:

Before starting to use linear regression analysis to test the study hypotheses, it was ensured that the data of independent variables were fulfilled for the conditions of regression analysis such as testing the normal distribution and testing the values of correlation between the dimensions of the organizational culture, in addition to making sure that there is no linear correlation problem. The results of these tests indicated the possibility of applying regression analysis. Linearity in extracting the results. The following is a presentation of the results of the linear regression analysis:

- Results of correlation coefficients for the multiple regression model:

Table 4. Model Summary

Std. The error of the Estimate	Adjusted R2	R2	R	Model
.169	.863	.875	.935(A)	1

a. Predictors: (Constant), the administrative, transformational, political, and moral dimension

b. Dependent Variable: Revitalize Tourism

It can be seen from Table4 that the value of the coefficient of correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable, which reached its value (0.935), as shown by the value of the coefficient of determination and is defined by (2R) with a value of (0.875), which explains that if an independent variable is added to the model, its value will increase even if there was no significance for the independent variable in the model (the increase of the sum of the squares due to the regression SSR with the constant sum of the total squares SST) and this, the modified coefficient of determination is calculated (Adjusted R2), which takes into account the increase in degrees of freedom, and as described above, its value reached (0.863). Therefore, the independent variables were able to explain (86.3%) of the changes occurring in the dependent variable and the remainder due to other factors.

- The overall significance test of the multiple regression model:

Table 5 represents the results of the ANOVA analysis of the significance of the regression model:

Table 5. Results of analysis of variance b

Source of variance	sum of squares	degree of freedom	average of squares	F	Sig
Regression	14.454	5	2.891	75.324	(a)0 .000
Residuals	2.072	54	038.		
Total	16.526	59			

Table 5 illustrates the analysis of variance, which aims to find the explanatory power of the model as a whole using the statistician (F).

The null hypothesis: There is a statistically significant effect at the level of (α <05.0) significance of the strategic leadership on the revitalization of tourism in Jordan.From what Table 5 shows, it becomes evident that there is a high significance for (F) test estimated at (75.324) and the level of significance estimated at (Sig = 0.000) less than the level of significance (α ≤0.05). From this standpoint, the main null hypothesis is accepted, whereby the independent variables combined to affect the dependent variable, as the independent variables interpreted an amount (86.3%) of the dependent variable. Thus, it can be said that there is at least one independent variable of the independent variables affecting the dependent variable, which can be significant, and this is known by testing the significance of the coefficients of the multiple regression equation. Test of the significance of the coefficients of the multiple regression equation:

Table 6 shows the values of the regression coefficients for the estimators and their statistical tests, as shown below:

Table 6. a (Coefficient)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	412.	211.		1.947	057.
	The administrative dimension	200.	085.	194.	2.341	023.
	The transformational dimension	448.	104.	552.	4.323	000.
	The political dimension	102.	117.	105.	872.	387.
	The moral dimension	075.	087.	073.	865.	391.

First sub-hypothesis test:

- the first sub-null hypothesis: There is a statistically significant effect at the level of (<05.0) significance of the administrative dimension on the revitalization of tourism in Jordan.

It is clear from Table 7 that the value of (t) reached (2.341), and in statistical terms, it reached (0.025), which is less than the level of significance (0.05 ≤ α), and the null hypothesis is accepted.

- The second sub-null hypothesis: There is a statistically significant effect at the level of significance (05<05.0) of the transformational dimension on the revitalization of tourism in Jordan.

It is clear from Table 7 that the value of (t) reached (4.323), and in statistical terms, it reached (0.000), which is less than the level of significance (0.05 ≤ α), and so the hypothesis is accepted

- The third sub-null hypothesis: There is a statistically significant effect at the level of (<05.0) significance of the political dimension on the revitalization of tourism.

It is clear from Table 7 that the value of (t) reached (0.872), and in statistical terms, it reached (0.387), which is greater than the level of significance (0.05 ≤ α), and the hypothesis is rejected.

- The fourth sub-null hypothesis: There is no statistically significant effect at the level of (α<05.0) significance of the ethical dimension of tourism activation.

It is clear from Table 7 that the value of (t) reached (0.865), and in statistical terms, it reached (0.391), which is greater than the level of significance (0.05 ≤ α), and the null hypothesis is rejected.

RESULTS

The results of testing the main hypothesis and the sub-hypotheses derived from it showed that there is a correlation between the application of strategic management and the activation of the tour leader, and the results of the sub-hypothesis test showed that there is a correlation between each dimension of the strategic leadership and the activation of the tourism sector. Therefore, it can be emphasized that the practice of strategic leadership contributes to revitalizing the tourism sector, and perhaps this confirms that adopting a strategic leadership style enhances the capabilities of tourism institutions to influence others to make voluntary decisions that give to achieving the long-term prospects of success of tourism institutions while preserving financial stability. Different leadership approaches to influence the vision and direction of growth and the potential success of an organization to successfully deal with change. Perhaps the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism has paid attention to this issue since the changes began in the Arab world, starting from the year 2011 when it launched its strategic plan in two phases: (2011-2015) and the second phase (2016-2020), then the strategic vision for the year (2025).

Upon reviewing the previous literature, we find that many studies (Harrington et al., 2011) and (Chatain, 2011) confirmed that adopting a strategic leadership approach enhances the competitiveness of the tourism sector.

Recommendations

In light of the previous result, the study recommends the following:

1. Training leaders in the Ministry of Tourism on the principles of strategic management in its various dimensions.
2. Establishing a qualified unit in the Ministry of Tourism to follow-up and check developments in the surrounding internal and external environment and analyze their implications for tourism in Jordan.
3. Adopting strategic planning as a basic option to enhance the competitiveness of the tourism sector.

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THE INFLUENCE OF DISSATISFIED TOURISTS' NON-BEHAVIORAL APPROACH ON OVERALL VISIT SATISFACTION: A STUDY ON MALAYSIAN DOMESTIC TOURISTS

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Abstract: Providing good quality of service is most basic attribute of the service industry, including tourism. Complaints by tourists actually provide opportunities for destination or business to recover from the service failures, and when the complaints are handled satisfactorily, destination or business may win tourists back. Therefore, this study aims to explore how complaint constraints influence on tourists' overall satisfaction level. In order to achieve the objectives, this study used a quantitative approach using PLS-SEM. This study revealed that overall tourists' satisfaction is influenced by limited time, unfamiliarity, limited communication, limited involvement, and positive holiday mood.

Key words: Tourists' Satisfaction, Complaint Constraints, Domestic Tourism, PLS-SEM, Tourism, Malaysia.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourists do not expect any dissatisfied experiences during their visit as they pay good money and expect the same with experience. Tourists today demand a high quality of service, and their level of tolerance becomes very low when they experience low quality of products or poor services (Su and Bowen, 2001). According to Lam and Tang (2003), when the providers are not able to satisfy them, tourists might express their dissatisfaction by complaining. Thus, customer complaints are an inevitable part of the tourism industry. Nyer (2000) reveals that marketers are in agreement that tourists' complaints are defined as fruitful sources of information which will assist marketers in recognizing the origin of dissatisfaction. Those tourists are encouraged to make a complaint would contribute on the greater increase of customer satisfaction and product evaluation, in comparison with those consumers are not willing to make complain. Complaints by tourists provide opportunities for destination or business to recover from the service failures, and when the complaints are handled satisfactorily, destination or business may win tourists back. Ultimately this may encourage repeat, or even, loyal tourists (Ekiz and Au, 2011). On the other hand, when tourists choose not to make a complaint, destination, or business will not be able to make amendment or improvement and loses its competitiveness in the market (ibid, 2009). According to Hedrick et al. (2007), only a low per cent of dissatisfied tourists tends to complain about their disappointing experiences. This is supported by Best and Andreasen (1977), stated that less than 50% of the dissatisfied tourists directly complain about their problems to the service provider.

Houcutt, Mowen and Chakraborty (1997), further explained that while dissatisfaction occurs, even though tourists do not complain, sometimes they tend to come back to the same service provider or destination. The authors added that this situation, however, happens only if tourists do not have any other options in destination or hotel choice. In many instances, however, tourists would do the opposite. The study revealed that 96% of dissatisfied tourists are found to ignore that particular destination (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Only a small percentage of tourist make a complaint about their dissatisfying experience and approximately two-thirds of them do not make any complaint (Richins, 1982; Day and Ash, 1979). Albrecht and Zemke (1996) revealed that only 5% of dissatisfied tourists give complaints to the correspondent body. According to Furlong (1993), dissatisfied tourists usually choose not to complain about their negative experiences because their expectation is very low on getting positive feedback or satisfactory result.

The same sentiment was also given by Badghish, Stanton and Hu (2015). Thus, implying that making complaints is wasting tourists' time and effort (Day et al., 1981). However, the majority of dissatisfied tourists usually choose not to complain about their negative experiences (Christiansen and Snepenger, 2002; Cohen, 2004). Tourists' silence or not complaining could be more precarious than voicing their problems or sharing their negative experiences. Hence, understanding why tourists do not complain has become a crucial matter. Thus, it leaves a gap for the researcher to fill. Therefore, this study is conducted to understand the influence of complaint constraints on overall satisfaction among Malaysian tourists when dissatisfaction occurs with hotel services.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourists complaint constraints

Limited time

Morello (2004) claimed that there are two categories of time: firstly, the clock time or objective time. Though Allaman et al. (2013) discussed the category of the time in their study is only clock time. According to Treisman (2013:2), the clock time can measure with definite terms, such as seconds, minutes and hours. The mental time or personal time is measured by people's preferences or their experiences in place of subjective measurement standards. People use the clock to manage the time, and that signifies the entire terms.

On the other hand, Knaap (1997) added, during the holiday, there must be a pre-determined time in terms of scheduling the activities during the tour, people are probable to miss track of their time. In this study, the concept of time used as the duration of time spent in a holiday destination. Previous literature of CCB explained that having not enough time or Limited Time is considered as one of the significant

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factors which can influence consumers' complaint behaviour (Gronhaug and Zaltman, 1981; Swanson and Kelly, 2001; TARP, 1999). According to Swanson and Kelly (2001), time limitation of tourists is an important aspect has effects to the service industry, on that place, the co-existence of consumer and service providers are generally needed. Chebat and Slusarczyk (2005) mentioned that timeliness as an essential requirement to solve the problem. Time goes into consideration while dissatisfied consumers seek recovery through complaining.

Unfamiliarity

Soderlund (2002) defined the familiarity as the number of product-related involvements accumulated by the consumer. Day and Landon (1976, p.181) argued that "...the less knowledgeable [familiar in this instance] consumer will be less able to judge product performance and evaluate the goods and services as he consumes...also he will be unfamiliar with procedures for seeking redress and in registering complaints" (p.5). They added that geographical factors and ethnic factors could be probable reasons for discrepancy of customers' knowledge on that product (Day and Landon, 1976). In another way, the consumers may get more confidence in the familiar environment. Thus it helps in expressing their satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction clearly.

Soderlund (2002) explained that familiarity with the products can bring more ease in the process of purchasing and "provides the customer with a different frame of references for evaluations compared to a low level of familiarity" (p.863). The author further addressed that the tourists with high familiarity intend more on accepting the extreme; it could be high and low-performance functions, even others too. The possible meaning of 'low-performance event' is the high level of service failures (Soderlund, 2002).

Limited communication

Communication is an important element of human nature and particularly significant for individuals' regular social interaction. The definition of communication is given by Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) as "...The transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver via a medium, or channel, of transmission" (p.293). Auditory is considered as a medium to convey the communication, these are singing or speaking, or through physical means which are sign languages, touching, or by making eye contact.

The form of communication is classified as verbal communication (communicating through using the language, word, speaking and sound) and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication, in the form of using language, plays a major part in the process of human communication. Bonvillain (2003) defined language as "...a communicative system consisting of formal units that are integrated by processes of combining components of sound, structure and meaning" (p.7).

Limited involvement

In consumer behaviour research area, 'Involvement' has received vast attention. According to Sharma et al. (2010), when a consumer has more involvement with a good, service, or in a situation of consuming the products, the more likely this consumer will tend to afford resources such as money, effort and time to voice out a complaint or seeking for redress for a dissatisfactory experience.

Mittal and Lee (1989) quoted that "...involvement has played an increasingly important role in explaining consumer behaviour (and has a significant relation with) extensiveness of the decision-making process and on-going product-related behaviour such as spreading word-of-mouth to peers". Involvement requires consumers to spend extra psychological and physical effort to understand and be part of the service offered (p.363). Tourism literature reflects that there is a comparatively smaller quantity of researchers who investigated the probable effects of Limited Involvement on consumers' purchasing behaviour, except Havitz and Dimanche (1999) and Altinay (1994). Cai et al., (2004) reported that, purchasing decision of tourists' involvement is based on information preferences context of tourists'.

The conclusion is made as that involvement, and Limited Involvement plays noteworthy roles in the 'pre-trip stage' of tourists' decision-making process; the statement is supported by (Cai et al., 2004).

Positive holiday mood

Iso-Ahola (1982) noted that the tourists' mood should be taken into consideration when analyzing tourists' behaviours. Liljander and Mattsson (2002) claimed that to understand tourists' behaviour, the psychological approach can play a vital role. According to Voase (1995), escaping from the routine is considered as one of the most basic psychological motivations behind travelling. Mill (1990) has provided the same statement that people are required to enjoy at least several days' holiday to wind down from their daily activities and to get some mental relaxation. Cohen (2004) stated that people travel to a different place to avoid common regular everyday activities, escape duties imposed upon them, get rid of tension within their life, search for recreation which is a no-work, no care, and no-thrift situation.

Similarly, most tourists think in their mind and convince themselves that holiday will bring joy and positive experience (Wood and House, 1991). Equally, leisure tourists always look to get a hassle-free travel experience, while they tend to think positively despite the difficulties they have experienced during the journey (Pearce, 1982). Therefore, "...driving pleasure from the trip is a central and non-instrumental concern for the tourist" and to do so, they "...enjoy taking it easy" (Suvantola and Gibson, 1992). This might happen due to tourists' temporary mode while visiting a place (Hosany and Gilbert, 2010; Suvantola, 2002).

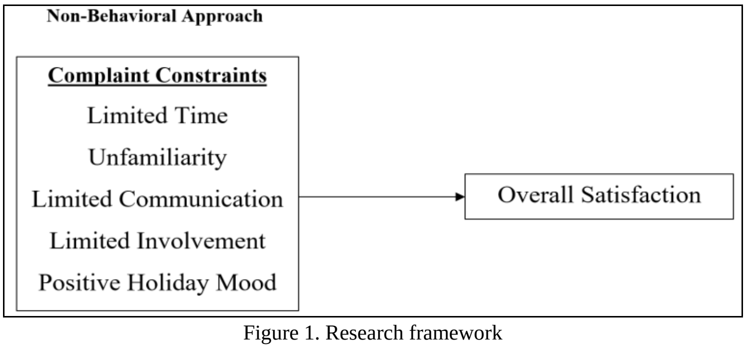

Figure 1. Research framework

Overall tourists satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has been defined as the combination of tourists' expectation prior to travel and their subsequent experiences (Baker and Crompton, 2000). By comparison, quality refers to the service operation's 'output', i.e., the attributes of the product that are primarily under the control of the operation (Crompton and Love, 1995). According to Oliver (1980), dissatisfaction occurs once the performance level is unable to meet a certain level of expectations. The concept of consumer satisfaction was widely debated in consumer behaviour literature during the 1980s and 1990s (Oliver, 1999). This debate has had an important resonance among tourism researchers, both conceptually and methodologically (Jamal et al., 2011; Kozak, 2001; Hassan et al., 2020). Due to multidimensional nature of tourism services (Maunier and Camelis, 2013), consumers always seek experiences that will satisfy their different needs simultaneously, while most of the needs are often effective based (Laing et al., 2014). Satisfaction is depending on the perceived difference between consumer's expectations and employee's perceived performance. Satisfaction is the individual's positive sense of experience (Rust and Oliver, 1994). It is normally measured before and after the trip in the tourism context. For instance, favourable feelings of tourists after a trip perceived as satisfaction, while experiencing an unfavourable feeling dominates the perception of dissatisfaction (Reisinger and Turner, 2003).

Based on the above discussion, this study proposed these hypotheses:

H1: Limited-Time has a significant influence on Overall Satisfaction of the domestic tourists in Malaysia

H2: Unfamiliarity has a significant influence on Overall Satisfaction of the domestic tourists in Malaysia

H3: Limited Communication has a significant influence on Overall Satisfaction of the domestic tourists in Malaysia

H4: Limited Involvement has a significant influence on Overall Satisfaction of the domestic tourists in Malaysia

H5: Positive Holiday Mood has a significant influence on Overall Satisfaction of the domestic tourists in Malaysia

METHODOLOGY

This is a quantitative study which seeks to investigate the influence of complaint constraints on tourists' overall visit satisfaction. In this research population defined as Malaysian tourists who have experienced dissatisfaction on hotel service during their visit. The number of domestic tourists in 2014 was 45,731,000 in overall Malaysia, and among them, 14% stayed in the hotel during their trip. As this study focused on the hotel sector, the total number of tourists were staying in the hotel in 2014 is approximately 6, 402,340. According to the study of Bloemer et al. (2002), the percentage of dissatisfied consumers is 21.35%, which is the population for this study. When the liberal assumption for the percentage of dissatisfied consumers counted following previous literature in approximately 20%, so the population size was 1,280,468, the researcher expected to get back 384 useable questionnaires from the respondents by agreeing with sampling table of Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) as they suggested, a sample size of 384 would be adequate for a population over 1 million. By using 384 as the target sample size, the true percentage in the whole population could fall within a positive or negative 5% range of the percentage obtained from the sample (Riddick and Russell, 1999). To get the information from different background, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to several places in the northern region. The researcher chose to use convenient sampling technique for distributing the questionnaires among respondents. The items comprised of tourists' complaint constraint upon their dissatisfying experiences, these items were adapted from Ekiz (2011). The items to measure overall visit satisfaction were adopted from Bhattacherjee (2001) and Oliver (1997).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic information

Respondents' socio-demographic information provided at a glance such as age groups, gender distribution, education levels, and monthly income. Among 381 respondents, 194 (50.9%) are male and remaining 187 (49.1%) are female. This study focused on Malaysian tourists, in terms of race, Malay (53.3%), Chinese (26.8%), Indian (16.5%) and others (3.4%). For the age groups, majority of them are 31-40 years old (37.55%) followed by 21-30 (28.6%), 41-50 (24.4%), 51-60 years old (8.7%) and 61 and above (0.8%). For marital status, 62.6% of them are married, 35.4% are single, and 2.1 % of them are widows.

The results of descriptive statistics for the ultimate variables are shown in the following table. According to Ahmmed (2014), for easy interpretation of the results of descriptive analysis, the range of five-point Likert scale is classified into three equal size classes, namely low, moderate and high. These are, values of lower than 2.33 [4/3+lowest value (1)] is treated as low; values of 3.67 [highest value (5)-4/3] are taken as high and values between these two extreme are treated as moderate.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for dimensions of variables

Dimensions (Variables)	Mean	SD
Limited Time	3.3998	.79671
Unfamiliarity	3.1820	.83779
Limited Communication	3.3333	.75432
Limited Involvement	3.2822	.87271
Positive Holiday Mood	3.3325	.76606

Note SD= Standard deviation

From the above table (Table 1) it is evident that mean values for Limited Time, Limited Communication, Unfamiliarity, Limited Involvement and Positive Holiday Mood fall into the range of 3.24 and 3.35. Most of the tourists did not complain due to Limited Time.

Measurement model of the study

For evaluating construct validity and reliability of the study variables, the researcher used measurement model assessment in Smart PLS-SEM using an algorithm. Table 2 and Figure 1 below shows the results of the measurement model of this study. The outer loadings for the measurement items of the variables are in an acceptable range. For a limited time, outer loadings counted as LT1-0.876, LT2-0.889, LT3-0.857 and LT4-0.772. For limited communication, outer loadings found as Communi1-0.920, Communi 2-0.874 and Communi 3-0.758. For limited involvement, outer loadings are LI1-0.951 and LI2-0.951. Outer loadings for positive holiday mood are Mood1-0.887, Mood2-0.858 and Mood 3-669. For unfamiliarity, outer loadings counted as Unfami1-0.851, Unfami2-0.912, Unfami3-0.915 and Unfami 4-0.920. For overall satisfaction, loadings are counted as Satisfaction1-0.878, Satisfaction2-0.894, Satisfaction3-0.830 and Satisfaction 4-0.832.

Table 1 also shows the Average Values Extracted for each variable. Average Values Extracted (AVE) found as 0.722, 0.729, 0.904, 0.657, 0.810 and 0.738 for a limited time, limited communication, limited involvement, positive holiday mood, unfamiliarity, and overall satisfaction respectively. This study implemented two techniques for identifying the discriminant validity of the study, which are Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) and Fornell - Larcker Criterion. Table 3 and Table 4 show the results of Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) and Fornell - Larcker Criterion, which indicate that discriminant validity is in considerable range to validate the constructs used in the study.

Table 2. Assessment results of the measurement model

Construct/ Associated Terms	Loading	Composite Reliability	Average Value Extracted
Limited Time			
LT1	0.876	0.912	0.722
LT2	0.889		
LT3	0.857		
LT4	0.772		
Limited Communication			
Communi1	0.920	.889	.729
Communi2	0.874		
Communi3	0.758		
Limited Involvement			
LI1	0.951	0.950	0.904
LI2	0.951		
Positive Holiday Mood			
Mood1	0.887	0.850	0.657
Mood2	0.858		
Mood3	0.669		
Unfamiliarity			
Unfami1	0.851	0.944	0.810
Unfami2	0.912		
Unfami3	0.915		
Unfami4	0.920		
Overall Satisfaction			
Satisfaction1	0.878	0.918	0.738
Satisfaction2	0.894		
Satisfaction3	0.830		
Satisfaction4	0.832		

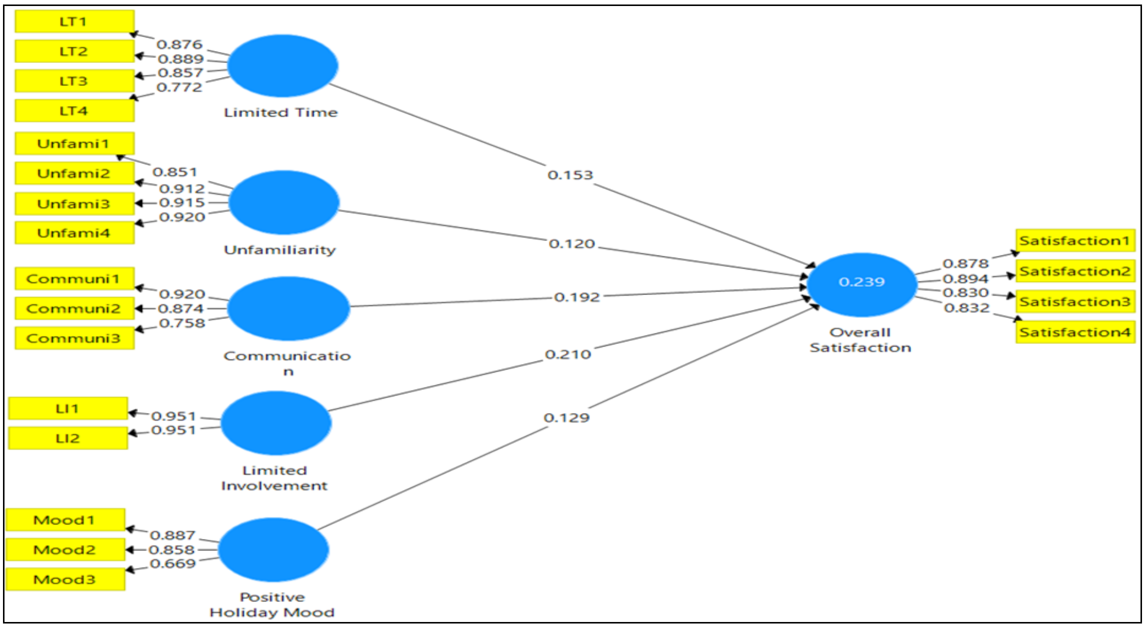

Figure 2. Measurement model of the study

Table 3. Discriminant Validity - Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	Communication	Intention	Limited Involvement	Limited Time	Positive Holiday Mood	Unfamiliarity
Communication						
Intention	0.386					
Limited Involvement	0.340	0.401				
Limited Time	0.190	0.255	0.103			
Positive Holiday Mood	0.142	0.263	0.199	0.094		
Unfamiliarity	0.351	0.352	0.524	0.146	0.253	

Table 4. Discriminant Validity - Fornell - Larcker Criterion

	Communication	Intention	Limited Involvement	Limited Time	Positive Holiday Mood	Unfamiliarity
Communication	0.854					
Intention	0.328	0.859				
Limited Involvement	0.296	0.357	0.951			
Limited Time	0.164	0.229	0.092	0.850		
Positive Holiday Mood	0.096	0.212	0.140	0.075	0.810	
Unfamiliarity	0.308	0.326	0.482	0.134	0.201	0.900

Assessment of structural model of the study

The diagram in Figure 2 and Table 5 demonstrated the structural model of the study. T-values of the model are showing high efficiency in the construct. The influence of the independent variable to the dependent variable is positively significant. To find the direct effects, the bootstrapping method was performed in Smart PLS 3. The study examined the direct relationship of Limited time, unfamiliarity, limited communication, limited involvement, positive holiday mood with overall satisfaction of the domestic tourists in Malaysia.

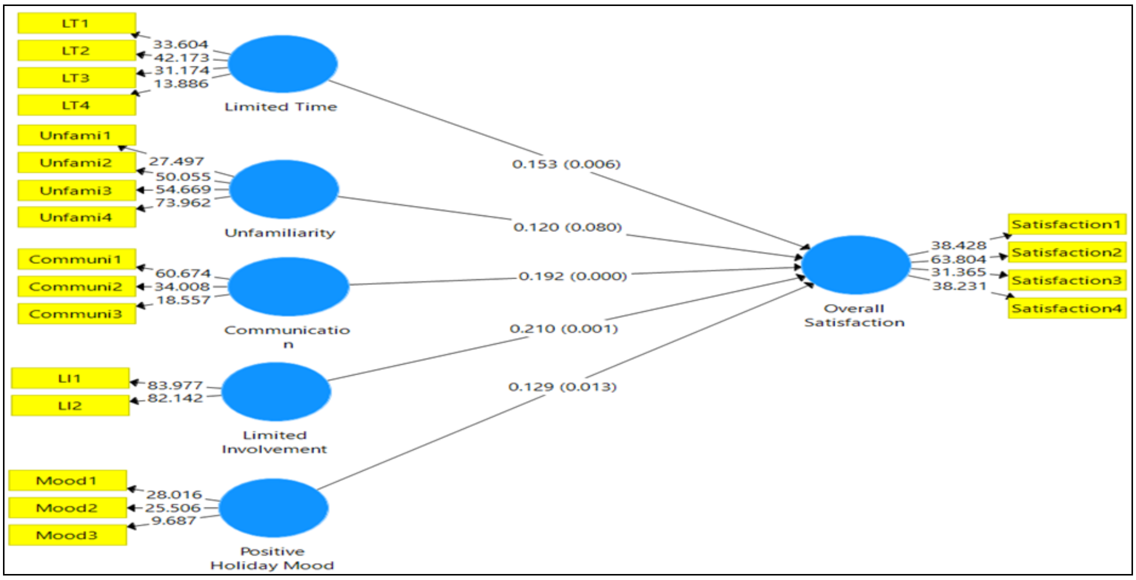

Figure 3. Structural model of the study

As shown in Table 5, the independent variables of this study limited time (T value= 3.034, p value= 0.003), unfamiliarity (T value= 1.771, p value= 0.077), limited communication (T value= 3.786, p value= 0.000), limited involvement (T value= 3.562, p value= 0.000), and positive holiday mood (T value= 2.499, p value= 0.000) have significant relationship with overall satisfaction of domestic tourists in Malaysia.

Table 5. Direct effects

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient	t Value	P values	Supported
H1	Limited Time -> Overall Satisfaction	0.153	3.034	0.003	√
H2	Unfamiliarity -> Overall Satisfaction	0.120	1.771	0.077	√
H3	Limited Communication -> Overall Satisfaction	0.192	3.786	0.000	√
H4	Limited Involvement -> Overall Satisfaction	0.210	3.562	0.000	√
H5	Positive Holiday Mood -> Overall Satisfaction	0.129	2.499	0.013	√

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research revealed that tourists' complaint constraints ought to be taken into account as complaints from the tourists' present precious information regarding service quality problems, and it should be viewed as an opportunity to learn how to improve service. Although, the greatest hazard is not trying to bother to complain but rather essentially take away negative word-of-mouth publicity and business somewhere else. In this regards, Malaysian tourists are less expressive in their views and providing negative feedback could be considered as tongue-tied and complex (Ndubisi and Tam, 2007). This study also revealed that overall tourists' satisfaction of the domestic tourists is influenced by limited time, unfamiliarity, limited communication, limited involvement, and positive holiday mood. Most of the respondents who precise their reason for not complaining as Limited Time, reporting complain is time consuming and handling complaints by the service provider will take longer time in handling the complaints as the tourists used to have time limitation during their trip. The second most common reason for not complaining was Limited Communication. For that reason, hoteliers in Malaysia should not simply ignore any negative perception provided by consumers. Hoteliers should look to enhance the services and gain more knowledge about consumer complaint behaviours. More prompt and efficient consistent services to consumers will develop their customer service. A service provider should be able to learn from complaints, e.g. how to prevent similar mistakes or service failure in future and identify where and how these mistakes happened. So, hoteliers should welcome more complaints from tourists and take a step to make it easy for tourists to complain. Hoteliers should understand that no complaints from customers do not indicate a good customer's satisfaction level. In this regard, the organization must have the intuition to think any complaints positively to develop further but not to take directly as an act of conflict. To conclude, it is assumed that the research framework and information flow from this study will assist a better understanding of correspondent authorities. A better understanding of the tourists' complaint constraints (Limited Time, Unfamiliarity, Limited Communication, Limited Involvement and Positive Holiday Mood) in terms of hotel service will provide hoteliers with valuable information to increase their effectiveness in handling the operation, improving customer satisfaction and repeat patronization.

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COMPARING MOTIVATION AND PROFILE BETWEEN ARCHAEOTOURISTS AND NON-ARCHAEOTOURISTS IN NGORONGORO, TANZANIA

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Abstract: The study aims to compare motivation and profile between archaeotourists and non-archaeotourists. It utilizes the push and pull motivational model and distance decay theory, and questionnaire data from a sample of 252 international tourists visiting Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) in Tanzania. The analysis revealed that archaeotourists are more heterogeneous than non-archaeotourists, as they not only attach importance to fascinating stories and the authenticity of past objects, but also to enjoying nature, the geological scenery, doing research on archaeological features and each other's company. In addition, they are older, have plenty of time to visit and are well off.

Key words: Ngorongoro, archaeotourism, archaeological site, tourist motivation, archaeotourist, Tanzania

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the important sectors of economies that contributes to economic growth in the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2018; World Bank, 2019). Natural attractions, especially wildlife, beaches and a warm climate have been conventional factors pulling tourists to visit SSA (Lwoga, 2011). However, today, people's past and contemporary cultures are becoming more important in SSA's tourist product mix (Timothy and Nyaupane, 2009). Specifically, the *archaeological sites* evidencing the past of humankind are increasingly becoming one of the important attractions, thanks to the presence of famous sites such as Olduvai Gorge, the Cradle of Human Kind in Tanzania, and to the tourists' changing preferences. In fact, globally, tourists visiting archaeological sites – a phenomenon known as *archaeological tourism* or *archaeotourism* - is not a new phenomenon as people have long sought out archaeological sites around the world (Giraudo and Porter, 2010). Archaeotourism is being encouraged due to its potential to conserve and preserve the local heritage, educate the general populace about their heritage and revitalize places that have suffered from the effects of remoteness and abandonment (Odum and Oguamanam, 2020; Cahyadi, 2016). To mention just a few examples of archaeotourism promotion, the number of tourists visiting the Machu Picchu archaeological site grew rapidly, from 77,295 in 1991 to about 1.3 million in 2015 (Oehmichen-Bazan, 2018). Archaeological sites in Guatemala are the reason for tourism being one of the main sources of income after the civil war ended in 1996 (Oehmichen-Bazan, 2018). In Egypt and in Europe, archaeotourism is among the mature tourist markets (Ercolano et al., 2018).

In Tanzania, archaeological sites came to the attention of international touristic and research expeditions since the colonial times. Archaeotourism gained further attention when the ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Songo Mnara were declared world heritage sites in 1981, and later the Kondoa Rock-Art Sites in 2006, and Olduvai Gorge and Laetoli Sites as part of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) Mixed World Heritage Site in 2010. The Tanzanian National Tourism Policy of 1999 encouraged the development of archaeotourism in its statements 4.4 (cultural objectives) and 5.3 (policy strategies for cultural tourism). Despite these efforts, archaeological sites still receive fewer local and international tourists than national parks and game reserves in their vicinity. For instance, while NCA received about 725,535 tourists in 2018, Olduvai Gorge – four kilometres away - received about 39,500 tourists (NCAA, 2019), and while Selous Game Reserve received about 19,179 tourists in 2018, Kilwa Kisiwani and Songo Mnara in its vicinity received about 3,048 tourists (URT, 2019).

Researchers attribute the low growth in archaeotourism in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to the dearth of knowledge about this market, specifically on what *motivates* tourists to visit archaeological sites, and the characteristics of the tourists visiting the sites, *archaeotourists*, as they differ from the dominant nature-based tourists (Ercolano et al., 2018; Sing'ambi and Lwoga, 2018; Lwoga, 2019; Odum and Oguamanam, 2020). Indeed, there has been limited research on archaeotourism markets, although there has been a lot using the push and pull model and empirical facts on eco-tourists and tourists visiting *natural attractions* that have guided the development and marketing of nature-based tourism. Because natural attractions are characterized by naturally occurring resources and environmental components, and cultural attractions are man-made or *influenced* by human being, what *motivates* an individual to visit either attraction may differ (Zhao et al., 2011; Chiang et al., 2015). Even within the cultural tourism realm, *archaeotourists* may differ from tourists visiting cultural events (Zhao et al., 2011).

The limited research available is inconsistent in explaining archaeotourists. Conventional research has limited archaeotourists to being motivated to find out about the cultural and historic features (Virto et al., 2011; Fagan, 2012; Ross et al., 2017; Ercolano et al., 2018; Odum and Oguamanam, 2020). However, archaeotourism can be enhanced by linking sites to natural attractions, assuming that archaeotourists also consider natural features important (Yun et al., 2008; Cahyadi, 2016; Rapidah et al., 2018). In terms of tourists' profile, based on the distance decay effect, studies agree that archaeotourists have plenty of time to visit a destination (McKercher and du Cros, 2002). However, they disagree on tourists' demographic characteristics, as some (e.g. Silberberg, 1995) argue that archaeotourists are older, more highly educated and on a higher income, while others (e.g. Prentice et al., 1998) argue that they are younger and of a lower socio-economic status. In this regard, the characteristics of

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archaeotourists remain unknown, and so it is unclear what would motivate these tourists to visit archaeological sites, where the main attractions are nature-based (typical of most Sub-Saharan African destinations), and how would their motivation differ from that of non-archaeotourists.

The above-mentioned studies focus on sites in regions other than in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and make a legitimate contribution to knowing about the motivation and characteristics of cultural tourists in general, as well as giving interesting insights for archaeotourism marketers. However, their findings cannot be generalized to archaeotourists in SSA. The knowledge generated from past studies in the developed world cannot be used to develop and promote archaeotourism in SSA. Differences between the cultures, economies, history, geopolitics and societies in SSA and those in other regions may influence how tourists perceive archaeological attractions (Timothy and Nyaupane, 2009). In most cases, SSA is renowned for its nature-based tourism, and as natural attractions are the main motive for visiting these locations, archaeological sites are often integrated in the nature-based trips as an added-on experience, but is not the primary reason for travelling (Lwoga, 2019).

This study contributes to this debate. It applies the push and pull motivational model, distance decay theory and uses existing empirical evidence to organize seemingly inconsistent findings to derive hypotheses. It then draws on a sample of international tourists visiting Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) in Tanzania, to examine motivational and profile (demographic and travel characteristics) differences between archaeotourists and non-archaeotourists. NCA is an interesting case study because, apart from being a destination known for its breath-taking crater and rich wildlife, it has recently begun investing in the development of its archaeological sites for tourism, including Olduvai Gorge (URT, 2019). This study gives a broader understanding of what motivates archaeotourists, as opposed to those in the general tourism market who are motivated to visit scenic and nature-based sites in SSA. It also shows archaeotourism marketers how archaeotourists differ from tourists visiting sites that are renowned for their natural attractions in SSA. This information is vital for designing and developing appropriate archaeotourism products and marketing strategies, which will ensure more visits to, and the financial sustainability of, archaeological sites.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Push and pull theory of motivation

The dominant theory explaining motivation is the push and pull theory, which posits that intrinsic and extrinsic motivational forces influence a person to participate in a particular tourism activity (Klenosky et al., 2007). A person may have cultural and socio-psychological disequilibrium, an intrinsic motivational force, which may require a travel experience to correct it. On the other hand, a person may decide to visit a place after being pulled by external motivational forces, such as destination attractions and activities that can meet her or his needs (Klenosky et al., 2008). The theory reflects the two major segments of the tourism system, that is, the demand *push motives* and *pull motives* that influence a person to visit archaeological sites.

Nature-based, cultural and archaeotourism, and motivations and profiles

The places that attract tourists to visit can theoretically be of natural, cultural or mixed (natural and cultural) orientation (Lwoga, 2011). While utilizing components of the natural environment to attract tourists is regarded as nature-based tourism, utilizing man-made or culturally influenced tangible and intangible components is referred to as cultural tourism (McKercher and du Cros, 2002; Chiang et al., 2015; Xu and Chan, 2016). Cultural tourists in general usually visit cultural attractions such as performing arts, cultural festivals, and sites and monuments, as well as travelling to study art, experience local foods and lifestyle, and go on a pilgrimage (McKercher and du Cros, 2002; Timothy and Nyaupane, 2009; Chiang et al., 2015). Therefore, archaeotourism emerges as a sub-form of cultural tourism involving visits to archaeological sites (Cahyadi, 2016; Ross et al., 2017). Tourists visiting natural attractions often want to view and experience wildlife and the landscape found there, to escape from a mundane environment, relax, be physically active, learn about nature, and experience a challenging adventure (Tao et al., 2004; Luo and Deng, 2008; Xu and Chan, 2016). In fact, eco-tourists differ from conventional tourists in that they attach great importance to viewing and experiencing natural attractions (Maleski, 2012). On the other hand, studies show that what motivates archaeotourists are compelling stories of the past, the desire to rediscover the past, memorable experiences including escapism, aesthetic and educational experiences, romanticism and fascination with the past, and having an authentic experience of the past (Virto et al., 2011; Fagan, 2012; Ross et al., 2017; Verkerk, 2017; Ercolano et al., 2018). Interestingly, some studies show that archaeotourists are also motivated by natural features such as the nature and exoticness of the sites, which add to tourists' sense of adventure (Yun et al., 2008; Giraudo and Porter, 2010; Cahyadi, 2016). It is thus logical to propose the following:

H1a: Fascination with the past is more important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists.
H1b: Learning about the past is more important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists.
H1c: Relationship enhancement is more important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists.
H1d: Experiencing the authentic past is more important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists.
H1e: Doing research is more important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists.
H1f: Personal development is less important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists.
H1g: Popularity of the site is less important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists.
H1h: Escaping is less important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists.
H1i: Nature and scenery is less important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists.

In recognizing distinct categories of tourists in the 1970s, cultural tourists were generally regarded as better educated and more affluent (McKercher and du Cros, 2002). Even in the 1990s, tourists greatly motivated by cultural attractions were more highly educated and better off (Silberberg, 1995). However, Prentice et al. (1998) found that tourists who visited primarily for cultural purposes had a lower socio-economic status, while those whose visit was not primarily for cultural purposes were younger and had a higher socio-economic status.

This study considers the following assumptions to guide the investigation:

H2a: Archaeotourists are older than non-archaeotourists.
H2b: Archaeotourists are more educated than non-archaeotourists.
H2c: Archaeotourists are better off than non-archaeotourists.

In terms of travel characteristics, the geographical notion of the distance decay effect explains the travel patterns of archaeotourists in the vicinity of a mainstream nature-based attraction. The notion argues that the difference between the demand and supply side of a location declines rapidly as the distance between them increases (McKercher, 2008). This is because most individuals are unwilling to spend more time and money travelling longer distances if a similar benefit can be obtained nearby (McKercher, 2008). In this study the concept implies that visits to archaeological sites vary according to the distance travelled, in that demand declines exponentially as the distance to tourist attractions increases (McKercher and du Cros, 2002). In this regard, time availability is an important element that can accentuate or minimize the effect of distance decay (McKercher and du Cros, 2002). Most tourists are known to have limited travel time, and so when archaeotourism is an incidental aspect of a trip (typical in NCA), the amount of time a tourist would be willing to allocate to visiting archaeological sites would depend on the time they have available (McKercher and du Cros, 2002). This means that tourists who perceive that archaeological sites are far from the iconic Ngorongoro crater in NCA would not visit them, and vice versa. Although the distance decay notion has been criticized in that distance is not an explicit variable in destination choice, it is useful in this study's context, and guides the assumption that archaeotourists in NCA would have more time to travel than non-archaeotourists.

H3a: Archaeotourists have more time to spend at the destination than non-archaeotourists.

H3b: Archaeotourists visit the destination more frequently than non-archaeotourists.

METHODOLOGY

Study area

The study was conducted in NCA Mixed World Heritage Site located between 35º30'E and 3º15'S in Arusha, Tanzania (Figure 1). NCA's 809,440 hectares span a vast expanse of highland plains, savanna, woodlands and forests, from the plains of the Serengeti National Park in the north-west, to the eastern arm of the Great Rift Valley. The area was established in 1959 as a multiple land-use area, with wildlife coexisting with semi-nomadic Maasai pastoralists practicing traditional livestock grazing. It includes the spectacular Ngorongoro Crater, which is the world's largest caldera of global importance for biodiversity conservation, due to the presence of globally threatened species, the density of wildlife, including the migratory wildebeest, zebras, gazelles, rhinos, giraffes, lions, leopards, hyenas, buffalos and elephants, and a variety of birds species.

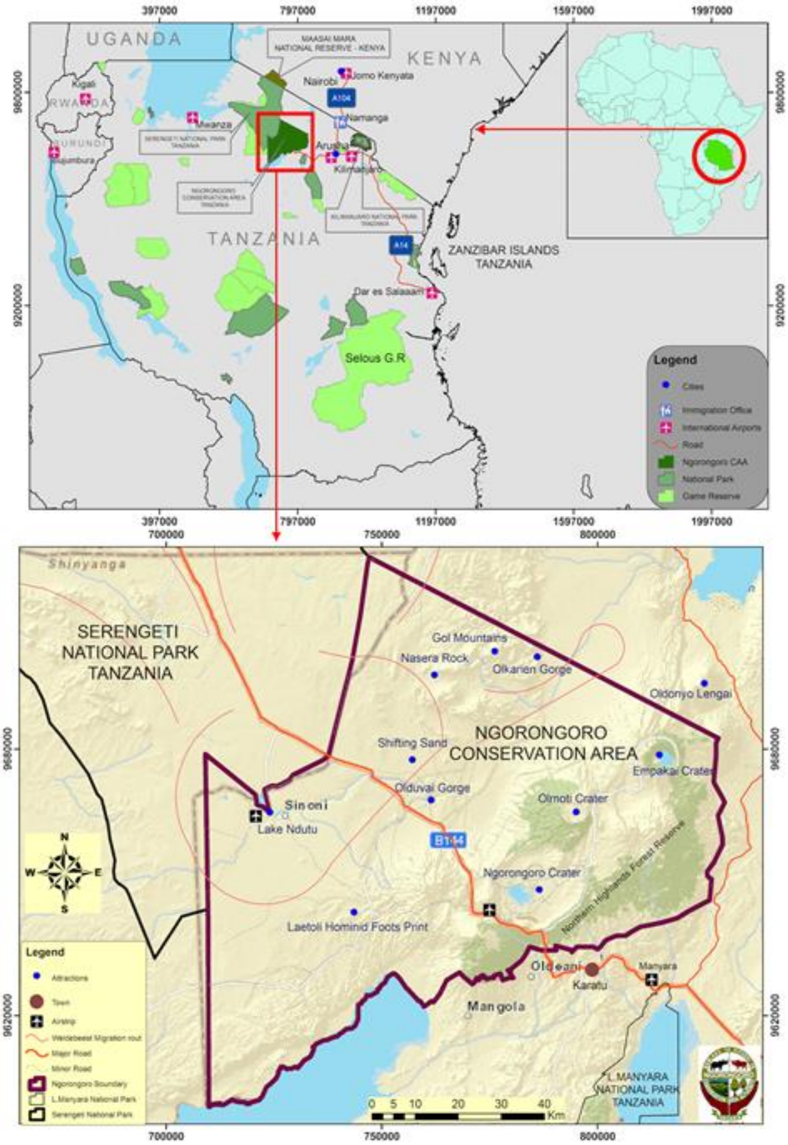

Figure 1. The Map of Ngorongoro Conservation Area (Source: Mwankunda, 2019)

Extensive archaeological research in NCA for over 80 years has yielded a long sequence of evidence of human evolution and human-environment dynamics, including early hominid footprints dating back 3.6 million years, and a sequence of diverse and evolving hominin species in Olduvai Gorge, ranging from Australopiths such as *Zinjanthropus boisei* to the Homo lineage that includes *Homo habilis*. There is also an early form of Homo sapiens at Lake Ndutu documenting the development of stone technology and the transition to the use of iron. NCA is therefore rich in terms of cultural heritage resources, especially, archaeological ones (Figure 2).

NCA is legally protected primarily by the NCA Ordinance of 1959 under the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA). However, the Antiquities Division (AD) of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) has been responsible for the management and protection of the archaeological resources in the NCA. Recently however, after noting the failure to develop the site properly, the AD handed over the protection, conservation and development functions of the archaeological resources to the NCAA. In terms of tourism in general, NCA noted an increase in tourist numbers from 332,469 in 2014 to 725,535 in 2018, most of them to visit the-must-visit

Ngorongoro Crater. Archaeological sites such as the famous Olduvai Gorge – under the AD – used to receive less than 50,000 tourists, as for instance it received 39,500 tourists in 2018 (NCAA, 2019). However, after being handled over to the NCAA, and with recent developments that the NCAA did to archaeological sites, Olduvai Gorge for instance attracted 939,084 tourists in 2019 compared with 32,012 in 2016, making it the top cultural site in Tanzania (URT, 2019). This means that archaeotourism has just begun to be well established in NCA.

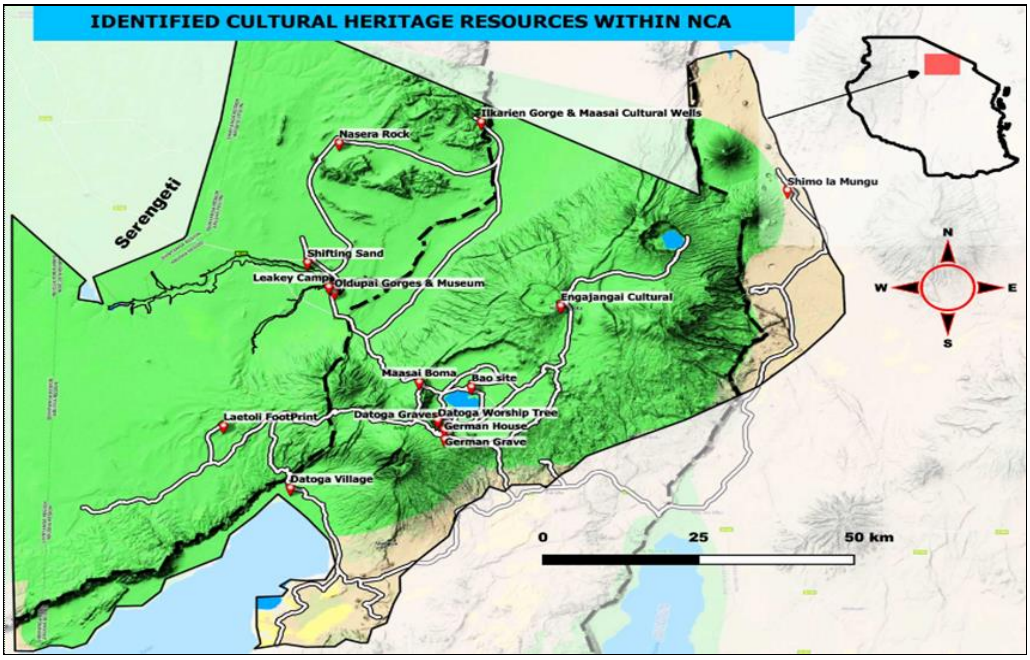

Figure 2. Ngorongoro conservation area showing cultural heritage resources (Source: Mwankunda, 2019)

Research design, sample, data collection and analysis procedures

This study is basically a cross-sectional research that utilized a questionnaire survey design. The target population was international tourists visiting NCA. The sample size was 252 tourists. The study applied random sampling at the exit point to involve tourists departing from NCA.

A self-administered questionnaire was given to tourists who agreed to participate in the study, with assurance to the anonymity of their responses. Tourists completed the questionnaires and delivered them by hand to the researchers. The questionnaire was prepared in English and contained both scaled and categorical measures to capture the variables of interest. The scale had an initial question that was intended to measure whether the tourist visited archaeological sites while in NCA or not. This was basically a dummy variable (1 = No, 2 = Yes). The scale also measured motivational variables, such as an interest in the past, personal advancement, learning, experiencing an authentic past, popularity of the place, doing research, the scenery, and escape. Measures related to the motivational variables were adopted from Chiang et al. (2015), Virto et al. (2011), and Ercolano et al. (2018). The questions regarding motivational scales asked respondents to rate the importance of motivation (measure) in their decision to visit NCA, by circling the appropriate response, such as *Not Important at All* (value of 1), *Not Important* (2), *Not Sure* (3), *Important* (4), and *Extremely Important* (5). It also involved scales that measured demographic variables such as sex (dummy variable), age, education level and monthly income (ordinal variables), and travel characteristics, such as tourists' origin (nominal variable) and travel frequency and length of visit (ratio variables). The questionnaire was pre-tested before being implemented. It was first sent to three tourism experts at the University of Dar es Salaam and NCA to review and scrutinize it. It was also administered initially to ten international tourists at NCA. Several measurement items were reshaped and reworded to improve measurements. The data were collected in August and September 2019, within the peak season in Tanzania.

Data were cleaned, coded and checked for appropriateness. Descriptive statistics including skewness and kurtosis, mean and standard deviation (SD) were applied to check the data's distributional behaviour with regard to normality. Frequency and percentage statistics were used to discover the prevalence of demographic and travel characteristics. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to analyse scaled data and the underlying dimensions of tourists' motivation. To analyse the differences in tourists' motivation and profile (demographic and travel characteristics) between archaeotourists and non-archaeotourists, their responses relating to the above-mentioned variables were compared using two-sided *t*-tests, Mann-Whitney *U* tests and chi-square tests with Fischer's exact tests. A *P*-value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant, and mean statistics were applied. To ensure validity, especially content validity, the research was carefully defined through reviewing the theoretical and empirical literature and through pre-testing the questionnaire, as mentioned earlier. Cronbach's Alpha was used to test reliability.

RESULTS

Demographic and travel characteristics of respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1. The majority were aged between 21 and 60 (about 83%) with a Bachelor or Masters Degree (77%) and a monthly income of over USD 5,000 (71%). This reflects the major categories of visitors to NCA, who are basically those who earn a salary, are well-educated and have a relatively high income. The travel characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 2. Most of them came from North America (37.7%, dominated by those from the United States of America (31%), followed closely by those who came from Europe, with Italians dominating, followed by Germans, French, Spanish and British. As shown in Table 2, tourists from African and South American countries followed with 3.6% each. In terms of those coming from Africa, Kenyans dominated. There is a fairly equal distribution of respondents in terms of visiting archaeological sites, whereby 53% visited archaeological sites while in NCA and 47% did not (see Table 2). In terms of travel frequency, the majority of respondents visited NCA once every few years (77.5%), followed by those who visited once a year (15.9%). Few respondents visited more than once a year (4.8%). The majority of respondents spent at least a full two to three days in NCA (78.9%), followed by those who spent half a day (15.5%), while a few spent four or more days (5.6%).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics (N = 252)

Characteristics	%
Sex	
Female	50.4
Male	49.6
Age	
18 – 20	2.8
21 – 40	57.2
41 – 60	26.5
> 60	13.5
Education level	
Primary	1.6
Secondary	14.3
Bachelor Degree	46.4
Master Degree	31.3
PhD	6.4
Monthly income (USD)	
No income	6.0
1 - 5,000	22.6
5,001 – 10,000	36.1
> 10,000	35.3

Table 2. Travel characteristics (N = 252)

Characteristics	%
Origin	
North America	**37.8**
United States of America	31.0
Mexico	3.2
Other American countries (Albania, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Cuba, Honduras, Nicaragua)	3.6
Australia	**2.8**
Europe	**37**
Germany	9.1
Italy	12.3
France	6.8
Spain	1.6
United Kingdom	1.2
Other European Countries	6
Asia	**12**
India	4.0
Singapore	3.6
China	1.6
Other Asian Countries	2.8
South America (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Chile)	**3.6**
Middle East (Israel, UAE, Saudi Arabia)	**3.2**
Africa	**3.6**
Kenya	1.6
Uganda	1.2
Other African countries	1.2
Visit to archaeological site	
Yes	53
No	47
Travel frequency	
First time	1.6
Once in a few years	77.4
Once a year	15.9
Twice a year	4.4
Three or more times a year	0.8
Length of visit	
Half a day	15.5
Full day	31.7
Two to three days	47.2
Four to five days	2.8
More than five days	2.8

Motivations for visiting NCA in general

Descriptive statistics based on mean and standard deviation shown in Table 3 indicate that, on average, appreciation of nature is the most important reason for tourists visiting Ngorongoro, with a mean value of 4.32, SD 0.6074, followed by learning about the past, with a mean value of 4.27 and viewing beautiful scenery, with a mean value of 4.25. Other items that have mean values of 4.0 and over relate to learning, experiencing nature, including unique geological features, and escaping. These findings show that natural resources, such as the wildlife, beautiful scenery and landscape are the most important attractions in NCA, and experiencing nature and escaping are the most important motivations. In terms of learning, the past dominates, implying that archaeological sites and experiencing the past can have a role in motivating tourists to visit NCA with the purpose of learning. EFA was used to summarize motivational measurement items into underlying dimensions regarding reasons for visiting NCA. Bartlett's sphericity test checked whether the correlation matrix of the measurement items was an identity matrix. As shown in Table 3, the p value for the Bartlett test was below 0.05, indicating that the dataset under consideration was not an identity matrix. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test of sample adequacy was applied to check whether the sample was adequate. The KMO value was 0.813, which is over 0.6, indicating that the dataset is suitable for factor analysis.

Varimax rotation was used to derive factor solution. The results indicate that the motivational items, all loaded with values above the average of 0.5, can be grouped into nine (9) factors. The factors are: (i) fascination with the past, which include seven items relating to the motive to view past objects, connect with and experience the past and satisfy romantic feelings about the past; (ii) personal advancement, which includes four items relating to the motive to experience solitude, think and focus on personal values; (iii) learning, which involves seven items relating to the motive to develop one's knowledge, explore the unknown, escape from routine and learn about new things and a different culture; (iv) encountering the authentic past, which includes items relating to the motive to seek authentic experiences, see and experience authentic past objects and authentic connections with the past; (v) popularity of the site, which involves four items relating to the site having world heritage status and being popular and famous; (vi) doing research, which includes three items relating to the motive to experience a historic age; (vii) nature and scenery which involves three items relating to the motive to view and appreciate nature and beautiful scenery, and experience geological landscapes; (viii) relationship enhancement, which includes three items relating to the motive to have fond memories and strengthen relationships with friends and relatives; and (ix) escape, which include two items relating to the motive to relax and be re-energized and regenerated. Cronbach's Alpha test of the nine factors were all over 0.6, indicating the measurement had satisfactory reliability.

Differences in motivation between archaeotourists and non-archaeotourists in NCA

An independent sample t-test was carried out on factors to determine whether tourists who visited archaeological sites and those who did not while in NCA were significantly different in terms of motivational factors, thus testing *H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d, H1e, H1f, H1g* and *H1h*. Table 4 shows that archaeotourists attached greater importance to experiencing an authentic past *H1d* (M_1 = 4.02, M_2 = 3.78), enhancing relationships *H1c* (M_1 = 3.96, M_2 = 3.59) and doing research *H1e* (M_1 = 3.52, M_2 = 3.09) than non-archaeotourists. On the other hand, they considered nature and scenery *H1h* (M_1 = 4.19, M_2 = 4.26) as less important. The findings also show that there are no significant differences in the importance they attach to the motive relating to fascination in general, personal advancement, popularity of the site, learning and escape. Thus, the results supported *H1c*, *H1d*, *H1e* and *H1h*. An independent sample t-test was also extended to each individual motivational item. The findings are indicated in Table 4. Archaeotourists attach greater importance of fascination relating to motives, such as listening to stories of the past (M_1 = 3.82, M_2 = 3.43), spending time in the past (M_1 = 3.67, M_2 = 3.32), enjoying looking at past objects (M_1 = 3.78, M_2 = 3.41) and experiencing the past (M_1 = 3.70, M_2 = 3.50). They also attach greater importance to connecting with the authentic past (M_1 = 4.06, M_2 = 3.73), feeling inner harmony (M_1 = 4.05, M_2 = 3.45), and having fond memories (M_1 = 4.09, M_2 = 3.71). On the other hand, archaeotourists consider the following as being less important compared with non-archaeotourists: viewing beautiful scenery (M_1 = 4.20, M_2 = 4.27) and appreciating nature better (M_1 = 4.32, M_2 = 4.38). Interestingly, they considered *experiencing geological landscapes* (M_1 = 4.23, M_2 = 3.98) as important.

Table 3. Factor analysis, descriptive and reliability statistics

Factor and Items	Overall Mean	SD	Factors									CA
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Fascination												0.926
I am fascinated by stories of the past	3.64	1.11	0.896									
To spend time in the past	3.50	1.21	0.894									
To enjoy looking at past objects	3.61	1.14	0.890									
To feel deeply connected to the past	3.45	1.16	0.753									
To experience authenticity of the past	3.60	1.09	0.717									
To connect with our origins	3.37	1.15	0.590									
To satisfy my romantic feelings about the past	3.40	1.08	0.512									
Personal advancement												0.927
To develop personal values	3.79	0.95		0.888								
To think about personal values	3.86	0.92		0.884								
To experience solitude	3.81	1.03		0.881								
To focus on myself	3.89	0.84		0.714								
Learning												0.831
To learn new things	4.18	0.76			0.774							
To learn about the past	4.27	0.69			0.759							
To explore the unknown	4.17	0.79			0.724							
To learn about a new culture	4.17	0.82			0.707							
To have a deep understanding of the past	4.19	0.77			0.676							
To develop my knowledge	4.18	0.76			0.669							
To escape from routine	4.02	0.94			0.612							
Encounter authentic past												0.883
To connect with the past	3.90	0.99				0.899						
To see authentic past objects	3.92	0.96				0.842						
To experience the authentic past	3.86	0.91				0.805						
To experience archaeological sites	3.94	0.98				0.682						
Popularity of site												0.825
This place is a World Heritage Site	3.96	0.96					0.818					
It has famous attractions	3.77	0.91					0.689					
It is a popular site	3.99	0.91					0.683					
To contribute to conservation	3.75	0.94					0.615					
Research												0.702
It is part of my research project	2.74	1.39						0.845				
I have a specific interest in the past	3.22	1.26						0.797				
To experience a historic age	3.92	0.90						0.479				
Nature and scenery												0.686
To view beautiful scenery	4.25	0.60							0.788			
To appreciate nature better	4.32	0.61							0.763			
To experience geological landscapes	4.11	0.70							0.647			
Relationship enhancement												0.685
To feel inner harmony	3.76	1.15								0.800		
To have fond memories	3.91	0.89								0.604		
To strengthen relations with relatives	3.69	1.13								0.552		
Escape												0.763
To relax	4.01	0.85									0.800	
To be re-energized and regenerated	3.86	0.89									0.675	

Differences in characteristics between archaeotourists and non-archaeotourists

A series of Chi-square tests was conducted to compare the two groups based on demographic and travel characteristics. As shown in Table 5, the results indicated that there is a significant difference between the two groups in terms of income and age, whereby archaeotourists are older *H2a* (M_1 = 3.67, M_2 = 3.30) and better off *H2c* (M_1 = 3.14, M_2 = 2.86) than non-archaeotourists. In terms of travel characteristics, there is a significant difference in length of visit *H3a* to NCA, whereby archaeotourists had more time to spend in NCA than non-archaeotourists (M_1 = 2.67, M_2 = 2.22).

DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that, in general, nature is undeniably the most important pull motivational force for tourists visiting NCA. One important push motivational force was escape, which is mostly associated with relaxing. However, the most important push motivational force appears to be the desire to learn not only about nature, but also notably about the past. EFA indicated the presence of the nine (9) dimensions of fascination with the past, personal advancement, learning, encountering authenticity, site popularity, doing research, nature, enhancing relationships and escaping. The results suggest that, although both groups generally consider fascination, personal advancement, learning, escape and popularity of the site to be important motives, archaeotourists attach greater importance to experiencing the authentic past, doing research and enhancing relationships than non-archaeotourists, but of less importance to the former was viewing nature and the scenery. The results thus support *H1c*, *H1d*, *H1e* and *H1i*. Although the results did not support the notion of fascination, they showed that some of its items such as *stories of the past* were considered more important by archaeotourists than non-archaeotourists.

Table 4. Independent sample t-test results

Factor and Items	Overall Mean	SD	Mean Visitor $N = 133$	Mean Non-visitor $N = 119$	*p*-value	Hypothesis	Decision
Fascination			**3.60**	**3.41**	**0.314**	***H1a***	NOT SUPPORTED
I am fascinated by stories of past	3.64	1.11	3.82	3.43	**0.013**		
To spend time in the past	3.50	1.21	3.67	3.32	**0.031**		
To enjoy viewing past objects	3.61	1.14	3.78	3.41	**0.015**		
To feel deep connection with past	3.45	1.16	3.42	3.49	0.688		
To seek experience of the past	3.60	1.09	3.70	3.50	0.071		
To connect with our origins	3.37	1.15	3.39	3.35	0.592		
To satisfy my romantic feelings about past	3.40	1.08	3.41	3.40	0.519		
Personal value advancement			**3.78**	**3.90**	**0.773**	***H1e***	NOT SUPPORTED
To develop personal values	3.79	0.95	3.74	3.85	0.687		
To think about personal values	3.86	0.92	3.81	3.91	0.879		
To experience solitude	3.81	1.03	3.71	3.91	0.477		
To focus on myself	3.89	0.84	3.87	3.92	0.804		
Learning			**4.14**	**4.21**	**0.260**	***H1b***	NOT SUPPORTED
To learn new things	4.18	0.76	4.18	4.19	0.993		
To learn about the past	4.27	0.69	4.19	4.36	0.061		
To explore the unknown	4.17	0.79	4.14	4.21	0.373		
To learn about a new culture	4.17	0.82	4.22	4.13	0.490		
To have deep understanding of the past	4.19	0.77	4.16	4.22	0.636		
To develop my knowledge	4.18	0.76	4.08	4.29	0.060		
To escape routine	4.02	0.94	3.98	4.08	0.362		
Encounter authentic past			**4.02**	**3.78**	**0.027**	***H1d***	SUPPORTED
To connect with the past	3.90	0.99	4.06	3.73	**0.014**		
To see authentic past objects	3.92	0.96	4.03	3.80	0.192		
To experience authenticity of past	3.86	0.91	3.94	3.77	0.134		
To experience archaeological sites	3.94	0.98	4.07	3.81	0.113		
Popularity of site			**3.85**	**3.88**	**0.994**	***H1g***	NOT SUPPORTED
This place is a World Heritage Site	3.96	0.96	3.90	4.02	0.559		
It has famous attractions	3.77	0.91	3.87	3.67	0.060		
It is a popular site	3.99	0.91	3.97	4.02	0.811		
To contribute to conservation	3.75	0.94	3.67	3.83	0.355		
Research			**3.52**	**3.09**	**0.000**	***H1f***	SUPPORTED
It is part of my research project	2.74	1.39	3.08	2.44	**0.000**		
I have specific interest for the past	3.22	1.26	3.41	3.05	**0.050**		
To experience a historic age	3.92	0.90	4.07	3.78	**0.029**		
Nature and scenery			**4.19**	**4.26**	**0.028**	***H1i***	SUPPORTED
To view beautiful scenery	4.25	0.60	4.20	4.27	**0.041**		
To appreciate nature better	4.32	0.61	4.32	4.38	**0.053**		
To experience geological landscapes	4.11	0.70	4.23	3.98	**0.001**		
Relationship enhancement			**3.96**	**3.59**	**0.000**	***H1***	SUPPORTED
To feel inner harmony	3.76	1.15	4.05	3.45	**0.000**		
To have fond memories	3.91	0.89	4.09	3.71	**0.000**		
To strengthen relations with relatives	3.69	1.13	3.74	3.63	0.508		
Escape			**3.95**	**3.91**	**0.425**	***H1h***	NOT SUPPORTED
To relax	4.01	0.85	4.07	3.94	0.092		
To be re-energized and regenerated	3.86	0.89	3.84	3.88	0.479		

Table 5. Differences in demographic and travel characteristics between the two groups

Tourist Characteristics	Overall Mean	SD	Mean Visitor $N = 133$	Mean Non-visitor $N = 119$	*p*-value	Hypothesis	Decision
Demographic Characteristics							
Age	3.50	1.48	3.67	3.30	0.042	*H2a*	SUPPORTED
Education	4.27	0.84	4.33	4.19	0.219	*H2b*	NOT SUPPORTED
Income	3.01	0.91	3.14	2.86	0.014	*H2c*	SUPPORTED
Travel Characteristics							
Travel frequency	2.25	0.60	2.24	2.27	0.764	*H3a*	NOT SUPPORTED
Length of visit	2.46	0.88	2.67	2.22	0.000	*H3b*	SUPPORTED

This means that, while archaeotourists at NCA are highly motivated by experiencing the authentic past, enhancing relationships and listening to stories of the past, non-archaeotourists are highly motivated by viewing nature and the scenery and doing research. The results corroborate earlier findings by Ross et al. (2017) and reflect Virto et al. (2011) as well as Cahyadi.'s (2016) conceptualization that archaeotourists desire to rediscover the past, seek memorable and authentic experiences, and satisfy their romantic feelings about the past. This implies that Olduvai Gorge site in NCA offers fascinating stories about the past, which is enhanced by the museum telling interesting, memorable and compelling stories, and by authentic objects. In addition, the results suggest that archaeotourists are motivated by opportunities to strengthen their relationships, meaning that NCA can offer opportunities for tourists to interact with their friends and relatives.

Interestingly, archaeotourists were not completely uninterested in natural attractions, thereby supporting earlier findings by Rapidah et al. (2018), Cahyadi (2016), Giraudo and Porter (2010) and Yun et al. (2008). The results in this study specifically add to past research that geological features are more important to archaeotourists than to non-archaeotourists. In fact, the geological perspective enhances the interpretation and experience of archaeological objects. In recognition of this fact, in 2017, the NCA begun to package geological features and landscapes as geo-tourism and acquired the status of a UNESCO Global Geopark, which seems to draw tourists interested in archaeological attractions. The results also show that archaeotourists are older and better off that non-archaeotourists, thereby supporting *H2a* and *H2c*. This result corroborates an earlier finding (Silberberg, 1995) that tourists motivated by culture have a higher income, and so are likely to pay for extra packages, such as those involving archaeological sites, when visiting Ngorongoro crater. At NCA, visiting the popular crater costs $250 per 7-seater vehicle, on top of which tourists wanting to visit archaeological sites would have to pay $30. The consideration of travel characteristics was unique to this study, which found that archaeotourists generally had more time and so could stay longer in NCA. This is explained by distance decay and time availability notions (McKercher and du Cros, 2002). In NCA, a tourist needs to drive for about an hour along a 4 km road from the crater to

Olduvai Gorge and for 2 hours along the 7 km road to Laetoli. Given that the road conditions range from fair to poor, from the point of view of accessing these sites, those with more time to spend in NCA would not perceive them as being far, and would therefore consider visiting them. In addition, because archaeotourists are older, they would need more time to walk around them. The exotic and hard-to-access *remoteness* of archaeological sites found earlier by Cahyadi (2016) that motivate visits to archaeological sites do not feature in the case of NCA. Perhaps, as shown earlier, in NCA the most important motives are still nature-based, although the archaeological sites' proximity to the crater matters.

CONCLUSION

The study contributes to the debate on the motivations and profiles of cultural tourists, and argues that archaeotourists are heterogeneous as they attach great importance not only to learning about a culture by listening to fascinating stories of the past and looking at past objects, but also to doing research, enhancing relationships and learning about nature, especially the geological features. Compared with non-archaeotourists, they have more time to visit places, are older and better off. The study shows the importance of push and pull conceptualization of motivations, and of distance decay notion in explaining archaeotourism market in the SSA context. An important marketing implication to be drawn from this research is that, if attracting more archaeotourists is desired, marketers should attempt to meet these specific needs by providing relevant learning activities for travellers, emphasizing that the sites are family-friendly. In fact, providing cultural and educational events and entertainment will not only enhance tourists' relationships, but will also give them a stronger motive to visit archaeological sites.

They should also maximize the opportunities for encountering the past through storytelling, and exhibiting authentic objects and localities. Importantly, they should explain that geological features can also be seen at archaeological sites, and so brochures and websites should emphasize geological scenes. While portraying the exoticness of archaeological sites is necessary to satisfy the need to escape and to learn, this should be done strategically by emphasizing that they are near mainstream nature-based attractions and can be easily accessed. In addition, the needs of older tourists should be considered. The limited sample of international tourists in NCA may prevent generalization of the findings to all archaeotourists visiting Tanzania, but this study's findings could still be useful to sites with similar contexts. Motivational and demographic and travel-based factors are contextual, and so their role in explaining the differences between archaeotourists and non-archaeotourists should always take the socio-cultural context into account. Future contributions to gaining an understanding of the different motivations and profiles of archaeotourists should include samples of different tourism contexts to ascertain the moderating effect of context.

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QUEST EXCURSION, AS INTERACTIVE FORM OF PROVIDING EXCURSION SERVICES IN KAZAKHSTAN

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Abstract: In this article, the authors give a clear definition of interactive forms of excursions, the process of organizing and implementing them in educational and professional activities in the field of excursion services. Special attention is paid to the experimental-empirical methods for creating author's quest-excursions of the different focuses, as unique means of tourist and local history, excursion and research work of specialists in the field of hospitality. The authors have developed and implemented six uniquely designed quest excursions, on the example of Almaty city.

Key words: excursion service, tourism, quest excursion, attraction

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, more and more attention is paid to the domestic and inbound tourism development as the most promising and economically important areas in the world tourism market. In the articles, publications and research works international organizations such as UNWTO, UNESCO, WFTGA, WTO, etc. speak primarily about the development of regional tourism, more of authentic direction. The leader of the nation, Elbasy N.A. Nazarbayev and the current president of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-JomartTokayev, repeatedly emphasized the need for significant development of tourism in the country.

Thus, the tourism industry experts faced the following difficult task: the development of tourist destinations, the development of innovative means of attracting tourists, improving the quality of excursion services and hospitality. At the present stage of its development, the excursion services are not just a way to organize leisure and educational activities in an urban or natural environment, today, it is a way to actively involve tourists in the excursion route by creating conditions in which the tourist turns from a listener into a participant who researches, analyzes and interprets the material in order to solve the tasks assigned to him. All this is possible only when developing innovative forms and methods of excursion services, which in turn is possible only with serious research and organizational work of specialists in the tourism industry. This research is based on the works of domestic and foreign scientists, as well as the experience of the world's leading organizations in the field of tourism, organization of excursion services and animation events. So, a special place in the study is occupied by international experience, quest-excursions developed in the European space are distinguished by their interactivity and historicity, while combining all the necessary features of an excursion, the term.

An excursion is one of the most effective methods of active-motor learning, considering its main property to be mobility. In his opinion during movement in space various motor sensations give a very special character to the intellectual and emotional experiences of an excursionist (Raikov, 1922).The scientist and tour guide, who headed General Excursion Department of the Central Council for Tourism and Excursions from 1969 to 1988, defines excursion as follows: "a methodically arranged process of viewing of places of interest, historical and cultural monuments, which is based on the analysis of objects before the eyes of tourists, as well as a smart report of events related to them" (Yemelyanov, 2001). Excursion is a purposeful, visual process of learning the world around us, associated with pre-selected objects, theme and route, under the guidance of a qualified specialist (Tătar et al., 2018).

Kazakh researchers believe that "excursion is a visit by an individual to tourist resources for educational purposes in the country (place) of temporary stay for no more than twenty-four hours" (Yagofarov and Lyuterovich, 2016). So now, we have a clear idea of the term "excursion", which reflects all the elements of this concept in the traditional sense, but interactive excursions (quests, theatrical elements, animation, etc.) have a number of distinctive features and specific characteristics, which undoubtedly require additions and comparisons. The traditional excursion is a form of cognitive and recreational activity, which is primarily aimed at show-and-tell, with the use of techniques of

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enhancing attention, thus, the informative part dominates in front of entertainment. Meanwhile, the quest excursion is not traditional, educational, museum, city or country excursion, but it is arranged in the search and game form and targeted equally on leisure, entertainment, animation, and quite eventful in the field of information content and cognition. 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.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The article is based on the literature review research of domestic and foreign scientists, research and systematization of materials, development of innovative methods of experimental and empirical level. The experience of the CIS countries, scientists, whose work is aimed at the development of excursion services, various methods of active cognition, was studied. So, in various works, the term "quest excursion" is interpreted in different ways, there are several variations of it, so the most common: quest excursion, tasks excursion, quest tour, excursion-quest and so on. Each term has its own specifics, in this regard, we have defined the term "quest excursion" as the most appropriate, since it is the one which reveals the specifics of the direction of research, namely the study of excursion objects and attractions, by solving puzzles of various orientations by means of an excursion route to achieve final result, finish, treasure, etc. A quest excursion is the study of objects with the help of game tasks and a storyline through the development of new skills of information search and communication, and their application in a given situation (Alekseyeva, 2015) «Quest tour as an innovative form of excursion activity»;

The definition of this term from the perspective of children's tourism is the following: "A quest excursion is a game during which participants perform various tasks for logical thinking, acquiring the skills of interacting with a team, searching for information and the ability to apply it to achieve the ultimate goal of the mission" (Alexandrova, 2015).

In addition, quest excursion is a service for organizing visits to specially selected objects of excursion display by individual tourists (excursionists) or tourist groups, which consists of familiarity and exploration of these objects through observation, communication with other subjects and solving logical problems under the guidance of a qualified specialist - a guide, lasting less than 24 hours without an overnight stay «Quest tourism as an innovative form of tour» (Nekhayeva and Morozkina, 2017), in the works of these authors, this term is also used by the scientists (Bulygina et al., 2016). Their work has become the basis for organizing our research and made it possible to deepen the previously existing concepts and definitions (Kedrova, 2017); Quest-excursion as a form of modern excursion activities (Kuteeva and Pospelov, 2015) and interactive excursion activities (Pospelova, 2017).

The main method of research was experimental and empirical (Zhuravlev et al., 1998) that is a mixed method that combines observation, questionnaire survey, study of creative and experimental works of students, undergraduates, local historians and guides. The mixed methods research design was employed (Morgan, 2013), integrating quantitative and qualitative methods in data collection and analysis (Karatabanov et al., 2020). Applied the experimental and empirical methods, creative development, survey, etc. Applying the mix of methods makes it possible to conduct more extensive research, which is a special research strategy, where a researcher or a group of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (for example, the use of qualitative and quantitative optics, data collection and analysis procedures, etc.) for a comprehensive and deep analysis and solution of a wide range of problems (Burke and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). During the sociological survey of respondents, in which more than 200 people, residents of the city of Almaty, of various age groups took part, allowed to form the directions for the development of excursions-quests. Exactly they determined the direction of the experimental part of the study. The survey results have become the key for the experiment on the development and implementation of the results in the tourism offer of Almaty companies (Republic of Kazakhstan). Also, they were presented at the Republican Competition of Tourism Industry Specialists of the Kazakhstan Tourism Association (Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the research was the definition of the specific features of the term "quest excursion", as well as the experience of foreign countries was studied, a methodology for creating excursions-quests was developed, author's excursions quests were created and implemented. The research results are presented below.

The most important distinctive features of the quest excursion are the following:

- excursionists should independently obtain the information about excursion objects, sights, objects of the tour route, i.e. the tourist becomes an active participant in the educational and entertainment process, where a special role is given not only to information, but also to the physically active part of the quest excursion;
- the presence of a clear storyline that allows tourists to follow the course of events, while maintaining the interest of the excursionist and his\her desire to achieve the goal of the quest excursion;
- the main goal is to get acquainted with historical facts, characters, sightseeing objects, despite the fact that a fairly large part of the excursion is an active solution of the tasks set for tourists, but the result is still information about the objects of the excursion route.

The comparative analysis presented in figure 1 will allow us to fully assess the features of the two main directions in the organization of excursion services: a traditional excursion (themed, observational, natural historical, etc.) and a quest excursion of the different focuses (traditional, sports, fantasy, intellectual, etc.) Thus, Figure 1 shows the distinctive features of the traditional excursion and quest excursion in the main areas: preparation, implementation and analysis of results. The results of this comparison allowed us to conclude that the quest excursion is not only highly interactive, but also requires thorough preparation.

Subsequently, for the further course of the research, it was necessary to conduct a sociological survey to determine priority directions in the organization of quest excursions, choice of locations, theme and focus, and the results of which became the starting point of the research, when it became the guidelines in the research organization.

A sociological survey conducted in August 2019, the results of which are shown in Figure 2, allowed us to determine exactly which sector of the tourism market is interested in conducting quest excursions, which areas in the development of the storyline are most interesting, which objects of tourist interest in Almaty are most suitable for the main criteria for organizing quest excursions, namely:

- the territory, the area of which allows conducting interactive activities of excursionists;
-the availability of excursion objects, attractions, and notable places that are informative enough and allow to form a sound knowledge of the history, culture, and nature of the destinations where the quest excursion can be held;
- the focus of the quest excursion, its storyline, often dictated by the place where the quest is held;
- the development of tasks that involve tourists in active educational and search activities and the storyline;
- the clear structure for completing tasks, when one solution allows you to start performing a new task, thus forming a "quest excursion scheme", as well as "start" and " finish";
-the availability of necessary documentation for the quest excursion: the tour route, the scheme of tasks and solutions, individual text of the excursion, etc.
- the ability to control the process of conducting the quest excursion by means of GPS, WhatsApp, Google Map and others.
- the availability of a guide and support staff necessary for the quest excursion.

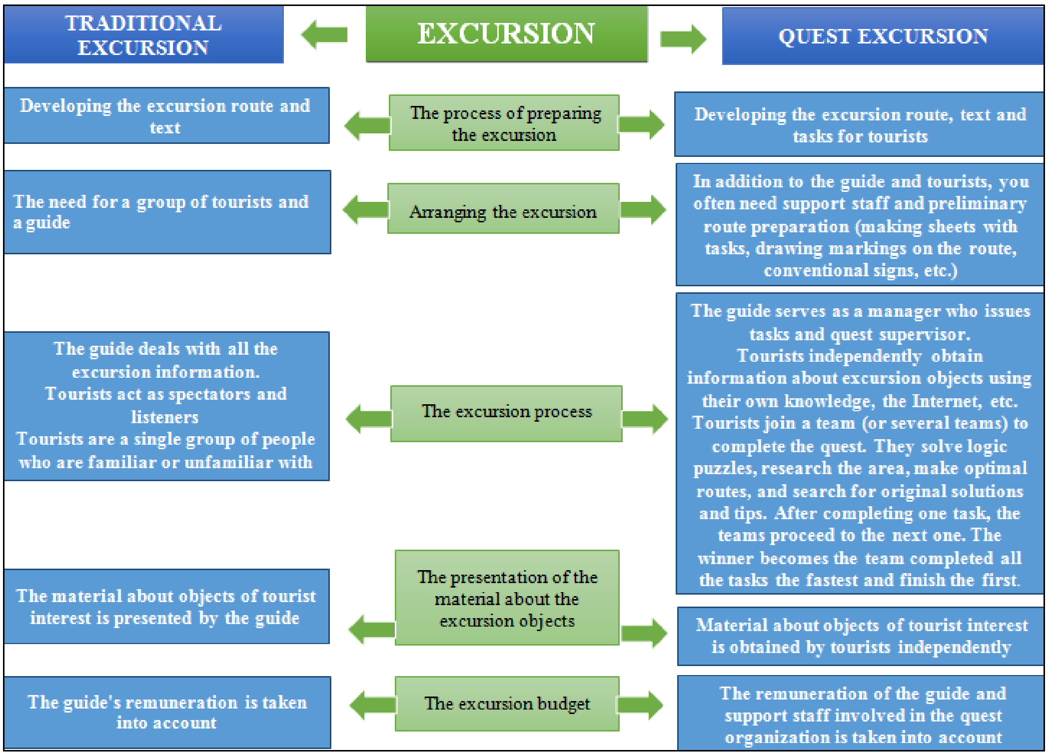


Figure 1. Comparative analysis of the traditional excursion and quest excursion (Source: compiled by the author)

We have analyzed the data obtained from the respondents during the survey, in which 65% were people aged from 18 to 24, 16% - from 15 to 17, 11% - from 25 to 34, 7% - from 35 to 49, over 50 - 1% (Figure 2).

The second question was: "What type of activity do you prefer the most?": 50% of respondents prefer the outdoor quest excursion, 30% would choose the indoor quest excursion, and 20% – the classic one (Figure 3).

The third question helped determine priorities in choosing tasks, namely, 46% of respondents prefer logic tasks, 31% - creative tasks, and 23% - sports tasks (Figure 4).

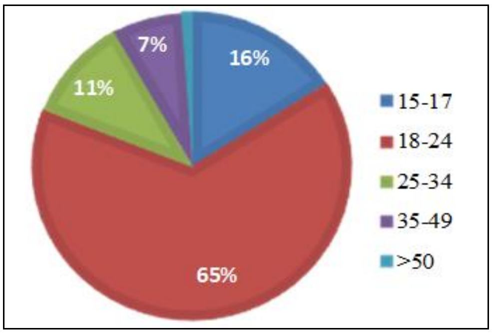


Figure 2.The analysis results of the sociological survey; Question 1(Age) (Source: compiled by the author)

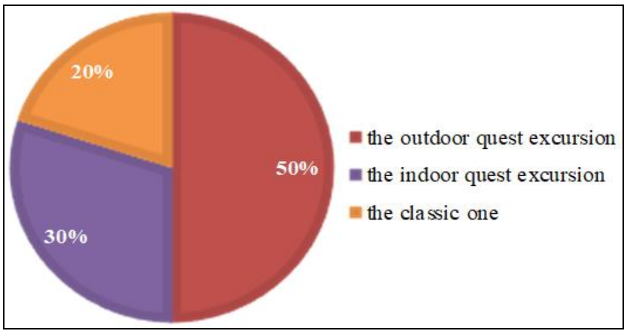


Figure 3.The analysis results of the sociological survey; Question 2 (What type of activity do you prefer the most?) (Source: compiled by the author)

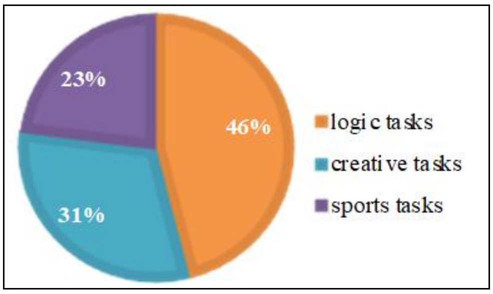


Figure 4. The analysis results of the sociological survey; Question 3 (Which quest tasks do you like the most?) (Source: compiled by the author)

Therefore, Figure 5 shows the results of a sociological survey in which more than 220 respondents took part. The survey shows that the most interesting quest excursions are tours of various focus, organized outdoors, in the parks and squares of the city. The next stage was the process of analyzing the world and regional experience in the preparation and implementation of interactive forms of excursions, namely quests. So, in international practice, two types of quest excursions are most in demand: one is conducted with the lead of a guide and other necessary staff, and the second is organized by means of new information technologies, and does not require direct participation of the organizers. In the countries of Europe and America, quest excursions have more than a century of history, so, at the preliminary stage of the research, which consists of collecting and analyzing information, as well as studying the world experience in the field of organizing quest excursions, we reviewed the experience of Latvia (Riga) and Sweden (Stockholm) in 2015. The organization of quest excursions, on the territory of these countries, has various themed focuses, but at the same time, historical quest excursions are the most popular.

So, the routes we have arranged were developed taking into account the informative saturation, i.e. the quest excursion was built on the basis of attractions in the historical center of the city. Tasks were logic puzzles, puzzles about history; to a greater extent they were of an authentic nature, and assumed full involvement in the culture of the country, as well as enrichment of knowledge about the current state and traditions of those cities. It is worth noting the essential elements of these quest excursions, namely the task sheet, maps and route diagrams, hidden tasks and objects of the quest, etc., which undoubtedly show the high quality of preparation for such events.

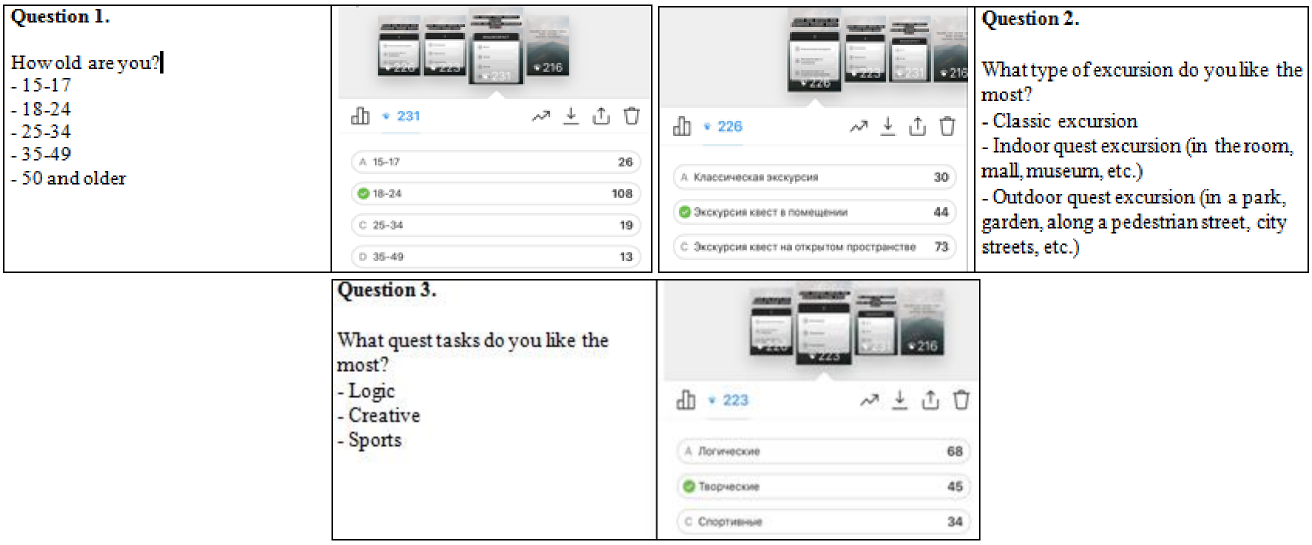


Figure 5. The results of the sociological survey (Source: compiled by the author)

In the post-Soviet space, quest excursions are just beginning to gain popularity among the general population and tourists. Work is underway to develop priority routes, identify locations, create quest excursions and implement them, popularize and promote them on the regional and international tourism market.

The practical part of the research is the process of developing a step-by-step plan and methodology for creating quest excursions, taking into account not only the results of a sociological survey, but also foreign and domestic experience in organizing and conducting quest excursions. The main locations were identified and their spatial information material was evaluated (Zakiryanov et al., 2018):

- *Central Park of Culture and Leisure*. The area is more than 42 hectares. It was founded in 1856, in the city of Verniy as State Garden (Russian: Kazennyy Sad). This park has an interesting history, and the presence of local history objects, monuments, legends and a diverse landscape contribute to the creation of unique projects, including quest excursions (43°15′45″N 76°58′07″E, Almaty, Kazakhstan).
- *First President's Park*. The area is 53 hectares. It was founded in 2001 on the initiative of the First President N.A. Nazarbayev. It is a dendrological park, i.e. a wide variety of woody, shrubby and herbaceous plantings. Among the objects are park alleys, squares, monuments, an observation deck, a Japanese garden, the Jety Kazyna complex (Seven Treasures of the Kazakhs), as well as elements of landscape design (43.188°N 76.887°E, Almaty, Kazakhstan).
- *Park of 28 Panfilov Guardsmen*. The area of the park is about 18 hectares. The park was founded in the second half of the 19-th century and is an object of local history. It is in this park that one of the world's 100 wonders of wooden architecture is located – the Holy Ascension Cathedral, objects of memorial and landscape significance (43°15′32.7″N 76°57′10.7″E, Almaty, Kazakhstan).
- *Pedestrian part of Panfilov Street*. The length of the street is 3800 m.; it is located in the historical part of the city and was laid at the end of the 19-th century. The street has an interesting historical development and has had a huge impact on the development of the entire city infrastructure. On the street there are historical objects, buildings and elements of urban infrastructure (Abay Opera House, Nedelka fountain, Zhambyl Zhabayev monument, Astana square, etc.), Almaty, Kazakhstan.
- *MEGA Mall Alma-Ata*, one of the largest objects in this area of activity in the country with a total area of 180,000 m². On the territory of the mall there are entertainment centers, restaurants, shops, as well as art and decoration elements (fountains, statues, panel picture, etc.) (43°12'9"N 76°53'30"E., Almaty, Kazakhstan).

The above locations fully reflect the principles of creating and implementing the quest excursion, as not only with educational, informational, historical, but also entertainment and animation focus (Akbar et al., 2020). Thus, we can conclude that when choosing places, scenarios, tasks and stages of quest excursions, it is necessary to follow the next principles and stages:

1. The area of the location should correspond to the focus of the quest excursion, its features, specifics, the number of routes and the duration of their passage in time. So, a small area of the selected location can be justified by the presence of a single route, the number of objects involved in this route, and the quality (complexity) of the developed tasks. It should be understood that the larger the area of the location, the more options for creating a quest excursion, and the number of teams involved. The distance between the way points of the quest excursion route allows to implement a sports, animation, game and search part, while adjusting the time frame of the quest excursion, increasing or reducing the time spent to solve problems and move between the way points of the route;

2. Objects, attractions, way points form the route of the quest excursion. Their distinctive feature primarily depends on the information saturation of such objects, i.e., in contrast to the usual quest, the quest excursion is aimed at forming knowledge about the objects of the city located in a certain location, and collected in a single route, while it is necessary to divide the objects into Main and Accompanying. Thus, after defining the Main Points which are basic on the route, we could add Accompanying Points, which do not have much information richness, are able to diversify tasks and make a pause between complicated objects in terms of information. It is worth remembering that the amount of information that the average person can analyze for a limited amount of time without intellectual and emotional tiredness is not large and limited. In this regard, it is necessary to accurately classify quest excursions by focus (intellectual, cognitive, fantasy, sports, etc.) in order for the tourist to know exactly what to expect, while not forgetting about the excursion part of the quest excursion, i.e. the process of learning through search and play;

3. The route of the quest excursion, developed in accordance with the selected location and combining the Main and Accompanying objects, in various variations, i.e. the presence of several route options or several different routes located in the same location. When developing routes for multiple teams, the following should be considered:

1) the time spent on the route options should be identical, i.e. when planning the "ideal minimum" time spent on the route with knowing all the solutions for the tasks, it should be the same for all route options, i.e. each route can be completed in equal times;

2) the complexity and number of tasks should be balanced and equal or equivalent for different routes, i.e. there are several options where this is possible: a) the same number and level of complexity of tasks, b) different number of tasks and the same total complexity;

3) start and finish. In most cases, there is one start and one finish point on different routes, this is quite convenient and in demand, but there is also a variant of a single start and different finish points, which may be due to the specifics of the routes themselves;

4) progress along the route is possible in a line directivity, i.e. the solution of one task allows to pass to the next object and solve the next task, etc.;

4. Tasks for the quest excursion should be developed in accordance with the focus (intellectual, cognitive, fantasy, sports, etc.), while taking into account high cognitive activity. These can be tasks about the objects and sights themselves, revealing their historical and city-forming role, architectural feature, local history aspect, etc., which is undoubtedly a priority in the development of tasks for the Main objects of the route, such tasks allow you to implement the excursion focus of these quests. Tasks should be developed in a logical sequence; they should be mutually dependent and interrelated with a single theme and focus. Also, special attention should be paid to the requirements: categories of complexity, information content, interactivity, usefulness and practical focus, tasks should be balanced, i.e. include various elements, also having a narrow focus of the quest excursion itself. Thus, we can say that the development of tasks for a quest excursion is a creative process that synthesizes information data and an entertainment and interactive component;

5. Substantive and support staff is one of the main features for the organization and conducting quest excursions. The availability of qualified specialists at all stages of preparation, development, implementation and conducting the quest excursion determines the quality of the final tour product. Like in traditional tours, so in the quest excursions the presence of a guide is necessary at different stages. For example, when selecting the location, the guide could assess the quality, quantity and richness of the objects (points) of route to form the path of the quest excursion, with developing the control and the individual text (if necessary), i.e., the tour guide creates a product, but, in the implementation process it is necessary to consider the scale of the work, namely, the presence of the coordinator, support staff and observers can qualitatively affect the result, and thus increase the positive effects of the quest excursion. Our experience gained during the development and implementation of quest excursions allows us to assess the importance of detailed selection of all personnel involved in this process. In addition, special attention should be paid to qualitative characteristics, skills in the field of information technology, minimal knowledge of history, local history, ethnography, etc. and detailed involvement in the process of preparing and implementing quest excursions;

6. Resources concept combines all the elements necessary for the implementation of the quest excursion, namely, printed maps and routes (in the full version for the organizers and special for participants), tasks (cards, sheets, crosswords, puzzles, brain twisters, etc.), search elements, prizes, etc. all should be taken into account when making final calculation;

7. Tips are an integral part of the quest excursion, it is an opportunity to get help in solving and completing tasks, in the course of passing the route of the quest excursion. Tips can be needed due to the characteristics of the group, the complexity of tasks, etc., when it is necessary to get back the tourists to the route, direct or help them. It is important to discuss these points in advance, for example, in what situations the tips can be given, their number, the impact of tips on the final result (increase in time, additional tasks, etc.) in this column we include fines for violation of the rules and using a way around the quest route. All these points should be reflected in a special document - Safety Provisions and Rules of the Quest Excursion;

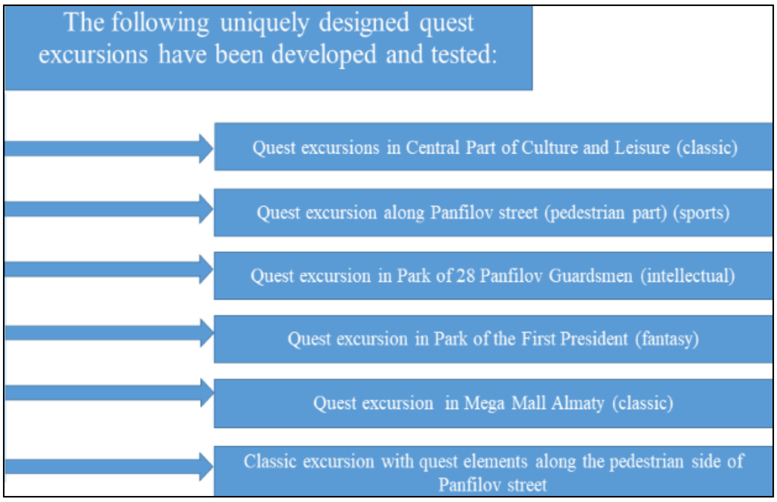


Figure 6. Quest excursions of different focuses (compiled by the author)

8. The process and results of the quest excursion should be analyzed, recorded and taken into account for further use in such work.

In the course of the research, we implemented all the above-mentioned principles and created uniquely designed quest excursions, presented in Figure 6, which fully reflect the specifics of this direction. So, the following quest excursions around the city of Almaty were developed:

1) Quest excursion in Central Park of Culture and Leisure, a search quest that combines educational and sports elements;

2) Quest excursion along the pedestrian part of Panfilov street, the main focus is sport with a combination of history, local history, urban planning, as this route is full of attractions not only of the city, but also of the national level;

3) Quest excursion in Park of 28 Panfilov Guardsmen, intellectual focus, fully revealing all the local history features of objects located in this area;

4) Quest excursion in Park of the First President, fantasy focus, i.e. a large area of the location was "transferred" to an alternate reality, when the scenario was created, supplemented with artifacts and treasure;

5) Indoor quest excursion with a classic focus in Mega Mall Almaty with features for safety and internal documents, in this case, there are the principles of active learning, sports activities, history and local history, as the objects involved in the route are specific and information rich;

6) A classic excursion with elements of a quest along the pedestrian part of Panfilov Street with concentration of objects of excursion interest and information saturation of not only the Main, but also the Accompanying objects of the route.

Thus, the developed quest excursions are uniquely designed by the authors, correspond to the developed methodology and contribute to the creation of a high-quality excursion and tourist product necessary for the development of domestic and inbound tourism.

Thus, the development of quest excursions contributes to the high-quality provision of excursion services, which combines information and interactive components, which is undoubtedly interesting for the modern tourist market.

- *Classic excursion with quest elements along the pedestrian part of Panfilov Street* (Figure 7) consists of two parts:

1) The classic part of the excursion along the route: Panfilov Street.

2) Interactive part of the excursion, task: "Prove or disprove 6 task options for 5 questions that require not just finding the answer, but also proving it." This form allows tourists not just to listen to the information during the excursion, but to hear and see everything that the guide considers necessary, to be an active participant.

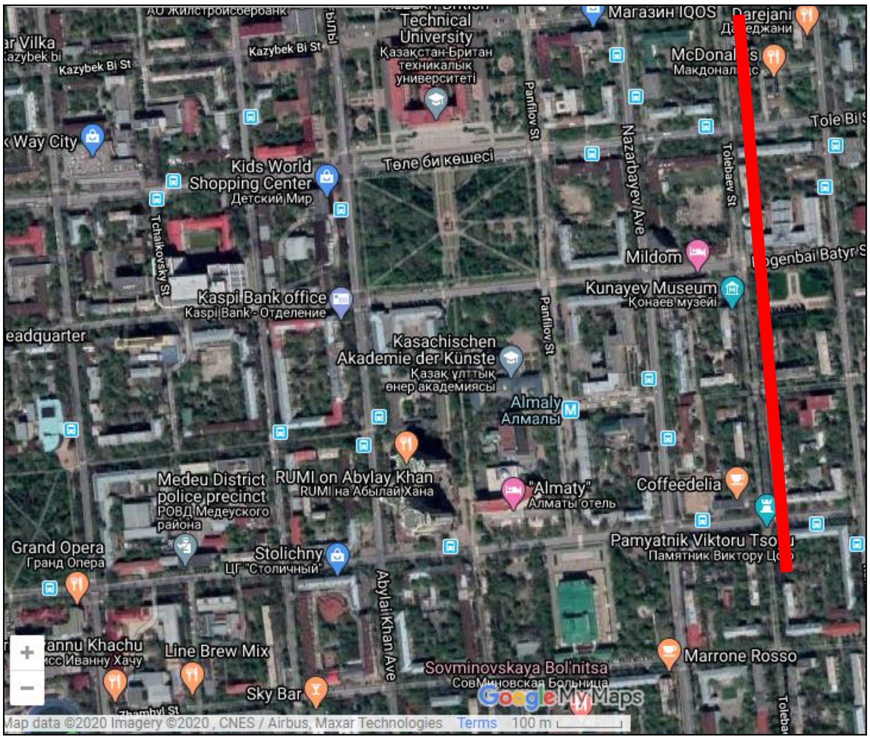


Figure 7. The route of the quest excursion along the pedestrian part of Panfilov Street [https://www.google.com/maps]

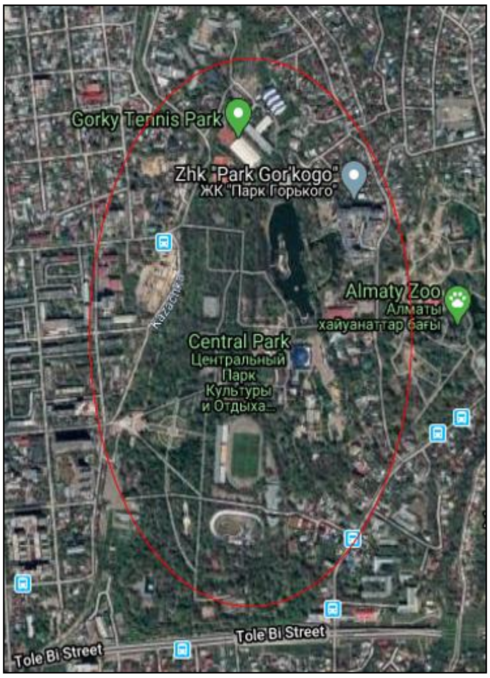


Figure 8. Map of Central Park of Culture and Leisure (Almaty) [https://www.google.com/maps]

Examples of the interactive part of the excursion:

A) Prove or disprove:

1. The building of the Abay Opera House was built in 1934.
2. The number of benches on the right side of a pedestrian street is equal to the number of young trees on the left side (along the route from the South to the North).
3. The first fountain in the city now has no water and it does not work.
4. The number of arches in the Nedelka fountain is equal to the number of days of the week.
5. Monument to A. Moldagulova and M. Mametova faces the old square, currently Astana square.

B) Make a series of photos "The most…"

a. The funniest.
b. The most original.
c. The brightest.
d. The most crowded (group photo, the more people and the closer they stand, the better).
e. The most cozy (everyone interprets the word "cozy" in their own way).

C) Hunting for birds photo (take a photo with this bird and answer questions).

a. Find an exotic bird that indicates the direction of the cardinal directions. What bird is it? Where does it live? (Toucan, lives in forests from southern Mexico to Northern Argentina, location of the bird is Irish Pub, on the left wall from the main entrance).

b. Find a bird that is a symbol of love and tell an interesting fact about it (swan, which cannot survive without its mate, location is Fountain of Lovers).

c. Find a bird that is a symbol of peace and tell an interesting historical fact about it (which was a postal bird, the location is victory monument in the square in front of KBTU) (you can take a photo with a live pigeon).

Summing up the results of the program. Tourists get not only the opportunity to walk along the route on their own, but also, after completing the task, make good photos.

- *Organization of the quest excursion in Central Park of Culture and Leisure.* The quest is designed for 3 teams. Each team has its own route through the park and has its own special tasks. The minimum possible time for each route is 45 minutes, and the best time shown during the quest is 1 hour and 45 minutes. The main idea of the quest is to get ahead of the rival teams in finding the treasure that is hidden at the last point of the route. The location map is shown in Figure 8.

Each route from the start point to the finish point, together with the time for tasks, is at least 45 minutes, the real time is 1 hour 45 minutes. The passage time from point to point is 5-10 minutes, and the time for doing the tasks at each point is 5-10 minutes. At each point, teams should send photos from the place to get further tasks (and this will also help the organizers track the places and time of the quest). The start and finish points are the same for all teams.

The start is at the main gate, in front of the park map. Each team draws lots, thereby choosing a route. The first puzzles are given to find the next point. The finish is at the fountain with Argali, near the willow, photos from the route testing are shown in Figure 9.

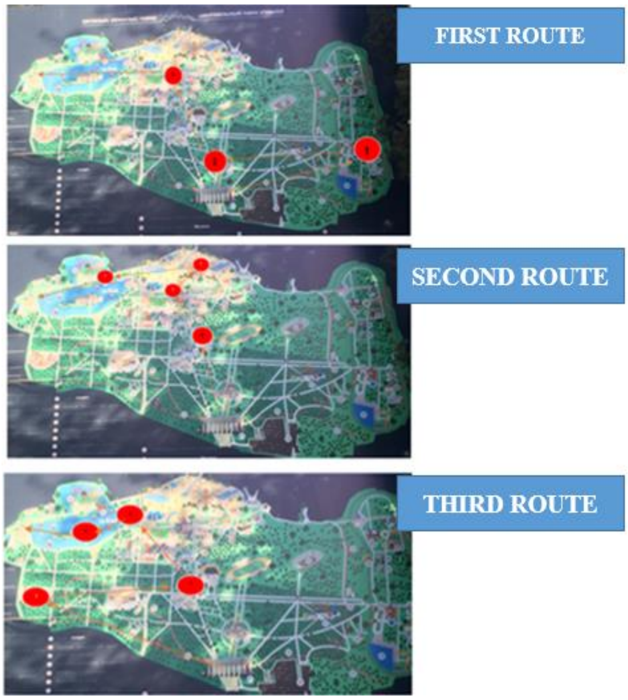


Figure 9. Routes and photos of the quest excursion in Central Park of Almaty

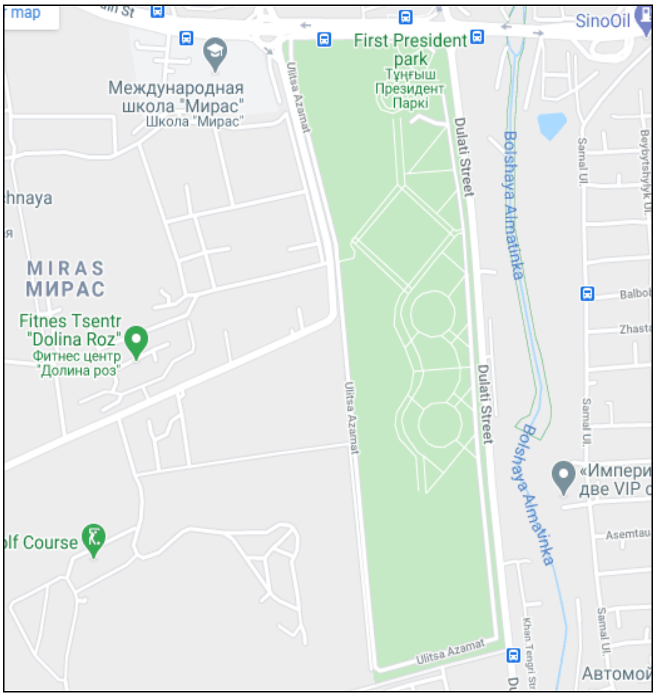


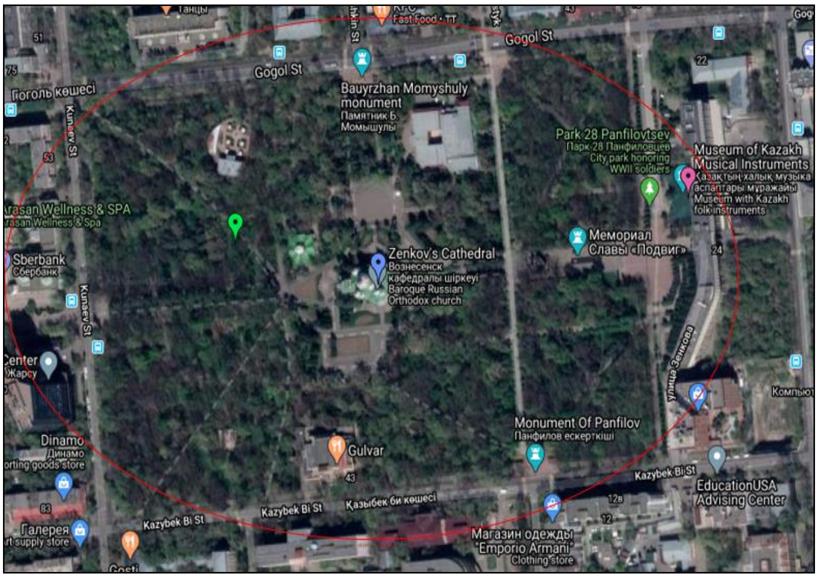
Figure 10. The route of the quest excursion in Park of the First President [https://2gis.kz/almaty]

- *Quest excursion in Park of the First President.* Fantasy – the presence of a different storyline (Figure 10):

1) Invented story that precedes the quest.

2) Developed single route with tips. A distinctive feature, different place of "entry" in the quest, participation from 1 to 5 teams.

- *Quest excursion in Park of 28 Panfilov Guardsmen (intellectual).* The quest is designed with maximum emphasis on exploring the attractions of the park. The single route is shown in Figure 11, the presence of organizers at certain points that not only coordinate the process, but also give tour information about the objects.



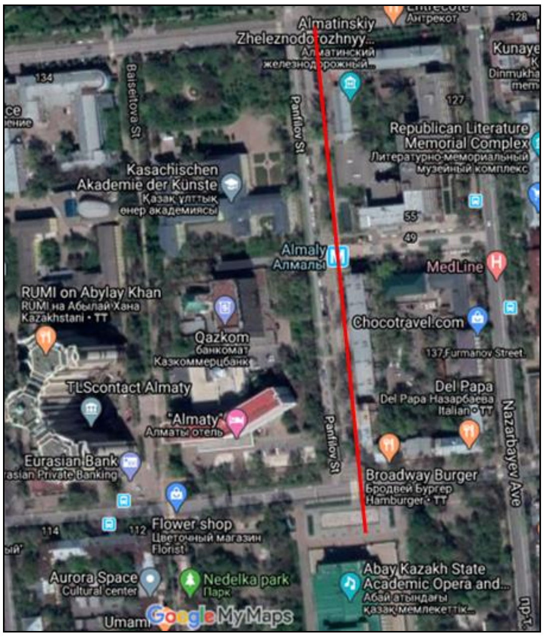


Figure 11. Route of the quest excursion in Park of 28 Panfilov Guardsmen [https://www.google.com/maps]

Figure 12. Route of the quest excursion along Panfilov Street (pedestrian part) [https://www.google.com/maps]

- *Quest excursion along Panfilov Street (pedestrian part (sports).* This quest excursion combines intellectual and creative tasks of a sports focus, but taking into account the possibility of passing the route by different categories of tourists (Figure 12). The minimum route time is 45 minutes, and the optimal time is 1 hour and 30 minutes (excluding organizational time). One route with tasks. At the finish line, a sheet of questions is issued, after answering which, the fastest and correctly answered team receives a code from the lock that contains the prize.

Thus, the developed and tested quest excursions contribute to:

- Improving the quality of training of tourist personnel, which is a priority for the development of domestic and inbound tourism. Special attention is paid not only to the study of developed quest excursions, but also to the method of creating these directions in tourism. Thus, the method developed by the authors allows us to effectively form stable competencies in the field of creating, implementing and promoting quest excursions.
- Creation of a new tourist product in Almaty, necessary for the development of domestic and inbound tourism of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The innovative product will expand the base of services provided to tourists, and qualitatively affect the variety of leisure facilities.
- Extending knowledge about Almaty, its history, culture, modern development, etc., which is necessary to create a favorable image of the country, its development and promotion in the world tourism arena.
- A variety of leisure activities for tourists in Almaty, providing innovative forms of organizing sightseeing services, as well as creating animated events aimed at attracting tourist flows.
- Expansion of the tourist potential of the city, its development and popularization among residents and visitors of the city, domestic and international tourist flows.

CONCLUSIONS

1. In the article, the authors proposed clarification of the term "quest excursion", which fully reflects the specifics of this form of excursion service.
2. The authors of the article have developed a unique method of creating quest excursions as a special form of organizing excursion services, combining elements of information and interactivity, while special attention is paid to the stages of the process and argumentation of each element of the method, which can qualitatively affect the level of organization of excursion services.
3. This article presents the results of the implementation of the uniquely designed methodology for creating quest excursions, namely, the development of 6 full-fledged quest excursions on the territory of Almaty, tested and implemented in practice.
4. The methodology developed by the authors of the article will allow to influence the development of domestic and inbound tourism, as well as to become a guide for creating quest excursions at the regional and international level.

Acknowledgments

The results of the research presented in this article will make it possible to develop effectively quests excursions according to the methodology proposed by the authors, and will also become educational and methodological material for the training of specialists in the tourism industry. The data presented in the article are practical and innovative in the excursion service in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Quest excursions expand the offer on the domestic and inbound tourism market of Kazakhstan.

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VISITORS' CHARACTERISTICS AND DESTINATION IMAGE: THE CASE OF NIGERIAN ZOOS

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Abstract: When compared to in situ conservation sites like national parks and game reserves in Nigeria, zoos are the most visited wildlife tourism destinations given their proximity to people and close interactions with wildlife. This study explored the characteristics of visitors and the image they possess about zoos. A total of 1529 visitors were sampled using a structured questionnaire in four prominent Nigerian zoos in the southwest zone. The results revealed that the majority of visitors were single, young and mid adult male and female Nigerians within the age range of 18 -37 years. The foremost image of visitors about a zoo is that of close wildlife experience, recreation and entertainment, however, conservation was least acknowledged. Only age was found to have a significant relationship with the destination image. The study concludes that zoo managers should continually employ various strategies in projecting the right image of zoos. The study extends current research on zoos by highlighting so far, the uninvestigated image of zoos in Nigeria and documenting practical implications.

Key words: Destination image, tourism, visitors, zoo, Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

Zoos, the shortened and popular acronym for zoological gardens or parks, are institutions designated for *ex-situ* conservation of wild animals and exhibition for recreational, research and educational purposes (Alarape et al., 2015). Omonona and Ayodele (2011) described zoos as educationally planned oriented life animal displays, which is presented to visitors in the most aesthetically pleasing, interesting and naturalistic context. Visits to zoos and wildlife sanctuaries present an exceptional opportunity for large numbers of people to be engaged in conservation issues and to support wildlife (Smith et al., 2010; Eshun and Tichaawa, 2019, 2020; Lekgau and Tichaawa, 2020) while also providing a recreational avenue. In most parts of Central and West Africa, such as Nigeria, zoos are the most visited wildlife tourism destinations given their proximity to people and close interactions with wildlife when compared to *in situ* conservation sites like national parks and game reserves (see Ajayi, 2015), thus contributing significantly to the nation's tourism industry.

Several studies have concluded that visitors' characteristics and destination image influence visitors' behaviour (see Baloglu and McClearly, 1999; Bigne et al., 2001; March and Woodside, 2005; San Martin and del Bosque, 2008; Jun and Yan, 2015) and thus, important in destination marketing and overall tourism development. The decision of an individual to visit a particular destination is influenced by visitors' characteristics and the image put forth by destination marketers, and also that acquired from different sources and even previous experiences in such destinations (March and Woodside, 2005; Banyai, 2009), and is thus used in market segmentation. Visitors' characteristics include personal or socio-demographic attributes such as gender, age, marital status, income, education and religion; and travel characteristics such as number of visits, nature of visits, medium of awareness and travel company (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2007; Tichaawa and Moyo, 2019). Image of a destination refers to the linkage between notions, views and attitudes concerning a specific place (Tasci and Gartner, 2007). Kotler and Gertner (2004) defined it as the sums of thoughts and feelings people hold about a place. With respect to zoos, it can be said that zoo image is the totality of beliefs, ideas and impressions that an individual (in this case, the visitors) has about the zoo. There are two elements of destination image which is the cognitive and affective elements. The earlier considers the image created in the mind of visitors as a result of the information available to them, while the latter emphasizes the image that is formed based on personal characteristics of the visitors (Beerli and Martin, 2004).

Destination image can be influenced by visitors' past experiences, marketing communications and non-promotional media such as films, novels and television shows (Banyai, 2009). The assessment of destination image can aid in the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of a destination and offers critical insights for management and development (Bigne et al., 2001). It helps managers to understand visitors' perspective as it relates to their understanding, use and connectivity to the place visited (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005). This information can be used to provide avenues for increased satisfaction and loyalty and the design of promotional campaigns (Jenkins, 1999). Destination image can also be a predictor of visitors' readiness to recommend such place to others, as well as with intentions to revisit, that is, visitors' loyalty (Banyai, 2009). It can additionally influence the satisfaction (an individual's response after expectations is compared with actual experience) derived from the tourism experience (Chon, 1992; San Martín Gutiérrez, 2006).

While a number of studies have analysed zoos in Nigeria (see for example Adefalu et al., 2014; Adetola et al., 2016; Ajayi et al., 2017), there has been a dearth of research with regards to the visitors' characteristics and the image they hold about zoos, as well as the resultant effect on satisfaction and loyalty. In this study, we argue that urban eco-tourism attractions such as zoos, from inception, have been mirrored as entertainment and leisure avenues. More so, they are usually associated with learning about animals, thus leading to the assumption that people visit the attraction because of a concern about conservation and a need to increase knowledge (Jordaan and du Pleiss, 2014). Whether or not these visitors have such image about the zoo is unknown, especially with respect to zoos in Nigeria. Also, their characteristics are hardly explicitly studied. In another light, the cognitive element of destination image has received greater emphasis than the affective part in various studies (see for example Chi and Qu, 2008; Sun et al., 2013). It becomes expedient to assess who the visitors to Nigerian zoos are as well as to understand the

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notions of these visitors about zoos that have made visiting them a popular activity *vis a vis* the rationale of operation of zoos. Also, the relationship between the affective elements which is centred on visitors' personal characteristics and destination image was assessed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Zoos and visitors' characteristics

The establishment of zoos in a society is premised partly on the idea of bringing man close to wild animal species (Yager et al., 2015). Zoo keeping, as such, started in ancient times as animals were kept by royalty and feudal lords for sports (Omonona and Ayodele, 2011). The first animal collections for public amusement was set up in ancient Egypt and China (Fa et al., 2011), with the Egyptian dynasties dating over 4000 years back. The first zoological garden, with respect to a definite record, existed in the Chen Dynasty of about 1100 BC in China and was called 'The Intelligence Park'. Zoos have evolved from keeping animals in menageries, simply for public excitement and without due consideration for animal welfare, to conservation centres that features education, research, recreation and conservation. Various types of zoos now exist and they include, among others: *urban zoos*, which are typically located in urban areas, with a sizable number of animals, usually constrained within small but naturally inclined spaces*; open range zoos* with fewer species and sizable enclosures; *safari park or zoo parks* with animals kept in larger enclosures and less restrictive confinements; *petting zoos*, targeted at children especially containing friendly and docile animals; *animal theme parks*, a combination of amusement park and zoo; *aquariums* for housing fish and other marine life; *rescues and sanctuaries* for rehabilitating and release of animals, and *specialized zoos* concentrating on a specific group of animals (Stephanie, 2013; Ajayi, 2019).

Zoos attract over 600 million visitors globally (WAZA, 2016). It is largely acknowledged in the available literature (see Ajayi, 2019; Jordaan and du Pleiss, 2014; Knezevic et al., 2016) that, these visitors are diverse in age, education, marital status, income status, occupation, gender, cultural backgrounds, social orientation, motives and travel characteristics. Generally, the younger folks and educated visitors are more prominently recorded in various studies. There is no unanimous agreement on the gender of visitors in zoos. For example, Hun and Anuar (2014) reported more males in a Malaysia Zoo while Adetola and Adedire (2018) documented more females than males in two Nigerian zoos. Repeat visitations are also common in zoos as documented by Adetola et al. (2016), Ajayi et al. (2017), and Knezevic et al. (2016) in a Nigerian and Croatia zoo respectively. Couch (2013) on the other hand reported more first-time visitors in a Detroit zoo. Lots of people also visit zoos in order to share experiences with their families and friends (Ajayi et al., 2017; Knezevic et al., 2016; Lee, 2015) and, as such, are seen in the company of such in zoo premises. Zoo visitors have also been documented in several studies to be domestic visitors, and typically from the same city or close cities where the zoo is cited. From the foregoing, visitors in zoos in various countries share similar as well as contrasting characteristics, providing information on Nigerian zoo visitors is important.

Destination image

Destination image is the summation of thoughts and feelings people hold about a place (Kotler and Gertner, 2004; Hemmonsbey and Tichaawa, 2018, 2019a, 2019b). Crompton's (1979: 18) definition is the most commonly cited in the available literature. He refers to it as "the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination". This is in relation to an individual, while other definitions imputed the group perspective, where images can be upheld by a set of people (Jenkins, 1999). The traveller's image of a destination is built not only on past experiences and marketing communications but also on non-promotional media (ie. films, novels, and television shows (Banyai, 2009). For the benefit of destinations, images should be distinct, attractive, straightforward and of utmost importance, convincing and realistic (Kotler and Gertner, 2004). Banyai (2009) noted that visitors' destination image is a composition of the notions sold by the marketing arm of the destination and of other factors such as previous visits - a notion also supported by San Martin and del Bosque (2008).

Chen and Tsai (2007) noted that a destination's assessment relies on perceived worth, significance and general fulfilment. MacInnis and Price (1987) opined that destinations exist during the three phases of consumption that can be adapted in the tourism consumption experience. Prior to the experience, an imagined consumption may take place. Image can increase the value an individual has for a destination and can enhance the satisfaction derived during the consumption. At the post-consumption phase, image may aid an individual's reliving of the experience through memories or souvenirs. Image can be said to, therefore, influence visitors' satisfaction and loyalty as noted by Banyai (2009). Selby and Morgan (1996) noted that understanding the different images that visitors and non-visitors have of a destination is invaluable, enabling the salient attributes of the naive image and the re-evaluated image to be incorporated into tourism marketing planning.

In zoo settings, image from the visitors' perspective has hardly been studied. Traditionally, the image put forth about zoos is that of entertainment and leisure, especially at inception. The incorporation of science and education emerged with the establishment of the Zoological Society of London (Turley, 1998). With an increase in concern for animal welfare and increasing threats to wild animals in their natural habitats, conservation was incorporated (WAZA, 2006). With this, the role of modern zoos now includes recreation, research, education and conservation, and most zoos promoted themselves as these, and project these images to the public. Carr and Cohen (2011: 187), through content and semiotic analysis, explored 54 zoos' websites in 8 countries and found that the zoos portrayed themselves more as entertainment centres, while the conservation theme, although included, were without content. The authors noted that, "with the various messages portrayed by zoos on their websites, it can make it hard to discern whether zoos are primarily places of entertainment or serious, viable wildlife conservation establishments". It therefore becomes important to appraise the image visitors have about zoos, as well as visitors' characteristics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Four prominent zoos in south west Nigeria were assessed as shown in Figure 1. These include: the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden (UI Zoo); Federal University of Agriculture Zoological Park; Abeokuta (FUNAAB Zoo); Obafemi Awolowo Biological Garden (OAU Garden), and T.A. Afolayan Wildlife Park (TAAWP). All of these are located in federal institutions in the south west region of the country. The zoos were purposively selected based on their patronage and popularity in the region. UI Zoo was established in 1948 as a form of menagerie but later became a fully-fledged zoo in 1974. The zoo is located alongside the Department of Zoology in the University of Ibadan on a 10 acres land area and on latitude 7˚26ˈN and longitude 3˚53ˈE. FUNAAB Zoo was established in 2008 and founded in a conserved forest about 200m away from the main gate of the university on 153 acres of land at latitude N 07° 13' 17.5' and longitude E 003° 26' 49.2'.

OAU Garden was established in 1968 and is located close to the Department of Zoology in the Faculty of Science, under which the management is domicile. It occupies 32 acres of land on latitude 07° 31' 27.4'' N and longitude 004° 31' 26.9'' E. TAAWP was established in 2012 and is situated in Federal University of Technology Akure, Wildlife Park along Akure – Ilesha road in the North-Western part of the University at longitude 05˚ 18' E and latitude 07˚ 17'N . It occupies 22 acres on land. The park is also referred to as FUTA Wildlife Park. The zoos serve as facilities for education, research and recreation. This study adopted a mixed method approach to obtaining information. The tools employed for primary sources of data collection were questionnaires, key-informant interviews and direct observations. The main tool used was the questionnaires which were structured to contain open and closed questions to address the emerged themes from the objectives and were also used to obtain information from the visitors. The questionnaire questions were divided into three sections. The first section was designed to obtain information on the socio-demographic and travel characteristics of the visitors such as age, sex, marital status, education, monthly income, number of previous visits, travel company, purpose of visit and distance travelled to the zoo. The second section consisted of destination image questions, drafted by the researcher, and scored on a 3-point Likert type of agree (1), neutral (2) and disagree (3).

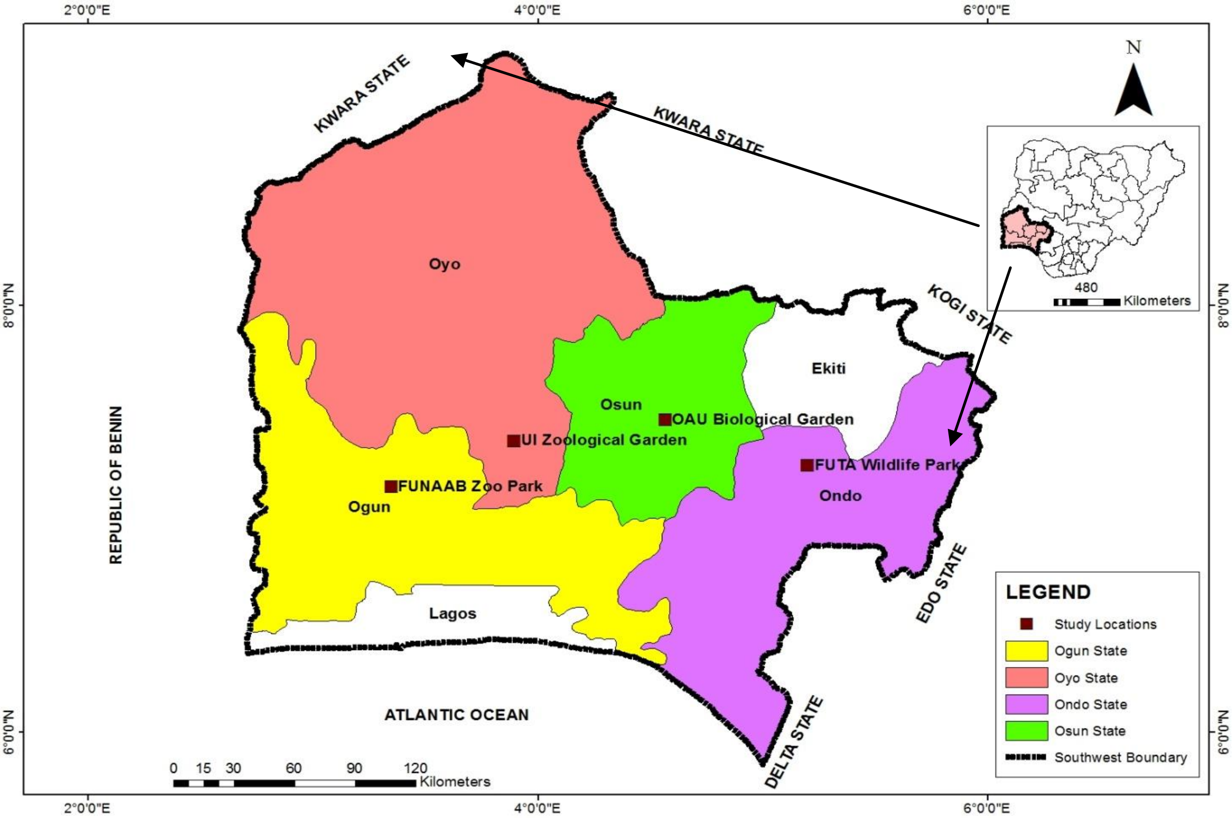

Figure 1. Map showing the study zoos locations in Southwest Nigeria (Source: Ajayi, 2019)

Visitors to the zoos were sampled using a combination of purposive (adult visitors of at least 18 years) and convenience sampling technique (based on willingness to participate in the survey). The study was spanned out over a period of six months from June to December 2018, to accommodate various types of visitors. The sample sizes of visitors in the zoos were determined using Yamane (1967) formula of sample size determination for a known population. In all, one thousand, five hundred and twenty nine copies of the questionnaire were administered in the zoos: 395, 379, 383 and 372 in UI Zoo, FUNAAB Zoo, OAU Zoo and FUTA Wildlife Park respectively. Visitors' population yearly in the zoos from which the sample sizes was estimated were 28440, 7380, 9180 and 5400 in UI Zoo, FUNAAB Zoo, OAU Zoo and FUTA Wildlife Park respectively. Key-Informant interviews were targeted at selected staff in the zoos and the directors, where available, to obtain information about the zoos, their history and purposes of establishment. Direct observations were also undertaken to collate information on the numbers of animals, visitors' characteristics, and the zoos' attributes. Further, using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20, the data obtained were subjected to Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics, specifically One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Pearson Chi Square and Correlation at $\alpha_{0.05.}$

RESULTS

Socio-economic characteristics of visitors in selected zoos

The results of the socio-economic analysis of the respondents across the study zoos are presented in Table 1. There were slightly more male (52.3%) than female (47.7%) visitors in the zoos. Most visitors (86.7%) were single while only 13.3% were married. The visitors were largely young, and the percentages declined with higher age groups: 77.3% (18-27 years), 16.5% (28-37 years), 4.4% (38-47 years), 1.4% (48-57 years) and 0.4% (above 57 years). With respect to religion, Christians were largely represented (79.5%), followed by Muslims (18.4%) while Traditionalists (2.1%) had the least representation. The majority of the respondents had tertiary education, as represented by 79.0%, while 15.1%, 5.2% and 0.7% had secondary education, no formal and primary education respectively. Also, the respondents were largely Nigerians (95.2%) while the foreigners had a 4.8% representation. Further, majority of the respondents were students as represented by 71.9%. 18.2% were employed, 5.6% (self-employed), 4.1% (unemployed) and 0.2% were retired. Most of the respondents earned less than ₦50000 monthly (75.3%). This was followed by those that earned between ₦50000 and ₦99999 (15%). The least representation was ₦100000-149999 (4.4%), ₦150000-199999 (2.9%), ₦200000-249999 (0.9%), ₦250000-299999 (0.3%) and ≥₦300000 (1.2%).

Travel details of visitors

The travel details of the respondents are presented in Table 2. Majority of the visitors (60.9%) were first time visitors, while 39.1% were returning visitors. With respect to the nature of travel, 49.6% were local travellers, 27.7% were intrastate travel visitors, 20.8% interstate travellers and the least (1.9%) international travellers. Also, most visitors (61.3%) stayed less than 3 hours while 38.7% stayed longer in the zoo. The travel company of visitors across the study zoos was family/friends (32.4%), school excursion (25.2%), spouse/partner (12.3%), study/research group (10.3%), tour group (8.2%), alone (7.8%) and the least – company, retreat group (1.8%). The transport medium most common was hired vehicles (40.7%), followed by respondents who came in private cars (28.6%) and via public transport (27.7%). Other means (3%) include walking and cycling.

Table 1. Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

Characters	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	800	52.3
	Female	729	47.7
Marital status	Single	1325	86.7
	Married	204	13.3
Age (years)	18-27	1182	77.3
	28-37	252	16.5
	38-47	67	4.4
	48-57	22	1.4
	>57	6	0.4
Religion	Christianity	1215	79.5
	Islam	281	18.4
	Traditional	16	1.0
	Others	17	1.1
Educational status	None	80	5.2
	Primary	10	0.7
	Secondary	231	15.1
	Tertiary	1208	79.0
Nationality	Nigerian	1454	95.1
	Non-Nigerian	75	4.9
Employment status	Students	1100	71.9
	Employed	278	18.2
	Self employed	85	5.6
	Unemployed	63	4.1
	Retired	3	0.2
Monthly income (₦)	<50000	1151	75.3
	50000-99999	230	15.0
	100000-149999	67	4.4
	150000-199999	45	2.9
	200000-249999	14	0.9
	250000-299999	4	0.3
	≥300000	18	1.2

Table 2. Travel details of visitors

Travel details	Response categories	Frequency	Percent
Type of visitor	First time visitor	931	60.9
	Repeat	598	39.1
Nature of visit	Local	759	49.6
	Intra-state	423	27.7
	Inter-state	318	20.8
	International	29	1.9
Length of stay	<3 hours	937	61.3
	>3 hours	562	38.7
Travel company	Alone	120	7.8
	Spouse/Partner	188	12.3
	Family/Friends	496	32.4
	Tour group	125	8.2
	Company retreat	27	1.8
	Study/Research group	158	10.3
	School excursion	386	25.2
	Others	29	1.9
Means of transport	Private vehicle	437	28.6
	Hired vehicle	623	40.7
	Public transport	423	27.7
	Others	46	3.0

Table 3. Medium of awareness about the zoos and preferred marketing medium

Response categories		Frequency	Percent
Medium of awareness	Brochure	134	8.8
	Family/Friends	798	52.2
	Radio/Television	73	4.8
	Internet	67	4.4
	Newspaper/Magazine	17	1.1
	School	388	25.4
	Others	52	3.4
Preferred medium	Television/Radio	635	41.6
	Travel websites/blogs	234	15.3
	E-mail	146	9.6
	Facebook/Twitter/Instagram	367	24.0
	Newspaper/Magazine	59	3.9
	Billboards	58	3.8
	Others	29	1.9

Medium of awareness about the zoos and preferred marketing medium

As illustrated in Table 3, over half (52.2%) came to the knowledge of the zoos through family/friends, 25.4% in school, brochure (8.8%), radio/television (4.8%), internet (4.4%), newspaper/magazine (1.1%) and other means (3.4%). The most preferred marketing medium by visitors across was by Radio/Television as indicated by 41.6%. This was followed by social media handles of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram as represented by 24% and through travel websites/blogs (15.3%). Others include e-mail (9.6%), newspaper/magazine (3.9%), billboards (3.8%) and other means (1.9%). The Chi Square test of association in determining how the age of respondents influenced their choice of a preferred marketing strategy (Table 4) revealed a significant association (χ^2 = 154.656, df = 24, p = 0.000). The result of the Cross Tabulation revealed a great diversity in the responses of the visitors. For example, respondents of lower ages e.g. the 18-27 age group, indicated television/ radio as well as social media handles, travel websites and electronic mail as their preferred marketing strategies, as the age increases, the preference for the social media handles decreases.

Table 4. Cross Tabulation between visitors age and preferred marketing medium

	Television/Radio	Travel Websites/Blogs	E-Mail	Facebook/Twitter/Instagram	Newspaper/ Magazine	Billboards	Others
18 - 27 years	31.9	12.1	6.7	20.5	3.3	2.7	0.2
28 - 37 years	7.3	2.7	1.9	2.5	0.3	1.0	0.9
38 - 47 years	1.8	0.4	0.9	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.6
48 - 57 years	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.3
>58 years	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0

(χ^2= 154.656, df = 24, p = 0.000)

Visitors Image of zoo

Visitors' image of zoological gardens across the study zoos is presented in Table 5. The factors of highest percentage agreement were 'a place to see wild animals' (92%), 'a place that provides a fun day out for the public' (88.3%), 'supports scientific research' (84.1%), 'educate the public about conservation issues' (83%), 'a source of generating income' (83.1%), 'zoos are important places for conserving wildlife' (82.9%), 'a place that offers opportunity to interact with wild animals' (78.5%), 'The zoo is a training ground for staff/conservationists' (73.4%) 'Zoos treat sick and injured animals' (73.2%), 'A place where people see wild animals without having to destroy their natural environment' (73.2%), and 'Zoos organize animal conservation campaigns' (72.1%). This was followed by the factors 'Zoos breed animals actively' (67.2%), and 'Zoos reintroduce wild animals into the wild' (60.3%). The factor of least percentage agreement was 'Zoos are venues for social functions such as birthday/ wedding party and conference' (26%). The categorization of the image of the visitors shows that majority (82.0%) had positive image of zoos while only 18.0% had negative image (Table 6).

Table 5. Visitors Image of Zoos

Factor (α = 0.741)	**A**	**N**	**D**	**M**	**SD**	**Order***
A place to see wild animals	92.0	6.6	1.4	1.10	0.34	1
Offer opportunity to interact with animals	78.5	16.2	5.2	1.27	0.55	7
Provides a fun day out for the public	88.3	10.5	1.2	1.13	0.37	2
Venue for social functions e.g. birthday party, conference	26.0	26.0	48.0	2.22	0.83	14
People see wild animals without destroying their natural habitat	70.4	20.9	8.7	1.38	0.64	12
Zoos are important places for conserving wildlife	82.9	16.5	0.5	1.18	0.39	3
Educate the public about conservation issues	83.0	15.7	1.3	1.18	0.42	3
Organize animal conservation campaigns	72.1	21.6	6.2	1.34	0.59	9
Breed animals actively	67.2	29.3	3.5	1.36	0.55	11
Reintroduce animals into the wild	60.3	29.2	10.5	1.50	0.68	13
Support scientific research	84.1	13.9	2.0	1.18	0.43	3
Treat sick and injured animals	73.2	19.2	7.7	1.35	0.62	10
Source of generating income	83.1	14.5	2.4	1.18	0.45	6
Training ground for keepers/staff/conservationists	73.4	20.5	6.1	1.33	0.59	8
Overall image score				1.34	0.23	

Where A= Agree, N= Neutral, D= Disagree *Rank order by descending mean in total sample

Table 6. Categorization of visitors' image of zoos

	Frequency	Percent
Positive image	1254	82.0
Negative image	275	18.0

Table 7. Test of difference in visitors' image of zoos across the destinations (Kruskal Wallis Test)

ZOO	N	Mean Rank
UI Zoo	395	745.56
OAU Garden	383	883.00
FUNAAB Zoo	379	663.81
TAAWP	372	767.25
Total	1529	

(χ^2=108.553, df = 3, p =0.000)

Relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and destination image

This is outlined in Table 8. The gender, marital status, educational level, occupation, nationality and income of the visitors do not have any significant relationship with destination image at p>0.05. However, visitors' age (χ^2=34.159, p =0.001) was found to have a significant relationship with destination image at p<0.05.

Table 8. Relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and Destination Image

Socio-demographic characteristics	χ^2	df	P value
Gender	2.972	3	0.396
Marital status	4.015	3	0.260
Age	34.159	12	0.001*
Education	16.544	9	0.056
Occupation	13.508	12	0.333
Nationality	6.352	3	0.096
Income	18.841	18	0.402

(* = significant)

Test of difference in visitors' image of zoos across the destinations

Significant differences were found to exists in visitors' image across the zoos (χ^2= 108.553, p = 0.000) as shown in Table 7. FUNAAB Zoo visitors had a significantly higher and better image of zoos than visitors in FUTA Park and subsequently UI Zoo and OAU Zoo at p<0.05.

Test of relationship between age and destination image

Using Kruskal Wallis test (Table 9), older visitors had a better image of zoos than the younger ones at p<0.05 with the best recorded for visitors within the age range of 48-57 years.

Table 9. Test of relationship between age and destination image

Age	N	Mean Rank
18 - 27 Years	1182	773.03
28 - 37 Years	252	694.24
38 - 47 Years	67	832.89
48 - 57 Years	22	975.00
Above 58 Years	6	627.50
Total	1529	

(χ^2=31.648, df = 4, p = 0.000)

DISCUSSION

The descriptive analysis revealed that the sex percentage of respondents in the zoo gardens were almost equivalent. Such was also documented by Adetola et al. (2016) in UI Zoo. The findings give voice to the fact that while males may be more eager to travel than females (Arul et al., 2013; Alarape et al., 2015), females are not left out, and in some cases, may even be at par with their male counterparts. It was found that the zoos largely attract visitors who are not married. This is in line with Yager et al. (2015) and Adetola et al. (2016) but contradicts Knezevic et al. (2016) and Lee (2015). Arowosafe and Adebayo (2014) noted that single individuals have greater freedom and less financial outlay on travelling for tourism so they are likely higher in number than their married counterparts. Visitors were largely youths between 18-27 years of age. Further, the percentages were observed to decline with higher age groups. In a study conducted by Couch (2013) in Detroit and Potter Park Zoos in Michigan, United States of America, most visitors were between 20 and 39 years of age, and a decline with increasing age was also reported. Likewise, by Alarape et al. (2015) and Yager et al. (2015) in Markurdi Zoo, Knezevic et al. (2016) in Zagreb Zoo, and Adetola et al. (2016) in UI Zoo. Adefalu et al. (2014) described zoo visitors as youths, who are strong, full of energy, dynamic and lovers of adventure. With respect to the religion of the visitors, they were largely Christians. Other religions accounted for were Islam and Traditional religion. This corroborates Adetola et al. (2016). Visitors to the zoos were well educated as their highest educational attainment reflects tertiary education. This was also reported by Couch (2013). In the same vein, most visitors were students. This may be attributed to the fact that the zoos are located in universities, hence, a natural attraction to the inhabitants within the university environment. This corroborates the findings of Adetola and Oluleye (2014) in OAU Garden and UI Zoo, as well as Adetola et al. (2016) for UI Zoo visitors. Domestic tourism seems to be the order of the day in these zoos as the bulk of visitors to these zoos were Nigerians. This trend of domestic tourism was also reported by Alarape et al. (2015), Adetola et al. (2016), Knezevic et al. (2016) and Ajayi et al. (2017). This finding affirms the report of UNWTO (2013), Mbanefo (2014) and SANParks (2013) that the tourism market is mostly constituted by local visitors. The analysis of the monthly income of the visitors revealed that the majority earned less than ₦50000 monthly. All in all, the socio-economic report of this study is largely similar to that of Adefalu et al. (2014) in their survey of the socio-economic characteristics of visitors to UI Zoo, and that of Ajayi et al. (2017) on zoo tourism in Nigeria with Ogba Zoo as a case study, where majority of the respondents were young, Christian, Nigerian, educated and earning less than ₦50000 monthly.

Visitors to the zoos were mainly first-time visitors. This is not an unusual outcome, as variations in the frequency of visits have been reported for various zoos across the globe. A high first-time visitation, though not as prominent as repeat visitation, was reported by Couch (2013). Despite the prevalence of first-time visitation in the zoos, they are mostly likely able to invoke repeat visits as respondents are willing to recommend the zoos to others as well as visit in the future. With respect to the nature of travel, most visitors were local travellers from the city in which the zoos were located. This was followed by intrastate travel visitors and interstate travellers. International visitors were recorded as very low. The importance of domestic tourism in contributing the largest percentage of visitors, as well as a ready market for the tourism industry, is further emphasized by the findings of this study. The visitors to the zoos were largely day visitors and excursionist. This corroborates Ryan and Saward (2004) who noted that visiting zoos is a popular family-oriented leisure activity, usually involving a one-day visit. In total, about two-third of respondents across all the zoos stayed less than 3 hours while one third stayed longer. The Tourism Society (2016) referred to the earlier group as leisure day visitors and the latter as same day visitors. An important characteristic of these types of visitors is that they are residents of the local catchment areas. Ridgway et al. (2005) noted that the bulk of visitor groups visit zoos that are in the same city where they live. The predominant media of awareness to the zoos were through family and friends and from school. Yager et al. (2015) reported media of awareness through friends/relatives and parents in Markurdi Zoo, and this was also the case for Alarape et al. (2015). This study therefore affirms the importance of word of mouth as a voluntary and unpaid publicity media especially in the tourism industry. This is in line with Philemon (2015). It was observed during the period of study that visitors who had been to the zoo before bring along new visitors, especially family and friends, on subsequent visits. More so, McCabe (2000) noted that friends and relatives have been identified as organic image-formation agents and emphasized that this WOM information is one of the most reliable sources of information for destination selection with a high rate of repeat visitation. Also, the zoos are default places of excursion for schools across all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary). The fact that they are located in the universities also gives credit to the knowledge of the zoos from school.

In the same vein, the assessment of the travel company of the visitors revealed that they came in the company of family/friends, school excursion, spouse/partner, study/research group, tour group, alone and, the least - company retreat group. Most parents were observed to come with their children, especially on the weekends. This was also documented by Jordaan and du Pleiss (2014) in National Zoological Gardens, South Africa, and by Couch (2013) in Detroit and Potter Park Zoos. Weekdays attract school children in their hundreds, especially primary and secondary students who are led into the zoos by their teachers. While this affirms the earlier assertion that zoos are default sites for excursion, it also corroborates the Association of Zoos and Aquarium (2018) that zoo visitors mostly come in groups. This was also reported by Couch (2013), Alarape et al. (2015), Adetola et al. (2016), Knezevic et al. (2016) and Ajayi et al. (2017). Visitors across the zoos came mostly in hired vehicles, especially the excursionists. The most preferred marketing strategy by visitors is by Radio/Television. This was followed by social media handles of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and through travel websites/blogs. Knezevic et al. (2016) noted that age is a vital factor to consider with respect to marketing strategies. This association was recorded in this study as the age of respondents was found to influence the choice of a preferred marketing strategy. For example, respondents of lower ages, e.g. the 18-27 age group, indicated television/ radio as well as social media handles, travel websites and electronic mail as their preferred marketing strategies and as the age increased, the preference for the social media handles decreased. This finding echoes the findings of Connell (2004) and Knezevic et al. (2016).

The result of visitors' image of zoos, which is the totality of beliefs, ideas and impression an individual has about the zoo, revealed that visitors largely see zoos as a place to see wild animals. This is followed by the recreational perspective of zoos as a place that provides a fun day out for the public. The scientific research and educational purposes of zoos ranked in the third and fourth positions for image respectively. The fifth highest image visitors have of zoos is that they are a source of generating income. While the first impression of visitors refers generally to a basic characteristic of the zoo (a place to see animals), the second image of visitors was that of recreation and entertainment. This is in line with Carr and Cohen (2011) and Knezevic et al. (2016) who opined that visitors' image of zoos is that of entertainment rather than education, conservation and research. Visitors also see zoos as important places for conserving wildlife, and as places that offer opportunities to interact with wild animals and training avenues for staff/ conservationists.

Other perspectives considered zoos as places which organize animal conservation campaigns, treat sick and injured animals, breed animals actively, and as places where people see wild animals without having to destroy their natural environment. The high percentage agreements found in the study support the fact that visitors are aware of the wildlife conservation roles of zoos (through animal breeding, conservation campaigns and protection of the *in situ* environment) and the close human-animal interactions they offer. The factors of least percentage agreement were the roles of zoos in reintroducing wild animals into the wild and serving as venues for social functions such as birthday/ wedding party and conference. This means that the visitors least acknowledged the re-introduction agendas of zoos. This may be because, despite reintroduction being an agenda for zoos, it is hardly practiced, especially in Nigerian zoos. The exception may be the animal sanctuary/ rescue centres that are committed into restoration programs than the conventional zoos. Visitors also largely disagreed with the idea that zoos are venues for social events. It is one thing to state the purpose of establishment of a destination, it is another thing for people to perceive it as such. In the case of the study zoos, the core purposes of establishment, especially for a contemporary zoo (ie. education, research, conservation, recreation and income generation (Yager et al., 2015; Knezevic et al., 2016) corresponds with how visitors perceive it. In essence, visitors across the zoos have a good impression of the basic concept of zoos and their practices.

The age of visitors was found to have a significant relationship with destination image while other demographic characteristic, such as marital status, education, income and education, showed no significant relationship. This was also reported by Rafael and Almeida (2017) who found that younger people had better image than older people in online environments. This study established that older people had better image of zoos than the younger ones. This may be due to their experience over time, and probably more visits to zoos than the younger ones.

CONCLUSION

This study examined visitors' characteristics and destination image in zoos in Nigeria, and the existing interrelationships. Also, visitor's satisfaction and loyalty were explored in relation to their influence on destination image. The findings have shown that visitors in Nigerian zoos share similar personal and travel characteristics with zoo visitors globally, hence drawing some parallels with past studies. Visitors' characteristics can be leveraged in understanding the travel behaviour of these visitors as well as developing marketing plans to suit this market for the utmost success and continued relevance of zoos.

Also, the study revealed that visitors have a positive image of zoos. Foremost were visitors' identification of zoos as places that foster close wildlife experiences, recreation and entertainment, education and income generation, all of which are in line with the basic concept of zoos and their practices. However, zoos are less often seen as conservation centres. This finding becomes significant, especially as modern zoos are primarily promoted as *ex situ* conservation centres, in the context of existing literature, but hardly has the image of zoo visitors about this role been examined. A piece of implicating evidence may be the fact that most zoos do not actively carry out breeding programs and neither is reintroduction carried out. It is important that zoo managers, especially in meeting up with the roles of the modern zoo, should engage in and/or encourage conservation activities in which visitors can be engaged, so as to promote the conservation themes of their destinations. Such activities could include: captive breeding, interpretive guided tours, improved enclosure designs, conservation themed signboards and informative zoo websites. This would re-channel the orientation of visitors to have a comprehensive image of what zoos are, and thus, would allow for the correct all-inclusive message to be portrayed. This is without downplaying the recreational function of zoos, but rather projecting an image of recreation within a greater educational and conservation inclined destination.

With respect to the effect of visitors' demographics on destination image, an age effect was found which suggests that older visitors had a better image of the zoos than the younger ones. This finding is a shift from previous studies which mostly found gender and educational effects, especially in other nature-based tourism destination contexts. There is a need for destination managers to take this into due consideration in their promotional and management context, especially given that the largest representation of these zoo visitors are youths. The promotion of an image that mirrors the goals and objectives of the zoos should be portrayed and made available on youth-dominated platforms such as social media and websites. Despite the contributions of this study, especially with regards to destination image in zoos which has been largely unexplored, the study is not without limitations as it was carried out in only four zoos found in the south west region of Nigeria. The country is made up of six geopolitical zones and has zoos spread throughout all of them and, as such, future studies can be replicated in other zones and in other counties, which would enhance the generalization of findings.

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DIRECTIONS AND AREAS OF TOURISM RESEARCH IN KAZAKHSTAN

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Abstract: The aim of the article is to analyze research directions in tourism and the geography of Kazakhstan's tourism in order to identify those areas of research that are most often and underrepresented and cited in the literature, which will allow to identify potential, poorly recognized problems and research directions. The research material includes articles from journals indexed in Scopus. Research methods include statistical and bibliometric analysis of the number of authors, articles, journals and citations. In defining the research fields, classical classifications of research in tourism geography were used. Over the last five years, there has been a clear increase in the number of publications indexed in the Scopus database by over 450% in 2020 compared to 2015. Kazakhstan, tourism and tourism is the most frequently used key words. The articles with key words: ecocultural, marketing, sustainability, development and natural values have the highest number of citations, whose citations exceed the average value for the analyzed set of articles. The conducted research has indicated the most frequently chosen directions and areas of research in the field of tourism geography in Kazakhstan. These include articles in the field of development management and marketing. However, the texts from the ecocultural field have the highest impact factor defined by the number of those cited. Marketing, sustainability, development and natural values are on the next positions.

Key words: articles, citation, development, journal, Kazakhstan, research areas and directions, Scopus, tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

The modern world of science is changing at a dizzying pace. There is an increasingly specialized, and sometimes even niche division of disciplines into sub-disciplines. New directions and research fields are discovered, often of an interdisciplinary nature. Sometimes it is difficult to orientate even in the field of research known and practiced by him, so is the number of published research results, analytical works, case studies or descriptions of selected research problems, perhaps even worthy of being called inflationary. The issue of journals indexed by international publishing companies is similar, the best example of which can be the Scopus database, widely known to researchers, run by the Elsevier publishing house, or the Web of Science Core Collection (Archambault et al., 2009; Adriaanse and Rensleigh, 2013), last managed by Clarivate Analytics. In turn, tourism is one of the areas that are particularly strongly affected by the current pandemic related to the spread of Covid-19 around the world and time of terrorist attact influence on tourism (Wendt, 2019).

More and more studies focus on the assessment and analysis of the impact of a pandemic on the decline in tourist traffic and economic changes related to the economic crisis in individual countries, however, at the same time, more works in the field of development, economy, valorization and tourism infrastructure are published. Considering the above and the growing number of publications in the field of tourism geography, it was considered necessary to analyze the directions of research in this field to identify the most frequently discussed problems and to identify research problems that have been poorly identified so far (Dezsi et al., 2014; Deac et al., 2019; Gozner et al., 2017; Herman et al., 2019; Ilies and Grama, 2010; Ilieș et al., 2018, 2020; Azhayev et al., 2020).

Of course, the overall approach to the issue is far beyond the capabilities of a single researcher, the number of texts in the field of tourism in which the keyword tourism appears in the Scopus database in September 2020 reached almost 200,000. Publication, leading to the need to narrow down the research. They can be obtained either by specifying the topic, which excludes the implementation of the research goal, or the time scope, which leads to the research of a selected period of time, reducing the cognitive value of the research, or by regional limitation of the publications used in the analysis. Due to the research interests and the so far poor recognition of the research topic, it was decided that the region analyzed from the point of view of publications in the field of tourism geography will be Kazakhstan, for which a significant increase in the number of publications on tourism geography has been observed in the last ten years.

The aim of this study is therefore to analyze the research directions in the geography of Kazakhstan's tourism to determine those areas of research that are most often and least represented and cited in the literature on the subject. The research goal set in this way will allow to indicate potential, so far poorly identified problems and research directions. Which will enable identification and focus on previously underestimated topics and research problems.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Due to the subject of the research, the analysis included publications from the Scopus database, which indexes more journals related to tourism geography and more publications related to the subject of tourism geography in Kazakhstan. Commonly available system tools on the Scopus website were used to collect the data. The selection of publications is broadly defined, they include works for the two entries "tourism" and "Kazakhstan". The number of such searched publications, indexed in the Scopus database (as of September 30, 2020), amounted to 210 papers, including book chapters, scientific articles published in journals, conference paper and review. As at the date of the query, there were 210 publications registered by Scopus, including 173 articles, 17 conference paper, 11 chapter book, conference review 5 and 4 review. Due to the necessity of comparability of the analyzed materials, the selection was limited to articles in scientific journals.

The analysis of articles was performed for two sets. The entire material collected, a collection of 173 articles, was subjected to quantitative analysis. The dynamics of all publications on the geography of Kazakhstan's tourism in 2010-2020 are presented in succession; differentiation of texts due to the subject area; scientific journals, publishing authors; their affiliation and keywords. Simple statistical and bibliometric methods were used to show these data (Ball and Tunger, 2006; Chen and Huang, 2009; Waltman and Noyons, 2018). For obvious reasons, the sum of all data in each category will be greater than the number of publications. This is due to the fact that most of the publications are multi-author, which gives many affiliations to one article, as well as the classification of the text to several subject areas.

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A subset for qualitative analysis was created in the analyzed set. From 173 articles, 67 texts were selected that are cited and indexed at least once in Scopus. For this group, a qualitative analysis of the text was carried out, in which, while implementing the research goal, research fields in the field of tourism geography were defined. In defining the research fields, classical classifications of research in tourism geography were used (Bógdał-Brzezińska and Wendt, 2018; Wendt and Bógdał-Brzezińska, 2018; Wendt, 2020).

Then, in the next group of 31 articles, the selection of which was determined by the fact that they were cited at least three times, a detailed analysis of the research topic was carried out. Although the level of three citations is arbitrary, it was found to be sufficient to avoid at least some self-citations and indicate the texts with the highest impact factor.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first of the analyzed shows the dynamics of changes in the number of publications. Worthy of attention and additional research on the factors that influenced it is the significant increase in the number of publications on the geography of tourism in Kazakhstan. In practice, until 2010, only single publications appeared in the literature (in Scopus database) (Figure 1). Over the last five years, there has been a clear increase in the number of publications indexed in the Scopus database by over 450% in 2020 compared to 2015. The significant increase in the number of papers is probably related to the introduction of a new system for evaluating scientific achievements / progress in Kazakhstan, in which the decisive emphasis with a positive assessment, publications indexed in world databases were assigned, in contrast to the previously dominant rank of Russian-language journals (written and published in Cyrillic). This tendency is visible in the countries of the entire former sphere of influence of the former Soviet Union, where, while maintaining the value of the Russian-language heritage and Russian journals, articles from journals indexed in world databases, primarily in English, are beginning to gain advantage.

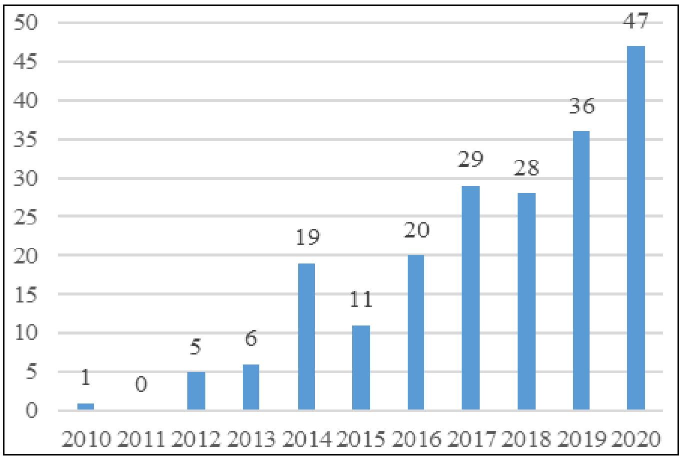

Figure 1. Number of articles "tourism and Kazakhstan" 2010-2020 (Source: own calculations based on data from the database of articles indexed by Scopus)

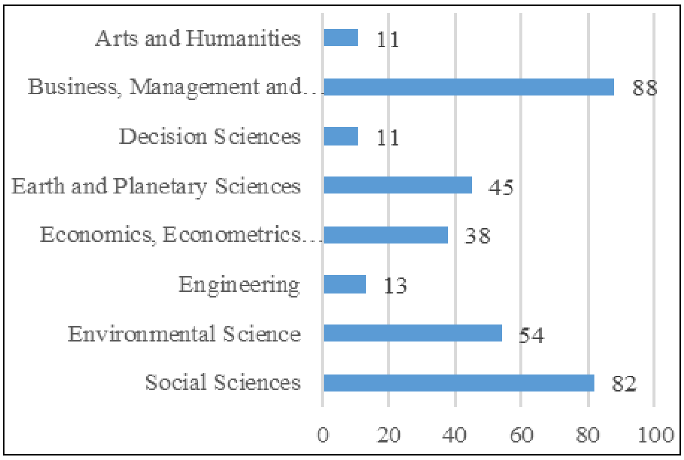

Figure 2. Division of publication for subject area (Source: own calculations based on data from the database of articles indexed by Scopus)

Another differentiation of the studied works shows a clear concentration of texts in the Business, Management and Accounting as well in Social Sciences group (Figure 2). More than 30 articles were qualified in the Scopus database for Earth and Planetary Sciences (45); Econmomics, Econometrics and Finance (38) and the Environmental sciences group (54). Such an arrangement in the areas of science indicates primarily the interdisciplinary nature of the research conducted. The dominance of research areas in the field of economic sciences, taking into account the main premise of the development of world tourism, is obvious. However, strongly represented social sciences, environmental science and also earth sciences clearly point to the geographical basis of the analyzed articles.

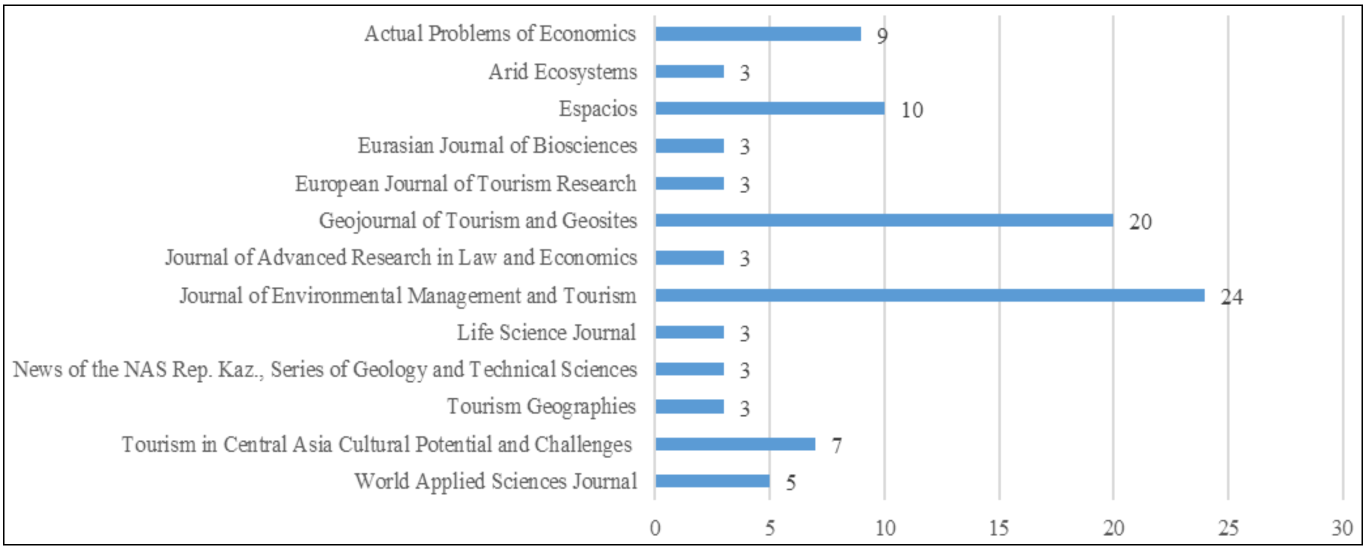

Figure 3. Articles divided by journals (Source: own calculations based on data from the database of articles indexed by Scopus)

In assessing the diversity of published texts, the number of journals was limited to the group of those with at least three articles indexed in the Scopus database, including 96 publications in total (Figure 3). Their analysis shows an obvious point. Almost 57 articles have been published in magazines with tourism in the title. Of these, 24 works were published in the Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism and 20 in Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites. However, another compilation seems interesting cognitively, which shows that also in classic journals dealing with tourism issues, such as Current Issues in Tourism, Landscape Tourism and Meaning, Tourism Economics or Tourism Planning and Development in the analyzed period of time (2000-2020) only two texts on tourism in Kazakhstan were published. The remaining journals in which two articles have also been published are: European Research Studies Journal, International Journal of Economic Perspectives, Izvestiya Akademia Nauk, Seriya Geograficheskaya, International Review of Management and Marketing and Sustainability. The next chart shows the differentiation of the authorship of texts for authors and co-authors who signed at least four texts from the studied group (Figure 4). Commonly available search databases, Google Scholar, Research Gate, Academia or search engines allow for the conclusion that half of the authors / co-authors work scientifically at universities in Kazakhstan, and the next group are researchers from Turkish universities, which may indicate good relations of scientific cooperation between these countries.

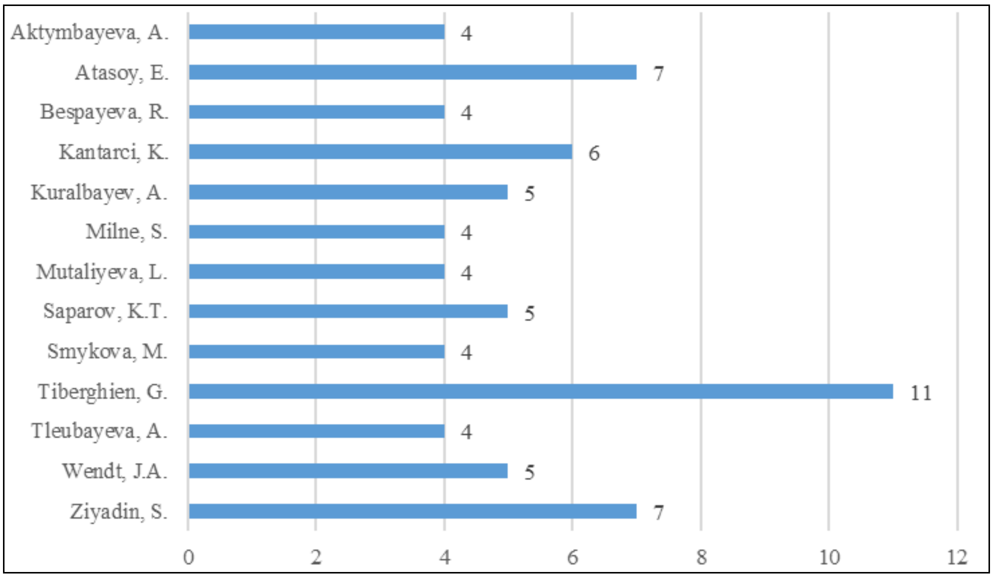

Figure 4. Articles divided by authors (Source: own calculations based on data from the database of articles indexed by Scopus)

The above conclusions are confirmed by another chart showing the differentiation of texts due to institutional affiliation (Figure 5). Among the nine universities with the number of publications above five, there are seven Kazakhs, one Scottish and one Turkish. Universities whose affiliation is included in at least five articles include, apart from Kazakh, obviously, institutions from the United States, and interestingly, from New Zealand and Poland.

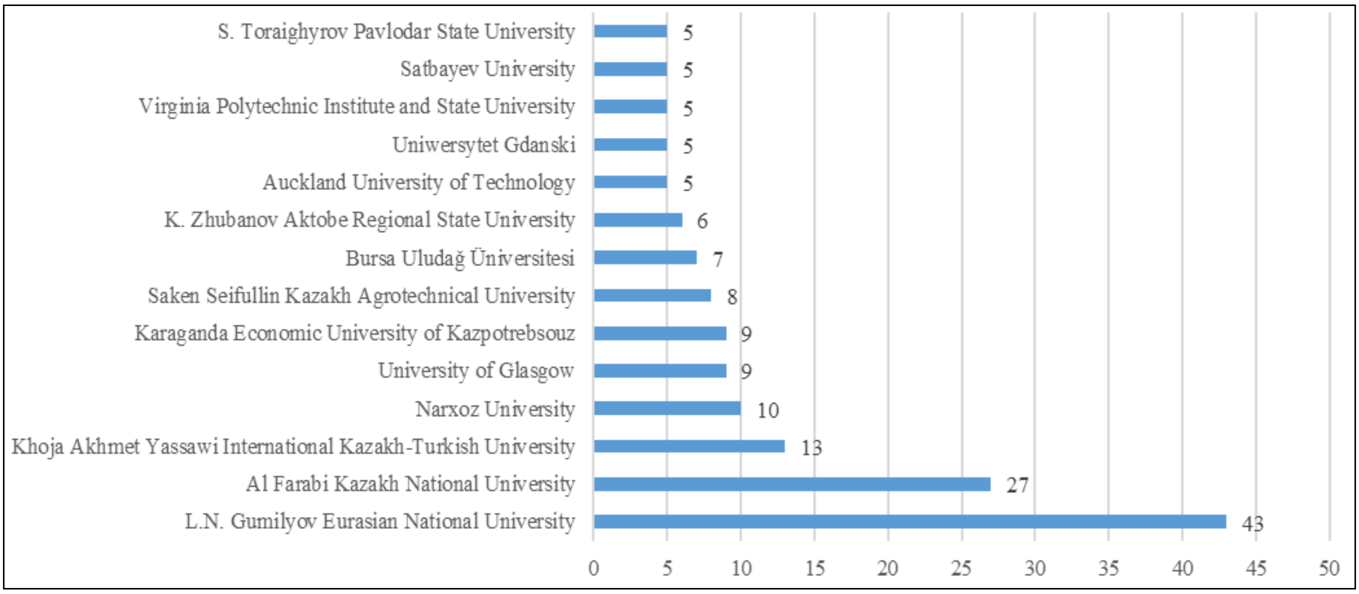

Figure 5. Articles divided by institutional affiliation (Source: own calculations based on data from the database of articles indexed by Scopus)

The case of the USA can be explained on the one hand by the multi-ethnic nature of the American population, and on the other hand by the comprehensive research interest of American universities. The New Zealand and Polish cases are probably the result of established research relations and scientific cooperation. The last of the analyzed categories of differentiation of the texts indexed in the Scopus database shows and to some extent achieves the research goal indicated in the introduction to this work. The table below shows the frequency of occurrence of key words in the analyzed works. As was to be expected, such key words as Kazakhstan, tourism and tourism development are among the most frequently quoted by the authors of the publications, each appearing more than 30 times in the works assessed. Next in the ranking of frequencies of occurrence are ecotourism, tourist, tourism management, sustainable development, all at least ten times (Table 1).

As shown by the data from the table above, articles with key words: ecocultural, marketing, sustainability, development and natural values have the highest number of citations, whose citations exceed the average value for the analyzed set of articles. Against this background, the most frequently represented texts, with key words development and economy, fare relatively poorly.

The next stage of the analysis includes a collection of 31 texts cited at least three times in the literature. In fact, with the average citation of the analyzed group of 61 articles at the level of 4.07, only at least four times cited texts should be included in the study, however, due to the representativeness of the entire research, it was decided to enlarge the influenza of the analyzed texts, including those that were cited three times, creating a set of 31 articles for final analysis (Table 3).

Table 1. Articles divided by key words (Source: own calculations based on data from the database of articles indexed by Scopus)

	Key words
Kazakhstan	80
Tourism	62
Tourism Development	34
Ecotourism; Tourist	12
Tourism Management	11
Sustainable Development	10
Tourism Industry	9
Recreation	8
Authenticity; Central Asia; China; Landscape; Recreational Activity	7
Agriculture; Environmental Technology; **Heritage Tourism;** Infrastructure; **Sustainable Tourism;** Tourist Attraction	6
Cluster; Cultural Heritage; Inbound Tourism; Kyrgyzstan; **Rural Tourism;** Russian Federation; Tourism Market	5
Almaty; Biodiversity; Competition; Competitiveness; Development; Ecology; Environmental Management; Geopolitics; International Tourism; International Trade; Perception; Silk Road; Tourism in Kazakhstan; Tourist Behavior	4
Agritourism; Assessment Method; Balneology; Business Tourism; Domestic Tourism; **Eco-cultural Tourism**; **Ecological Tourism;** Economic Development; Economic Impact; Economics; Ecosystems; Environment; Hotels; Information Management; Investment; Landscape Change; Management; Marketing; Mountain Region; National Park; Natural Resources; Recreational Activities; **Spiritual Tourism;** Strategic Approach; Tourism Economics; Tourism Experience; Tourism Infrastructure; Tourist Infrastructure; Tourist Market; Transboundary Cooperation; Turkmenistan	3

Among the remaining key words, three groups can be distinguished: types of tourism, organizational and economic aspects of tourism and geographical names. The first describes the types of tourism highlighted in the various texts. It includes key words such as: heritage tourism; sustainable tourism (6); rural tourism (5); agritourism; eco-cultural tourism, ecological tourism and spiritual tourism (3). A comparison with the classic divisions of tourism shows that research in the geography of tourism in Kazakhstan has only just begun and many subject areas are waiting for their researchers. The key words describing tourism in general, its development and economic issues look relatively better against this background. The key words include tourism development (34) and other terms relating to development, management and business: sustainable development (10); tourism industry (9); infrastructure (6); tourism market (5); development; international tourism (4). The remaining key words were indicated three or less times in the analyzed texts.

The third group of key words are geographical terms. The latter include the names of countries and regions: Central Asia and China (7), Kyrgystan, Russian Federation (5); Almaty (4) and Turkmenistan (3). The collected key words show an obvious focus on the research region, but the surprising thing is the small number of local terms, cities, national parks, or case studies. The next part of the research, which realizes the aim of the work, covers the analysis of selected 67 texts cited in the Scopus database. They were assessed and classified in terms of the number of articles, citations and citation index per article (Table 2). The table omits the articles for which the variety of the problems discussed did not allow for their classification, and the texts that appeared singular in their categories.

Table 2. Classification of article and theirs citation (Source: own calculations based on data from the database of articles indexed by Scopus)

Area of tourism	Articles	Citation	Citation / articles
Ecocultural	2	22	11,00
Marketing	4	35	8,75
Sustainability	3	19	6,33
Development	15	77	5,13
Natural values	3	14	4,67
Economy	8	26	3,25
Management	3	9	3,00
Ethnotourism	2	5	2,50
Ecotourism	2	4	2,00
Medical	2	4	2,00
Case study	2	3	1,50
Ecosystem	2	2	1,00
Geotourism	2	2	1,00
Hospitality	2	2	1,00
Industry	2	2	1,00
Landscape	2	2	1,00
Total number of classified articles	56	228	4,07

The analysis of the last data set confirms the previous conclusions. The most frequently discussed topics, among the most cited works, are articles in the field of development management and marketing (Herman et al., 2019; Wendt et al., 2019), which leads to the conclusion that there is a significant share of economists or researchers dealing with this subject among the authors of publications on tourism in Kazakhstan. The most frequently cited works are “The new silk road: Mediators and tourism development in Central Asia” (Werner, 2003) and "Digital tourism as a key factor in the development of the economy" (Watkins, 2018). First concern wide area of the Silk Road and is interesting as well for modern policy. The second concerns development issues in terms of modern tools supporting the development of tourism. One of the most frequently published and cited authors (Kantarci, 2007a; 2007b; 2007c) owes the high number of cited only three works, apart from substantive issues, also to a broad, geographical approach to the topic (Table 3). The articles devoted to theory, infrastructure, recreation, ecotourism and anthropogenic values are poorly represented among the works cited. Which may indicate, on the one hand, the lack of interest of researchers in this subject and, on the other hand, the weakness of, for example, anthropogenic values in the region. The latter conclusion is confirmed by the texts on spiritual tourism and ethnotourism and ecocultural tourism.

For obvious reasons, the presented bibliometric analysis is not free from certain limitations. Only the selected period of time and articles from the list of works cited by Scopus were taken into account when selecting the restrictions that were necessary for the implementation of the research. However, before 2000, relatively few works devoted to the subject of Kazakhstan's tourism were published, therefore the above-mentioned limitations could only slightly affect the final results of the research. It was also assumed, in accordance with the commonly used research workshop, that key words have a value representative of the content of the work. Chapters in books and books devoted to the analyzed issues were not included, which reduced the number of analyzed works, in this case influencing the representativeness of the obtained results. The indexing base was also arbitrarily adopted, but the justification for this choice is also confirmed in the literature on the subject (Vaughan and Shaw, 2008; Archambault, et al., 2009). Also, a query in the Web of Science Core Collection database indicated a much smaller number of indexed works in this database than when Scopus was selected. Another problem may be, for example, technical deficiencies in the Scopus database, where not all works published in journals indexed by Scopus appear, e.g. the work "Assessment of landscape ecological - recreational capacity of north Kazakhstan region" (Mazhitova et all., 2018; Ramazanova et al. 2019; Nazarova et al., 2019) it was not among the indexed works at the time of the data query. Of course, it is possible to comprehend the thesis of tourism in Kazakhstan as a whole, but it goes far beyond the purpose of the research that has been carried out, which can be treated as preparatory studies for a full coverage of the subject matter.

Table 3. Article about tourism in Kazakhstan (2000-2020) cited minimum 3 times
(Source: own calculations based on data from the database of articles indexed by Scopus)

Title of articles	Classification	Authors	Cit.
The image of central Asia countries: Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan	Anthropogenic values	(Kantarci, 2007a)	7
The life cycle of authenticity: neo-nomadic tourism culture in Kazakhstan	Culture	(Tiberghien and Xie, 2018)	6
The new silk road: Mediators and tourism development in Central Asia	Development (8)	(Werner, 2003)	29
Development of scientific tourism at Baikonur Cosmodrome Kazakhstan		(Koshim, et al., 2019)	4
The question of Kazakh national and geographical toponymic as a potential factor of tourism development		(Saparov, et al., 2017)	4
State policy of tourism industry development in the Republic of Kazakhstan		(Zhidkoblinova, 2013)	4
The characteristic features of the development of tourism in the mountainous regions of Kazakhstan		(Espenbetov, et al., 2017)	3
Modern changes in Zhezkazgan city: Positive and negative factors of tourism development (Kazakhstan)		(Aliaskarov, et al., 2017)	3
Research note: Evaluation and projection of economic indicators of tourism development in Kazakhstan		(Syzdykbayeva, et al., 2015)	3
Trends and problems in tourism development on the territory of Eastern Kazakhstan region		(Ziyadin, et al., 2014)	3
Performance and visitors' perception of authenticity in eco-cultural tourism	Ecocultural (2)	(Tiberghien, et al., 2017)	15
Managing the Planning and Development of Authentic Eco-Cultural Tourism in Kazakhstan		(Tiberghien, 2019)	7
Economic problems of Kazakhstan's competitiveness in the international tourist business	Economy	(Batyrova, et al., 2018)	5
Digital tourism as a key factor in the development of the economy	Economy / Development	(Watkins, 2018)	24
Authenticating eco-cultural tourism in Kazakhstan: a supply side perspective	Ecotourism	(Tiberghien, et al., 2018)	3
International tourists' awareness and attitude about environmental responsibility and sustainable practices	Environment	(Mazhenova, et al., 2016)	10
Formation of ethnocultural tourism clusters in Russia-Kazakhstan borderline territory	Ethnotourism	(Bancerova and Kasimova, 2018)	3
Optimization problems distribution of investments for the implementation strategy of domestic tourism in Kazakhstan	Management (3)	(Tulbayeva, et al., 2017)	3
Organizational and economic problems in the management of the spiritual - Historical development of tourism in South Kazakhstan Region		(Kuralbayev, et al., 2016)	3
Public-private partnership as a tool of public tourism sector administration		(Zhidkoblinova, et al., 2016)	3
Perceptions of foreign investors on the tourism market in central Asia including Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan	Marketing (3)	(Kantarci, 2007b)	20
Specificity of using information technologies in the digital transformation of event tourism		(Ziyadin, et al., 2019a)	7
The Borat effect: Film-induced tourism gone wrong		(Pratt, 2015)	7
Determination of Southern Altai geography propitiousness extent for tourism development	Natural values (3)	(Zhensikbayeva, et al., 2017)	5
Geosystems geoecological assessment of the basin of rivers for tourist valorization. Case study of Ilek river basin		(Berdenov, et al., 2016)	5
Natural potential for tourism development in Southern Altai (Kazakhstan)		(Zhensikbayeva, et al., 2018)	4
Fundamentals of recreation-geographic assessment for tourism development	Recreation	(Zhakupov, et al., 2015)	6
Rural tourism as one of the priority factors for sustainable development of rural territories in Kazakhstan	Rural	(Tleubayeva, 2018)	3
Model of sustainable development of tourism industry in Kazakhstan (regional perspective)	Theory	(Aimagambetov, et al., 2017)	7
Diversification tourism in the conditions of the digitalization		(Ziyadin, et al., 2019b)	10
Perceptions of central Asia travel conditions: Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan	Transport infrastructure	(Kantarci, 2007c)	8

CONCLUSION

Over the last five years, there has been a clear increase in the number of publications indexed in the Scopus database by over 450% in 2020 compared to 2015. The significant increase in the number of papers is probably related to the introduction of a new system for evaluating scientific achievements / progress in Kazakhstan, in which the decisive emphasis when positively assessed, publications indexed in world databases were placed, in contrast to the previously dominant rank of Russian-language journals. The diversity of the researched works shows the clear concentration of texts in the Business, Management and Accounting as well as in Social Sciences group. More than thirty Scopus articles have been categorized under Earth and Planetary Sciences; Economics, Econometrics and Finance and the Environmental sciences group. However, the strongly represented social sciences, environmental science and also earth sciences clearly indicate the geographical basis of the analyzed articles.

In the assessment of the diversity of published texts by journals, in the collection of 96 works, 57 articles were published in journals with tourism in the title. Of these, 24 works were published in the Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism and 20 in Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites. Half of the authors / co-authors work scientifically at universities in Kazakhstan. Another group consists of researchers from Turkish universities, which may be evidence of good relations in scientific cooperation between these countries. Among the nine universities with the number of publications above five, there are seven Kazakhs, one Scottish and one

Turkish. Universities whose affiliation is included in at least five articles include, apart from Kazakh, of course, institutions from the United States, and interestingly, from New Zealand and Poland.

The key words analysis showed that such terms as Kazakhstan, tourism and tourism development are among the most frequently quoted by the authors of publications, each appearing more than 30 times in the assessed works. Next in the ranking of frequencies of occurrence are ecotourism, tourist, tourism management, sustainable development, all at least ten times. The highest number of citations in the literature has articles with key words: ecocultural, marketing, sustainability, development and natural values, the citations of which exceed the average value for the analyzed set of articles. Against this background, the most frequently represented texts, with key words development and economy, fare relatively poorly. The analysis of the last set of data, including 31 texts, confirmed the earlier conclusions. The most frequently discussed topics, among the most cited works, are articles in the field of development, management and marketing, which leads to the conclusion that there is a significant share of economists or researchers dealing with this subject among the authors of publications on tourism in Kazakhstan. The articles devoted to theory, infrastructure, recreation, important like shopping tourism (Bar-Kołelis and Wendt, 2018), VR-tourism (Korinth et al., 2019) ecotourism and anthropogenic values are poorly represented among the works cited. Which may indicate, on the one hand, the lack of interest of researchers in this subject and, on the other hand, the weakness of, for example, anthropogenic values in the region.

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TRANSNATIONAL PLAYERS IN TOURISM: REGIONAL FEATURES OF FUNCTIONING

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Abstract: The purpose of our research is to describe the types of transnational corporations in tourism from the standpoint of the existing approaches to the typology of corporate models and to outline their advantages. The authors used the methods of logical and statistical analysis and the method of large-scale comparison of the analyzed phenomena. The authors described in detail American, German, and Islamic models of tourism conglomerates; analyzed sources of their global competitiveness. As a result of the study, it has been found the differences between the three models including the equation of technological progress, competitiveness growth, and management system.

Key words: corporate management, tourism conglomerates, economic policy, investment and operating, corporation competitiveness

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of large tourism conglomerates has been explained as attempts to monopolize profitable market segments and to exploit large scale or scope economies, in both cases the unavoidable result of its industrialization. Such a general pattern of integration has been interpreted as a trend in which dominant services producers converge to manage increasingly routinized procedures resulting in a standardized commodity, presumably shaping the boundaries of an emergent industry (Khairiree and Ushakov, 2016).

In contrast, others have described an inherently fragmented system in which differentiated and flexible firms can generate economic rents through their competences at developing product innovations (Comerio and Strozzi, 2019). In that scenario, the ability to develop innovative products by exploiting emerging information-intensive services leads to portraying tourism industrial structures as inherently diverse, fragmented, and changing (Bigné and Decrop, 2018). Alternatively, some predict the advent of mega tourism-related services multinationals operating at the nexus of financial, communication, and information-intensive industries and the demise of the tour operator dominated system (Ushakov, 2006). The presence of such discordant scenarios can be explained by structural diversity and methodological difficulties preventing the establishment and testing of theoretical propositions linking tourism technological environment and industrial structures (Al-Zahawai et al., 2019). In both cases, there is a general malaise with the suitability of conventional industry concepts for the study of tourism industrial organization.

Significant differences in organization of the tourism production process, normative-legal infrastructure of corporate management, development of financial institutions has logically predetermined the coexistence of several types of transnational tourist conglomerates, and this article will consider the key specific features of these corporate types. The aim of the research is to describe the types of transnational corporations in tourism from the standpoint of the existing approaches to typology of corporate models (American, European and Muslim); to outline advantages, bottlenecks and prospects for each of them. The research object of the article is international tourism as a multifactor socioeconomic phenomenon, which is in cause-effect relations with the world economy in general, both being also under the influence of globalization, transnationalization and liberalization processes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Diversity of economic systems, interregional differentiation by the level of economic institutes' development, different traditions of doing business in the countries worldwide have predetermined the existence of a range of economic-legal models of corporations' functioning and management (Chingarande and Saayman, 2018; Comerio and Strozzi, 2019). Among these models, it was differentiated American, German (European), and Islamic models. The research focuses on determining transnational activities at the global tourism market as an essentially new type of production organization in the field of tourist services. And this new type of services' production is grounded and explained in detail.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study is the scientific works of researchers in the field of the world economy, the activities of transnational corporations in the tourism business and the peculiarities of its influence on the investment potential of national economies. The information-empirical base of the research is presented by the results of the analysis of a number of monographs, printed and electronic periodicals of scientific publications.

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The research was carried out on the basis of the use of tools and methods of institutional and systemic approaches. In the course of the work, the methods of logical and statistical analysis, the method of large-scale comparison and comparison of the analyzed phenomena and processes in economic reality were used. The use of a combination of these methods of scientific knowledge made it possible to ensure the reliability of the results of the analysis and synthesis of the data obtained in the process of research. It also made it possible to formulate a number of author's conclusions, applicable in theory and practice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Organizational Strategies in American Tourism Conglomerates

The American style of management is most economy-oriented, rich in knowledge, experience and all related skills and methods. It is deeply rooted in historic and cultural traditions formed by several cultures simultaneously. There were two core preconditions for the formation of this model – the constant inflow of immigrants to the American continent and the interactive economic policy of expansion. At this, the American nation, on the one hand, was actively influencing the world integration processes, and on the other – it was also the subject of such external influence imposed by numerous other national cultures. American corporate management is essentially based on the individual entrepreneurial initiative. Speaking metaphorically, American business ideology is the happy marriage between individualism and competition. Individualism, in its turn, is the reflection of such a social construct in which everyone is supposed to take care of themselves. Thus, every American manager has this relevant positioning and a certain role within the managerial system. Both depend not only upon professionalism or his/her competences but also on manager's awareness that he/she is part of local business culture, certain business traditions and also personal experience obtained at both local and international markets (Duerden et al., 2018). Once an American corporation sets its tactical goals, it becomes flexible to the very maximum in what concerns distribution and redistribution of all types of resources so that to obtain and increase its income in the shortest term possible. In order to achieve such goals a company would need a rather formalized organizational structure with clear and explicit set of aims and tasks for each of its managers. Under such conditions each of these managers would be strongly encouraged to be initiative, to show entrepreneurial spirit, to develop their leadership skills and to make independent and well-grounded decision in the shortest term.

Managerial activity in American tourism companies is based on the principles of individual responsibility and assessment of individual results. It is also oriented on the achievement of primarily short-term, but very much exact (qualitatively and quantitatively) results. The process of decision-making in American companies also belongs to the individual level, just like the responsibility for this decision-making. The methodology of organizational structures' formation for these tourism conglomerates as well as their managerial process in its full compliance with rules and traditions of the American school of management are also based on the distinct distribution of responsibilities and authority, precise application of detailed job descriptions, formal mechanisms of coordination and control.

Organizational schemes in American conglomerates are built, as a rule, in such a way that certain authority is concentrated on a certain manager who is bearing personal responsibility for this certain type of managerial activity. Internal normative regime in an American company is developed taking into account the fact that shareholder capital of companies is usually distributed among a large number of investors who are mostly isolated from each other and often require trustworthy information for adequate decision-making regarding their investments. Thus, regulatory mechanisms of corporate control have been historically developing in American companies with the aim to provide investors with detailed and trustworthy information, guaranteeing them (ideally) equal access to this sort of information (Lin et al., 2019). Developing under the conditions of free market, American tourism conglomerates soon started to differentiate between the function of ownership and the function of control, this division especially concerns the largest companies at the tourism market. Legal division between these two is highly important from both business and social standpoint since investors who are providing their funds and thus owning an enterprise (or part of it) do not really bear any legal responsibility for the activities carried out by this enterprise. Investors hand over all managerial functions to professional managers who are getting paid for performing these functions. Thus, managers become agents (are providing agent services) (Bandurin, 2019). Control over management in tourism companies still belongs to shareholders who are performing it through the mechanisms that are making company's management transparent. Transparency of management is the key guarantee of shareholders' welfare and priority of their interests' satisfaction. Therefore, the most competent managerial body in the American model of corporate management is the Board of directors, while external side of management rests on the well-developed systems of corporate control and managers' incentives. However, we need to mention here that application of these mechanisms does not lead to full transparency of managers' activity and does not guarantee absolute maximization of investors' profit.

A standard strategy of a typical American tourism or hotel company is oriented mostly on achieving higher profitability and favorable reaction of the related stock market so that to achieve the level of dividend payments acceptable for shareholders. Since such a strategy is oriented mostly on satisfaction of shareholders' interests, it is always more of a short-term nature and thus does not really go well with the strategy of long-term investing. Also, of secondary importance become the issues of product renovation or production process optimization. In the vast majority of cases shareholders are much more interested to make use of their current position at the market. Thus, they often tend to underinvest and be more interested to speculate at stock exchange. For many American companies this strategy turned out to be truly damaging, leading to quick loss of competitive position at both national and international markets. As it was already mentioned above, a typical American tourism company belongs to its shareholders. On the other hand, there is a wide range of reasons (significant dispersion of capital, participation of a larger number of shareholders/investors at the same time, formal role of the Board etc.) due to which many shareholders feel more like outsiders, thus, they are more inclined to behave not as true owners of a company but rather as investors who are assessing quality of managerial decisions from the outside, looking mostly at the level of dividend payments and how well the shares are being traded at stock exchange. In this case, well-developed financial market allows all disappointed shareholders sell their shares in a matter of seconds, thus triggering the indirect mechanisms of corporate control (as mergers, acquisitions, buying out etc.). Presence of constant corporate control as such creates certain pressure on all stakeholders and leads to absolute dominance of short-term preferences.

Interestingly, this dominance of short-term priorities has been widely supported by top management of the absolute majority of TNCs operating in the tourism sector. Moreover, short-term priorities were not only supported but also encouraged since all higher-level managers got their bonuses according to annual performance results. Since none of these managers had guarantees they would stay on their positions for more than a year – there was no reason to sacrifice own annual bonus for any of the future goals (Bandurin, 2019). This means that managers, just like shareholders, were never interested in investing current profits as long-term investments. The paradox here is that under such circumstances the interests of both owners and managers go against the interests of production development. Another specific feature of the American type of tourism TNCs is 100% merger of sectoral enterprises (those working in tourism) with the related financial institutions (including foreign ones). This feature predetermines, to a larger extent, the core principles of corporate management as well as methods of competitive fight used and behavior at the global markets overall.

All these features of American tourism conglomerates have also led to popularity of M&A deals at the American market back in the end of the 1990s. Merger deals became widely spread, inter alia, due to dominance of short-term interests of managers, investors and shareholders, and especially because prices for shares of the companies announcing successful strategic mergers used to spike dramatically. One more feature of American tourism TNCs is professional education of their employees, and what is more importantly – conglomerates are generously investing their funds, time and other resources in this education. If we compare, for example, USA and Japan – in terms of high school education the latter is much more advanced, however, when it comes to university education, the situation is exactly the opposite.

One more specific feature of the American model is unity of standards. American companies somehow managed to spread common standards (lean production, quality control and assessment etc.) all over the world. This standardization is actually quite helpful for tourism companies since it helps cutting costs not limiting the offer of services at the same time. Using standardization methodology, companies – at the very first stage of standardization – reduce the number of internal tasks to the very minimum. In tourism business, more specifically, the following items are the most frequent objects for standardization: the number and the volume of consumables used to service clients (starting from paper use in the offices of tourist agencies and ending with the number of towels in 5-star hotels); services provided by suppliers (in cases when the latter are not directly affiliated to the structure of the same TNC); labor force qualifications; the very process of service provision, step by step (e.g., standard time for response, dress code of employees, stages and order of service provision etc.).

Evaluating the key achievements from the American style of corporate management in the tourism sector specifically, we need to mention several peculiarities which have predetermined the whole process of transnationalization in this sector. First of all, we need to mention the emphasized attention of American management to high dividends' provision for their shareholders. This feature has provoked another one - the growing number of mergers and acquisitions in tourism business, mostly because each of such deals got an instant positive response from the stock market. However, one of the preconditions for growing share prices after a merger deal is that corporation, as the key subject in this deal, is supposed to obtain valuable property, and for quite a long period of time this "valuable property" meant exclusively tangible assets (real estate, transportation means, land, shares of other known companies etc.).

For this very reason American tourism conglomerates were prone to engage in mergers with most of the hotel chains in other parts of the world. This became one of the reasons why today American hotel chains are the largest worldwide. They were going for extensive growth mostly, simply following the classical principles of the American model of corporate management. Universal nature of business education standards as well as standards in production and servicing became the key precondition for active horizontal integration in the American tourism sector. Throughout the whole second half of the 20th century the number of related diversifications was prevailing in this regard. Hotel chains were uniting with each other, similar trends were also observed at the markets of passenger air transportation and car rental. Vertical integration became common for American business relatively recently (Farmaki, 2017). By the time this type of integration became popular at the American continent, Europe already had a range of vertically integrated tourism holdings, the structure of which united hotel chain, airlines, tourist agencies' networks etc. At some point, American companies happened to be lagging behind since they did not want to abandon their expansion strategies and were still oriented primarily on creating the added value from the same tourist product.

Still, later on, American hotel chains have been managing dozens of world-famous brands, having representatives in nearly all countries of the world, while their airlines have been flying from any point A to any point B. At the same time, American companies were not rushing to finalize the process of transnationalization since the latter eventually meant their finite merger (Mikhailushkin and Shimko, 2015). They were forced to cooperate more only at the very end of the 1990s when competition with their European colleagues became quite intense. As it was already mentioned, tour operating and retail sector as such was of little interest for American companies for quite a while, mostly due to the absence of large tangible volumes in this sector (Khairiree and Ushakov, 2016). Therefore, American tourism business was concentrating on the production of own, standard but still competitive tourist services, later sold to huge numbers of consumers (via agents or directly, it was not that important for companies themselves). Such standardized services were mostly sold via universal tourist stock exchanges that were popular at the end of the 1990s. Roughly at the same time American TNCs realized they had to pay more attention to individual requests of clients who wanted to purchase the whole, readymade package of services. At the same time, a typical client also wanted all their individual requests to be taken into account. Finally, this typical client wanted to minimize the spending of all resources (including not only financial ones but also time and emotional resources) in the course of selecting and purchasing a tourist product.

On the one hand, all these trends were beneficial for American conglomerates, the structure and the system of which were ready to comply with the standardized requests of their current and potential clients. Hotel chains, airlines, car rentals, tour agencies – all of them were ready to provide services to their American clients in strict compliance with quality standards "just like at home". American hotel and transportations conglomerates had well-tuned systems for interaction with intermediaries and using them, were actively developing the retail segment of their service sales. However, during that period of time American tourism business was not able to produce such packages of tourist services that would be able to satisfy the averaged demand at the market. Moreover, even huge tour operators in the USA were operating under the shadow of global hotel chain and airlines. This situation caused a range of structural changes at the American tourism market at the very end of the 1990s. Large hospitality and transportation businesses started to pay their attention to a relatively new (for that time) phenomenon of e-commerce. Also, more of their attention was paid to small and even family tourist agencies. American TNCs started to launch their own tour operating departments, early activity of which was directed on satisfaction of tourist demand of the clients from their parent company. In such a way hotel chains have been forming specialized production structures which were formulating their tourist package offer on the basis of accommodation in their own hotels.

Airlines, in their turn, started to promote their additional services of hotel booking and car rental in the cities most visited by their passengers (Bandurin, 2019). Since this sort of tour operators were founded within the structures of transnational conglomerates, it would be logical to assume that American tour operating was functioning at the transnational level of management since its very early days. Traditional for American tourism conglomerates is inclusion of financial institutes (banks, investment funds etc.) into their structure. They guarantee corporate stability and serve as the most stable sources of financing for transnational business activity.

Specific Features of European Tourism Business

German conglomerates emerged at the end of the 19th century as vertically integrated groups. They were quickly expanding and developing in two directions at the same time: downward – from processing industries to mining and agriculture; and also, upward – to the markets of end products. The necessity of their rapid development was predetermined by the need for stronger control over spending and quality, and also control over demand. Also, these German conglomerates were performing an important function of social integration balancing between rather high corporate technical qualifications and average level of population education overall.

Most of German concerns were family businesses (Choo and Petrick, 2014). Banks started to play their important role in conglomerates of German model relatively late – only after the World War II. European model of corporate financing can be characterized by high dependence of companies from banks' capital and very high level of indebtedness in relation to owned capital. Under this scenario banks do not function as competitive credit institutions, instead, they try their best to lure their corporate clients into the system of complex and long-term relations. Capital markets are overall less developed.

As compared to market-oriented American conglomerates, German companies are much less transparent, they choose to disclose their corporate information rather selectively. In tourism conglomerates of Europe (Germany in particular) control is fully in hands of the so-called insiders (Lin et al., 2019) who are the persons with full access, due to their position, to internal information on corporate performance and company's development prospects. In the US insider is any owner of at least 10% of shares, and also any of the directors or other top managers. In Europe or Japan about 70% or more of all shares usually belong to financial groups or other affiliated with a corporation structure. Thus, control over all insider activity is organized by the leading bank. This bank is not only the major shareholder but also the core creditor of a conglomerate. Various corporate structures, shareholder agreements, discriminatory voting and other semilegal practices are widely applied to decrease the participation rate of minor shareholders.

Sometimes the organizational structures of European tourism TNCs (especially those of pyramid type) allow investors with the dominating role in the parent company fully control the branch, even if they have a minor share in it. Another widely spread way of redistributing control is issuing shares of several types so that to make sure that all insiders own shares with the special voting right (Chen et al., 2016). If in the USA the key owners are mostly institutional investors, in Germany, as a rule, these would be other corporations. Another distinctive feature of the German model is high concentration of shareholder capital. For example, back in 2008, 27 out of top-40 largest German conglomerates had at least one owner with more than 10% of all shares. And in the absolute majority of all German conglomerates three owners together cover more than 50% of all corporate shares (Van et al., 2017).

For this very reason owners under the German model, unlike their counterparts under the American one, have all the capacities and personal interest as well to use the owner right and participate directly in control over corporate management. Specificity of the German model has initially predetermined both strategic priorities and tactical decisions of European tourism companies. As it was already mentioned above, the majority of these companies were created in the post-war era already and predominantly within large industrial conglomerates or retail networks. For example, the well-known globally German conglomerate TUI originates from a steel concern, while famous REWE group was founded by the same-name retail network which, at some point, was the largest in Europe and quite influential at the world markets as well. One more specific feature of European TNCs operating in tourism is the fact that from the very beginning most of them were concentrated on product development. They did not practice down-top strategy and they never started from hotel chains or airlines. For quite a while European hotels and transportation companies were developing independently from the tourism sector. And when first tour operators emerged at the market (German and Spanish ones), they were more like usual big clients with one-time orders, and they were never owners or founders of travel agencies or hotels etc.

In our view, this is the first of principal differences between German and American large businesses operating in the tourism sector. European companies, from the very beginning, were oriented on the formation of standardized tourist product, they were always looking for their own, specific niche at a market and they were also ready to invest heavily in the development and strengthening of their own tourism brands (Mikhailushkin and Shimko, 2015). Quite soon many of these brands became famous not only in the Continental Europe but also in the UK, US and Canada. Besides that, German tourism conglomerates were developing in the context of intensive non-related diversification carried out by their parent companies, while American tourism business as such rests on the related diversification (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020). The very history of European tourism TNCs' development is the history of vertically integrated holdings. Tourism conglomerates were expanding upwards and downwards orienting on the value chain of their key tourist product and investing actively in hotels, transport development, agents' network etc. This European strategy of growth, on the one hand, guaranteed the growth of competitiveness at the tourism market thanks to lower prime cost of a tourist product and extra guarantees of its quality (since in this case several intermediaries were excluded from the chain of tourist package formation). On the other hand, this strategy also means rather strict positioning at the market since initially low financial capacities of companies did now allow for intensive, multidirectional investment (for example, in several hotel chains at the same time). And this led to lower assortment of tourist product offers which, in its turn, meant narrow specialization at the market.

Once European tourism companies became solid at their market, increased their investment rating, confirmed their reputation with their corporate bank – they moved to the second stage in their development (in chronological terms, this was late 1980s – early 1990s, at least, for most of these companies). At this second stage European tourism conglomerates started concentrating resources and efforts exclusively on the formation of their tourist product (Choo and Petrick, 2014). The key strategy at that time was getting rid of unprofitable assets or those of secondary importance for the core business. Once they got rid of this "dead load", tourism corporation got another stimulus for competitiveness growth since they also got additional assets for further expansion.

Therefore, at the turn of the century, TNCs broke nearly all connections with parent companies since tourism became basically the only type of activity. This is yet another difference of the European model from the American one. The latter used to stay within the structural groups of their parent companies since these parent companies were often too famous and too large to abandon them (take, for example, one of the largest American tour operators – American Express – it is still just a structural unit within the largest in the world financial empire). Another distinctive feature of European tourism business is its marketing strategy which is normally based on the umbrella brand of a parent tour operator. Let's take TUI again: this conglomerate owns hotels under the same name, tourist agencies with the same name, excursion buros, transportation companies and so on. This wide spread of the brand name increases the loyalty of consumers dramatically, despite all possible accusations in the oligopoly at the market. European tourism TNCs focusing on the development of own brands inevitably led to the upswing of intercorporate deals and projects in the course of which corporations join their financial and marketing capacities. Intercorporate communications and cooperation in Europe (in the form of traditional partnership and also as mutual capital investments) is much more developed than in the USA. Tourism corporations of the Old World are traditionally more open for joint projects' initiatives and are always ready to enter together new tourist markets or explore together new destinations, implementing joint investment projects, etc. The second important trend at the contemporary European market of tourist services is expansion at foreign markets. European expansion has a range of serious differences from the American one. If US tourism companies are expanding mostly in the transportation and hospitality sectors – European companies are focused mostly on tour operating and tour agencies, that is, on those segments in which they, by default, have significant competitive advantages over their American counterparts.

Expansion of European tour operators is usually based on one and the same scheme. First, the company does thorough research of the market of interests, determining the most commercially successful tour operator at it. Then it buys this operator out. The purchased enterprise keeps its brand (at least for some time), however, at the same time it gradually starts popularizing the brand of the European company. All further moves are quite easy and quick. The purchased company starts quite aggressive dumping, thus forcing nearly all national tour operators become its agents (they simply do not have any alternative under such circumstances). After some time, European corporation would offer franchising schemes to all the survivors at the market, thus increasing own presence at this market to its very maximum. Under this scheme, expansion was carried out in Eastern Europe, Nordic countries and also some of the post-Soviet countries. Resistance to expansion at all these markets was close to zero since competitive fight again such a strong global competitor would have been possible only in one case – if all national tour operators would have united their efforts and assets. And this scenario was impossible both for Eastern Europe and for the CIS, their markets were too “raw” for that (Hall, 2014). Therefore, the key specific feature of European expansion in the tourism sector is monopolization of all relations with consumers directly. This also means maximum presence at the consumer markets.

For this very reason today European tourism companies pay much attention to their orientation on client. European companies also became the initiators of global tourism stock exchanges which provide consumers with the opportunity to form their tourist product independently (Khairiree and Ushakov, 2016). European companies have also invested heavily in marketing and personal sales, building the whole monobrand empires of agent networks in various countries worldwide. Unlike it is in the USA, hotel chains in European countries do not enjoy that much popularity, thus, they are unable to play a meaningful role in transnationalization of European tourism business. Until now, more than 80% of all European hotels are independent business units, not members of some chains, neither national, nor global ones. The largest European hotel chains are Accor (France) and Sol Meglia (Spain), they can be actually called global corporations, however, as compared to their American counterparts, their geographical coverage and overall size are much poorer.

Some of European countries also have national hotel chains, for example, IberHotel in Spain or Sokos in Finland. However, in the context of the world tourism market the role of counterbalance to American aggressive expansion is really secondary. However, they usually have another competitive advantage which may be of interest to some tourists: their interior design, services and meals traditionally represent local specificity. As compared to the USA, in Europe the process of tour operators’ formation on the basis of airlines has just started. As it was already mentioned above, on the American continent tour operating started from within hotel chains and airlines (that is, being part of related diversification). However, since in Europe world hotel chains were not that strong, tour operating was developing mostly in the context of non-related diversification of various other parent companies. Today some of European airlines become the initiators of such related diversification and create their own tour operating companies, however, the market share on the continent is really insignificant.

Extra attention to client orientation expressed by European large tourism companies contributes to more positive image, raising the brand value and boosting client loyalty, however, it also leads to the necessity to invest much more actively in intangible assets. If American companies are more interested in quick positive reaction of the stock market and thus prefer deals with significant material backing (mostly real estate, such as hotel or restaurants) – European ones demonstrate much more interest in acquiring foreign tour operators or agent networks, the core assets of which are popular brands and loyal clientele. At first glance it seems that restructuring of corporate assets in favor of intangible element is a logical trend for today’s global business environment (Duerden et al., 2018). On the other hand, dominance of intangible assets in the structure of corporate ownership increases the vulnerability to market fluctuations. The last but not the least specific feature of tourism business functioning in Europe is the strongly decisive role of trade unions and of the state.

Professional unions of hospitality and tourism workers as well as of those working in catering and for transportation companies together form a powerful instrument, quite capable to correct and redirect the development of corporate management in the tourism sector. Members of such professional units are actively using their rights to push own agenda in relations with top management of tourist TNCs (Choo and Petrick, 2014). This helps maintain the internal balance of the insider model of corporate business used in the majority of European countries till today. If in the US state authorities have two roles only at the tourism market – the market relations’ regulator and the conductor of anti-monopoly policy, the European model of tourism sector management assumes immediate presence of national governments at the tourist market. Moreover, national authorities are not just present – they are active participant of this market. National states at the European market of tourist services are directly involved in the following activities: anti-monopoly regulation; labor rights’ protection; international promotion of national tourist products.

Transnationalization of Islamic Tourism

One of the core forms of corporate management which has its rightful place in the system of world tourism production is the so-called Islamic model of transnational corporation. Its features are very different from classical Western models of corporate management; however, they have never provoked any resistance in the world business community (Khairiree and Ushakov, 2016). Today Islamic states are already far from being some sort of secondary participants at the world market of tourist services. They are fully engaged in the processes of tourist flows’ generation as well as in the processes of welcoming foreign travellers at home, at their famous resorts and vibrant city centers. Some of the Islamic states are promising markets in terms of tourist services’ sales due to their constantly growing welfare level, their numerous populations and often quite relaxed business conditions which are encouraging many overseas businesses, including those directly related to the tourism sector. Good examples in this regard are Kuwait City (capital of the same-name country), Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, Doha in Qatar, Manama in Bahrain or Aqaba in Jordan – these are largest, global-scale projects on creation of free economic zones and also active financial centers. At the same time, such states as Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Turkey are quite interesting markets due to huge population numbers and enormous market capacities. Additionally, the potential of Islamic world to generate tourist flows is partially hidden since many European countries as well as USA, China, India and some of post-Soviet countries have significant share of Muslim population too. Separately we need to mention the prospects of Islamic states to become the “next big thing” in international tourism anytime soon. They have all necessary preconditions for that: rich history, original and unusual (for representatives of other cultures and religions) culture, high concentration of religious sites on their territory, relatively soft visa and customs regime and also well-developed infrastructure (Van et al., 2017). Many already implemented (or those in the process of implementation) tourism projects leave similar Western projects far behind – both in terms of size and in terms of costs. Such projects have already become popular tourist destinations for many Western tourists: Iranian island Kish in the Persian Gulf, Dubai in the Emirates, Marsa Alam of Egypt, Port El Kantaoui in Tunisia, both Mediterranean and Aegean costs in Turkey as well as Turkish ski resorts.

All these resorts are yet another proof that governments in Islamic countries are prioritizing tourism development and also have all the capacities to attract foreign tourists and guarantee they will be provided with products and services of the highest quality. Since the market of international tourism is still developing quite dynamically, it is quite logical that large and specialized companies are still emerging in the Islamic world, and many of them are in the process of transnationalization. The usual rules of Islamic company’s operation are fully applicable to tourist services’ production as well (Chen et al., 2016). Tourism, actually, is not only allowed by Islam but is considered to be a top-priority activity due to its positive influence on welfare and society overall. Travelling as such is interpreted as having spiritual value, consequently, all spending on travelling and all related activities (including organization of tourism travel and welcoming foreign tourists at home) are encouraged, generally speaking, even though there is also a range of bans and limitations stemming from the Islamic religious tradition. As applied to corporate management and policies of tourism companies, the following limitations may have a certain influence on corporate rules and performance (Albayrak and Caber, 2018):

− The ban on any type of activities, directly or indirectly related to production and sale of alcohol. Participation of an Islamic corporation in these types of activity, even abroad and/or when servicing tourists from other religious groups, is unacceptable. As applied to business, this fact often predetermines the choice of objects for foreign investment.

− Prioritizing other Islamic states or countries with significant shares of Muslim population in the external strategies of Islamic tourism companies. This prioritizing concerns both investment projects as well as sales strategies' development, expansion on certain markets etc. Numbers say it all: over 70% of all foreign investments in the Islamic world are directed into other Islamic countries (Zhdanov, 2003).

However, this limitation is becoming more and more formal, actually. Internal demand in the Islamic world has its limits, mostly because many Islamic countries are still developing, thus paying capacity of their population is not that high. This forces leader of the Islamic tourism to take extra efforts so that to attract tourists from other, richer states of both Old and New Worlds. Saudi Arabia is quite an interesting example in this regard. For decades, this country was notoriously famous due to numerous religious limitations. It used to deny entry to the country for non-Muslims, then this ban was lifted, however, visas were still hard to get. However, since the spring of 2016 the new generation of rulers in the country made the decision to ease the procedures for tourist visas so that to attract European tourists to their Red Sea resorts.

Apart from the limitations mentioned above, both internal and external activities of Islamic tourism companies are under the constant influence of the Islamic financial system and Shariah laws and principles of doing business. In the Islamic banking system, the leading role in capital accumulation belongs to the state. Bank investments in the private sector are nearly impossible. This is very different from the traditional (for Europe) system of financial interactions at the tourism market since in the Islamic world only state tourism companies (and of course, they are in the absolute majority at the market) have the ability to attract bank assets for further investment at home and abroad. Private tourism business is thus forced either to accumulate own funds for further investments in development (borrowing from Western banks is also strictly prohibited), or cooperate with Islamic banks and other financial institutions according to the Shariah laws and rules. This cooperation of Islamic tourism companies with Islamic banks is based on the following concepts: mudarabah – participation in profits, musharakah – participation as partnership, murabahah – contract for further resale, ijara – leasing contract, and istisna (compensation deal). Of course, these are only a few options available for financial operations at the Islamic tourism market. In some cases, businessmen camouflage non-Islamic financial practices interpreting them in a way so that they look as Shariah-approved. Taxation of financial operations is based on the principle of zakat – obligatory expropriation of income in favor of the poor (in real business practice this usually means fixed sums, in the amount of about 2.5-5%).

Since Islamic economy bans interest rate, neither private companies, nor Islamic banks are allowed to sell or buy money at the market of credit relations. In this situation, companies and banks with sufficient volumes of financial assets thus become comprehensive trade & investment intermediary institutes at the markets of commodities and services. Acting as intermediary market agents, they are able to promote the capital outflow from less commercially efficient segments to more efficient ones. Capital, in this case, is attracted directly into the charter funds of the most successful companies of the sector. N. Zhdanov (2003) is of the opinion that equity finance as a method of assets mobilization without direct participation in capital is actually the basis of the Islamic financial system. Others state that equity finance is the future of corporate finance as such. At the same time, operations related to equity finance are not able to cover all the growing necessities of the financial market, especially when it comes to credit funds' availability. Also, there is a problem of limited access to charter capital of companies that are not public (that is, of those companies the share of which are not traded at stock exchange).

Corporate Boards and banks track thoroughly all their financial and investment flows so that to make sure that none of them is directly or indirectly financing activities of the companies engaged (or somehow related) to alcohol production, insurance or pornography. This means that every potential object of investment is passing through the multilevel system of monitoring, with several serious filters. The first filter sorts out those companies that are producing products and/or get incomes against the Shariah laws. Then companies with high credit indebtedness are sorted out too and also those that are getting income from using interest rates. It may seem strange first but these and other peculiarities of the Islamic financial system became the key causes for quick transnationalization of Islamic tourism companies, mostly due to the fact that Islamic schemes of financing, apart from mutual commercial benefit for the both sides involved, also mean the alignment of production processes belonging to the interacting market subjects, even if they are located in different countries.

For example, the application of mudarabah requires certain control over the commercial activities of the trusted subject by the principal grantor since the latter is financially interested in success of their new mutual business. If in the European banking system the creditor sets the interest rate and "let the borrower free" for a certain period of time, being interested only in timely return of the sum (credit + interest rate), thus having no connection with the borrower themselves – within the Islamic financial system the situation is exactly the opposite (Brida et al., 2016). The creditor starts performing some sort of a patronizing function in relation to business of a borrower, supporting their new initiatives and ongoing projects, thus forming a solid platform for further consolidation of parent and filial businesses. Similar positive consequences in terms of ongoing transnationalization may also have murabaha and istisna. Musharakah initially requires close partner relations between the sides of an investment process. Consequently, if these Shariah-approved schemes of financing are used wisely and efficiently – there will be an additional reason for further merger of production processes of two (or more) initially independent types of businesses.

A tourism company, having all necessary resources for investments and operating at Islamic financial market, in many cases would be interested in opportunities for further cooperation in the same field (tourism) since in it, managers of this company would have enough knowledge and skills to make a grounded decision concerning any of the offered projects. Considering also the ban on insurance activities and consequently, absence of habitual for the West instruments to reduce the investment risk, it would also be logical to assume that transnationalization of the Islamic tourism capital is carried out within the framework of related diversification, when parent TNCs invest in some foreign branches, directly related to their core activity – tourism. The most frequent and the largest in volume transnational deals in the Arab world usually imply investments carried out by tourist or hotel chains in similar business somewhere abroad (for example, buying out several hotels and acquiring a national tour operator). They also invest in transportation and construction sectors since the latter have direct impact on the state of tourism development at the regional level.

Same as in Europe, tourism businesses of the Islamic world first demonstrated certain lagging behind in their transnationalization rates, as compared to other economic sectors (especially construction, mining, transportation, textiles, wholesale trade etc.). The major cause for this lagging behind was late development of international tourism in Islamic regions in general. First Muslim resorts (those outside former European colonies) appeared on the world map of tourism in the 1980s only, and during the first decade of their existence they were not that much profitable. Moreover, national tourism business of certain Islamic countries (Egypt, Tunisia or Lebanon) was a constant victim of political instability and frequent terror acts. We can even state that in all three mentioned above countries tourism is still at the stage of financial assets accumulation so that to invest later in some project abroad. Also, there might be so that the countries have already lost their opportunity to develop transnational tourism business of their own due to already well-established leadership of Western corporations on their territories.

Due to this lagging behind it also became logical that some of the transnational tourism companies in the Arab world emerged from inside the already existing other corporations, only indirectly related to tourism business. Most successful in transnationalization have been construction and transportation companies, and also some of the hotel chains in the Emirates. Thus, it is quite predictable that in the last 5-7 years all these businesses have come to the idea of creating their own tourism enterprises or tour agents' networks. For example, the world-famous holding Emirates (one of the structural units of which is the most profitable and the most dynamically developing airline in the world – also Emirates) has been an active participant of the state holding Dubai Tour Development Group since 2001. This state holding is carrying out a range of projects aimed at complex development of the tourism infrastructure in the United Arab Emirates. And it is also actively investing in the tourism sectors of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Iran and even some of European countries. Finally, we need to state that the Shariah-approved types of commercial activities, including those at the financial market, also stimulate the deals in which both sides can be branches of the same corporation, for example, branches located in two different Islamic countries. Such operations tend to reduce all business risks to the very minimum since all investment activity is carried out under murabaha and/or musharakah. This, in turn, optimizes all business processes and all joint activities of corporate structures. Therefore, all Shariah-approved financial operations become the basis for intracorporate relations of Islamic TNCs, especially when it comes to communication between different structural units. Therefore, we can make a conclusion that the core contents of corporate management at the Islamic tourism market has many differences from the traditional Western corporate management. Moreover, Islamic corporations are, to some extent, in a more beneficial situation as compared with their American or European counterparts thanks to the specificity of their organizational structure, methods and principles of corporate management.

For example, when Western companies come to the idea of partnership and merging their value chains – they usually end up with a flat network-like structure with low level of centralization. Thus, they have to search for new forms of interaction between their headquarters and other structural units. Their structures transform under the influence of market factors, sometimes such networks lose their best players simply because the latter do not want to change and restructure. At the same time, Islamic corporations by default are all ruled by the same religious principles, and Shariah for them is one and only legal basis. Moreover, as it was already mentioned above, all Shariah-approved forms of financial activities and business partnership as such promote business enlargement and transnationalization in a much stronger way than Western individualism and liberal values are able to. Regarding international tourism markets and transnationalization in the Islamic world we need to mention several peculiarities which mostly stem from the Shariah-based limitations imposed on businesses.

Since the scale of banned activities is quite large (everything related to alcohol, pork, insurance and also some of the stock exchange operations), most of financial operations in international Islamic tourism are carried out as direct investments. When the act of investment is direct, the Board of an Islamic TNC can rest assured about the "purity" of an investment object, moreover, in this case there is no interest rate involved which is also banned by the Shariah. When top management of an Islamic TNC, for some reason, needs to avoid the Shariah imposed restrictions, the owners (or the most influential shareholders) tend to entrust the tactical level of operations to Western managers. This is especially relevant for the hotel chains that do not have a strong brand, neither their own trademark (apart from the famous Jumeirah Hotels and Resorts). If they don't have strong brands of their own – they may enjoy the benefits from being managed by world famous Western companies. Under this scheme of foreign investment, the larger share of income is concentrated in the hands of a parent Islamic corporation while the managing Western company gets either some fixed amount, or a percentage from profit.

In this case the Islamic corporation intentionally limits its recognizability at the local market and also sacrifices part of its income flow; however, it also solves several problems related to servicing international clients (including sales of alcohol drinks, cooking meals from pork, providing rooms with cable TV channels, some of which may contain pornography). Thus, a certain two-level hotel system is being formed. The immediate owners of the hotels are Islamic TNCs, they are also the key investors in their development and infrastructure, they share all investment risks etc. However, direct management, both strategic and operational, becomes the responsibility of Western companies and their managers. Here, the interests of Western and Islamic tourism corporations are not intercepting – they achieve their own aims in parallel. Western companies tend to strengthen their presence at consumer markets worldwide, they concentrate on the marketing aspect and services' provision, while Islamic corporations tend to concentrate on their tangible assets, real estate and infrastructure around, thus, they are more engaged in construction of new hotels and/or acquiring the already functioning ones (Kolosinska et al., 2018). This state of affairs is typical not only for the hospitality subsector, actually. In many fields of production activities or in trade Western companies tend to make use of their technological advantages, marketing skills and more qualified labor overall (especially when it comes to management).

In such a way they provide some sort of "envelope" around their capital- and labor-intensive productions. Noteworthy, availability of such an "envelope" usually serves as the guarantee that the produced commodity would reach Western consumer markets, having global competitive advantages of their own. In the spheres of tour operating and retail trade of tourist products Islamic tourism corporations did not manage to achieve significant results, as compared to Western TNCs. This is related, first of all, to low internal demand for tourist product and also to obvious technological lagging behind (which is especially visible when it comes to marketing and PR, and also strategic management in the service sector). The major consumers of their tourist product at the global markets come from developed democratic states of the West, while their own internal markets of tourist products are unreachable for Islamic corporations, at least as of today.

On the other hand, this does not mean that Arab tourism companies would lose interest in the West, neither this lessens their ambitions to conquer Western markets. For the implementation of this longer-term strategy the governments of some of the Islamic states have already created a solid platform – their strong internal markets protected from Western influence. This is quite promising for these states since their internal tourism potential has only recently started growing, and today its growth rate is already quite high. At this, these internal markets create all necessary preconditions for raising their own, national champions in the tourism sector so that later to "insert" them onto the Western consumer markets. Of course, Islamic tourism corporations entering Western market is a very distant future scenario, and for the many this scenario may seem unrealistic as such. However, we need to keep in mind that the share of Muslim population in many European countries as well as in the USA, China, Japan, Russia etc. is only growing. And these growing population numbers will soon be able to become one huge platform of loyal clients, when the right time comes to Islamic tourism expansion to the Western markets.

Islamic corporations themselves are very well aware of what is their most perspective product − the Islamic tourist product. Previously, Islamic tourism meant only hajj and umrah (two types of pilgrim journey to Mecca), however, today Islamic tourism corporations are ready to offer a much wider choice of Islamic travels: leisure in Islamic traditions, Islamic resorts, spiritual tours, education tourism (Cairo, Istanbul, Tehran etc.). The growing variety of tourist products offered by Islamic companies is gradually forming a new unique niche at the international tourism market, while the growing numbers of Muslim population worldwide guarantees Islamic tourism companies that very soon, will find their own place in global tourism. As the final note on Islamic tourism business we need to mention the following feature – the role of the state in Islamic business in general. Many other specific features of Islamic TNCs are deeply rooted in it.

The role of state authorities at the tourism markets of Islamic states is predetermined, in the first place, by the level of tourism production development and also by financial self-sufficiency of tourism companies. This role may range: from the function of control over the quality of tourist services provided (most frequently this means development of national standards in tourism servicing provision) to guaranteeing security to foreign tourists coming to a country (in some countries this even means the establishment of the so-called tourist police). The state may also regulate prices for tourist services, accommodation, passenger transportation etc.

CONCLUSIONS

The American model of corporate management, the emergence of which has been provoked primarily by the inflow of migrants to the country and also its interactive economic policy of expansion, is based on the individual entrepreneurial initiative, equation of technological progress with economic success and the system approach to management. Functioning of the US corporate sector is under the constant influence of financial institutions and their lending funds. The priority role in management belongs not to owners (who are often a combination of many minor shareholders) but to professional top managers. In relation to the American model separately we need to mention the regulating role of the state. Rigid anti-monopoly laws guarantee wider authorities for state bodies in regulation of corporate activities. At the same time, there is hardly any state support provided for the tourism sector. The American state has been not involved in promotion of national tourist product; thus, this function of promotion has been fully transferred onto independent organizations, or corporations had to join forces for campaigning.

Unlike their American counterparts, huge production-distribution systems in Europe from the very beginning were forming in very close connection with financial institutions, often with the priority role initially given to the latter. Secondly, European model was being formed and developed in the structure of large businesses not directly related to tourism (industrial enterprises, retail chains, for example). Domination of common interests over private ones in German corporations means that all short-term interests of shareholders and investors become of secondary importance. This stimulates vertical integration in this sector, including the one aimed at the consumer. All European countries where tourism is (or potentially can be) one of the leading sectors within national economy, have well-functioning national tourism organizations, the key goal of which is promoting these countries at the world tourism market. E external marketing for Germany as a country attractive for international tourists is organized and carried out by the German Center for Tourism, organization founded by German federal government.

Islamic model of corporate management is based, in the first place, on the bans on interest rates and mandatory social tax. Absence of interest rate and also prohibition of commercial projects' financing by financial institutions together have stimulated the emergence of rather original forms of cooperation between service companies with each other and also with banks. This form of cooperation is based not on strict division of commercial results but rather on the shared responsibility of partners for common implementation of projects. And this becomes the original Islamic platform for transnationalization. In the Islamic world the state and large tourism companies are more like partners rather than parties in the process of some sort of vertical interaction. The state not only controls but consolidates larger projects, including international ones, making sure all related financial transactions do not contradict Shariah laws. In their turn, corporations are responsible for creating comfortable conditions for the development of the related small and mid-sized businesses, including those directly affiliated in the structure of TNCs in tourism.

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PROMOTION OF GEOTOURISM AND GEOHERITAGE AT THE OASES OF OUED NOUN

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to restore the value of Oued Noun Oases that has been less estimated for several centuries, without destroying the collective memory. Our duty is to look through certain models of geotourism and geoheritage practiced elsewhere, which would be the best approach to preserve this natural landscape that has become very fragile. A systematic survey was conducted on several selected geosites, including inventory, characterization, classification, evaluation and appreciation. That is to say, qualitative and quantitative assessments were carried out on the basis of geoheritage values of international significance. This paper is focused on the efforts should be made in all these sites to ameliorate and develop geoheritage and geotourism in Oued Noun Oases. This research is conducted not only for scientific research and indication of sites, but also to developing geological, ecological and cultural infrastructures within the reach of tourists.

Key words: Geotourism, Geosite, Geoheritage, Geodiversity, Development and Oued Noun Oases

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INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is a principle of action; however, investigating closely this concept, reveals that it does not cover a unified program. A group of factors could be considered as solutions to the current problem only if there is a growing governance in the recognition of the gravity of the issue. According to an advanced regionalization plan, Morocco has adopted a new policy of development that integrates the environmental component, the rationalization of natural resources, measures for poverty reduction and an appropriate social and spatial distribution of wealth (Benkada et al., 2018). Geotourism, which is a new and fundamental concept in the vision of tourism traced by the government for 2020, has currently been demonstrated as a key factor for sustainable development.

The field of tourism responds to a strong demand when it takes into account the programs and the strategic plans implemented by the decision makers and the players of the industrial tourism (Reynard et al., 2017; Pica et al., 2017). Oued Noun Oases faces numerous natural, human-induced, institutional, organizational and legal constraints. Hence, there is a need for a practical tool that would reconcile the imperatives of conservation (Hakim and Soemarno, 2017), the demands of the local population and tourism, and at the same time positively address the constraints that hamper the management of the site. It, therefore, constitutes a sector of undeniable tourist value and an important tourist destination according to its specialization in the territorial offer and thanks to the particularity and specificities of its goods and services related to the geotourism activity that could arise (Nazaruddin, 2019). The identification of geological heritage values (Lazzarini et al., 2014; Brilha, 2016) constitutes the first principle in the elaboration of geotourism circuits and the basis for promoting the revitalisation of rural areas through new tourism opportunities (Ólafsdóttir, 2019; Farsani et al., 2011). This orientation is reflected in the initiation of a broad debate within society on the subject of geotourism, geoheritage and geoconservation (Carcavill et al., 2008, Carcavilla et al.,2009, Poiraud et al., 2017, Duval et al., 2010), in a world of increased industrialization, the environmental issues have been omitted (Henriques et al., 2011). The need to preserve the ecological and geological (El Hadi et al., 2015) space is a major concern in an economic context that promotes the integration of alternative tourism in the new philosophy of the national strategy in the tourism sector (Mirari and Benmlih, 2018).

STUDY AREA

The Oases of Oued Noun are situated in Guelmim-Oued Noun region, province of Guelmim, on a surface of 2170 ha (Chmourk, 2011). The province establishes a buffer zone between Sahara and Souss on a surface of 10783 Km² that is 18.34% of the total surface of the region. It is limited by the province of Sidi-ifni in the north, the province of Tan-Tan in the WS, the province of Assa-Zag in the East, the Atlantic Ocean West and the province of Tata (Souss-Massa region) in the East (HCP, 2015).

The plain of Guelmim is a part of the western anti-atlas. It contains two main morphological units: the trays of limestone of western anti-atlas and Jbel Baní which is considered the source of Feijas (Weisrock et al., 2006), establishing a bridge between the desert zone and the semiarid sub. The city possesses a dry and Saharan climate (MEMWE, 2010) due to the interference of several geologic and geomorphologic aspects: the closeness of the Atlantic Ocean, the influence of the cold currents, and the presence of a mountainous barrier of the anti-atlas (SMDHBA, 2013). All these factors insure a protection against the east and south east sandy winds in addition to the effect of the Saharan continental character, especially in summer. The average annual temperature is 19, 6 °C (SMDHBA, 2013).

The hydrological network of surface is established by three main wadis: Noun, Bouissafe and Aouriouira, on a 9300 Km² surface. The aquifer represents the underground water resources: the deep aquifer at oscillating levels of lower limestone of the Georgian then the groundwater and alluvial aquifer between 15 and 45 m (Mahmouhi et al., 2016). The biodiversity of the various ecosystems of the region is based on a sheltered biotope. Thanks to their aridity and the rarity of human activity and especially in a little isolated area, numerous endemic species find an environment which is favorable to them (Cuzin, 2003). The region contains a vegetable belt of forests on 31700 ha,

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as well as an identified and endemic flora, according to the peculiarities of each life area. The fauna consists of a fair important number of mammalian organisms, avian, amphibians and rare and endangered reptiles (Bergier et al., 2017).

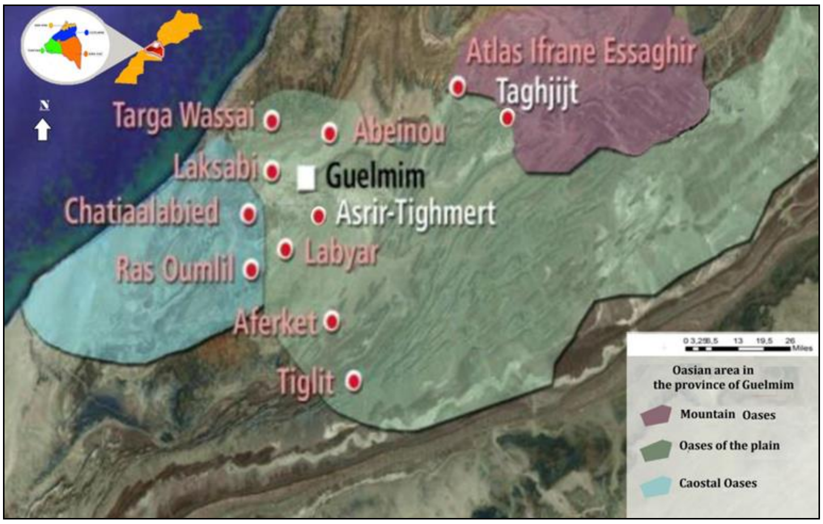


Figure 1. Oasian area in the Oued Noun Oases

Geographical and Geological outline of the study area

The chosen study region is located on the southwest of Guelmim city (N28°9, W10° 02, altitude 540 m), in a large synclinorium which forms, on a regional scale, a narrow depressed basin between the Precambrian basement in the South and the Paleozoic cover in the North (Belfoul et al., 2001; Michard et al., 2011).

The lithostratigraphic successions of the region (Table 1) studied are basically formed by Cambrian formations, formed by shales with paradoxids and by sandstones with *conocoryphs* and *lingules* (SMDHBA, 2013). The Ordovician series are represented by green silstones of lower arenig age, the thicknesses is 150 m contain *trilobites*, *Graptoliths* as well as *Echinoderms* (Destombes et al., 1985). On the geological map (Figure 2) of Goulimine and the lower Drâa wadi, these basic terrains pass towards the summit with sandstones and quartzites dating from the middle arenig. Their thickness does not exceed 50 m (Naser, 2006). Caradoc-age quartz deposits and micro-conglomeric sandstones form the last visible bars before the tectonic contact of E-W direction which separates them from detrital carboniferous deposits (Figure 2). These facies are similar to the periglacial Ashgill age (Ettayfi, 2013; Pique et al., 2007). Between the pleated Bani and the Devonian ridges of the Rich, lies the plain of Assa-Aouinat Torkoz, whose quaternary (Pique et al., 2007) cover generally masks the Silurian shales.

Beyond the Western anti-atlas, also pleated, but with more moderate relief than the Bani, spreads out again a broad plain, that of the Drâa wadi with shale (Choubert, 1963) substratum of the Upper Devonian, most often masked by the quaternary alluviums. On another note a geological point of view, the Guelmim area is part of the Anti-Atlantic chain elongated in a WSW-ENE direction, where Precambrian and Sub-Cambrian to Cambrian terrain outcrops (Pique et al., 2007). The southern slope of the Anti-Atlas, to which the region belongs, has a fairly gentle slope with sharp ridges (HCWFFAD, 2008). The terrain is of post-Cambrian Paleozoic age (Pique et al., 2007).

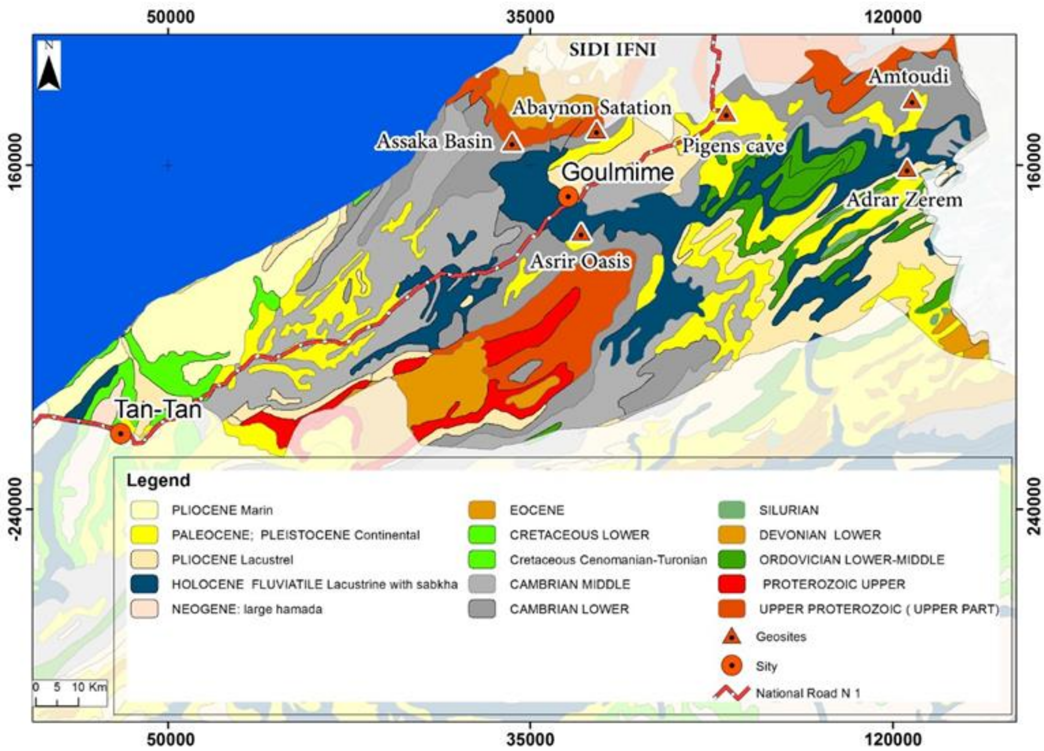


Figure 2. Geological map of the study area

Table 1. Synthetic stratigraphic column of the Plioquaternary of the Guelmim plain SMDHBA, 2011

	Unit	Stratigraphic units
Plioquaternaire	Unit 4	▪ Scree regs and cones at the foot of the reliefs ▪ Limestone crust, saline crust ▪ Alluvium, sand and pebbles around watercourses, silt on the plain.
	Unit 3	▪ Alternation of : - Lake limestones - Sandy marls passing laterally to sandy clays - Marly to marnocalcareous limestone with sand passages ▪ Presence of fossil bed alluvium below these formations
	Unit 2	▪ Conglomerate ▪ Clay and Marly Clay
Acadian	Unit 1	Surface weathered shale with inclusion of sandstone levels

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This article is based on a set of materials which contain literatures, maps, and photographs related to Oued Noun Oases. The methodology used in this work is the inventory of geosites, its characteristics, classification and evaluation. The inventory was carried out by the identification, classification and distribution of the most important geosites of the Oases through a geological survey. The survey was developed by reading literature reviews, field trips and interviews with specialists in local geological heritage.

The geosites characterization was based on direct observation, relevant selection, detailed description and specialized classification through work on geodiversity (Gray, 2005), vision between the works of Pralong, 2006; Brocx and Semeniuk, 2007; Predrag and Mirela, 2010 and the scale (Brocx and Semeniuk, 2007) (Nazaruddin, 2019).

Two evaluation approaches are adopted for the development of this article: a qualitative approach (Aoulad-Ali et al., 2019; Nazaruddin, 2019), which gives particular attention to the geographic and geological heritage values for classification and description, a quantitative approach which aims to assess the geosites and its geoheritage value and SWOT analysis to establish development strategies.

RESULTS

1. Inventory of gosites

The enhancement and the conservation of the geological heritage (Chakrabarty and Mandal, 2020) have become very important in several countries (Giusti, 2012), especially for sites that have scientific, cultural or economic interest (Ranjbaran et al., 2020). This importance is mainly due to the appearance of a strong tourist demand, who no longer seeks “4S” tourism (Sand, Sea, Sex, Sun) (Cheng, 2016) but “4E” tourism from the beginning of this milleniumto improve awareness of responsibility: Educational tourism, Environment and clean nature, culture and history Event, Entertainment and fun.

The Guelmim plain encompasses a vast territory that greatly exceeds the sole area of the Oases; it is to incorporate pre-desert areas of great scenic beauty, but also to house elements that constitute the geological wealth of the plain (Mirari and Benmlih, 2018). To select geosites of geoheritage significance, several criteria must be taken into account: Uniqueness, representativeness and rarity (Predrag and Mirela, 2010; Brocx al., 2011; Pralong, 2006). In this map (Figure 2), we offer some geosites of geotourism importance with a descriptive table.

Table 2. List of selected geosites as potential geoheritage resources and geotourism attractions in Oued Noun Oases

N°	Geosite	Location	Main geological feature	Other Characterizations
1	**Amtoudi**	Rural Municipality Amtoudi: N 29 ° 14.930’; W9 ° 11.127 ’	Illustration of the Lower Cambrian formations corresponding to the upper limestones, the schisto-limestone series, the schistous series and the terminal sandstones.	the sandstone-quartzitic series of the 1st Bani and the plain corresponding to Feijas which are covered with quaternary deposits
2	**Adrar ZerZem**	Rural municipality Taghjijt: N 28 ° 926; W 9 ° 042	It is in the form of a rocky ridge oriented E.-0. which overlooks the right bank of the Seyad wadi	The engraving station is located on the rocky outcrops overlooking the plain alluviale surrounding
3	**Abaynou station**	Rural municipality d’Abaynou N°29°093; W10°019	It is an emergence of this Saudi tablecloth appear at the northern limit of the Guelmim basin	Sandy clay generally less than 7 meters thick
4	**Pigeon cave**	Rural municipality Ait Boufoulen N 29 ° 300; W9 ° 695	The caves are made up of a set of dark and narrow rocks	Rainwater enters and emerges in a pond called Bizane in Agjgal wadi.
5	**Assaka Basin**	Rural municipality Targa Wassay N 29 ° 07; 'W10 ° 25'	Georgian and Precambrian mass forms an external feija broad of 5Kms on average	It is made up of eruptive rocks dating from the Precambrian II and III (Andesites, Basalts and Granites).
6	**Asrir Oasis**	Rural municipality of Asrir N 29 ° 074; W 9 ° 432	It is made up of schist, sandstone and Georgian limestones, belonging to the upper part of lower limestone of the Adoudounian	-

The characterization of the geosites was developed by direct observation and description of the sites during the field trips and supported by data from the literature and interviews with geology scientists and the locals. These geosites have a noticeable geological importance which must enhance its geoheritage, such as geological, archaeological, morphological, hydrogeological and sociocultural values. The following part is a description of the selected geosites at Oued Noun Oases, Guelmim province.

Geosite "Amtoudi"

This site is a Berber village in southern Morocco (Figure 3) it has a very rich landscape of the Western Anti-Atlas. It is an oasis of mountainous nature located at the bottom of a canyon where about 325 households live.

With a respectable age of more than 2 billion years, the Stromatoliths of the Anti-Atlas correspond to discoid or nippled constructions produced by mats of bacteria, mainly *cyanobacteria* (blue algae). Islands are formed elongated fossils forming a relief, about 1 to 5 cm high. They can be caused by the agitation of the swell on the beaches, or the action of sea currents on the bottom. They are found on the upper surface of a finely detrital layer and bear witness to a shallow marine environment.

Amtoudi travertines

On an altitude of 930 m with geographic coordinates N29°14.361 ’; W9°10.108 ' (Figure 4), there are travertines which show a particular type of limestone rock which forms at the emergence of certain sources and on the slopes of river beds, as a result of changes in the physico-chemical conditions induced by plants and algae which fix carbon dioxide causing precipitation of travertine.

Amtoudi waterfall and Bougaa source

At an altitude of 931 m, with geographic coordinates N29°14.36'; W9 ° 10.108', a log of Oued Amtoudi follows the old faults where water flows all year round (Figure 5); the springs and waterfalls are the result of a resurgence in the gorges cut into the shale-limestone alternation of the lower Cambrian at the bottom of the palm grove of Amtoudi. The First village includes a great part of Agadir (Robles-Marín et al., 2014), spread over the two rivers, but at fairly high level and perched on the cliffs, some were inaccessible. The history of the word Agadir which is the emblem of the region is often explained as collective granaries, and Agadir designates the nose of an eagle.

Amtoudi's stratigraphy

Illustration of the Lower Cambrian formations which corresponds to the upper limestones, the schistolimestone series, the schistous series and the terminal sandstones (Figure 6). The "upper limestones" are a transgressive set of dolomites and limestones ranging in thickness from around 400 m in the Western Anti-Atlas to 75 m or even 0 m in the eastern part of the massif.

Archaeological Geosite "Adrar Zerzem"

The Adrar ZerZem Site is located in the rural commune of Taghjijt, 80km towards Tata (Figure 7). This site dates back to almost 2,500 years before our era (Louart et al., 2013). A quality of about 37 mortuary monuments of former Amazigh inhabitants and other monuments confirm human settlement in the region (BOKBOT et al., 2005). This area shelters a very important archaeological complex which includes several types of vestiges: rock engravings showing a great thematic variety, burial mounds connected to other dry stone structures with circular plan, and finally, an outdoor habitat with abundant archaeological material surface.

These discoveries will contribute to the enrichment of historical research concerning this important period in the history of Morocco which preceded the discovery of the Moroccan coasts by Phoenician sailors (Figure 8).

Figure 3. Panoramic view of the Amtoudi basin

Figure 4. The Amtoudi lineaments

Figure 5. Bougaa source

Figure 6. Tumulus in "Adrar Zerzem ((Bokbot et al., 2005)

Figure 7. Rock carvings

Geomrphological geosite "Cave of pigeons"

Located at Ait Boufoulen 50 km towards Agadir (Figure 9), the caves are made up of a set of dark and narrow rocks. Access to these caves is difficult. A set of palm groves is spread across the geographic space of this site, among others, such as those of Bouzakarn and Ait Boufoulen.

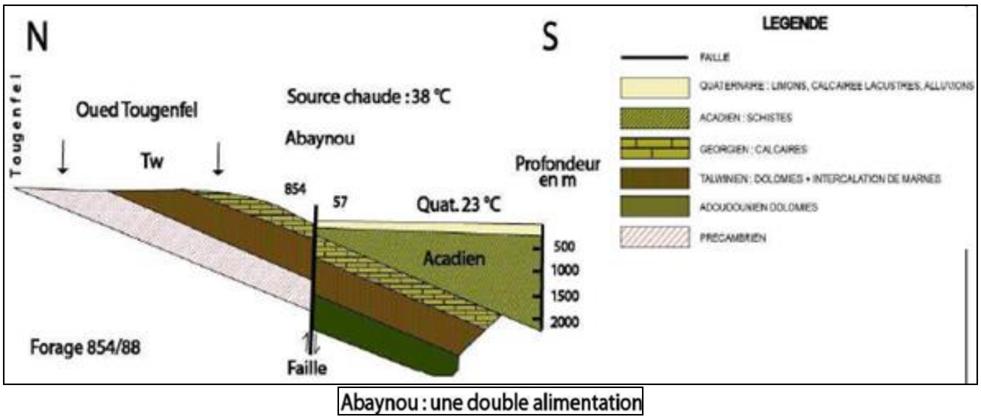
Thermal Geosite "Abaynou"

The Abaynou source, located at the rural commune of Abaynou 10 km to the north, is an outlet of this Adoudounian water table appearing at the northern limit of the Guelmim basin (Figure 10). Water of this spring comes out with a temperature of 45°C and a sulphate-calcium facies. Its origin is deep and probably appears at a fault affecting the Georgian limestones of the West of Ouggoug Oases

(SMDHBA, 2013). In the upper part, at the entrance to the gorge taken by the Guelmim-Ifni road, there are thick banks of black limestone. The series are said to be 400 to 500 m thick south of Abaynou. This unit is distinguished by more accentuated reliefs, with a characteristic light color on satellite images. The water from this spring has healing properties, particularly with regard to dermal and rheumatic diseases.

Figure 8. The waterfalls of the wadi Amtoudi

Figure 9. Travertine in the vicinity of the cave



Figue 10. Chematic section illustrating the deep origin of the source of Abayno, SMDHBA.2013

Figure 11. A panoramic view of the Assaka bassin

Figure 12. A panoramic view of the Asrir oases

Hydrogeological geosite "Assaka Basin"

A beautiful outcrop of sandstone and greenish subhorizontal shales on the Seyad wadi (dip of 5-10° to the SE). We are at the top of the “terminal sandstones”, in the zone of passage to the schists at paradoxides (Figure 11). The terminal sandstones were formerly stored in the lower Cambrian, but are now dated to the beginning of the middle Cambrian. The top of several benches shows bioturbations and asymmetrical ripple marks in the N-S direction. The Wadi bed is guided by these deaclases (Weisrock et al., 2006).

Sociocultural geosite “Asrir Oases”

The Asrir Oases, formerly known as "Noul-Lamta" (Joumani, 2008), has played a very significant role in the history of the southern provinces (Figure 12) thanks to its strategic position between the Atlas Mountains and the Atlantic plains. Asrir represented a place of ancient settlement of human groups and a point of convergence and crossing point for many transhumant tribes. Furthermore, this site shows particular, cultural, archaeological and geotourist features which are represented by rock shelters, Kasbahs, granaries and others.

2. Classification of geosites

Table 3. The classification of selected geosites

N°	Geosites	Geodiversity	Scope	Scale
1	Amtoudi	Relief / Landscape / Rock	Geomorphological	Big ladder
2	Adrar ZerZem	Relief / Landscape /	Archaeological	Medium scale
3	Abaynou station	Relief / Rock and Hydrological Process	Geomorphological / hydrogeological	Medium scale
4	Pigeon cave	Relief / Landscape / Rock	Geomorphological	Medium scale
5	Assaka Basin	Hydrological process	Hydrogeological	Bigscale
6	Asrir Oases	Relief / Landscape / Oasis	Geomorphological	Big ladder

Table 4. Qualitative assessment of selected geosites for potential geoheritage resources and geotourism attractions in Oued Noun Oasis, Morocco

N°	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
geosites	**Amtoudi**	**Adrar Zerzem**	**Abaynou station**	**Pigeon cave**	**Assaka Basin**	**Oasis Asrir**
Scientific (and educational) value	Formation of the cascade and diaclase scade and diaclase lithology	Formation of the rock engraving process, Tumulus	Hot spring process training / Geothermal system	Cave / sinkhole formation	Formation processes of waterfall; the lithology of the waterfall	Formation of the Oasis / Fieja process
Aesthetic value	Relief and Landscape and panoramic view of the Anti-Atlas	Relief and Landscape of Monuments	Relief and Landscape / Biodiversity	Relief and Landscape of Discovery	Vegetable landscape of middle mountains	Pre-Saharan landscape
Recreational value	Leisure activities and hiking on site	Discovery activities and scientific research	Leisure activities, hiking and swimming	Exploration activities	Leisure activities, hiking	Leisure activities, hiking
Cultural (and historical) value	An Amazigh village in southern Morocco / heritage of the collective granary	the history of Morocco which preceded the discovery of the Moroccan coasts by Phoenician sailors.	-	-	-	Dating of the site exists during the Almoravids period (Noul-Lamta)
Aesthetic value	Relief and Landscape and panoramic view of the Anti-Atlas	Relief and Landscape of Monuments	Relief and Landscape / biodiversity	Relief and Landscape of Discovery	Vegetable landscape of middle mountains	Pre-Saharan landscape
Functional value	-	-	Curative virtues in particular with regard to dermal and rheumatic diseases	-	-	-
Religious value	National	International	Regional	State	State	National
Contents	documentary	Iconographic	Symbolic	Indicial	Indicial	Indicial

Table 5. Numerical assessment of selected geosites for potential geoheritage resources and geotourism attractions in Guelmim Oasis

N°	**Geological site**	**Scientific (and educational) value**	**Aesthetic value**	**Recreational value**	**Cultural (and historical) value**	**Economic value**	**functional value**	**Significance level**	**Total**
1	**Amtoudi**	5	5	5	5	5	0	4	29
2	**Adrar ZerZem**	5	5	2	5	0	0	5	22
3	**Abaynou station**	5	5	5	0	5	5	3	28
4	**Pigeon cave**	5	5	0	0	0	0	2	28
5	**Assaka Basin**	5	5	3	0	2	0	3	18
6	**Asrir Oases**	5	5	5	5	5	0	4	29

DISCUSSION

The degradation processes with the action of mass tourism presents a strong threat to the oases of Oued Noun. However, care must be taken to avoid any disturbance that could, in the long term, affect its biological and heritage quality through geotourism. The Amtoudi site and Asrir oasis represent the main heritage of Oued Noun Oases and they must be maintained in an optimal ecological state as much as possible.

This synthesis values the quality of the Oases's geosite and geodiversity, the sharing of geoconservation standards, best practices in geotourism development, the exchange of expertise and support for geoheritage preservation (Henriques et al., 2011; Reynard and Brilha 2018; Gordon et al., 2018). On the other hand, this synthesis makes it possible to present the geosites with a notion of responsibility and at the same time to valorize the quality of the geodiversity of the selected ones. The selected geosites of the Guelmim Province have been classified according to the following classification: geodiversity, scope and scale. According to Gray (2005), geodiversity is divided into eight components: rock, mineral, fossil, relief, landscape, processes, soil and other georesources. Predrag and Mirela (2010) and Brocx and Semeniuk (2007) have classified geosites as petrological, stratigraphic, mineralogical, (palentological), geomorphological, speleological, hydrological/hydrogeological, structural, etc., sites. Brocx and Semeniuk (2007) classified geosites into six categories based on scale: regional/megascale (coverage of 100 × 100 km or more), large/macro-scale (coverage of 10 × 10 km or more), medium/mesoscale (coverage of 1 × 1 km or more), small-/microscale (coverage of 10-100 m × 10-100 m or more), fine/leptoscale (coverage of 1 × 1 m or more), and very fine-scale (coverage of 1 × 1 mm or more).

Two approaches have been carried out to scientifically evaluate the geosites of the Guelmim Province, qualitative and quantitative:

The qualitative approach is based on the values of geological heritage (Gray, 2004, 2005). Especially scientific values (related to geological meanings and interests); educational values (related to earth sciences and environmental education); aesthetic values (related to landscape beauty features); recreational values (related to recreational and tourist activities); cultural values (related to cultural and historical values); economic values (related to financial characteristics); functional values (related to use characteristics), etc

On the other hand, the quantitative approach was developed to evaluate sites in a numerical way or to rank them according to their geopatrimonial values. For natural heritage values, six values were established for this study: 0 = none, 1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = fair, 4 = good and 5 = very good. In contrast, for levels of significance, there are five categories of values: 1 = local, 2 = regional, 3 = national, 4 = international and 5 = international. In effect, Brocx and Semeniuk (2007) presented the levels of significance (ranking) according to the level of importance of these sites, which must also be determined, including international, national, state, regional and local levels.

In addition, Pena dos Reis and Henriques (2009) presented the contents displayed by geological objects are designated as indexical (a clear relationship between geological processes and their products), iconographic (a particular geological phenomenon), symbolic (an image with geological characteristics used by the public) at the local scale.For documentary (a phenomenon understanding geological changes), scenic (a phenomenon with a great recreational function) at the regional scale.Finally, the conceptual (a reference to singular geological occurrences) on a global scale. The geoswites of the province of Guelmim are composed by reliefs, landscapes, rocks, waters and oases. Besides, these geosites are possessed by relief features (geomorphological sites), such as oasis, waterfall, mountain and cave. A hot spring phenomenon that is classified as a hydrogeological site is also a valuable resource of the province. An archaeological area contains a very important landscape that includes several types of remains. A hydrological area has a very rich biodiversity (Table 1). These sites range from small to large scale (Table 2). These qualitative and quantitative assessments can speak directly to the priority that should be given to geosites for geoconservation and development efforts. On the other hand, three geosites are designated for the geological objective Indicial and the three other geological objectives are developed: documentary, symbolic and iconographic (Table 3). Geosites with higher scores or values should receive greater attention and priority. Table 4 presents the scores obtained for each site with regard to geoheritage values and levels of significance. The SWOT analysis was used to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of geosites in the province of Guelmim and to help decide on geoconservation and geotourism development efforts (Mirari et al,. 2020) The SWOT analysis of all these sites can be found in Table 5.

Table 6. SWOT presents a diagnostic analysis of the selected geosites

N°	Geosites	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat
1	**Amtoudi**	Quality environment: a landscape heritage, an archaeological heritage and a cultural and historical heritage	The Establishment of reception facilities on the ground such as rest areas	Fragility of the most precious and most visited ecosystems; Low environmental awareness and education	Failure to comply with environmental management prin ci Growing tourist pressure
2	**Adrar ZerZem**	Quality environment: a landscape heritage, an archaeological heritage and a cultural and historical heritage	Establishment of reception facilities on the ground such as rest areas; The layout of the trackss	Inaccessibility Lack of signage	Destruction of environments Possibility of losing cultural identity
3	**Abaynou station**	Typical surrounding villages	The development of the slopes	Low Environmental awareness and education	Growing tourist pressure
4	**Pigeon cave**	Typical surrounding villages	Environmental education	Inaccessibility Lack of signage	Destruction of environments Possibility of losing cultural identity
5	**Assaka Basin**	The Destination with high biodiversity: magnificent landscapes – fauna and flora diversity – preserved and diversified ecosystem	Environmental education	Fragility of the most precious and most visited ecosystems	Failure to comply with Environmental management principal
6	**Asrir Oases**	Quality environment: a landscape heritage, an archaeological heritage and a cultural and historical heritage	The establishment of reception facilities on the ground such as rest areas; The development of tracks	Fragility of the most precious and mosvisited ecosystems; Risk of silting up and desertification	Failure to comply with environmental management Princi ples Growing tourist pressure

The promotion of geosites in the region understudy and its networking to constitute geotourism routes like certain themed circuits can constitute a factor of development and enhancement of this region of southern Morocco. These circuits have been designed to discover the geological and archaeological history of the region through all of the geosites, where it is possible to find information and infrastructures intended to the public. This policy may represent a new offer for encouraging the promotion of cultural tourism.

Geosites provide essential scientific information. They represent the beauty of the landscape, and allow reconstructing the history and the geological processes of the region. These archives of nature, very numerous and diverse in southern Morocco, will undoubtedly generate significant tourist flows if they are well valued.

CONCLUSION

The geographical location of the Oued Noun Oases gives this territory a great potential for sustainable development with an interesting geological experience that has not yet been exploited. Certain rules and tools are required systemically and responsibly to a development policy within the framework of an Oued Noun Oases development project and the creation of a geoterritorial image.

The observation scale begins at the local platform to take into account the problems, the different issues and the impacts on geosites. Development must, however, integrate a reflection on a global scale to consider external elements such as climatic factors, the structure of geosites and the policy adopted at the regional level. In this respect, the oases's diversity of exceptional landscapes predisposes it to play an important role in geotourism, which must respect the environments and the biodiversity. In this sense, care must be taken to promote respectful geotourism and geoheritage in the Oued Noun Oases in general and in the Amtoudi geosite and Asrir Oases in particular.

The target is to protect and preserve the local, cultural and natural geoheritage. It will be the same for the rationalization of socioeconomic activities and the involvement of all in a responsible and sustainable spirit.

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This strategy will constitute a real initiative for sustainable development and according to the charter that will be established, it will become possible to observe rules of respect for the environment, the geological and cultural heritage of the region.

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