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Event Tourism: Theory and Practice

Guest Editors:
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Aims & Scope

Tourism Today serves as an international, scholarly, and refereed journal aiming to promote and enhance research in the fields of tourism and hospitality. The journal is published by the College of Tourism and Hotel Management, Cyprus and is intended for readers in the scholarly community who deal with the tourism and hospitality industries, as well as professionals in the industry. *Tourism Today* provides a platform for debate and dissemination of research findings, new research areas and techniques, conceptual developments, and articles with practical application to any tourism or hospitality industry segment. Besides research papers, the journal welcomes book reviews, conference reports, case studies, research notes and commentaries.

Aims & Scope

The scope of the journal is international and all papers submitted are subject to strict double blind peer review by its Editorial Board and by international reviewers. The journal features conceptual and empirical papers, and editorial policy is to invite the submission of manuscripts from academics, researchers and industry practitioners. The Editorial Board will be looking particularly for articles about new trends and developments within the field of tourism and hospitality, and the application of new ideas and developments that are likely to affect tourism and hospitality in the future. The journal also welcomes submission of manuscripts in areas that may not be directly tourism-based but cover a topic that is of interest to researchers, educators and practitioners in the fields of tourism and hospitality.

Decisions regarding publication of submitted manuscripts are based on the recommendations of members of the Editorial Board and other qualified reviewers in an anonymous review process. Submitted articles are evaluated on their appropriateness, significance, clarity of presentation and conceptual adequacy. Negative reviews are made available to authors. The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent those of the Editorial Board of *Tourism Today* or of the College of Tourism and Hotel Management.

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the twelfth edition of *Tourism Today*, the journal of the College of Tourism and Hotel Management. The College of Tourism and Hotel Management continues to make the journal available to anyone free of charge from its website, as has been the case for many years now.

This is our second guest-edited edition and we are proud to have such quality submissions and capable guest editors. We are definitely honored to have had Suosheng Wang, Sotiris Hji-Avgoustis, and Yao-Yi Fu as guest editors for this edition. They have put together a high-quality issue on an important and expanding topic in the field.

This edition of the journal should be especially interesting to those interested in the specific topic under study, event tourism. In addition to those articles edited by the guest editors, there are additional articles that came to us via the normal submission process. The end result of this guest-edited edition is that there are six highly specialized papers dealing with event tourism while there are additional articles on other interesting topics of interest to others.

As has been the case for more than a decade now, comments that could assist us in improving the journal are appreciated. We hope that those who read the journal will take an active role in the journal by submitting research for our consideration. We at *Tourism Today* are always happy to see new submissions to the journal and are willing to get useful feedback to make *Tourism Today* a better journal.

We wish you a good reading.

Craig Webster
Editor-in-Chief, *Tourism Today*

NOTE FROM THE GUEST EDITORS

Event Tourism is defined as the systematic development, planning, marketing and management of events (temporary, structured attractions) intended to attract people traveling outside of their usual habitat. These events usually fall into three categories: cultural events, conferences and expositions, and sporting events.

Event tourism is a new area in academic institutions around the world and most event tourism research deals with topics on economic development and impacts, and event marketing and management from the corporate perspective. Event tourism related research is still in the early stage of development and requires more and active creation of knowledge and theory.

This special issue aims to foster the dissemination of high-quality research in practice and theories concerning the knowledge discovery from event tourism original research projects. Its emerging applications and usages can provide industry practitioners and academicians with solutions on how to capitalize on its offerings to improve the quality of life of host communities. We extend our appreciation to all the authors who submitted original research articles in all aspects of event tourism, including theoretical studies and practical applications. All submitted papers were peer-reviewed and selected on the basis of both their quality and their relevance to the theme of this special issue.

Suosheng Wang, Indiana University
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Guest Editors

The experience of organising folklore festivals: the case of Ismailia International Folklore Arts Festival (IIFAF)

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ABSTRACT

Festivals and special events are providing both economic and social benefits for host destinations. Recent studies dealing with festivals and events have focused on either understanding visitors' motivation or assessing the outcomes of such events. However, little research has been done to examine how festival organisers perceive the success/failure of their festivals and dealing with issues threatening the existence and viability of festivals. Thus, the purposes of this study are: (1) to analyze the present status of IIFAF and its main problems, (2) to explore the various aspects of IIFAF organisation, management and marketing strategies. The findings of the study revealed that lack of training, knowledge and awareness of festival organisers is the main threat to the existence of festivals. Other issues related to festival organisers' challenges have also been identified. Recommendations may assist stakeholders and organisers to better understand the challenges that face festivals and hence work on developing an effective and innovative management approach.

Keywords: Folklore festivals, IIFAF, economic and social impact, volunteers, marketing, organisers' perceptions

INTRODUCTION

Festivals, art and special events have been regarded as a worldwide tourism phenomenon (Getz, 1991) and special forms of tourism (Song *et al.*, 2012) that are considered positive sources of economic revenue for host destinations (Formica and Uysal, 1998; Litvin and Fetter, 2006; Kim and Morrison, 2005). Additionally, they are regarded as ways to boost sustainable tourism by maximising the social benefits and facilitating learning about local culture and traditions (McKercher *et al.*, 2006). In the U.S. for example, there are approximately 10,000 festivals accounting for over 31 million visitors (Lawton and Weaver, 2010). Economic crises and government budget balance are among the factors that affecting the viability of festivals, and hence professionals and experts have aimed to identifying good practices and search for solutions for festivals and events to survive and thrive (Lee and Goldblatt, 2012).

In different forms of festivals (e.g. public, private and non-for profit) that have different focus (i.e. culture, sporting, community), careful management is required in order to keep an event economically and socially viable in the current highly competitive environment (Carlsen and Andersson, 2011). Despite the widespread consensus that attracting visitors is a major goal for organisers (Getz *et al.*, 1998), Carelson and Andersson (2011) indicated that both private and non-profit festivals managers are relatively more concerned about financial issues whereas, public festival managers are more focussed on branding.

Festivals are considered rich areas for management and organisational researchers, however, Carlsen and Andersson (2011: 83) asserted that “festivals have rarely been managed strategically”; festival strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation are regarded as fashionable ways that facilitate achieving the event objectives. Comprehensive analysis of strategies employed to enhance understanding of difficult festivals management situation is crucial, particularly in relation to financial, economic and social issues. Employing stakeholder theory by event managers inevitably lead to better handling of communication among all stakeholders involved in the event, achieving better communication and hence, maximizing the positive outcomes (Reid, 2011). In addition, good management of human resources (i.e. volunteers, collaborators and employees) in festivals, are ways to ensure the success of the festival and ensure knowledge-transfer between stakeholders (Rulling and Pedersen, 2010). Festivals are also considered a crucial way for promoting better understanding between guests and the host community (Getz, 1991).

In evaluating festivals success, three main factors have been identified by Prentice and Andersen (2003); first, the extent to which the festival is able to attract visitors, second, its ability to attract performers and third, its positive impact in modifying the destination image.

Festivals marketing and its role in attracting visitors and promoting for host cities have been highlighted in a number of studies; Devine *et al.* (2010), discuss how creative marketing through website design encouraged participants and spectators of the Ironman Triathlon events to extend their stay and spend more in the host region. Similarly, Devine and Devine (2010) demonstrated how The Milk Cup tournament has its own website which provides information on key areas such as the history of the tournament, tournament rules and past winners and results. Tickets sale increase is also considered a sign of the success of a festival in attracting visitors (Carlsen *et al.*, 2010). Yet, organisers’ creativity in generating revenues for their festivals and special events has been a crucial element in relation to the success of such events, particularly under the current economic climate (Masterman, 2006).

Festivals ability to attract performers and promote repeated visits is linked to satisfaction and loyalty; facilities provided during the festivals and handling performers’ complaints effectively positively affect performers’ loyalty via satisfaction. Loyalty of performers and visitors is a sign of the success of festivals that contribute not only to festivals themselves (i.e. guarantee a market share) but also to local communities by generating economic benefits and promote community cohesiveness and social pride (Yoon *et al.*, 2010).

A festival is seen by scholars (e.g. Andersson and Getz, 2009) as a tool for increasing tourism in host cities and positively changing tourists' image of the host destinations. Enhancing destination image is related to how the media is projecting the festival; therefore, Carlsen and Andersson (2011) suggested that organisers need to consider adopting a media organisation as a sponsor.

Despite the wide range of literature that focused on the strategic management of festivals (i.e. Anderson and Getz, 2007; Carlsen and Andersson, 2011), little is available in relation to how organisers perceive festivals success/failure and what effective strategies are suggested in relation to helping the festivals managers in facing challenges of both a practical and technical nature that threaten the viability of festivals (Carlsen *et al.*, 2010), particularly in developing countries, where festivals managers may suffer from scarce resources and limited training opportunities.

This paper discusses a major cultural festival; Ismailia International Folklore Arts Festival (IIFAF), a dance/drama festival organised in the city of Ismailia, Egypt; each year folkloric troupes of different nationalities gather in Ismailia to present the culture and art of their countries through dance and theatre performances. IIFAF is an event of 8-10 days and participants are between 800-2000 folk dancers from all over the world. Examples of countries which contributed previously in the festival are: European countries including Poland, Spain, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovakia, Italy, Turkey, Romania, Georgia, Belarus, Macedonia and Bulgaria; Latin American countries Argentina, Puerto Rico and Colombia, African countries (Kenya and Ghana) and Asian (Malaysia) in addition to Australia, Canada, Palestine, Syria (Egypt State Information Service, 2010).

IIFAF is traditionally a yearly festival; however, subsequent to 1985, it ran for five consecutive sessions. Following this, however, IIFAF ceased to run for five consecutive years and returned once again in 1995 until 2002. Although in 2002, it was agreed by IIFAF chairman and committee that the festival should be organised every two years, IIFAF stopped after its 14th session in 2004 until 2008 (Egypt State Information Service, 2010; Ismailia online, 2012). Ismailia Folk festival is distinct from other festivals in having spatially concentrated venues and in being open to the general public. A steady growth in the international visitors to Ismailia should be expected. It was noticed by the researcher that the IIFAF has been either cancelled or delayed in a number of years. Additionally, the researcher faced a major challenge in finding information related to the festival in previous sessions (See Table 1).

Table 1: IIFAF previous sessions and contributors

Session	Year	Contributors
5th	1989	18 countries
12th	2001	32 countries
13th	2002	24 countries
15th	2008	16 countries
16th	2010	16 countries

Source: (Aawsat, 2012; Ismailia, 2008; Abd Elsamad, 2010; Ismailiamall, 2010)

In the 5th session of the festival in 1989, the total cost of the festival was estimated to be approximately 1.6 million Egyptian pounds. Sponsors at that time were able to cover the total cost of the festival without putting financial pressure on Ismailia governorate (Elbashayer, 2008). In its 13th session, the total cost of the festival was estimated at 1.3 million Egyptian pounds and sponsors included stakeholders, such as Culture Ministry, Tourism Ministry, Egyptian Tourist Authority Media Ministry, and a number of business men (Wady, 2002). At the time of this research, it was indicated by the festival chairman that the current cost of the festival is estimated at 4 million Egyptian pounds; a situation which puts Ismailia governorate and Ministry of Culture under financial pressure to cover the cost of the festival.

Kim and Uysal (2003) indicated that little attention has been given to the perception of festival organizers on the socio-economic impact of festivals, and their success and failure. In addition, literature on festivals sustainability and survival is described by Lawton and Weaver (2010) as limited. Hence, the aims of this study are:

- To analyze the present status of IIFAF and its main problems
- To explore the various aspects of IIFAF organisation, management, marketing strategies employed, and issues affecting its viability.

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the aim of this study which is exploring reasons behind the survival of IIFAF, a qualitative approach was used. Eleven in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the key organisers of the festival. Since the festival is based in the city of Ismailia, the organising committee is based in the city council of Ismailia governorate. The organising committee consists of employees in the council who are responsible for organising the festival in addition to their daily tasks related to their regular jobs. Interviews were conducted with the Chairman, Public Relations manager, Tourism Manager, Treasurer, and seven other employees involved in the organisation of the festival.

All interviews were conducted in the Arabic language. The data collected from the interviews

were recorded, translated and then analysed using the thematic analysis approach. At the first stage of the process, the author reviewed the transcripts a number of times, searching for themes that were relevant to the aims of the study (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The themes that emerged from the data included ‘planning and organisation’, ‘community cohesiveness’, ‘volunteers’, ‘marketing and promotions’, ‘organisers’ perceptions’, and finally, ‘economic and ‘social benefits’.

In the following section, each theme will be discussed in detail, while the final section of this paper highlights the studies’ recommendations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are mainly reflective of respondents organising IIFAF, the respondents’ gender ratio was different to that of event industry in general with a majority of males who had four-year college degrees. All respondents indicated that the task of organising the festival was undertaken in addition to their jobs requirements as employees in the Ismailia governorate. It was indicated that during the festival, volunteers were also recruited to help. IIFAF shows used to be held at outdoor public spaces or parks, but are now common in multiple facilities and venues city-wide.

FESTIVALS PLANNING AND ORGANISATIONS

Since IIFAF is a festival in which the host destination is taking a full financial responsibility for participating teams, it was revealed during the interviews that planning for IIFAF is focused on managing accommodation spaces, food and beverage, transportation for the dancers, and providing dancers with additional ‘pocket money’ (300 L.E. each). In addition preparation for the program of the shows had no tremendous financial investments in pavilion constructions and infrastructure development in the city of Ismailia.

Respondents indicated that planning for IIFAF starts at least 6 months prior to the date of the festival. After contacting CIOFF (International Council of Organisations of Folklore Festivals and Folklore Arts), invitations are sent to the potential participating teams and consequently organisers receive information about numbers of visitors and when times for arrivals are scheduled. As pointed out by the Public Relation Manager, “Organisers start preparing for the festival 6 months before the starting date, sub teams starts 1 month before”.

Accreditation has been considered an issue that needed to be explored during the interviews. It was mentioned during the interviews that IIFAF is accredited from CIOFF as an international festival. CIOFF maintained that the overall numbers of international Festivals were estimated at 355 (CIOFF, 2012), however, IIFAF was not listed among these, although it was indicated in the media that IIFAF was supposed to be organised in August 2012. The reason for that was revealed during the interviews with the IIFAF treasurer:

“Egypt is used to be a member of the International Organisation of CIOFF but not anymore because someone decided not to pay for the membership fees of \$350”.

The Treasurer indicated that being a member in CIOFF is not regarded as important and the festival will retain his international status although Egypt is not a member. There was no available information on those responsible for ceasing the funding, nor information about who is responsible for retrieving the CIOFF membership.

All respondents indicated that no training had been provided to them in relation to organising and planning for festivals and special events since the 1st session of the festival in 1985. Their perception about their own performance in organising the IIFAF was that it was “good” and they all described the festival as successful. However, there was a mutual agreement among them that training is urgently needed and also cooperation with academics with a background in tourism and events-planning would be greatly beneficial. As the Public Relations Manager emphasised, “we need academic help in planning for the IIFAF”. Indeed, well planned festivals and events would be used as a tool for further understanding a viable community development strategy (Song *et al.*, 2012).

COMMUNITY COHESIVENESS

Although IIFAF organisers are not aware of the latest literature on event management and stakeholder theory, they were able to communicate with the stakeholders involved in a previous session of the festival, and particularly sponsors, as evidenced in an interview with the Media Manager:

“We all cooperate. The financial support is mainly from different sources; Tourism Ministry, Culture Ministry, Suez Canal Authority. There were also donations from Suez Canal University, they used to provide the students’ hostel to accommodate the guests, and other donations were from different companies and Institutions (i.e. the Olympic village and Complex Educational Languages).”

Similar to Rulling and Pedersens’ (2010) conclusion about film-festival organisation and how it would include managing multiple stakeholders, the organisation of folklore festivals needs to take account of and manage relations among different stakeholders involved in a specific event, particularly when an event has a number of different sponsors. IIFAF Media Manager described their previous performance in relation to managing various stakeholders as “successful”, however, IIFAF chairman emphasised that the lack of communication between the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture was causing problems. He pointed out that the two ministries are not cooperating financially in supporting the festival, “There is no communication between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Tourism”. He added “The role of the Ministry of Tourism is very limited, especially regarding sponsorships. It is helping only in airport welcoming and providing brochures about places in Egypt”. In addi-

tion, respondents asserted that the Ministry of Tourism is avoiding supporting activities or events if it became obvious that the Ministry of Culture is providing help and support for a particular event. Perhaps the Ministry of Tourism needs to be reminded of its crucial role in promoting for cities of Egypt and provide more support to events and festivals.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the human resources that can add value to festivals and events. Understanding volunteers' motivations assists festival organisers and planners in assigning different tasks to them according to their existing skills, knowledge and area of interests. In addition, it helps in developing the competency of volunteers and other individually required knowledge and skills related to tasks assigned (Barron and Rihova, 2011). IIFAF organisers are dealing with volunteers' applications differently. Yet, volunteers' motivations and skills (particularly in using foreign languages) are the first criterion for dealing with the number of volunteers' applications, as asserted by IIFAF media manager:

“Volunteers have to have good skills in using different languages, such as Indo-Chinese and European languages. They would be required to have graduated from languages schools and universities. In relation to other skills, another respondent added:

“We used to deal with big numbers of volunteers applications, we do interviews to test their skills, general information, culture, history, and personality and judge whether they will be able to deal with the guests”.

Other criteria, such as, volunteers' background and personality would come next when considering volunteers for festivals. ‘Motivation’ seems to have no weight in deciding on IIFAF volunteers. However, it was revealed in the interview with the IIFAF Public Relations Manager, that in the past, very limited training has been provided for volunteers. If offered, the minimal training would mainly be related to dealing with dancer-groups, health and safety, tourism services and general advice in emergency situations. As the Public Relations Manager stated:

“We arrange for seminars to be delivered by the tourism police for the volunteers to be aware of what they are allowed to do and what may consider forbidden legally. We try to get them ready to answer questions asked by guests; these questions may be related to culture, religion, tourism areas, services...etc.”

Volunteering in festivals is considered a strategy for young people to improve their skills and knowledge in relation to the different roles and tasks assigned to them. It can be used positively to enhance individuals' professional skills, particularly in such areas as team working, communication and networking (Barron and Rihova, 2011). Consequently, organisers and planners may need to shift their focus from only looking at the volunteers' skills to asking broader questions, such those related to their motivations, potentials and opportunities for developing better careers.

Generally, the IIFAF volunteer team comprised a total of 25 groups (10 volunteers each). Tasks related to such areas as visitors' accommodation, transportation and guidance, and these jobs were assigned to groups according to the skills of its members. University undergraduate and postgraduate students, typically in Language and Tourism courses at the local university (i.e. Suez Canal University), are at the top of the volunteers list. Other recently graduated young people are also recruited if needed.

Although recruiting and training volunteers in special events and festivals is criticized for being a costly process and present financial challenges for organisers (Rolfe, 1992), IIFAF volunteers are recruited with full awareness that no funding is provided for them. In addition, their limited training is mostly focused on seminars provided by the festival sponsors. Respondents indicated that volunteers consider the benefits of their participation as mainly socially focused (i.e. attending the shows and communicating with dancers). In addition, it is also considered a means of gaining work experience. Due to these factors, they normally perform their tasks well:

“During the festival, volunteers always do a good job; they deal well with guests and even form strong friendships with visitors and performers. Also, tourism flourishes during the time of the festival.”

Respondents argued that tourism in the city of Ismailia flourishes only during the time of the festivals, particularly when the shows are organised in public places. Indeed, they all agreed that there has been no evidence of visitors and performers being motivated to visit the city outside of the time of festivals.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Festival marketing is crucial in attracting visitors and create economic revenue to destinations. Creating a well-designed website has proven to be an effective tool for promoting events and festivals, and hence, helps in increasing visitor activities during such events (Devine *et al.*, 2010). The IIFAF website has been created¹. Unfortunately, however, the website is not available, and during the time of this research, only a few brochures were retrieved by the researcher. These included brief introductions for the teams participating, provided a program, and offered some advertisements for local restaurants and hotels. Limited information was available about the city of Ismailia as the host city and little was available about the culture and tradition of the local community.

Organisers of IIFAF were overwhelmed about the fact that the festival used to be covered by international media accompanying the dancers. As the IIFAF Media Manager asserted:

¹<http://www.ismailiaiff.org>

“The festival is accompanied by a number of international media coming with the teams to cover the event, also national and international newspapers have their crucial role in transferring the information. Media has an important role in showing the international community how the Egyptians are welcoming their guests.”

IIFAF Organisers depend on national and international media to broadcast the festival with little consideration given to any other forms of marketing and promotion, or the use of volunteers for such a task. In other festivals (e.g. Melbourne, 2006), promotion was achieved through website coverage, television and some radio broadcasts. In addition, alerts were sent through direct mail, e-mail and print media to promote the festival, attract visitors and help raise publicity internationally about the event destination (Strategic Direction, 2011). It is suggested that more innovative approaches towards marketing and promotion would maximise positive outcomes for the festival. The use of social media (i.e. Facebook and Twitter) would no doubt, help to promote social publicity of the event both locally and internationally.

IIFAF ORGANISERS PERCEPTIONS

IIFAF, through the efforts of often inexperienced and untrained organisers seems to have achieved success in previous years. The IIFAF Treasurer was proud to state that IIFAF was nominated by the CIOFF representative as the best festival in 2004, and the second best festival in the year 2000. As the Treasurer stated himself, “We were the 2nd best festival in 2000 according to CIOFF organisation”. The IIFAF Media Manager admitted that the festival was successful when the shows were organised in public spaces and venues: “The festival in its early days in 1985 was very successful, especially when shows were organised in the streets among the public. It has been less successful since”. From the respondents’ points of view, the festival achieves success. In addition, the respondents judged the success of the festival by their ability to manage the various aspects related to welcoming and accommodating dancers.

On the other hand, some scholars (e.g. Prentice and Andersen, 2003) seem to be judging the success of festivals differently. They maintain that “the festival is judged successful in its international arts positioning in terms of the core of serious repeated tourists it attracts”. Additionally, Carlsen *et al.* (2010) noted that organisers consider a festival successful when visitor-attendance and ticket sales increase. However, other issues such as visitor satisfaction, program development and knowledge transfer, are considered crucial in judging the festival’s success or failure. Indeed, the overall goal should not simply be the hosting of a successful event; it must be hosting a successful event that complements the overall ‘tourism product’ (Litvin and Fetter, 2006 p. 48).

IIFAF has been organised in the city of Ismailia; a city of approximately 4482.8 km² or 0.46% of Egypt’s area, along the west bank of the Suez Canal. It is the capital of the Canal region where the Suez Canal Authority has its headquarters, and where the Suez Canal Uni-

versity is established. Ismailia city is approximately 120 km from Cairo. It was indicated by the Public Relations Manager that the city has been credited by hosting the festival:

“I think Ismailia is now well known internationally because of this festival, we have been trying to show that the city has a number of attractions; we used to organise trips for the guests to show the diverse tourism product”.

Cities and villages have been competing in attracting festivals and special events as it facilitates communication and is an opportunity to share the culture between visitors and the host community (Okech, 2011). Yu *et al.* (2012) indicated that successful special events should involve promoting the host destination to enhance its image among visitors. Although it was confirmed by another respondent that the festival helped in promoting the city of Ismailia “Ismailia is a small city, however, IIFAF made it well known in the events and festivals world”, it was highlighted later in the interviews with all respondents that some festival dancers booked holidays after finishing the festival in other places in Egypt (e.g. Cairo, Sharm Elshiekh and Hurgada). There was little evidence that visitors and tourist numbers to the city of Ismailia increased. The IIFAF Chairman highlighted another crucial issue during the interview which is related to the safety of dancers during the festival:

“A major problem accompanying securing the group safety, despite the police being in the presence of such groups, is the belief that Ismailia is not a safe PLACE and therefore police members have to be there to protect them everywhere they go. Guests used to have limited freedom in going out by themselves without police protection which affected their enjoyment of the festival.”

The respondent argues that in IIFAF, excessive security instructions and practices are negatively affecting visitors’ image about the city of Ismailia and perhaps Egypt generally. Other respondents also emphasised that dancers have previously expressed their discomfort in relation to being continuously accompanied by the police. This also seems to be limiting their chances to communicate with the local community and learn about the Egyptian culture. Carlsen *et al.* (2010) discuss how festival organisers need to be innovative in relation to managing different aspects of their festival in order to attract visitors to the host city and remain viable. Organisers are not under pressure to be innovative in order to generate extra revenue, for example, encourage visitors to extend their stay in the local area. It was clear during the interviews that organisers have previously found it difficult to manage the number of dancers contributing in festivals. The lack of proper planning also leaves organisers under pressure to getting enough spaces to accommodate dancers and manage issues related to their short stay during the time of the festival. While on the one hand international attendance will sustain economic revenue for the host city, on the other hand, scarce resources tend to be a problem particularly when the host city is still under tourism development and has little resources to accommodate the large numbers of tourists. Indeed, there is an urgent need to recognize a potential range of motivations for visitors to the festival, and also the range of resources available for them. In addition, the city of Ismailia needs to carefully look at the position of

IIFAF within the overall tourism plan of the city and provide the required resources for tourism development to satisfy future demands of potential visitors.

ORGANISERS CHALLENGES

Festivals organisers are faced by a number of challenges; mostly related to marketing, financial planning and programming in order for the festival to remain viable (Carlseon *et al.*, 2010). Developing knowledge and assessing the outcomes of the festival probably prevent an event failure and discontinuation. IIFAF chairman asserted:

“There is no economic feasibility study for the event, we don’t know how to get the greatest benefit out of it, we don’t know how to employ the international media in promoting Ismailia and Egypt..., we don’t have a clear plan of what should be done.”

IIFAF can be beneficial socially and economically if well planned. Organisers need to be trained about the latest issues in relation to planning and managing the festival. The IIFAF Treasurer pointed out that the issues they used to face in festival sponsorships prevented any consideration of training to either organisers or volunteers. On the other hand, Public Relations Manager asserted that even if money is available, training options have not considered as “important” or a “first priority”. Perhaps lack of awareness of the importance of festival planning, management and organisation are among the major problem in that case.

A crucial aim of this piece of research was to find out reasons behind the unsustainable nature of the IIFAF festival and explore possible causes for not hosting the festival this year (2012). Respondents highlighted a number of reasons. Over half of the respondents (including the Chairman and Treasurer) indicated that lack of sponsorship is the main challenge as it has been difficult for organisations to support the festival financially. The Treasurer concluded, “Sponsorship tends to be problematic, we are wishing to have fixed sponsors for the festival”. The rest of respondents (including public relation manager) emphasised that the political situation of the country is the cause; they indicated that securing the safety of the groups would be a difficult task, particularly after the Egyptian revolution.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

Dwyer *et al.* (2005: 357) indicated that special events are considered one of the major generators of economic benefits for host destinations. They argued that since the impact of an event on the local economy is usually greater than its impact on the hosting country, the local council is advised to undertake an “*economic impact study*” before deciding whether to support a particular event. IIFAF chairmen asserted: “I think the festival achieved its aim and proves that Egypt is safe and able to handle such big events. Since the festival was first organised in 1985, no major problems happened.”

Andersson and Getz (2009) argue that festivals can be divided into three categories according to their ownership (public, private and not-for-profit). Although IIFAF is a public festival as it has been organised by the government, it can also be seen as a not-for-profit for a number of reasons: first, attending the shows is free for local communities as well as visitors or tourists. As asserted by an employee, "Tickets are free and the local community are benefiting from coming to watch the free shows". The treasurer added, "Attending the shows is free for everyone, however, we do have invitations and we organise the entry to avoid any problems from crowds". Anderson and Getz (2009) argue that a free-entry festival is literally for everyone, and governments justify them by reference to the desired externalities they generate, such as social cohesion, civic pride, or heightened tourist attractiveness. Secondly, during the festival, respondents confirmed that international attendance is not the focus and their main aim is to accommodate the performers. Consequently international attendance during the festival is very low as confirmed by IIFAF Public Relations Manager "Only very few people from the international community are coming to watch the festival".

However, even non-for-profit festivals which in some cases can involve governments (e.g. a study of Canadian visitor and convention bureaux) is being organised when a destination promotion is needed during off-peak time (Getz *et al.*, 1998).

There is no doubt that festivals and special events do have positive social impact, such as creating community cohesion (Yolal *et al.*, 2012). Respondents indicated that the core aim of IIFAF is related to the social benefits for the teams participating and the local community, which was reflected on the festivals' previous logos (i.e. "*Art is the language of Peace*" (Wady, 2002) and "*Together for peace*" (Ismailia, 2008) and confirmed by IIFAF chairman "The festival is an invitation for peace" and emphasised by another employee: "It's a good way of enhancing communication between Egyptians and the international guests from different parts of the world, everyone here is valuing the festival and looking forward to organise it again".

Regarding the net economic values of festivals, Kim and Uysal (2003) indicated that most festivals/events organizations' yearly revenue range was between \$250,000 and \$500,000. IIFAF organisers have no estimations on the festival economic revenues. Indirect benefits have been acknowledged by the IIFAF Treasurer, "Some volunteers had friends among the guests, and few of them have even been invited by their friends from Bulgaria and Austria. Additionally, I heard that a couple of previous volunteers managed to get job opportunities abroad through their international friends from the festival".

Assessment of economic benefits of the IIFAF is crucial for awareness of any financial loss for the host city resulting from the organisation of the festival. Yu (2012) provided an example of an event (e.g. Shanghai Expo) in which many host cities experienced negative economic impact after the event.

In Scotland, international festivals were originally developed as a celebratory leisure product,

with objectives to promote both international arts to Scotland and Scottish arts internationally (Prentice and Andersen, 2003). Similarly, IIFAF is considered by the organisers a cultural festival; its main focus is promoting and exchanging arts and culture from different places of the world, in addition to promoting Egyptian art to dancers contributing to the festival as demonstrated by IIFAF chairman: "It is a cultural event, there are some economic benefits but we don't have accurate figures for it ... The festival benefits small businesses and injects money into the city of Ismailia"

Successful festivals and special events have proven to be crucial means for developing tourism infrastructure in the host destination in the Arab world (e.g. the Dubai Shopping Festival (DSF) and the Jerrash Festival of Culture and the Arts) (Alharmaneh, 2005 cited in Weber and Ali-Knight, 2012). They can be a key driver for travel to certain destinations, particularly during the off-peak times.

Anderson and Getz (2009) argue that governments should review their festival agenda and carefully decide what to promote and develop. Indeed, the various outcomes of festivals, such as its economic, environmental, social and cultural implications on the host destination must be evaluated (Getz *et al.*, 2010)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Event managers and organisers of festivals around the world are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of such events in attracting international visitors and generating income for the host destination. After being nominated by CIOFF as the best International festival for 2004, IIFAF organisers have been pulled back as a result of the problems and challenges faced.

This study aimed to analyze the present status of IIFAF and its main problems and to explore the various aspects of IIFAF organisation, management, marketing strategies employed, and issues affecting its viability. In the case of IIFAF, it was revealed that sponsorships, political issues and lack of organisers' motivation are factors affecting the viability of the festival and result in such outcomes as delay or cancellation. Raising knowledge and awareness among organisers and planners about the importance of festivals and special events would be critical and lead to more innovative approaches in planning and organising events of this type.

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge about festival management, and the findings discussed here should be of interest to festival and event organisers. The study revealed a number of issues; Firstly, lack of training and experience on the part of the IIFAF organisers were reasons for which the cancellation occurred. This was linked to CIOFF membership and credibility. In addition, it affected the organisers vision on important issues related to generating revenues and attracting international visitors. Secondly, lack of communication and cooperation among IIFAF sponsorships made it difficult for organisers to

plan for the festival, particularly due to the lack of cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Tourism. It was revealed in this piece of research that the Ministry of Tourism considers festivals and special event activities as related directly to the Ministry of Culture and consequently, tourism officials were not central to the process, except for help in welcoming guests to the airport. Tourism officials in Egypt need to understand their crucial role in supporting festivals and special events for the benefits they bring to the tourism industry. Thirdly, organisers need to shift their focus and look beyond volunteers' language skills, to such aspects as their motivations, potentials and the types of benefits this type of involvement brings to their careers. Fourthly, creative marketing for festivals has a positive role in attracting visitors and generating revenues (Devine *et al.*, 2010). Organisers and planners have their own plan in relation to marketing their festival rather than depending on the international media. An effective marketing plan will provide opportunity for the host destination to project its culture, authenticity and share aspects of its identity with other communities around the world. Additionally, excessive safety and security instructions and practices are negatively affecting visitors' image about the festival host city and perhaps the host destination. Festival promotion plans need to project the positive aspects of the festival and the host destination and facilitate communications between visitors and the host community. Finally, organisers' perceptions in relation to the success or failure of their festival need to be taken into account only when evidences of its economic and social benefits are available.

A future vision is required; linking festival aims and objectives with its outcomes must be the focus. Indeed, the study concludes that IIFAF organisers should apply the strategy of developing folklore festival tourism based on best practice and cooperate with event management academics.

The results of this study also need to be viewed in light of its limitations. These limitations, along with the study's findings, suggest directions for further research. This study focussed on the planning and organisation aspects of IIFAF; data from this study were collected from only one international folklore festival in Egypt.

In future research, firstly, visitors' motivations and local community perceptions needs to be investigated. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, festivals contribution to sustainable tourism needs to be evaluated, particularly in terms of its overall social impact and the use of culture as a tool for educating visitors and performers about the destination. In addition, other similar government and not-for-profit international festivals need to be explored before further conclusions and generalisations are drawn.

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Sport fan and non-sport fans' perceptions about hosting a bicycle sporting event in a mountain park

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on differences and similarities between people who identify themselves as avid, casual, or non-sport fans. Attitudes and behavioural intentions relating to a small scale sport event in a Canadian national park were examined. Significant differences were found regarding the appropriateness of hosting the sport event in the park, negative and positive impacts on visitor and resident park experience, and perceived crowding. Categories of sport fans appear to be a useful tool for segmenting park users/residents for understanding how small scale sports events may affect visitors' and locals' park experience. Several practical suggestions are provided to help reduce negative aspects of hosting the sport event in Banff National Park.

Keywords: sport event, sport fan, bicycle race, perceptions, impacts

INTRODUCTION

This research note examines residents' and visitors' perceptions of Bike Fest, a small scale competitive sport event held in Banff National Park (BNP), Alberta, Canada. To enhance our understanding of sport tourists and perceived impacts of sporting events in destinations, three categories, avid, casual, and non-sport fans were used to frame the analysis. Jones (2008) suggests "that the state of knowledge [on sport fans] lacks clear linkages, especially in terms of the fan as a sport tourist..." (p.161). There is a need for descriptive understanding of the sport fan as a sport tourist (Jones, 2008). This increased understanding can also assist destinations to optimize the experience of different sport fans and non-sport fans.

LITERATURE REVIEW

SPORT FANS

Sport fan motivations have been associated with but not limited to identifying with the team (Smith & Stewart, 2007), appreciating the sport (Hinch & Higham, 2005), event promotions

and entertainment (Bernthal & Graham, 2003; McDonald & Rascher, 2000), social interactions (Bernthal & Graham, 2003; Kulczycki & Hyatt, 2005), sportscape (e.g., parking, stadium) (Wakefield & Sloan, 1995), and nostalgia (Kulczycki & Hyatt, 2005). Sport fans do not express the same level of interest, commitment, or enjoyment towards sports and/or sport teams (Funk & James, 2001; Smith & Stewart, 2007; Sutton, McDonald, & Milne, 1997). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate how sport fans and non-sport fans perceive sporting events within various destinations and settings.

SPORT EVENTS

Festivals and events vary in size from local/regional scales to larger mega and hallmark events. They are established to attract and retain visitors to and residents of host destinations (Getz, 2008). Many desired outcomes are sought, some of which include: community engagement (Chalip, 2006; Gibson, Willming, & Holdnak, 2003), urban renewal (Misener & Mason, 2006), destination image and tourism (Chalip & McGuirty, 2004; Getz, 2008; Higham, 1999). Weed (2010) suggested certain places can become associated with specific sports and therefore influence the meaning of the destination. When sport events are integrated into a destination's suite of offerings they can be effective avenues for marketing the destination (Chalip & McGuirty, 2004; Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2010) and enhance the experience of sport enthusiasts (Hinch & Higham, 2004; Smith & Stewart, 2007).

Higham (1999) explained that small scale sport events often fit better within the host destination and have fewer of the negative impacts associated with mega events. These events can involve the host community and can attract local and distant spectators. Sport events, especially those designed to promote tourism, can be viewed positively (e.g., community pride (Veltri, Miller, & Harris, 2009; Ziakas, 2010)). Negative outcomes can also be experienced by local residents (e.g., congestion (Ohmann, Jones, & Wilkes, 2006)). Tourists who visit a destination for reasons unrelated to the sport event can also experience impacts, both positive and negative (Fourie & Spronk, 2011; Lee & Taylor, 2005). While research on small scale sport events exists, there is a noticeable literature gap encompassing the impacts of small scale sport events within special landscapes (i.e., a national park). Destination managers seek to achieve resident related goals such as enhanced quality of life, and tourism-related goals such as optimized experiences and attracting and maintaining a desired number of visitors. To inform managers decisions we have selected a number of variables (i.e., perceptions of event appropriateness, crowding, displacement, enjoyment, as well as future visitation and event recommendation intentions). In sum, this paper seeks to illustrate the perceptions of residents and visitors regarding the impact of a small scale sport event; its unique contribution is the utilization of sport fan segments to expand understanding of small scale sport events.

METHODS AND SAMPLE

Data were collected as part of a larger study that explored the hosting of special events within BNP. This paper reports data collected at one of these events, a sporting event, called

the Banff Bike Fest, which included five elements: family and children's races, time trials, a criterium, and an invitational road race. The event offered various opportunities for spectating and participating in a variety of locations within BNP during the two day event. The context for this study, Banff National Park, is an iconic tourism destination that hosts more than 3 million visitors annually. The park has one town site, which houses more than 7,500 full time residents plus seasonal tourism workers (Statistics Canada, 2012). In addition to recreational and tourism pursuits, a main goal of the park is the conservation of biodiversity and mountain landscapes. A moratorium on new special events, such as Bike Fest, existed throughout much of first decade of the 21st Century. Parks Canada, the parks' management agency funded the study to investigate the outcomes associated with the permitting of new events in its mountain parks.

Bike Fest participants, visitors to BNP, and full-time residents were surveyed; only visitors and residents' responses are reported here. Residents of BNP were defined as individuals whose main residence was located in BNP, all other respondents, both overnight and day trippers, were categorized as visitors. A self-completion survey was distributed to every fifth individual intercepted at prominent locations within BNP (i.e., the Town Site, scenic lookouts, along the Bike Fest race routes). Potential participants were asked to return the completed survey in a postage paid envelop once they arrived home. The survey was designed to examine experiences and motivations about visiting/residing in BNP, interest in bicycling and sport tourism, and sport fan and travel behaviors. Approximately 1149 surveys were distributed between June 20 and 22, 2008 from 9 am to 7 pm; 51 residents and 213 visitors returned their surveys for a response rate of 23%. This response rate is similar to other recent studies conducted in BNP (Halpenny & Wang, 2008); due to heavy surveying of Banff residents and visitors it is speculated that survey fatigue may have contributed to a low response rate.

Respondents self-selected their personal sport fan identification as avid (n=21), frequent (n=72) (these two categories were later combined and labelled as avid (n=93) to simplify analysis), casual (n=110), or not a sport fan (n=53); 8 participants failed to identify their sport fan type. This question was about their interest in sport in general, and was not specific to bicycle racing. A similar classification was used by Bull (2006). Different surveys were used to measure visitors' and residents' perspectives; however, only four survey items varied between these questionnaires (e.g., for residents: "I wanted to remain in BNP this weekend so I would enjoy Bike Fest" and for visitors: "I wanted to visit BNP this weekend so I would enjoy Bike Fest.") Residents and visitors were combined into one sample for analysis purposes, however for the items where differences in phrasing existed for visitors and residents, these were reported separately. Data were analyzed using SPSS 18.0; descriptive statistics and one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to examine differences between (a) avid sport fans, (b) casual sport fans, and (c) non-sport fans.

Forty-four men and 44 women were grouped into the avid sport fan category with an average age of 41 years old. Forty seven casual sport fans were male and 50 were female; their average age was 43 years old. Twelve males and 37 females identified themselves as not being

sport fans and had an average age of 45 years. Household income levels of avid sport fans were slightly higher than the other two categories; however education levels were similar with a majority of participants having achieved a university bachelor degree.

RESULTS

Appropriateness of the setting was measured with two items with a 5-point scale; similar results were observed in response to these items (Table 1). “The social and cultural atmosphere of BNP makes it an appropriate location for Bike Fest” was more agreeable to avid sport fans (M=3.62) than casual (M=3.37) and non-sport fans (M=3.00). Avid sport (M=4.10) fans agreed more strongly to the statement “The physical landscape of BNP makes it an appropriate site for Bike Fest” than casual (M=3.72) and non-sport fans (M=3.27). An one-way ANOVA test revealed a significant difference between the avid sport fans and non-sport fans for all statements at the $p < .05$ level: $F(2, 215)=3.9, p=0.02$, and $F(2, 214)=9.0, p=0.00$ respectively.

Table 1: Appropriateness Items

Social and Cultural Atmosphere of BNP makes it an appropriate location for Bike Fest							
	Number	Mean	df	df2	F	Sig.	Eta squared
Avid Sport Fans	83	3.62	2	215	3.910	p = .021	0.035
Non-sport Fans	38	3.00					
The Physical Landscape of BNP makes it an appropriate site for Bike Fest							
	Number	Mean	df	df2	F	Sig.	Eta squared
Avid Sport Fans	83	4.10	2	214	8.951	p = .037	0.077
Casual Sport Fans	97	3.72					
Avid Sport Fans	83	4.10	2	214	8.951	p = .000	
Non-sport Fans	37	3.27					

*Appropriateness items were measured on a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree).

Significant differences between groups were observed for half of the items used to measure the impact of the event on park residents and visitors (Table 2). These included: “Bike Fest reduced my access to a favourite place in Banff N.P.”; avid sport fans (M=1.81), casual (M=1.95), and non-sport fans (M=2.37), and “Bike Fest increased my enjoyment of the Banff N.P.”; avid sport fans (M=3.43), casual (M=2.74), and non-sport fans (M=2.43). For residents of Banff “I wanted to remain in Banff N.P. this weekend so I would enjoy Bike Fest” revealed differences between avid sport fans (M=3.48) and non-sport fans (M=1.90) but not

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casual sport fans (M=2.60) ($p < 0.5$). For visitors: “I wanted to visit Banff N.P. this weekend so I could enjoy Bike Fest” revealed differences between avid sport fans (M=2.53) and both non-sport fans (M=1.87) and casual fans (M=1.81) ($p < .05$). No differences between groups were observed for items that addressed opportunities to “accomplish planned weekend tasks in BNP,” “engage in a favourite activity in BNP” or “affect where visitors stayed in BNP.” A final impact measurement item which used a 10 point scale, “Bike Fest enhanced [value = 10] or detracted [value = 0] from your experience in the park that weekend,” revealed that avid sport fans had an enhanced experience (M=6.30) because of Bike Fest; this differed significantly from casual sport fans (M=5.24) and non-sport fans (M=4.19) who had a more neutral to slightly overall negative experience ($p < 0.01$).

Table 2: Event Impact Items

Bike Fest reduced my access to a favorite place in Banff National Park.							
	Number	Mean	df	df2	F	Sig.	Eta squared
Avid Sport Fans	89	1.81	2	244	3.752	p = .019	0.0298
Non-sport Fans	49	2.37					
Bike Fest increased my enjoyment of Banff National Park.							
	Number	Mean	df	df2	F	Sig.	Eta squared
Avid Sport Fans	90	3.43	2	244	12.690	p = .000	0.094
Casual Sport Fans	108	2.74					
Avid Sport Fans	90	3.43	2	244	12.690	p = .000	
Non-sport Fans	49	2.43					
I wanted to remain in Banff National Park this weekend so I would enjoy Bike Fest (Residents only).							
	Number	Mean	df	df2	F	Sig.	Eta squared
Avid Sport Fans	25	3.48	2	62	5.639	P = .008	0.154
Non-sport Fans	10	1.90					
I wanted to visit Banff National Park this weekend so I could enjoy Bike Fest. (Visitors only).							
	Number	Mean	df	df2	F	Sig.	Eta squared
Avid Sport Fans	74	2.53	2	202	6.761	p = .002	0.063
Casual Sport Fans	85	1.81					
Avid Sport Fans	74	2.53	2	202	6.761	p = .021	
Non-sport Fans	46	1.87					

*Event impact items were measured on a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree).

Of the four items used to measure crowding in BNP during the event, only one significant difference was observed (Table 3). For the item “The other people in BNP [0 = detracted from my experience; 10 = added to my experience],” significant differences were observed between avid sport fans (M=5.59), who enjoyed the presence of people more than non-sport fans (M=4.73) ($p<.05$). Casual sport fans (M=5.09) responses were not significantly different from the other two groups. Significant differences were not observed between sport fan groups for the other crowding measures. These included: “BNP would have been enjoyable with far fewer people vs. far more people;” “The availability of parking, accommodations and related hospitality services were intolerable vs. tolerable;” and, “The time spent waiting for access to scenic sites, parking, and hospitality services was intolerable vs. tolerable.”

Table 3: Crowding Item

The other people in BNP detracted [value = 0] or added [value = 10] to my experience.							
	Number	Mean	df	df2	F	Sig.	Eta squared
Avid Sport Fans	91	5.59	2	248	4.043	p = .019	0.0316
Non-sport Fans	52	4.73					

Differences were not revealed between the sport fan groups for the Intentional behaviour items. These included: “I plan to return to BNP in the near future” [avid sport fan (M=4.15), non-sport fan (M=4.20), casual (M=4.06)] and “I would recommend BNP as a travel destination to my friends and family” [avid sport fans (M=4.66), non-sport fans (M=4.64), casual (M=4.59)]. Intention items aimed only at tourists responding to the survey also revealed no significant differences in response to “Plans to return to BNP in the near future” [non-sport fans (M=4.15), avid sport fans (M=4.10), casual sport fans (4.05)] and “Overall visitor experience” [non-sport fan (M=4.72), avid sport fan (M=4.67), casual (M=4.61)]. No significant differences were noted between the sport fan groups for visitors and a pricing question, “To what degree was the price of your admission to BNP good value for the money you paid?”

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research note used a continuum of avid sport fan to non-sport fan categories to outline residents’ and visitors’ combined attitudes towards a small-scale sport event and its perceived impacts on their experiences in Banff National Park (BNP), an iconic park tourism destination. From a theoretical and practical perspective the results confirm that sport is observed, evaluated, and perceived differently by the different sport fan groups. Theoretically and methodologically, the categorization of residents and visitors into three sport fan groupings appears to have produced useful data for understanding visitor and resident needs and experiences. For many of the indicators (almost all the perceived crowding, park entrance fees, and half of the “impact” items) no significant differences between the sport fan groups were found. Avid sport fans felt Bike Fest was appropriate for the destination and positively influenced their experience with minimal crowding which suggests avid sport fans appreciate

sport viewing opportunities. Sport events vary in terms of the scale of the event, type of sport, and context (indoor and outdoor / permanent and repurposed-temporary). Further directions for research might include a comparison of sport fan types and perceptions of sport events at various destinations; this could expand an understanding of the role of sport fan type and sport involvement in destination choice and sport tourist behavior.

Some aspects of the sport event decreased the experiences of the non-sport fans, this requires further investigation and practical considerations need to be addressed to reduce negative impacts of sporting events in BNP. First, it is important for effective pre-event communication to occur between the event organizers and the residents and visitors. This communication can provide residents and visitors with realistic expectations for their experience in the park during race weekend, as well as information on how to watch or avoid the sporting event.

Second, pre-event planning can minimize park user displacement caused by the event through the strategic scheduling of other community and tourism events. For example, moving Bike Fest's Invitational Road Race to a different time of day or location would reduce conflict with recreational vehicle traffic departing BNP campgrounds at peak checkout times. Park staff and event staff training can enhance local capacity to host event and non-event visitors during Bike Fest. For example event volunteers could be given additional training in crowd management and information for drivers on how to avoid Bike Fest competition routes.

Third, avid-sport fans differed significantly from non-sport fans in their perceptions about the number of people in BNP during the event. Previous research (e.g., Chalip, 2006; Green & Chalip, 1998) has shown that sport events are often perceived as venues for social interactions. Having designated sites for sport fans and participants to congregate would permit sport related socialization and minimize crowding effects at other locations.

In summary, non-sport fans differed significantly from avid sport fans in their views about the appropriateness of BNP as a setting for Bike Fest. This data reveals that destination managers and marketers as well as event organizers need to consider how small-scale sport events influence the experiences of participants, spectators and non-spectators. For example, Parks Canada's goal is to foster personal connections between Canadians and the national parks (Jager & Halpenny, 2012). Therefore, it is important for Parks Canada to balance the experiences offered to encourage connections to the parks without rejecting or isolating other park users. The positive impacts which included Bike Fest's enhancement of the experiences for a large portion of surveyed residents and visitors (both casual and avid-frequent sport fans) may assist Parks Canada in achieving the goal of connecting Canadians to their national parks.

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Who comes to our cultural festival and why?: a motivation segmentation study¹

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ABSTRACT

Motivation serves as a practical basis to better position the event/destination and is also used to enhance attractiveness of the event/destination in visitors' minds. However, the universal standard of event motivations is debatable, not to mention to profile each segment of participants among various festivals and events. Therefore, the purposes of this study are to identify visitor's motivations for an ethnical event and to segment them by their motivations for this cultural festival. A total of 547 valid questionnaires were collected in 2012 and five factors of motivations were extracted. Three groups of participants were, then, classified based on their motivations, i.e., excited learner, family lover, and passion folk. Findings also corroborated that participation behaviors and visitors' socio-demographic backgrounds vary among clusters. The theoretical and practical implications are discussed later.

Keywords: festival motivation, segmentation, Festival of Nations, freelisting

INTRODUCTION

Festivals or special events have become one of the fastest growing tourism attractions in the world (Getz, 1997; Mayfield and Crompton, 1995; Nicholson and Pearce, 2001; Thrane, 2002). Various studies confirmed the fact that festivals or special events serve as venues for creating revenue and attracting business to local areas in the past decade (Crompton and McKay, 1997; Frey, 1994; Lema and Agrusa, 2009; Thrane, 2002; Turco and Dinu, 2009; Tyrrel and Johnson, 2001; Uysal and Gitelson, 1994). In addition to the economic benefits, festivals or events would offer a platform to celebrate different cultures in a diverse society (Rao, 2001), improve the level of involvement in community activities (Chwe, 1998), foster a family recreation opportunity (Gursoy, Kim, and Uysal, 2004), boost a sense of community pride (Guerreiro, Oom do Valle, and Mendes, 2011), to name a few.

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The event is one of the important strategies used by tourist destinations to attract visitors (Kotler, Bowen, and Makens, 2009) and event motivation can be used to better position tourism destinations in visitors' minds (Guerreiro, et al., 2011). Motivation is a driven force for human behaviors (Iso-Ahola, 1980). It functions as a force for people to act to satisfy their needs and wants because individuals have a need to satisfy the shortage when they feel a state of deprivation (Leiper, 2004). By their distinct motivations, it will be an effective approach to design appropriate programs for participants and better differentiate festivals.

Therefore, there are two objectives for this study. First, an attempt is made to document participants' motivations to an ethnical festival. Second, this study intends to examine whether festival motivations differ among groups of participants and if yes, who they are.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation, the force to initiate, direct, and arouse human behaviors, would serve as one of the possible approaches to examine how human behaviors are generated (Iso-Ahola, 1980; Pearce, 1982). Specifically, three significant benefits would be derived from studies on motivations, including designing an appropriate product/service, enhancing customers' satisfaction levels, and gaining insight into customers' decision making processes (Crompton and McKay, 1997; Leiper, 2004).

Behaviors in different domains are likely to be aroused by different needs. Illustrated by Mayo and Jarvis, leisure travel is probably driven by the need for variety, escape from the boredom of consistency and tension, the unexpectedness, change and novelty (as cited in Ritichainuwat, Qu, and Mongkhonvanit, 2008). Because the festival is an alternative form of tourism, Getz (1991) justified that travel motivation theoretical frameworks could be utilized in identifying participants' festival motivations. Two theoretical frameworks have been utilized in festival studies, i.e., the seeking and escaping theory (Iso-Ahola, 1982) and push and pull theory (Dann, 1977, 1981). Based on his leisure pursuit theory (Iso-Ahola, 1980, 1983), the seeking and escaping theory stated that people tend to escape from their stressful and boredom routines and seek the personal psychological rewards in sense of self-determination and relaxation (Mannell and Iso-Ahola, 1987).

The push and pull model (Dann, 1977) also attempts to use factors to explain human travel motivation, where participants are motivated by push factor (e.g., psychological reward) and pull factor (e.g., festival attributes to stimulate intrinsic reward within push factor) (Scott, 1996; Uysal, Li, and Sirakaya-Turk, 2008; Yoon and Uysal, 2005).

As researchers were in pursuit of a universal festival or travel motivation model, it seems that it would not be a feasible approach due to the complex nature of human motivations (Harrial and Potts, 2002; Pearce, 1982). However, empirical studies have shown that most motivations found in various festival studies are identical and there would be some specific

components in different festivals due to their particular contexts, e.g., types of festivals or special events (Crompton and McKay, 1997; Uysal and Li, 2008). The following parts of literature review identify (1) major documented motivations for festivals and (2) empirical studies of event motivation segmentation.

SOCIAL ACTIVITY/SOCIALIZATION

Socialization is one of the major reasons for most people to attend festivals (Lee, Lee, and Wicks, 2004; Li, Huang, and Cai, 2009; McDowall, 2011; Park, Reisinger, and Kang, 2008; Regan, Carlson, and Rosenberger, 2012; Schofield and Thompson, 2007; Van Zyl and Botha, 2004; Woosnam, McElroy, and Van Winkle, 2009; Yolal, Cetinel, and Uysal, 2009; Yuan, Cai, Morrison, and Litnon, 2005). Uysal and Li (2008) evidently indicated that the socialization motivation has been identified in about 24% of the total current festival studies. This phenomenon also has been cross-culturally validated among different cultural contexts (Chang, 2006; Schofield and Thompson, 2007).

FAMILY GATHERING

Family gathering and togetherness would be considered as a variation of socialization motivation (Crompton and McKay, 1997). It was identified as one of the important and universal motivations for attending festivals or special in various studies not only in the U.S. (Backman, Backman, Uysal, and Sunshine, 1995; Kim, Uysal, and Chen, 2002; Li, et al., 2009; McDowall, 2011; Park, et al., 2008; Scott, 1996; Yuan, et al., 2005) but also around the world (Dewar, Meyer, and Li, 2001; Formica and Uysal, 1996; Lee, et al., 2004; Prentice and Andersen, 2003; Schneider and Backman, 1996; Schofield and Thompson, 2007; Van Zyl and Botha, 2004; Yolal, et al., 2009). Based on Uysal and Li's empirical study (2008), family togetherness ranked the third highest frequent dimension (18.8%) in current festival studies.

ESCAPE

Consistent with the escaping and seeking theory, escape, also named "recover equilibrium" (Crompton and McKay, 1997) has been concluded as another major force for festival motivation. In festival studies, statements such as "escape from routine life, boredom and stress", and "life pace changing" were used in many studies (Dewar, et al., 2001; Kim, et al., 2002; Lee, et al., 2004; C. Lee, 2000; Li, et al., 2009; McDowall, 2011; Schneider and Backman, 1996; Uysal, Gahan, and Martin, 1993; Van Zyl and Botha, 2004; Yolal, et al., 2009; Yuan, et al., 2005). Escaping would be a common festivals motivation but it was not the most important reason to attend festivals (Uysal and Li, 2008).

NOVELTY

The novelty motivation was rated the second most important motivation for festival attending based on findings from previous study reviews (Uysal and Li, 2008). About 19% of the previous festival/event studies mentioned "novelty" motivation. And it is not surprising to know that a number of studies identified the novelty factor as one of the festival motivations among different events and festivals (e.g., Guerreiro, et al., 2011; Yu and Yen, 2012). Novelty motivation refers to participants' expectation to attend a festival for the variety of new things

and to obtain an unusual experience which is not available in their routine life. The festival novelty appeals to first time visitors more greatly than the repeated ones (Uysal, et al., 1993).

CULTURAL EXPLORATION

The cultural exploration motivation is similar to novelty seeking motivation but it focuses more on experiencing different cultures. Some tourists visit festivals as they would like to explore or experience different customs and cultures (Chang, 2006; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Formica and Uysal, 1998; Lee, et al., 2004; C. Lee, 2000; Schofield and Thompson, 2007). For festivals which emphasize on the cultural demonstration or a new experience on cultural features, “cultural exploration” motivation is likely to be important, (Chang, 2006; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Formica and Uysal, 1998; Lee, et al., 2004; C. Lee, 2000; Schofield and Thompson, 2007).

OTHER FESTIVAL MOTIVATIONS

In addition to the five motivations discussed above, there are various motivations for festivals derived from different studies. For example, Scott (1996) identified natural appreciation as one of the factors for festivals after conducting a comparative study on three different festivals, including Bug Fest, Holiday Light Fest, and Maple Fest. Van Zyl and Botha (2004) did a study on Aardklop arts festival in South Africa and identified two unique motivations that people participated in this community-based event, i.e., community pride and self-esteem seeking when this festival bear a responsibility to represent its culture and heritage to the public. Some motivations are tied to features of the specific festival and those serve as the driving force to attract festival participants (Lee, et al., 2004; Van Zyl and Botha, 2004; Yoon and Uysal, 2005).

APPLICATION OF SEGMENTATION IN FESTIVAL STUDIES

Market segmentation has been believed the key strategic concept in marketing (Myers, 1996). The term “market segmentation” was first introduced by Smith (1956) as “[segmentation] is based upon developments on the demand side of the market and represents a rational and more precise adjustment of product and marketing effort to consumer or user requirements” (p. 5). The strategy of market segmentation has some advantages. First, people tend to attend a variety of festivals to satisfy their various needs, tastes, attitudes, motivations, life-styles, etc. Second, when focusing on providing and marketing goods and services which appeal to particular kinds of customers, corporate resources are more effectively and efficiently used and therefore, contrary to the mass production, segmentation encourages the development of corporate which can supply relatively small markets profitably (Chisnall, 1985).

Diversity among tourists reflects the reality of life and, tourist segmentation studies help generate relatively homogeneous groups of tourists in terms of some criteria so that tourists and/or potential customers can be reached more effectively and efficiently (Middleton, Fyall, Morgan, and Ranchhod, 2009). In market segmentation literature, there are many basic variables to classify the market, including social demographics, consumer attitudes towards specific product/service, lifestyles/psychographics, and buyer behavior (Myers, 1996; Smith,

1995). Socio demographic and/or psychographic variables are generally used as the bases for market segmentation. However, more recent studies also suggest that psychographics and buying behaviors can help better understand tourists than socio demographics (Gladwell, 1990; Johns and Gyimothy, 2002).

Findings of segmentation studies on event motivation can be divided into two categories. One is to segment event participants into different degrees of motivation, e.g., the moderates and the enthusiasts (Formica and Uysal, 1996), highly motivated and lower motivated groups (Yu and Yen, 2012), etc. Another segment result shows the difference of groups in terms of their motivation types. For example, Lee et al. (2004) segmented visitors to 2000 World Culture Expo into four groups, including culture and family seekers, multi-purpose seekers, escape seekers, and event seekers. Li et al. (2009) found five distinct groups, i.e., family travellers, festival enthusiasts, loyal festival goers, escapers, and social gathering lovers for a community-based festival in the Midwest of the United States.

RESEARCH METHODS

THE STUDY SITE AND THE FESTIVAL

The study festival is the Festival of Nations (USA), the longest-running festival in Minnesota from 1932. It is one of the largest multi-cultural events in the United States. For the celebration of its 80th anniversary in May of 2012, more than 90,000 people join this festival during the three-day event (S. Heckler, personal communication, July 23, 2012). Representing 90 different ethnic groups from around the world, the festival in 2012 featured authentic food from around the world, bazaars with unique and international gifts, demonstration of unique skills passed down from generation to generation, and dance groups with authentic ethnic dancing and costumes.

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The study instrument was a self-administered questionnaire containing several sections, and sections used for the current study include three items of satisfaction with the festival, four items of behavioral intention, 24-item motivation scale, social demographics, and festival participation behavior questions (such as information source, travel partner, etc.). The three satisfaction item and the four behavioural intention items were adopted from Lee, Lee and Choi (2011)'s study. Participants were asked to indicate their agreement on five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree).

Since there is no unified motivation theoretical model to explain travel motivation in general and festival motivation in particular (Pearce, 1982), motivation items were developed based on a two-step process of combining structured and unstructured approaches. Nineteen out of the 24 motivation scale items were developed based on another Minnesota festival study (Yu and Yen, 2012) with modifications of wording. In the second step, additional five items were selected according to the festival features announced on the official website of this

festival and free listing from festival participants. The official website is used by the festival organizers as a means and channels to communicate with festival attendants. Ideally, the festival features described on the official website should meet its attendants' needs/wants and therefore, attendee-centered motivation studies can be used as one of the festival evaluation approaches (Williams and Bowdin, 2007). Specifically, the motivation item "I seek experiences with diverse cultures" was derived from its website as it was described as "one of the largest multi-cultural events in the United States".

Freelisting was employed to collect participants' responses to festival motivations in the pilot study. Freelisting is a commonly used anthropological and ethnographic approach to easily accumulate inventories in a specific domain or topic (Bolton, Curtis, and Thomas, 1980; Borgatti, 1994; Quinlan, 2005). It rests on three assumptions, i.e., people tend to list terms in order of familiarity, people who know better about the subject provide a longer list than people who know less, and the term that mentioned most frequently is the locally prominent one (Quinlan, 2005). In short, it is a tool to capture people's perceptions on particular concepts by analysing the number of times and the order related terms derived from response from participants (Weller and Romney, 1988). Although not often used, it has attracted attention of researchers in the leisure context to develop leisure activity inventory (Yeh, Hsu, and Chick, 2011) and in the tourism context to study travel experience (Ribeiro, 2012).

Participants with previous festival experience were recruited for a pilot study to identify motivations for festivals. They were asked to list reasons for attending the studied festival in specific and reasons for attending festivals in general. They were recruited for the pilot surveys through a survey conducted either face to face or online. Twenty five college students volunteered for this pilot study. In order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of festival motivations, freelisting was utilized to collect their responses on the motivation questions. The most important motivations for attending festivals in general are entertainment/having fun (27%), food (23%), and social activities (14%). The most important motivation for the studied festival is multicultural related reason.

Before the onsite data collection, the festival organizer contributed her opinions on the items from the organizer's perspective. Seven participants were contacted to fill out the questionnaire to check the total time to finish this questionnaire and the ease to understand and answer the questions.

SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION

Later, an on-site survey was conducted over the Festival of Nations period dated from May 4 to 6, 2012, under the permission from the festival administrative authority. Five college students were trained to collect and distribute the questionnaires to potential participants. A total of 547 valid questionnaires were collected by the end of the festival while 258 people refused to complete it, giving the response rate about 68%.

DATA ANALYSIS

Several statistical analyses were performed to fulfil the purposes of this study. First, three separate exploratory factor analyses and Cronbach's alpha tests were used to identify visitors' motivation for community festival, their satisfaction with the festival, and their behavioral intention. Second, the factor structures of the three constructs were tested with confirmatory factor analyses. Third, a hierarchical cluster and a K-mean cluster analyses were performed to segment visitors based on motivation structure. The cluster result was then validated using discriminant analysis. Following were chi-square test, ANOVA, and multiple responses crosstab to compare among clusters and to identify who those participants are in each cluster.

FINDINGS

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

A total of 547 valid questionnaires were collected. The majority of the participants were female (66.3%), educated (76.4% have a college degree or higher), and claimed themselves as Caucasian (78.2%, following are 9.8% Asian/islanders and 5.6% of Hispanic). On average, the participants were 43.5 years old (SD=15.5) and have US\$75,743 annual household income (higher than Minnesota average \$29,582).

Most of them have attended this festival before (59%), and among the repeated participants, they expected to spend the same money as last year during the festival (60.9%). On average, they have attended this festival for 5.7 times. They tended to join the festival with family (62.7%) and spent US\$65.5 during the festival (SD=40). The source of information regarding this festival was diverse but mainly due to their previous experience (42.2%), from friends (38.9%), school (10.7%), official website (10.5%), and newspaper (9.7%).

FESTIVAL MOTIVATION, SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTION

Twenty four items were used to assess participants' motivation to attend the 2012 Festival of Nations. Eleven out of the 24 items had scores higher than 4, indicating their agreement to the motivation items. The strongest motivation is "to eat food from around the world" (mean=4.61, SD=0.771), followed by "to see new and different things" (mean=4.46, SD=0.746), and "to explore new things" (mean=4.4, SD=0.78). Only two motivation items had scores lower than 3, indicating their disagreement to the motivation statement. They are "do not normally have an opportunity to go to" (mean=2.86, SD=1.472) and "feel bored in my daily life" (mean=2.32, SD=1.307).

Generally speaking, participants had high satisfaction with this festival. The means of the satisfaction items range from 4.48 to 4.53 (SD from 0.663 to 0.683). They also had positive intention toward this festival. They were most likely to agree that they would spread positive word of mouth about this festival (mean=4.47, SD=0.706) and least likely to agree that they would prioritize the festival over other festivals (mean=3.77, SD=1.073).

DIMENSIONS OF FESTIVAL MOTIVATION

The motivation scale used in this study was mainly adopted from Yu and Yen’s study (2012), which suggests a five factor solution. The five-factor festival motivation model is also congruent with reviews on festival literature. Five factors were extracted based on the 24 motivation statements using a maximum likelihood factoring procedure with a varimax rotation. Factor loadings of 0.40 were used to determine which items loaded on to each factor. For simple structure, when items loaded on two or more factors, the difference should be greater than 0.10; otherwise, they were deleted. Reliabilities for the five factors were checked using Cronbach’s alpha test. The five factors have reliabilities ranging from 0.69 to 0.83, which indicated acceptable to good internal consistency for every scale (Cortina, 1993; Nunnally, 1978).

The final five factors, explaining 54% of the variance, are presented in Table 1. The first factor “festival features” was composed with six items that capture the characteristics of this festival. The second factor, “novelty,” depicted the unexpected and new atmosphere at the festival. “Recover equilibrium,” the third factor, represented the benefits of boredom and stress relief by attending the festival. The fourth factor, “exploration,” featured the sense of discovery and adventure in the festival. The final factor, “family gathering,” captured the chance for participants to be with their family during the festival.

Table 1: Results of exploratory factor analysis and reliability test for the motivation items

Motivation to participate in the Festival of Nations 2012...	Festival features	(novelty) to know something	Recover equilibrium	exploration	Family gathering
to enjoy its unique atmosphere	.742				
to enjoy the exciting activities at the Festival	.738				
it offers a variety of activities to see and do	.698				
continuous entertainment	.577				
it provides authentic performances to be surprised and delighted at the Festival	.422				
to explore new things		.684			
to learn about different ethnic groups and cultures		.549			
to see new and different things		.537			
seek experiences with diverse cultures		.488			
to take a break from daily stress			.680		
to escape my normal routine			.653		

feel bored in my daily life				.582	
to meet new people				.724	
to have a sense of discovery				.647	
seek adventure				.622	
to help family learn ethnic arts, dance, and music					.956
to spend time with my family					.537
Eigenvalue	7.083	2.081	1.404	1.270	1.210
% of variance explained	29.513	8.670	5.850	5.294	5.042
Cumulative variance explained	29.513	38.184	44.034	49.328	54.370
Cronbach's alpha	0.832	0.771	0.688	0.814	0.717
Composite mean score ¹	4.233	4.403	3.176	3.656	3.809

¹Coded on a 5-point Likert scale where (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to validate the five motivation measurement model (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black, 1998). The results of goodness-of-fit indices suggested that the measurement model of five-motivation solution acceptably fits the data ($\chi^2=408.531$, $df=125$; CFI=0.920, IFI=0.921, RMSEA=0.064). In addition, the t-values of all indicators exceeded the critical level of 1.96, providing further evidence of the indicator reliability (Hatcher, 1994).

Overall, participants showed different degrees of agreement among five extracted motivations. For example, "novelty" had the highest degree ($m=4.403$), followed by festival features ($m=4.233$), family gathering ($m=3.809$), and exploration ($m=3.656$). They, however, had a neutral motivational degree on "recover equilibrium" ($m=3.176$).

TYPES OF FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS BASED ON MOTIVATION

The primary objective of this study was to distinguish the different groups of Festival of Nations participants based on their motivations. As a result, cluster analysis was applied to identify groups of festival participants based on similar responses to festival motivation. Results of the hierarchical cluster method suggested a two to three cluster solution. Hence, a K-means cluster analysis was conducted using two to three cluster solutions. A three-cluster solution was adopted for later data analyses.

The first cluster, which consists 21% of the participants, was named as "excited learner" because they have high motivation scores on "festival features" and "novelty" dimensions ($m=4.02$ and 4.25 , respectively). "Family lover," which represented 34% of the participants, tend to have high scores on "novelty" and "family gathering" dimensions ($m=4.04$ and 4.10 ,

respectively). The final cluster was “passion folk.” They represented the majority of the participants (45%) and had high scores on every motivation factor (composite means between 4.35 and 4.75) except “recover equilibrium” ($m=3.8$). Nevertheless, their recover equilibrium motivation was still stronger than other two groups.

To ensure the stability and the quality of the cluster analysis results, several steps were processed. The first step was the internal validation procedure, an assessment using information obtained from within the clustering process (Milligan, 1996). The findings of MANOVA showed a statistically significant difference among the three clusters on the motivation dimensions ($F=150.346$, $p<0.0001$, Wilks' Lambda=0.171). The results suggested that internal validity was present. The composite means of motivation dimensions among clusters are presented in Figure 1. Next, a more robust procedure using discriminant analysis was used to confirm participants' memberships in each designed group. Overall, 96.6% of the cases were classified accurately.

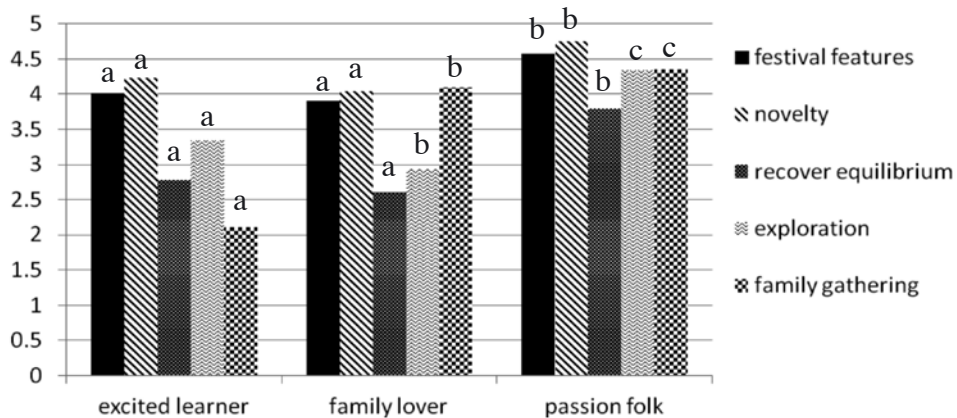


Figure 1. Composite means of motivation dimensions among clusters

Note: Means with different superscripts indicate significant difference ($p<0.05$).

External validity, or external criterion analysis, was examined by comparing the clusters on variables of interest that were not included in the original clustering procedure (Everitt, 1974; Hooley and Hussey, 1999). ANOVA tests indicated that the passion folks are more satisfied with this festival ($F=26.424$, $p<0.0001$) and have higher intentions to revisit the festival, to recommend and spread positive word-of-mouth to others ($F=27.830$, $p<0.0001$; see Table 2). Further, chi-square analysis suggested that the three clusters differed based on education. “Excited learners” tended to be post graduates, “family lovers” were more likely to be post graduates (39.1%) as well as college graduates (35.3%), and “passion folks” tended to have high school degrees ($\chi^2=10.599$, $df=4$, $p=0.031$). In addition, passion folks were younger than the other groups ($F=6.438$, $p=0.002$) and the family lovers spent more money than others ($F=4.611$, $p=0.01$).

Table 2: Comparisons of satisfaction and behavioral intentions among clusters

	Clusters			F	p
	Excited learners	Family lovers	Passion folks		
Satisfaction	4.382 ^a	4.326 ^a	4.708 ^b	26.424	0.000
Behavioral intention	4.230 ^a	4.196 ^a	4.630 ^b	27.830	0.000

Note: Means with different superscripts indicate significant difference.

Most of the participants attended the festival with family and/or friends but the percentages differ among clusters. For example, “excited learners” tended to come with friends (57.7%), followed by with family (31.5%). “Family lovers” tended to come with family (81.3%) whereas only 20.9% came with friends. “Passion folks” also came with family (63%) but the percentage is lower than “family lovers,” and about 27.7% came with friends.

As for the ethnicity of participants, most of them claimed themselves as “Caucasian” but the composition of minorities are different among clusters. More specifically, the biggest minority of “excited learners” was Indian/Alaska natives (7.3%, vs. 83.6% of Caucasian); for “family lovers,” the biggest minorities are Asian/Islanders (7.9%) and Hispanic (7.3%, vs. 83.6% of Caucasian). The Caucasians in the “passion folks” were relatively lower than the rest groups (71.4%) and other ethnic groups were Asian/Islanders (13.9%), African American (5.6%) and Hispanic (5.2%).

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The current festival motivation scale, adopted from previous research (Yu and Yen, 2012) and items from freelisting technique remains a promising tool in measuring motivation of cultural festival participants. The maximum likelihood factor analysis, reliability test, and confirmatory factor analysis revealed a satisfactory structure with conceptually clear and reliable sub-scales. Results are consistent with previous research documenting that dimensions of novelty, recover equilibrium, exploration and family gathering are applicable in the tourism context (e.g., Crompton and McKay, 1997; Guerreiro, et al., 2011; Lee, et al., 2004; Li, et al., 2009; Van Zyl and Botha, 2004). The other dimension “festival feature” was identified in other studies as well (Lee, et al., 2004; Schneider and Backman, 1996); however, items are applicable to the specific context of the study. The festival feature motivation had the highest eigenvalue and explained the highest percentages of variance in the exploratory factor analysis, which shows the importance of this festival motivation and suggests festival participants’ motivations are not exactly universal across festivals.

Festival participants’ motivations vary and they do present in the similar but not exactly the same framework proposed by previous researchers. In this study five dimensions of motiva-

tion were identified. Except “festival features” all of the rest motivation dimensions were found in the adopted motivation scale (Yu and Yen, 2012) and many festival motivation studies (e.g., Crompton and McKay, 1997; Guerreiro, et al., 2011; Lee, et al., 2004; Li, et al., 2009). It suggests the majority of the motivations are consistent among festivals but participants of the Festival of Nations value the festival features as well.

The three-cluster solution was deemed appropriate as each cluster had an adequate number of participants who attended the festival for common motivations within clusters and yet different motivation patterns across clusters. The analysis revealed some clear patterns. The passion folks were the biggest group and composed with the highest percentages of minorities. This festival was featured as one of the biggest multi-cultural events in the United States in different perspectives, e.g., food, arts, costumes, performances, etc. Probably because of their background, they represented the group who had the highest motivation scores, satisfaction with the festival, and positive intention to come back.

Family lovers were motivated to attend the festival for family gathering. They joined the festival predominately with family and expected to spend the most. The last cluster, excited learners, represents the smallest group. While they were motivated to learn and seek new things, their motivation for family gathering was the lowest. Instead of coming with family, the majority attended with friends.

Among the motivation dimensions, festival features and novelty have higher scores across three groups of participants. Accordingly, findings suggest the festival feature highlighted by the event programmers is an appropriate tactic to attract participants. Combined with the motivation for novelty seeking, the event organizer should renew its festival features each year to retain old customers and attract new ones. For example, in 2012, the festival organizers utilized various activities to promote its distinguishing features and emphasize its novelty aspects, including authentic food, international gifts, ethnic dancing and costumes, and unique handicraft skills. For the future, other aspects of culture such as folk music, instruments, literature, storytelling, architectures, etc. should be considered and performers representing different ethnic groups can be invited to increase levels of novelty and diversification for this festival.

On the other hand, findings also indicated that festival participants are different in terms of their motivations, satisfactions degrees, intention levels, socio-demographics, festival information sources, and festival participation patterns. Specifically, different marketing strategies can be used to target different clusters with various characteristics. For instance, to target the excited learners, the festival organizers can offer friend/companion packages (such as buy two get one free) or friend-related social activities because they tend to attend this festival with their friends. The passion folk group had the highest percentage of the largest minority groups compared to other two clusters of participants. Namely, the compositions of the minority groups are the most diverse. For that, marketing efforts directly to the minority communities can be enhanced to increase their attendance to this festival. Festival organizers

should make those minority communities believe that this festival would give them an opportunity to demonstrate their own home culture, which can even encourage them getting involved to event hosting. It can increase the degree of involvement of those minority groups and adds its multi-cultural atmosphere as well. Finally, for the family lover cluster, the festival organizers are able to emphasize that Festival of Nations offers a unique opportunity to get family together and strengthen their bonds among family members by participating in various activities within this festival.

Parts of the items of “festival feature” motivations were derived from the official website of the studied event (Williams and Bowdin, 2007) and freelist results (Yeh, et al., 2011), suggesting both are the promising approaches to add validity of the motivation construct. Researchers are suggested to empirically test especially freelisting method in the tourism context.

As mentioned by Mayo and Jarvis, leisure travel is probably driven by the need for variety, escape from the boredom of consistency and tension, the unexpectedness, change, and novelty (as cited in Rittichainuwat, et al., 2008). This argument is partially suggested in the current study. Among the three groups of event participants, both “excited learner” and “family lover” do not weigh “recover equilibrium” very high (average scores of both groups are below three on the five-point scale). It, therefore, suggests a need to distinguish escape from novelty.

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Call for fully functional and distinct CVBs in China: a Case of Hangzhou

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses China's institutional issues in developing group business and event tourism by inquiring the case of Hangzhou. Institutional Challenges faced by Chinese cities in developing event tourism were investigated and discussed. The Functions of Hangzhou's institutions actively engaged in the marketing and management of the city's group business were evaluated with a comparative approach. This study indicates that these institutions are delivering CVB (Convention and Visitors' Bureau) functions in different ways, however, the current organizational structure might be a big challenge for the city in striving for the top event tourism destination in China. It is recommended that the setup of a fully functional and unique CVB be considered by the municipal government which is necessary for its success in group business and event tourism development.

Keywords: event tourism, organizational structure, CVB, Hangzhou

BACKGROUND

With the steadily fast growth of tourism, China is now showing the greatest overall potential in the field of group business and event tourism. As indicated in "Report on China's Development of the Economy of Conventions and Exhibitions in 2012," China's convention and exhibition industry maintains an annual growth of 20% and organizes the most exhibitions in Asia (HCEO, 2012a).

Among China's most successful event-tourism destinations is the city of Hangzhou (Capital of Zhejiang Province). According to HTC (2012), Hangzhou was ranked in the 31st place in Asian cities rankings with 10 international association meetings being organized in 2010. In 2011 Hangzhou rose to the 27th place in Asian cities by hosting 15 international association meetings. While Beijing (hosting 98 international association meetings) and Shanghai (hosting 81 international association meetings) are China's 1st tier convention and exhibition cities, Hangzhou is one of the top 2nd tier cities. On the second China International Meeting

Industry Grand Ceremony and Summit Forum held in Xiamen in 2012, Hangzhou won the honorary title "China's top ten conference destination" (MICE Hangzhou, 2012a).

In an effort to upgrade Hangzhou's tourism industry in addition to the development of domestic tourism and inbound tourism, Hangzhou's convention and exhibition industry leaders have established a vision for Hangzhou to become one of the most successful and sophisticated event-tourism destinations in China. To strive for this goal, Hangzhou has made sight-seeing, leisure, and event tourism the three pillars of the city's tourism economy. Event tourism is now becoming an important component of Hangzhou's tourism industry. Hangzhou is ambitious to become 'an international convention destination, Capital of China's festivals, and well-known international convention and exhibition city' (HCEO, 2012a).

Just like many other Chinese cities, Hangzhou is a newcomer in the international marketplace of event tourism. As observed by Rui Yao, Deputy Director of World Expo Office of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (China Tourism Industry Guide, 2011), Hangzhou needs to tackle a series of big challenges on the course of becoming a successful convention destination. These challenges are: 1) The institutions in charge of group business involved in marketing and managing group business have overlapped functions which need to be straightened out; 2) There is no market-oriented operations or mechanism in Hangzhou in the field of event tourism; 3) The industrial network of group business in Hangzhou is not well established to show the city's comprehensively competitive advantages in attracting, organizing and managing group business; 4) Hangzhou is short of high-end convention facilities and professionals in group business; and 5) Competition for conventions is becoming much stronger today among China's event tourism destinations.

The challenges faced by Hangzhou in attracting and managing international conventions are not rare among Chinese cities which are competing for group business. Obviously all these challenges are converging to a call for a highly sophisticated convention bureau (CVB) in the destination city which is proactive in bidding for group business and highly strategic in developing its destination and managing group business. This study attempts to examine and discuss China's institutions which assume the functions of CVBs in China by using Hangzhou as an example.

CVBs ROLE IN EVENT TOURISM

In western countries which attract the highest number of international meetings and events, CVBs play the key role in promoting destinations and attracting group business. With rare exceptions, there are few destinations with successful event tourism that don't have CVBs.

It is commonly acknowledged that CVB's role is indispensable for a city to attract meetings and events. As a layer of destination marketing organizations, convention and visitor bureaus (CVBs) are important information brokers and disseminators in the meetings and conven-

tion industry. One of CVBs' critical missions is to promote and brand their destination as a desirable place for meetings and conventions and other related group businesses through travel intermediaries such as a travel agency and meeting planner (Kim et al., 2004). CVBs are destination marketing organizations representing an important element of the host location (Morrison, Bruen, and Anderson, 1998). The MICE segment has been the traditional and most important target of North American CVBs' which is relatively new to similar tourism organizations in countries like China. Polivka (1996) detailed the various tasks CVBs perform for meeting planners. For instance, in an effort to solicit convention business, CVBs provide a variety of information to meeting planners. Familiarization trips are organized by CVBs for meeting planners interested in the destination. It can provide referral services by suggesting reliable and appropriate service providers. It can also circulate information to facilities that can accommodate conventions/meetings. Site reviews are arranged by CVBs once a meeting planner has selected specific facilities. Finally, the promotion of convention attendance, convention housing assistance, on-site registration and information, and on-site registration staffing are CVB activities pertaining to the servicing of conventions. Despite their key role in destination marketing, only a few academic studies have focused on CVBs, mainly in the United States and Canada (Weber 2001).

According to Vallee (2008, p.162-163), the CVB commonly achieves its goals by working to:

- a) Solicit, qualify, and confirm groups to hold meetings, conventions, and trade shows in the area it represents;
- b) Assist meeting groups that have confirmed through attendance building and convention servicing;
- c) Manage the destination brand through awareness building and customer relationship management;
- d) Market to leisure travel trade and individual travelers through targeted promotional and sales activities;
- e) Facilitate relationships between meeting manager and travel trade buyers and sellers, with sellers generally composed of local businesses offering products and services;
- f) Service visitors, including convention delegates, in the destination to encourage them to stay longer and see more of the area

Given the unique role of CVBs, from meeting planners' perspective, a CVB is a "storefront" for event planners/managers to go shopping and a "backstage" which delivers professional services highly expected by meeting managers. CVBs should have event specialists to actively solicit group business from associations and corporations regardless of size. CVB's event service managers or specialists are event managers' point of contact who provide their best services before an event begins, often participate in site inspections with event planners before the host city is selected, help plan and build attendance, and provide on-site and post-event supports. Event planners prefer to use services provided by CVBs instead of other institutions because CVBs' services can satisfy their needs in unbiased and one-stop shop-

ping of the meeting products, services and facilities. Because of these features, CVB web sites usually serve as the official destination presence on the Internet. These web sites provide extensive information about the services of the CVBs as well as useful information, convention facilities and services, and hotel properties, etc. Given CVB's unique and indispensable role, it can be hardly imagined how the event destination could be negatively perceived by meeting and event planners/managers.

CVBs Functions in China

In China, the National Tourism Administration (CNTA) is the sole national organization in charge of international tourism planning, marketing, promotion, coordination and management. CNTA is a governmental agency in charge of tourism directly affiliated to the State Council. Its main responsibilities are to: plan and coordinate the development of the tourism industry; establish and organize the implementation of market development strategies for domestic tourists, inbound tourism and outbound tourism; organize the survey, planning, development and protection of tourism resources; normalize the order of the tourist market, supervise and manage the service quality and maintain legal rights and interests of tourism consumers and operators; promote the international communication and cooperation of tourism and take charge of affairs relating to the cooperation with international tourist organizations; establish policies on travel to Hong Kong, Macao & Taiwan; and organize and instruct tourism education and training, stipulate the vocational qualification system and ranking system for tourism employees (CNTA, 2012).

More specifically, international tourism marketing activities (including marketing of international group business) at China's national level are organized and conducted through CNTA's Department of Marketing & International Liaison. This department is responsible for the nation's development of domestic and international tourist markets, organizing promotional activities for key tourist regions, destinations and routes; international cooperation and communication, promoting the orderly opening of outbound tourism destinations towards Chinese citizens; examination and approval of foreign travel agencies to be established in China; and instructing the operation of China's tourist institutions stationed abroad. The department implements overseas promotional and marketing activities mainly through CNTA's 18 overseas offices in 14 countries and regions (CNTA, 2012).

There are a variety of tourism associations in China at the national level. However, Chinese associations are more political and less marketing-oriented since these associations are government owned and are not operated independently in terms of marketing or management of the association members. There is no independent association due to the fact that no association in China can form an association without government approval and involvement. For instance, at the national level, there are the China Tourism Association, China Association of Travel Services, China Tourist Hotels Association, and China Tourism Automobile and Cruise Association and the China Association of Tourism Journals which are all CNTA's

subordinate institutions. All these associations' secretariat offices are stationed in the CNTA's office building and the personnel working in these offices are appointed by CNTA. These associations/groups have limited resources and no administrative power unless its governing agency such as CNTA devolve its authority to the institution and entrust it to bear out some responsibilities. Besides, in terms of functions, these associations are mostly facing inside (i.e. its association members on management, education or training, etc.) rather than outside (e.g. building of awareness and image, marketing, promotion, etc.).

Similar to CNTA, China's provincial and municipal tourism bureaus have similar organizational structure and functions in their own provinces or cities. They are responsible to provincial governors or municipal mayors. Generally these bureaus have no overseas offices. The local tourism marketing and promotional activities, are largely dependent on the provincial tourism bureaus. All provincial governments have a tourism bureau with responsibilities for tourism planning, management and promotion. There is also a third tier of tourism administration at the municipal and county levels. Given that the provincial and local tourism bureaus are not directly affiliated with CNTA, their influence on the provinces in terms of tourism marketing is quite limited. As provincial and local tourism bureaus are financially independent from CNTA, these bureaus can independently conduct their own marketing activities. While the funding situation at the provincial level and in some of the major cities varied considerably, those with larger amounts of funding could exercise a higher degree of autonomy, which can dilute efforts at the national level to project a clearly defined and consistent theme in the market place (Wang and Ap, 2003).

It is noted that, apart from these governmental departments and government-owned associations, there are no other institutions considered to be a better fit for being called CVBs in China. As a matter of fact, these marketing departments within the national tourism bureau or local bureaus at different levels are quasi-CVBs in China. However, as shown in the functions fulfilled by CNTA's Department of Marketing, marketing and promotion of group business is not these marketing departments' sole responsibility. Instead, their marketing functions are much broader than the ones done by a typical CVB. Moreover, what makes China's 'CVBs' a big challenge or a complicated issue is that these marketing departments may not be the sole organization in Chinese cities which are involved in group business marketing and promotion. The following section utilizes the case of Hangzhou to demonstrate the organizational issues in marketing and managing group business in China.

Organizational Issues, the Case of Hangzhou

A semi-structure interview was conducted with a manager who is working for Hangzhou Tourism Commission in charge of MICE business marketing and promotion. Interviewed questions included: which institutions are directly or indirectly involved in marketing, organizing and managing Hangzhou's meeting, exhibition and event businesses? How do these institutions function differently in bidding for meetings, exhibitions or other events? How

do these institutions coordinate and communicate with each other? What are the challenges facing Hangzhou in bidding for international and/or mega events to be held in Hangzhou? More detailed information about Hangzhou's government agencies and associations involved in meeting and event marketing and managing were retrieved from the related institutions' websites. Each institution's functions in the field of event tourism were examined and compared with CVB's expected goals as defined by Vallee (2008).

As a result of the face-to-face interview and review on publicly published documents, four institutions are identified to be involved in achieving CVB's goals.

1. Hangzhou Tourism Commission (HTC)

The Hangzhou Tourism Commission (HTC, which is formerly called Hangzhou Tourism Bureau) is an independent government agency of Hangzhou Municipal Government reporting to the Vice Mayor of Hangzhou in charge of Tourism Industry and Destination Management. There are several departments in the Commission, including international/domestic tourism marketing department, industry administration department, policy and law department, etc. Functions performed by the Commission include: drawing up policy and law of tourism industry, promoting Hangzhou city as an ideal destination, organizing large tourism events and festival, supervising and inspecting the tourism market system, etc. (PATA, 2012).

HTC is a municipal tourism bureau with similar functions of all the other tourism bureaus in China. Under HTC is a department of group business which is called Hangzhou Tourism Image Promotion Center (HTPC). The HTPC is responsible for the promotion and development of MICE business in Hangzhou. One of HTPC's goals and responsibilities is to position Hangzhou as one of China's premier MICE destinations. As such, it has focused primarily on meetings and incentive tours. HTPC is also organizing forums, training and destination promotion in partnership with industry experts.

HTC is active in promoting the city as an ideal MICE destination. In 2009, the Hangzhou Tourism Commission set up the MICE Division under the Department of HTPC to work on the MICE industry and encourage travel agencies to undertake more MICE events. In 2011 Hangzhou established the Hangzhou MICE Association, to promote the city, provide professional information and guide the market. In addition, Hangzhou cooperated with the World Tourism Organization to conduct research on the general situation of the international MICE market and Hangzhou's event tourism strategy. The city also launched the Conference Ambassador program to reinforce relationship marketing in the MICE industry (China Hospitality News, 2011).

HTC fulfills CVB's functions mainly through its marketing department, i.e. HTPC. By comparing with CVB's typical functions, it is construed that HTC performs part of CVB's functions which are:

- Marketing to both business groups and individual travelers through domestic and international marketing and promotion;

- Managing Hangzhou's brand as China's ideal MICE destination through awareness building and customer relationship management;
- Soliciting, qualifying, bidding and confirming MICE groups to have events in Hangzhou;
- Facilitating relationships between international group business buyers and Hangzhou based event product and service providers;
- Supervising the tourism system to ensure provision of quality service to both leisure and business visitors

2. Hangzhou MICE Association

Hangzhou MICE Association was established in 2011. There are about ninety-five members in the association, consists of thirty travel agencies, thirty-seven hotels, ten scenic spots, four institutions and social groups as well as other enterprises and public institutions like convention and exhibition services, exhibition venues, advertising, media, and aviation and gifts, which comprehensively included units that had the ability to hold big and small meetings or receive incentive travel groups in Hangzhou (MICE Hangzhou, 2012b). Hangzhou MICE Association, the first association in MICE industry, has brought together lots of MICE service providers to make a great service team. From the event planning till opening, all the service members devote themselves to a better solution so as to meet the demand from different meeting sponsors (MICE Hangzhou 2012c).

In order to build Hangzhou into China's top MICE destination, the association has established the Hangzhou MICE network, published Hangzhou's MICE Manual, opened its MICE website, disseminated the electronic journal of 'MICE Hangzhou' online and set up lead account. The association organized MICE training courses for its members, actively participated in both domestic and international MICE trade shows, and invited buyers to make familiarization trips. In addition, it has acted as a connecting bridge between the government and enterprises and lobby for governmental support on MICE. For example, with governmental support, the association set up an annual evaluation system to award the tour operators which successfully introduce conventions and incentive travel to Hangzhou. Meanwhile, it will seek government's timely support to the tour operators which are bidding for MICE business. The association is also planning to set up a statistical report system on MICE (Chen, 2012). Hangzhou MICE Association aims to serve as the professional and official MICE platform for both buyers and sellers and to provide the MICE market in Hangzhou with professional information services and necessary policy support.

It is noted that though the MICE Association is composed of both public and private partners, unlike the associations in western countries, this association is not a fully independent institution. Most of the association's functions are mainly delivered through its secretariat office which is also the MICE Division of HTC. In other words, this association can be regarded as HTC's subordinate institution which serves as a platform where HTC consolidate and facilitate its leading role in fulfilling CVB's other functions through its administrative influence over the association members. The CVB's functions performed by this association include:

- Facilitating relationships between international group business buyers and Hangzhou based event product and service providers;
- Identifying the association as Hangzhou's CVB with the opening of the MICE website and publication of "MICE Planners Guide";
- Identifying the association as the primary point of contact in the process of lead development and bid development
- Assisting event groups through attendance building and event servicing (note: this item is not explicitly stated in the association or other institutions' published documents, the authors recommend that attendance building be ideally taken care of by the MICE Association)

Despite the term "MICE" which stands for meeting, incentive, convention and exhibition used by HTC as well as its MICE Association as their goal to pursue, it is admitted by the interviewee that HTC and the MICE Association will mainly focus on convention business and incentive travel without engagement in exhibitions since exhibitions belongs to the business scope of another office – Hangzhou West Lake Expo Office.

3. Hangzhou Convention and Exhibition Coordination and Development Office (HCEO)

Hangzhou Convention and Exhibition Coordination and Development Office (HCEO) is also called Hangzhou West Lake Expo Office. Like HTC, HCEO is also an independent department under Hangzhou Municipal Government and reporting to the same Vice Mayor. What is noteworthy to mention is that the director general of HCEO is also the Associate Secretary of the Mayor's Office. Based on this, it can be inferred that HCEO is at a higher administrative level than HCO even though both organizations are two separate departments of the municipal government.

HCEO is also called Hangzhou West Lake Expo Office because this office is in charge of Hangzhou's annual West Lake Expo which consists of a series of exhibitions, conventions, festivals and government-sponsored meetings. In addition, the office sponsors the World Leisure Expo which happens every five years. It also manages major events like the Animation and Fireworks Festivals. For instance, Hangzhou just kicked off the 14th West Lake International Expo which started from September 15 and will last till October 30, 2012, where a series of exhibitions, forums and leisure activities are expected to attract 10 million visitors and create business communications for around 50,000 businessmen (HCEO, 2012b).

As indicated by its title, HCEO is considered to be the official representative of Hangzhou's convention and exhibition industry. The office executives often promote Hangzhou's convention and exhibition resources at both domestic and international travel trade fairs and forums. HCEO's main Responsibilities and duties include (HCEO, 2012c):

- Be responsible for the general planning of the West Lake International Expo and comprehensive coordination of its routine work.
- Handle the application of the West Lake International Expo events, provide guidance and supervision to the organization and implementation of the events.

- Be responsible for financing the West Lake International Expo, and managing the funds, assets and investment of the Expo.
- Take charge of the routine work of the Organizing Committee of the West Lake International Expo, and play a role in leading and coordinating the work of its working bodies.
- Study and work out the plan for developing the city's convention and exhibition industry; study and draft local laws and regulations concerning the development of the convention and exhibition industry; take charge of the application for approval for large-scale conferences, exhibitions and festivals.
- Be responsible for organizing, guiding, coordinating and managing large-scale conferences, exhibitions and festival activities; organize and conduct external exchange and cooperation for the convention, exhibition and festival celebration industry.
- Take charge of other work entrusted by the Municipal Government and the Organizing Committee of the West Lake International Expo.

To compare HCEO's responsibilities with CVB's expected goals, the following are found to be related to CVB's functions:

- providing government support in terms of planning, regulating, and financing Hangzhou's convention and exhibition industry;
- managing, supervising, and facilitating the development of the city's convention and exhibition industry;
- approving, organizing, coordinating and managing large-scale events in the city (note: large-scale events to be held needs to be approved by the local government in China);
- communicating and cooperating with international group business partners and organizations.

It is noted that while HTC's CVB functions mainly focus on convention and incentive marketing and promotion, HCEO's responsibilities lay more on the government's administrative roles not only in exhibitions and festivals but also conventions and big-scale conferences and other events.

4. Hangzhou Convention & Exhibition Industry Association (HCEA)

Under the leadership of Hangzhou Convention and Exhibition Coordination and Development Office is an association called Hangzhou Convention & Exhibition Industry Association (HCEA). HCEA has a membership made up of professional meeting organizers and exhibition organizers, and a range of industry suppliers.

Hangzhou Convention and Exhibition Industry Association was established in June, 2003, and consists of exhibition departments, exhibition companies, exhibition halls, advertisement planning companies, restaurants, travel agencies, and research and teaching institutions of exhibition. Under the guidance of the relevant government departments, this association conducts internal coordination of the industry, defends its member's legal rights and inter-

ests, organizes external exchange and cooperation of the industry, helps the government to manage the industry, so as to form a self-disciplined industry mechanism, upgrade the comprehensive quality of the industry and promote the healthy development of Hangzhou's exhibition industry (HCEO, 2012d). By the end of 2005, this association had 56 unit members and 29 individual members. Members include companies of different business types such as convention and exhibition companies, conference and exhibition centers, hotels, and tour operators. To strengthen its supervision and management of Hangzhou's conventions and exhibitions, HCEA has recently set up five professional committees: Professional Committee of Conventions, Professional Committee of Exhibitions, Professional Committee of Festivals and Celebrations, Professional Committee of Conventional and Exhibiting Education, and Professional Committee of Convention and Exhibition Services and Products (HCEA 2012). To be different from Hangzhou MICE Association, HCEA is more of a trade association. The main function of this association is to provide up-to date industrial information and professional training to its members in order to improve and standardize the city's event services, and ensure a professional development by strengthening network and communication among the members. The association's routine work includes: editing and circulating its association journal, conducting statistics of the industry, promoting exchanges within the industry, and fostering cooperation and coordinative relationships within the industry.

This association will be able to contribute to CVB's goals in the area of 'assisting meeting groups through event servicing.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study identified four institutions all of which more or less share the functions as expected of a typical CVB. By examining and comparing these functions, it is noted that most of the key roles and functions that are essential to its group business success are in place.

HTC and HCEO are Hangzhou's two separate governmental organizations in charge of the city's group business, wherein marketing, bidding and account service functions are delivered by HTC or through its subordinate MICE association; and planning, coordinating, administering and financial support functions are performed by HCEO. A comparison of their group business functions is that HTO is mainly marketing oriented (focusing on convention and incentive travel) and HCEO is administrating oriented.

One challenge for HTO is that this organization may not be able to exercise its marketing strategies on group business wholly independently since HCEO also has some marketing and promotional functions especially in exhibitions and large-scale conventions and other events. For instance, Vice Mayor Jianting Zhang led Hangzhou's tourism, convention and exhibition promotion delegation to the United Kingdom, France, and Germany in 2012, to conduct marketing and promotion campaign. HCEO's Deputy Director General Xiuqin Hui participated in the mission to promote Hangzhou's West Lake Expo, Leisure Expo and the development

of the city's convention and exhibition industry (HCEO, 2012e). It seems that the municipal government assigns the marketing and promotion of group business to both the organizations each with a different group business focus.

The two associations – HMICEA and HCEA - are working separately with HMICEA under HTC and HCEA under HCEO. Their functions include lead building, relationship establishment (between buyers and sellers), attendance building, servicing, and professional development. Specifically, HCEA is essentially a trade organization, whose purpose is to advocate for and promote group business development and professionalism within the convention and exhibition industry. Consequently, HCEA is mainly supplier oriented. In contrast, HMICEA is market fronting, assisting HTC to connect inbound MICE events to Hangzhou's event facility and service suppliers. It is likely that many of the suppliers have to make them members of both HCEA and HMICEA in order not to be left behind. Meeting planners and managers in west countries tend to look for 'associations' for suppliers' information or submitting 'request for proposal', but this should not be the case in China, as the associations are not operating independently, just like Hangzhou's HICEA and HCEA. Neither of the two institutions can fulfill CVB's functions independently without support of their upper level governmental administrators.

To pursue an ideal event tourism destination, it is highly recommended that Hangzhou utilize a fully functional and distinct CVB – no matter if it is within HTC or HCEO – as event planners and managers are generally looking for an independent, unbiased and non-commercial CVB to work with. If Hangzhou cannot have such a fully functional and independent CVB, it will be a big challenge for Hangzhou to achieve its goal of becoming a top MICE destination in China as its sales and bidding for group business will not be competitive. In addition, event planners and managers interested in exploring event opportunities in Hangzhou will not be able to easily locate the 'front-store' and won't know where to start in Hangzhou.

In summary, HTC together with its MICE association delivers most of CVB's functions as expected in the marketplace but its business scope is constrained to convention and incentives only. HCEO together with its subordinate association HCEA is comparatively more resourceful and administratively more influential in coordinating with group business facility and service suppliers but most of its functions are administrative with a limited role in marketing, sales and bidding efforts. Given the current structure and indistinctly distributed functions of the two organizations, on one hand, neither HTC nor HCEO could deliver CVB's full functionality without each other's support; on the other hand, to continue the current format of having the two organizations in charge of group business development could be redundant, inefficient and confusing to all the event partners. In the situation like Hangzhou, to strive for a competitive and successful event destination, one priority task for the municipal government is to consider facilitating its organizational structures and be able to at least provide one-stop 'front-store' (i.e. CVB) to the prospective group business buyers. It will be fine to still have different governmental departments (like HTC and HCEO) being assigned with different CVB functions, but when facing outside (such as marketing, promotion, sales, bidding, securing events, bridging buyers and sellers, on-site and after-event services, etc.), there should be only one sole 'CVB' organization in the marketplace in charge of all different

types of group businesses, small or big-scaled. With this priority being straightened out, the municipal government should also take full responsibility in coordinating all the relevant departments or organizations including HTC and HCEO to efficiently deliver all the necessary functions as required to host a successful event in Hangzhou.

This study discusses China's organizational issues in developing group business by inquiring the case of Hangzhou. Institutional Challenges faced by Chinese cities in developing group business event tourism were investigated and discussed. It is hoped that group business and event tourism researchers as well as event planners/managers interested in China's group business would find this study informative and inspirational. It is also hoped that this study would prompt more researchers' interest in identifying and discussing institutional challenges and exploring solutions in the field of group business and event tourism.

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A confessional tale: auto-ethnography reflections on the investigation of attendee behavior at community festivals

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ABSTRACT

This article is an auto-ethnographical reflection on a hermeneutic phenomenological grounded theory study exploring the behavior of community festival attendees. Presented as a “Confessional Tale” (Van Maanen, 1988), it provides a glimpse of the researcher as he immersed himself as a participant observer to learn “what was happening” at community festivals. Similar to an actual festival’s anticipation phase, the tale begins prior to actual on-site fieldwork with a recap of the researcher’s journey in search of an appropriate epistemology, research design, and theoretical method to fill a recognized research gap in the field of event studies. As the tale proceeds into the participatory phase of fieldwork the researcher discusses how data was collected and analyzed. The tale concludes not with the usual final results and conclusions of a research project, but rather with a reflection phase, with an understanding that the researcher’s first attempt at this uncommon event studies research method can be improved, that more is yet to be accomplished, and that “one day the researcher will know more.” This article, in style and format, will undoubtedly be quite foreign to what readers typically find in tourism and event academic journals. The hope is that, in what are primarily post-positivistic quantitative research driven fields, eyes might open to an alternative method of scientific inquiry as well as presentation approach.

Keywords: grounded theory, auto-ethnography, confessional tale, participant observation, community festivals

INTRODUCTION

This article was conceived and written in response to what has been a general recommendation during the past decade seeking new avenues of research and innovative methods to more contextually understand visitor phenomena at festivals and events. In the tradition of auto-ethnography (Heider, 1975; Hayano, 1979; Wolcott, 2008), it is presented in the first person. As the primary research instrument for the study from which this paper is derived, I unhesitatingly acknowledge and take responsibility for my biases from previous employment as a festival manager as well as my academic philosophical worldview. Although this

more casual writing and reporting style is most likely foreign to many readers of tourism and event academic journals, it may hopefully open eyes to alternative and expanded possibilities for future research. I choose this type of approach as a pioneering tactic to inform what has been described by Holloway et al. (2010) as the strongly post-positivistic and quantitative research oriented field of event studies to a partial gaze at the underpinnings of an alternative social constructivist qualitative research approach. I feel obliged to add a few words on the “Confessional Tale” writing method (Van Maanen, 1988) mentioned above and applied here within as I suspect few readers are familiar with the concept. It is an ethnographic writing technique that allows one to deeply reflect upon an entire research process from conception, to any point during, or at the completion of, their inquiry. With my study still a work in progress, this article is not intended as a report on its results, conclusions, or implications. It is, rather, a confessional tale presented at this point in time about the unique situation from which my project arose, the thoughts behind the selection of its epistemology and research design, and an explanation of the qualitative methods that I have undertaken attempting to gain a deeper contextual, knowledge of the on-site behavior of attendees at community festivals.

MY CONFESSIONAL TALE

After a 35-year career in leisure services, much if it producing large community festivals and events for major cities in the southwestern United States, semi-retirement evolved into a part time adjunct faculty university position teaching special events management and subsequent acceptance into a PhD program focused on community resources and development. With the completion of my first year of graduate studies I struggled to decide on what subject and course of action to pursue for my dissertation, adamantly refusing to focus on the topic of festivals. Believing myself well qualified in the industry, “I did not want to learn what I already knew.” During my second year and first qualitative research class, I was introduced to many things I did not know and honestly had spent very little thought on while a practitioner. I quickly came to realize there was a major festival concept about which I truly lacked contextual knowledge. Although my objective background of festival management systems, sponsorship, marketing, budgeting, economic impact, visitor motivations and satisfactions, staffing and volunteers, facilities and equipment, and activity programming was extensive, it became evident that I knew very little, if anything except minimal antidotal information, about a subjective understanding of the behavior of attendees at festivals. Literature informed me that I was not alone in this deficiency of experiential knowledge (Getz, 2007, 2010; Holloway et al. 2010).

RESEARCH DESIGN – EPISTEMOLOGY

In developing my research design I first reviewed potential epistemologies. A critique of tourism curriculum proposals (Tribe, 2001), which included event tourism, identified three

epistemologies proposed as most suitable for research in the field; the scientific-positivist, the critical, and social constructivist. Briefly, the scientific-positivist design, which has dominated event studies, is most often quantitative in nature, deductive, particularistic, and insists on a controlled system approach with no outside influences. Tribe (2001) asserts that a scientific-positivist approach has only limited application in the field when one is placing attention on the concepts of meaning and value. Seeking a more contextually understanding of the actual on-site behavior of attendees in a fresh light of meanings and values I decided another approach would be more appropriate. Since critical and social constructivist designs are most often qualitative in nature, inductive, holistic, and predicated on an open system where both the observational context and the researcher are part of the study these approaches appeared to offer a better fit. Critical epistemology, however, is concerned primarily with inequalities and the disempowered as an ideological imperative. Searching for examples of this approach being applied to festival research I found an example of queer theory being used to investigate the shaping of collective identity at gay and lesbian film festivals (Gamson, 1996). Because this type of epistemology tends to concentrate on specifically identified groups and issues as opposed to the more general mass experiences, it too was not chosen. Social constructivism is a belief that human phenomena are socially constructed rather than objectively real. The generation of meaning and value arises from physical, social, emotional, and intellectual interaction within the human community. I selected this epistemology for studying the on-site experiences of attendees at festivals as it rose above the other approaches as the worldview with the best fit for understanding the behavior of people.

With a social constructivist epistemology established I next decided upon a research strategy. An obvious choice was phenomenology since in this approach the fundamental nature of human behavior, as portrayed by the participants themselves, is identified by the researcher. To understand the on-site experiences of attendees at community festivals I choose to follow a course of action that would involve my careful examination of people in a natural setting as a way to discover the meaning of their relationships to others as well as their surroundings. In view of the fact that I was an invested member of the festival and event industry it became critically necessary to recognize my own preconceived notions and place them aside. As I settled upon this strategy I also came to learn that phenomenology can be used in both qualitative and quantitative designs (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010). There are several branches of phenomenology with no one branch predominant in the field of event studies, however, in the closely related field of tourism studies, two branches are normally made use of when researching human experience; hermeneutics and heuristics. For purposes of my study the branch of hermeneutics offered the better option as it relies more on a constructivist and interpretive outlook that addresses individual experience from the perspective of contextual relationships. Heuristics on the other hand takes on a positivistic stance that reduces human experience to a more isolated examination. This selection was not as straight forward as it may at first appear knowing that the rules and conventions of phenomenological strategy reflect its origins in philosophy and are often described as somewhat vague. My concerns were diminished, however, after reading from Padgett (2008, p. 36), that phenomenology "is uniquely suited to leave readers feeling as if they have walked a mile in the shoes of the participants" ... and that is what I was ultimately hoping to accomplish.

Social constructivist epistemology, by spawning new values and meanings, offers the prospect of potentially generating theory. What little is known about the on-site behavior of attendees at community festivals comes from sociology, anthropology, and tourism discourses with an identified empirical and theoretical research gap in the field of event studies (Getz, 2010). Although well over fifteen years ago the “immediate conscious experience approach” entailing the observation and scrutinizing of actual behavior as it occurs in real time and space was proposed to better understand leisure experiences by Mannell and Kleiber (1997, p. 83) the behavioral experiences of participants as reported in the field of event studies continues to be a mystery (Getz, 2007) because of minimal, almost non-existent examination and theory building. With these thoughts in mind I decided to use grounded theory as my research methods; it could place a focus on the contextual on-site experiences of those attending community festivals and also potentially build theory for the field of event studies. I have to admit, at first this was mostly an egotistical irrational decision as grounded theory has a certain mystique about it, and what doctoral student wouldn’t like to be known for building theory. After examining grounded theory as a research method, however, I found it to be a systematic strategy introduced by Glaser & Strauss (1967), that was repositioned toward a process of verification (Corbin & Strauss, 1990), and has more recently been moved away from its positivistic roots toward social constructivism (Bryant, 2002; Charmaz, 2000). It leads to the development of theory through inductive research grounded in data as opposed to deductive research that tests the assumptions of existing theory. I came to believe it was the best choice for what I was hoping to accomplish. My study was not an attempt to test or expand upon any existing or preconceived theory, and began with only the general idea that attendees at festivals are having some kind of experiences. I discovered a conflicting opinion by Schwandt (1993) who believes that no qualitative study begins from pure observation and all conceptual structure is based on theory, but my study began with no explicit theoretical point of reference. With my epistemology, strategy, and method now in place I began to make plans for fieldwork and the data collection process of me engaged as a participant observer and primary data-gathering instrument driven by the research question, “What is the on-site behavior of attendees in real time and space at a community festival?”

As the final step of my design before heading into the field I made a purposive decision to conduct my research at community festivals conveniently located within a 1-day drive from my home. The question surfaced of how I would delimit and define the term community festival. Through history, community festivals evolved from their organic rural roots, to being more organized with the onset of industrialization, into the marketing and commercial organizations that have emerged in the past sixty years. Getz (1989) defined the product of special events as five linked perspectives, one of which was visitor experiences, but acknowledged the improbability of a universal definition; similar conclusions were drawn by Hall (1989) and Jago and Shaw (1998) as well as by Getz (2008) again when he re-examined the topic of definition. Although a definition of community festival remains esoteric, the challenge to delineate an exact meaning has led me to the realization that every community festival must be, in actuality, a distinctive experience unto itself. For the purposes of my study I decided to leave the concept of community festival undefined, but delimited to special events that:

- 1) Are open to the public, either free or by admission, gated or open access, and include either only local residents or local residents and tourists;
- 2) Have a primary theme of celebration or festivity (not with a primary purpose of sports competition, sales, business or trade, hospitality, marketing, education, science, politics, recreation, meeting or convention, religion, performing or visual arts, or marginal events such as riots or flash mobs);
- 3) Are temporary, infrequent, but with opening and closing dates;
- 4) Have a defined single location, although they may include multiple venues and activities, but not only processional in design such as a march or parade.

DATA COLLECTION

With everything now in place I ventured into the field as a participant observer to begin collecting data. It must be noted that the specific way I undertook participant observation, depicted as a “complete observer,” is one of more than several different roles that can be employed (Baker, 2006, p.174). As such, I was on location and remained passive, unobtrusive, and detached as much as possible, there to see and experience what was happening. To date seven community festivals have been part of my project. The first two were intended more or less trial runs of forty-five minute observations conducted primarily to develop my skills and become operationally proficient. For the remaining five events I observed each for a single day, for a period of approximately four hours. While at all seven of these festivals I moved randomly, attempting to see every area and venue, slowly moving through each element watching the behavior of attendees and hand writing short notes about what was happening in a small 4 inch by 5 inch notebook. At my first event I thought it might be important to observe and then write my notes in secret so as not to change attendee behavior, but I discovered that when I openly jotted notes that nobody seemed to care, was at all concerned, or that I affected the crowd behavior in any manner. In every case the goal was to dress and act like a typical festival guest; for example at an Irish Festival I wore a green shirt and continually had a beer glass in my hand (which was nursed for the entire four hours as not to affect my ability to observe). Sitting and listening to music, waiting in line for food and beverage, and maybe just checking out the craft vendors, I tried to be just another person at the event while conducting my observations. Unusually, at each event I came across an acquaintance, with whom I was cordial and would spend a little time talking, just like an everyday visitor would with those they might encounter, with one exception ... I never revealed that I was conducting research. Occasionally I would follow an individual or group of people for a short time as they moved throughout an event and often I would see many of the same attendees several times during an event. At first it was not easy to jot notes, but I developed shorthand that made it easier. Understanding that only simple notes were required to jog my memory after I left the event was an important technique that kept me from trying to record every little detail. Also, while taking notes, every now and then I would get ideas of what I thought might be a larger concept of what I was observing and would write short reflective notes to myself.

Many pages of handwritten notes were taken at each event as well as hand drawn maps for future reference. After leaving an event, within no more than twelve hours, the handwritten notes were expanded upon with extra details and remembrances. After my first trip to an event I learned to leave larger spaces between my comments and to write on only every other page, this making it easier to later expand the handwritten notes. A brief example of handwritten notes that were taken during a four hour observation at an Irish festival, during a five minute period, along with the later quick expansion completed within twelve hours (in italics) follows:

“people in line – *free formed* – for ponies, no one talks, man on cell – *plus others* – adults watch ponies, hold kids hands, man bored – *arms folded* – looking around, now on cell, kids talk to each other, parents do not – *zombie like stares* – two parents leave line – *drag kids*”

Although these notes appear very short, they would trigger much longer memories of attendee behavior in the next step of the process.

Subsequently, within seventy-two hours of my participant observation, the expanded field notes would be used to type a much more detailed, stronger, thick description of my participant observation. In two of the five, four hour cases “life got in the way” and this did not happen. Although I can use insight gained from these two lost observations, it was a lot of work for very little data. For the participant observations for which thick descriptions were written, much longer documents were generated for both the shorter forty-five minute and longer four hour observation sessions that averaged ten and twenty-five pages of doubled spaced type written data, approximately 2,500 and 8,000 words each, respectively. The process of writing the thick descriptions for the four hour observations was extremely time intensive and took between nine and ten hours. Based on the same five minutes of handwritten notes from the Irish festival example above, the following thick description was created:

“There is a horse trailer parked to the side, unpainted, not very attractive, maybe a hazard, but nobody cares. A man is taking a picture of his children as they sit on ponies. The boy has on a big green hat. Nobody is paying attention to the dad or his kids. There is a free formed line that meanders off to the southeast for the pony rides. Nobody in line is talking to anybody, two people are on their cell phones, and a few adults are holding their child’s hand. Several adults seem to be looking ahead at the pony rides, others looking down; three on cell phones, one man looks really bored and has his arms folded across his chest with a frown on his face. A couple of kids talk to each other, but their parents stare off into the nothingness like zombies. Two parents walk away from the line, holding kid’s hands, more or less dragging them as they go.”

DATA ANALYSIS

Data collection and analysis in grounded theory is not linear, maybe best described in terms of *élan vital* or the smoke from a candle that fills a room, and the constant ambiguity of having all parts in motion at once was the most difficult part of the process for me as a novice with his method. As data is collected, it is reflected upon, with thoughts of possible codes and themes about what action has happened perpetually emerging. As I moved forward with data analysis from each observation I also found myself constantly going back to re-examine previous data, often uncovering something I had overlooked. The hard part was to not move the data deliberately toward an end point, rather to keep collecting data as themes naturally emerged.

After writing thick descriptions of what I observed, my data was broken down ... word by word ... line by line ... sentence by sentence ... and incident by incident to produce action codes describing “what was happening.” The open coding of my four hour thick descriptions produced over 500 small initial action codes for each observation. Again, based on the Irish festival handwritten notes and thick description from above, the initial action codes that emerged from the five minute observation period follow:

- People do not pay attention to hazard
- Man takes picture
- Man wears green
- People pay no attention to others
- Line forms randomly
- People inline not talking
- People on cell phones
- Parents hold kids hands
- Adults look at ponies
- People looking at ground
- People on cell phones
- Man is bored
- Arms folded across chest
- Waiting man frowns
- Parents in a daze
- People quit waiting
- Parents hold kids hands
- Parents lead kids

With the above example eighteen pieces of data, initial action codes of what attendees were actually doing, ended up being generated from only a five minute observation. This initial coding process then proceeded into the identification of categories, emerging themes, and potential substantive theory. By themselves the initial action codes listed above seem almost inconsequential, yet with additional focused coding, the larger landscape of attendee behavior emerged and was grounded in data. This is now the point that I have reached in

my research project with the longer four hour observations. For the earlier shorter forty-five minute observations, however, the initial coded data has already been examined for shared meanings or attributes and organized into categories and sub-categories, a systematic process referred to as focused coding. This was first attempted on the computer, but I found it confusing and difficult to develop a deep feel for the data. Instead I elected to complete this step the old fashioned way, by hand, making small bits of paper with individual action codes that were then placed on a large table and organized and reorganized into categories over a period of several months. It was with this second step of focused coding that categories began to be joined together into emerging themes to form frameworks of promising substantive theory.

FIELDWORK – MEMOS

Charmaz (2006, p. 15) warns the qualitative researcher that “methods provide a tool” but “methods alone do not generate good research” and “a keen eye, open mind, discerning ear, and a steady hand can bring you close to what you study.” Grounded theory is a very systematic qualitative method, but it is not a system of exacting sequential steps. The strength of grounded theory is that it allows the researcher to be flexible as data is collected. As my data was collected I immediately began to write memos; operational memos that recorded my thoughts on the technical procedures of fieldwork and reflective memos where my thoughts naturally began to go back and forth from data collection, to analysis, to theory building, to potential expansions or contractions of my project ... maybe best described as an avalanche of ideas. The hardest part of understanding how to conduct a systematic grounded theory research project for me was this unsystematic back and forth, up and down, here and there, mixing of data collection and analysis. For those with a staunch background in quantitative methods I understand how this is hard to grasp. It was by this process of writing memos, lots of memos, I really came to comprehend grounded theory and deal with this high level of ambiguity. For purposes of example an excerpt from an operation memo follows:

“At the event I encountered and talked to 5 people/groups I knew. Mr. C - a parks & recreation director, Ms. P – an economic development director, Mr. B – owner of sound company, Ms. B – working part time to help manage the event, and a group of four students from one of my classes that had decided to do the fieldwork portion of the class by analyzing this event. Spent no more than a few minutes with each and it did not seem to really affect my ability to observe participant behavior or to change other participant’s behavior in any way. It is obvious I was over concerned with this issue – I do not see it being a problem as I move forward.”

This type of operational memo allowed me to establish a much more robust personal sense of how to conduct a quality participant observation. It allowed me to document my process and become an ever increasingly better technical grounded theorist.

My reflective memos, on the other hand, helped me to organize my thinking of what attendees

were doing and feeling, what was their actual behavior, as they participated at community festivals. An short excerpt from a memo follows:

“Overall I was surprised how much this festival was about standing in long lines – for kid’s activities and food and beverage – it seemed like the majority of the people I saw at this event were in lines. There seemed to be a pattern in the lines with the people in the back of the lines not very active and as they got closer to the front of the lines they were more engaged. I wonder how cell phones have changed event behavior as many people in line were using them.”

As I continue to analyze data it is these types of memos that spur ideas of how to connect the dots, how the initial action codes group into focused categories, and the categories into emergent themes for potential substantive theory.

CONCLUSION

At this point in time I have finished collecting data in the field as a participant observer at community festivals as I have reached saturation in the initial codes and categories that are developing. As I finished my participant observations, a theme emerged indicating that community festival producers may be lacking the ability, desire, or resources to create a high level of festivity that includes emotional, physical, and collaboratively creative participant experiences which in turn affect levels of social capital bonding and bridging at community festivals. As I continue to code and analyze my remaining thick descriptions I find myself also preparing to conduct focus groups and/or interviews with community festival producers as well as complete a review of a major festival organization’s newsletters over the past three years as a method of theoretical sampling in order to generate additional data to help refine these promising, but still weak, themes that have emerged. With this method I hope to exhaustively develop properties that proactively saturate the themes and become part of potential substantive theory about influences on attendee behavior. At some point, all my categories will be flushed out with no need to collect additional data. This is what grounded theorists aim for; it signals a time to stop collecting data and proceed with writing the results.

Using grounded theory to collect and analyze data is not easy, it takes a very long time, and at times is exhausting; the process described above has already taken three years. There is an extreme learning curve for grounded theory researchers and I can confirm that one gets better at data collection, analysis, and dealing with a high level of ambiguity only with experience. I have a personal sense of joy that I am almost at the point of beginning to write results, but more importantly, right from the beginning of this extremely inductive systematic process I have had a sense of accomplishment that I have been able to “learn what I did not know.” Being exposed to a new and innovative method to conduct festival and event research I have discovered more than I imagined possible about the contextual behavior of those who attend community festivals. That brings me to the end of my confessional tale, for now, for as I find

myself excited about writing about the behavior of attendees as community festivals, I also plan to find out more.

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Longitudinal measurement and implications of residents' perceptions towards the cultural facility versus cultural tourism development

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ABSTRACT

The world-class Cultural Trail was constructed in downtown Indianapolis aiming to make the city a popular cultural tourism destination. Little research has ever been done to measure the impact of the facility on people's perceptions toward the city's cultural tourism development, which is important for all the stakeholders to well understand the role of the facility and how to integrate this facility with the initiative of the city's cultural tourism development. Four rounds of surveys were conducted, tracking the city residents' evolving perceptions towards the new facility and urban cultural tourism. Results show that this new facility plays a positive role in the dimensions of 'attractiveness,' 'awareness,' 'civic pride/city image,' and 'uniqueness'; however, no distinct enhancements of perceptions were noticed during the four-survey periods. This study implies that building such a cultural facility is not enough to ensure a successful cultural tourism destination. Recommendations are further provided as how to capitalize on the cultural facility in making the city an attractive cultural tourism destination.

Keywords: Cultural Trail, Cultural Tourism, Residents' Perceptions, Longitudinal

INTRODUCTION

Tourism organizations commonly use one of two definitions of cultural tourism – a more specific view or a broader view (Richard, 2002). A more specific view of cultural tourism is the movement of persons for essentially cultural motivations such as performing arts and cultural tours, travels to festivals or events; and visits to historical sites and monuments; A broader view encompasses all movements of people. Based on the definitions, cultural tourism is not considered as a niche market within tourism, rather it is an amalgamation of tourism typologies and diverse activities which have a cultural focus (Kantanen and Tikkanen, 2006).

City governments today are viewing cultural tourism as an important tool in revitalization of economic development that results in improved quality of urban life for both residents and visitors. The city of Indianapolis is such an example. For the last decade, Indianapolis

has been striving to renovate cultural facilities and programs aiming to support and boost urban cultural environment, help improve the quality of life for Indianapolis residents, and enhance visitors' experience. Among all the efforts is the recently completed hallmark cultural facility, the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, which is designed to connect Indianapolis' six well-known Cultural Districts and build the city into a world-class urban bike and pedestrian path. Its ultimate goal is to nationally and globally position Indianapolis as an urban cultural tourism destination (Payne, 2010).

Given the huge amount of investment in the project and the ultimate goal of becoming a successful cultural tourism destination to be accomplished, this study deems it critical to assess the impact made by the facility in improving the city's cultural tourism. Especially, to ensure successful and sustainable marketing campaign on the initiative of cultural tourism, an essential priority for the tourism authority is to attain a good understanding of residents' perceptions towards urban tourism development. Thus, this study tends to evaluate the residents' perceptions and attitudes toward the Cultural Trail versus the city's cultural tourism. Studies of residents' attitudes and behaviors are important because interactions between tourists and residents have a significant effect on visitors' satisfaction with the destination (Pizam et al., 2000). The active support of host communities can be crucial for successful tourism development (Gursoy and Rutherford, 2004). Jurowski et al. (1997) noted that internal marketing messages are imperative to explain the social benefits of tourism to residents looking to reduce opposition and form a favorable destination image. Likewise, as a city increasingly gains the residents' support on urban cultural tourism, it will be much more cost-effective and marketing-effective to promote the city's cultural tourism (Wang et al. 2011).

According to Perdue *et al.* (1990), the importance of a community resident study on perceptions of tourism is twofold: (1) it helps to identify resident attitudes and perceptions towards tourism and (2) it helps to examine resident support for additional tourism development and specific development policies. As for Indianapolis' cultural tourism authority and marketers, the impact of the Cultural Trail on the cultural tourism environment needs to be examined to get a better understanding as to how the Cultural Trail has been capitalized on the course of cultural tourism development and how to improve its marketing strategy to maximize its impact. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the effect of the newly built facility of the Cultural Trail on local residents embracing the city's initiative of cultural tourism. More specifically, this study is designed to accomplish the following objectives:

- 1) To examine how the Cultural Trail has been accepted and used by the city residents;
- 2) To assess how the Cultural Trail has influenced the residents' perceptions of the improvement of the city's profile as an urban cultural destination;
- 3) To make recommendations as to how to maximally capitalize on the new cultural facility.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural tourism can be a tool for restoration and revitalization of economic development, in addition to creation of vivacious public areas and amenities that result in improved quality of life for residents and visitors (Bianchini, 1993). In addition to generating revenue, cultural tourism provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the significance of heritage (Carlsen, Hughes, Frost, Pocock, & Vicki, 2008). In terms of benefits, it can increase conservation, image, local business, local art and crafts, cultural exchange, and quality of life, along with infrastructure development (Weikert & Kerstetter, 1996). Residents may acknowledge the positive benefits derived from tourism, such as providing residents with jobs, learning about their cultures, sharing the cultures with tourists, and preserving the culture (Besculides, Lee, & McCormick, 2002). Typically, cities invest in cultural attractions and infrastructure to secure a niche position in the international tourism map, developing an industry that is sustainable and plentiful in synergies with other strategic sectors of the urban economy (Russo & van der Borg, 2002).

Although relatively few visitors view themselves as ‘cultural tourists, culture is the single most important motivation for city trips (ETC Research Report, 2005). Cultural tourism includes visiting or experiencing heritages or attractions, such as archaeological sites, historical ruins, museums, art galleries, performing arts, concerts, festivals, or fairs. The National Trust for Historic Preservation (2009) views cultural heritage tourism as traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. Stebbins (1996) defines cultural tourism “a genre of special interest tourism based on the search for and participation in new and deep cultural experiences, whether aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, or psychological.” Kantanen and Tikkanen (2006) further argue that cultural tourism is an experiential tourism in search of authentic experiences and personal knowledge-gain relating cultural objects and consider it an entity of a diverse range of activities. In their view, cultural sites as important attractions offer products or constructions of history and represent their historical distinctiveness, which remains recognizable but is presented in a new way. From tourists’ standpoints, McKercher and Cros (2003) advocate that cultural tourism can involve diverse markets, sizes of segment, and products because various types of tourists experience cultural tourism, from purposeful sightseeing tourists to incidental, casual, and serendipitous tourists. As for today’s experiential visitors, they are turning to cultural tourism as a means of seeking self-realization through engagement with authentic, emotional and spiritual experiences.

Based on the literature review, city cultural tourists are not unique but similar to other tourists who tend to attend for urban recreational and pleasurable purposes, not merely for deep learning experiences while visiting urban cultural sites. Besides, cultural tourism is not an exclusive market within tourism. Rather, it is an amalgamation of tourism typologies and diverse activities which have a cultural focus.

Previous studies have discussed what constitutes successful cultural tourism. Murphy and

Boyle (2006) reviewed major factors emphasized in literature and identified 19 determining factors for a successful urban cultural tourism destination, based on a case study of Glasgow, Scotland. The example factors includes the following topics: policy, strategy, capital, city image, marketing, civic pride, physical improvement, proximity/access, unique selling point, attractions, flagship projects, and activities, festival, and events. Carlsen *et al.* (2008) identified nine critical success factors of cultural heritage tourism. The nine factors include: objectives and concepts, financial planning, marketing, destination and proximity, human resource management, product planning, quality and authenticity, conservation, and interpretation.

With respect to measuring the success of the city's initiative of developing urban cultural tourism, Wang, Yamada, and Brothers (2011) conducted a survey in Indianapolis. The study showed that the city was not perceived to be a successful cultural destination based on Murphy and Broyles' (2006) conceptual model. Moreover, the study of Wang *et al.* (2008) identified some the important dimensions which are deemed to be essential for the success of the city's urban tourism. These key dimensions include the attractiveness of the city, residents' awareness enhancement, civic pride/city image, and unique selling point of the city. With the completion of the Cultural Trail, a logic step in research is to measure how the facility has been exposed among the local community and how the addition of this mega attraction has helped improve the city's profile as an urban tourism destination.

METHOD

To accomplish the goal of this study, a self-administered questionnaire is designed based on the pre-defined dimensions in the study of Wang *et al.*'s (2011). This study used constructs in place of single attributes in measuring the residents' perceptions towards the different dimensions in measuring the success of the city's cultural tourism, i.e. 'attractiveness,' 'awareness,' 'pride,' and 'uniqueness.' According to Stewart *et al.* (1992), compared with a single-item measure, a multi-item index or construct can increase score reliability by pooling information that items have in common, validity by providing a more representative sample of information about the underlying concept, and responsiveness or precision by decreasing score variability. As a result, two items were included to assess each of the four dimensions and consequently a summated score of each construct will be calculated by averaging the scores of two items used to assess each corresponding construct. Table 1 displays the four constructs and each construct's two corresponding questions to be measured.

Table 1: Constructs and the Corresponding Questions to Be Measured

#	Constructs	Measured Items
1	'Attractive' - Attractiveness of the city for being a cultural tourism destination:	How do you think of Indianapolis as a cultural tourism destination? (1 - very unattractive, 5 - very attractive).
		In your opinion, more visitors coming to Indianapolis will make this city's life - (1. much worse, 5 - much better).
2	'Aware' - Awareness enhancement of cultural tourism	The Cultural Trail makes distinctive improvements in 'awareness enhancement of cultural tourism in local community' (1- strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree).
		The Cultural Trail makes distinctive improvements in 'providing more cultural activities and events in the city' (1- strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree).
3	'Pride' - Civic pride and renewed image	The Cultural Trail makes distinctive improvements in 'residents' sense of civic pride of the city' (1- strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree).
		The Cultural Trail makes distinctive improvements in 'fostering a renewed or improved city image' (1- strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree).
4	'Unique' - Uniqueness of the city as a cultural tourism destination	The Cultural Trail makes distinctive improvements in 'establishing a unique selling point of the city's cultural tourism' (1- strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree).
		The Cultural Trail makes distinctive improvements in 'creation of the city's unique culture and heritage' (1- strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree).

These items are measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Respondents are also asked about their demographic information, length of knowledge about the trail and usage of the trail, and some other variables. Respondents were also asked to express their feelings about the facility in a form of open-ended question.

A pilot test was conducted to make sure all the questions are readily understandable and consistent with the study objectives. Four rounds of data collections were conducted with

the method of convenience sampling at several different locations near the Cultural Trail in downtown Indianapolis. These four rounds of surveys were collected in October 2010, April and October, 2011, and April 2012. Indianapolis residents who were 18 years or older were suitable for the surveys. A total of 1,243 valid surveys were collected after the fourth survey was completed.

Basic descriptive statistics was run to glean the variables' frequencies, means and standard deviations. One-way ANOVA analyses were conducted to detect the perceptual differences among the four rounds of surveys. The Independent Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test was performed to see if the value distribution of the categorical variables was the same across the four rounds of surveys. The significance alpha level of these tests is set at 0.05. SPSS is used for all the data analyses.

RESULTS

Respondents' Demographics, Awareness and Usage of the Cultural Trail

Table 2 shows the information of respondents' demographic characteristics. Over 60% of respondents are 35 years old or younger. More females (52.4%) participated in the surveys than males. With regard to participants' annual household income, about 31.4% earned less than \$30,000, 33.4% were between \$30,000 - \$60,000, and the others made over \$60,000. The major ethnic group participating in the surveys is the white (71.6%), followed by African American (13.8%). The Asian, Pacific islanders, and American natives altogether made up 14.6%. According to America's 2010 Census report, the Indianapolis population was composed of 51.7% females and 48.3% males, among which 61.8% were the white and 27.5% were the black. The median household income 2006-2010 is \$43,088. By comparison, the sample reflects the features of Indianapolis' 2010 census data.

Table 2: Respondents' Demographic Profiles

		1st round		2nd round		3rd round		4th round		Overall	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Gender	Male	151	40.3	127	46.9	162	54.4	136	50.9	576	47.6
	Female	224	59.7	144	53.1	136	45.6	131	49.1	635	52.4
Age	18 - 25	112	29.5	60	22.1	93	30.7	138	50.7	403	32.8
	26 - 35	109	28.7	85	31.3	89	29.4	51	18.8	334	27.2
	36 - 45	63	16.6	62	22.8	52	17.2	50	18.4	227	18.5
	46 +	96	25.3	65	24	69	22.8	33	12.2	263	21.4

		1st round		2nd round		3rd round		4th round		Overall	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
HH Income	<30k	118	32.1	69	25.9	102	35.2	85	31.7	374	31.4
	30k - 60k	122	33.2	105	39.5	85	29.3	86	32.1	398	33.4
	60k - 90k	55	14.9	52	19.5	63	21.7	63	23.5	233	19.5
	90k +	73	19.8	40	15.1	40	13.8	34	12.7	82	15.7
Ethnic/race	White	273	74.6	189	70.5	216	72.5	184	67.6	862	71.6
	Black	46	12.6	43	16.0	47	15.8	30	11.0	166	13.8
	Other	47	12.8	36	13.4	35	11.7	58	21.4	176	14.6

One of the purposes of this longitudinal study is to track the awareness rate of the new facility among the residents as well as the use of the Cultural Trail. It is construed that the rates of awareness and use of the Cultural Trail are going to be climb up with the elapse of time since the first round of survey. As shown in Table 3, however, such a curve did not happen in these four surveys. On average, 20.7% of the participants did not hear about the Cultural Trail before being intercepted for a survey and 34.9% have not got a chance to try this new facility. Results from the four surveys are not consistent, neither are there any changing patterns to be noticeable.

Table 3: Percentages of Residents Who Never Heard about and Used the Cultural Trail

Percentage	1st round (%)	2nd round (%)	3rd round (%)	4th round (%)	Overall (%)
Never heard about the trail	26.4	12.0	17.4	25.2	20.7
Never used the trail	50.1	20	27.7	36.4	34.9

In terms of how the residents heard about the Cultural Trail, as shown in Table 4, participants in the four different time periods all reported that 'word of mouth' is the major source to know the Cultural Trail (with an average 42.5%). The second main source is 'driving past' with 23.4%, followed by 'road signage' with 22.2%. These three sources are all belonging to the self-discovery category of sources; the second category of source is public media including 'TV/radio'(11.4%), 'newspaper'(9.0%) and 'website'(6.1); and the third category of source is tourism marketing organization (TMO) which is CVB in this study with 4.5%. In other words, so far the TMO and the public media have not played or not been perceived to play a significant role in promoting the Cultural Trail in the city.

Table 4: How Residents Heard about the Cultural Trail

	1st round (%)	2nd round (%)	3rd round (%)	4th round (%)	Overall (%)
Word of mouth	47.4	42.5	39.4	40.1	42.5
Road signage	13.0	24.9	22.5	29.4	22.2
Driving past	17	29.9	20.4	27.0	23.4
Newspaper	8.9	7.4	13.9	4.9	9.0
TV/radio	13.2	5.2	17.9	8.3	11.4
Website	6.3	8.3	4.4	5.4	6.1
CVB	3.4	3.4	4.4	7.3	4.5
Other	15.8	6.5	7.9	8.8	9.8

Summated Means of the Four Perceptual Constructs

The summated mean scores of the four constructs (namely, 'attractive', 'aware', 'pride' and 'unique') are displayed in Table 5 with a breakdown of the four-round surveys.

Table 5: The Summated Mean Scores of the Four Constructs

	1st round		2nd round		3rd round		4th round		ANOVA	
	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.	F-value	Sig.
Attract	3.79	.60	3.72	.71	3.71	.69	3.55	.76	5.96	.00
Aware	3.71	.67	3.77	.74	3.79	.72	3.76	.74	.75	.52
Pride	3.85	.79	3.74	.70	3.88	.79	3.81	.79	1.89	.13
Unique	3.72	.76	3.65	.74	3.79	.77	3.76	.81	1.87	.13

As shown in Table 5, the mean scores of 'Attractive' construct in each round range from 3.55 to 3.79; the 'Aware' construct received the mean scores from 3.71-3.79; the mean scores of 'Pride' vary from 3.74 to 3.88; as for 'Unique', the lowest is 3.65 and the highest is 3.76. All the mean scores are above the mid-point value 3, indicating a generally positive perception of the residents towards the improvements of the urban tourism development. The last column of Table 5 shows the results of ANOVA analysis for each of the constructs comparing the mean differences across the four rounds. Only the construct of 'attractive' shows to have significant difference among the mean scores of the four-round surveys. A further post-hoc analysis on the construct 'attractive' reveals that the mean score in the fourth-round is significantly lower than that of the previous three-round surveys which is a violation of the assumption that the completed Cultural Trail should make people feel the city to be more attractive with the elapse of time.

The Cultural Trail's Role in Making the City a Successful Cultural Tourism Destination

One question is to ask the participants to rate their degree of agreement to the importance of the Cultural Trail in making this city a successful cultural tourism destination. Table 6 shows the frequencies of respondents' ratings in the different rounds of surveys. The patterns of the ratings across the four rounds are consistent, with the mode being 'important' (46.5% on average), followed by 'neutral' (26.0%), 'very important' (13.9%), 'unimportant' (11.1%), and 'very unimportant' (2.5%). In other words, on average, over 60% of the respondents think the Cultural Trail plays an 'important' or 'very important' role in making the city a successful cultural tourism destination versus only 13.6% deemed the project 'unimportant' or 'very unimportant'.

Table 6: Role of the Cultural Trail in making the city a successful cultural tourism destination

Percentage	1st round (%)	2nd round (%)	3rd round (%)	4th round (%)	Overall (%)
very unimportant	1.3	5.2	2.0	2.2	2.5
unimportant	8.8	13.3	11.0	12.1	11.1
neutral	24.1	29.2	25.3	26.0	26.0
important	50.1	38.7	44.7	51.3	46.5
very important	15.6	13.7	17.0	8.4	13.9

Independent Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test across the four rounds of surveys: the test is significant at 0.003.

It is hypothesized that the longer the residents know about the Cultural Trail, the more likely the residents will be aware of the important role this facility can play in making the city a successful cultural tourism destination. To test this, the Independent Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test was performed to see if the distribution of the values shown in Table 6 is the same across the four rounds of surveys. The result shows the significance level of 0.003 and as a result this hypothesis is rejected. In other words, the distribution of values in each round of survey is not the same. It is noted then by comparing the values of all the four rounds that the most favorable perceptions were noticed in the first round and the least favorable perceptions were found in the second round while perceptions in rounds 3 and 4 were somewhere in between. Based on these analyses, it is concluded that generally, more people deemed the facility to be able to play an important role across the four rounds of surveys, however, there is no empirical evidence to prove that with the elapse of time more residents than before would realize the important role of the facility in contributing to the city's cultural tourism development.

Content Analysis of Participants' Comments on the Cultural Trail

In the surveys, participants were also asked to give their comments as how the Cultural Trail meant to them. Content analysis method was used to review all the comments. Comments with the same notions were put together and categorized into different themes. As a result, all the comments were categorized into three major themes, namely, 'good addition to the city,' 'improvements needed for attracting visitors,' and 'lack of promotion and marketing of the

facility.' Table 7 is a summary of the results of content analysis of the respondents' typical comments.

Table 7: Results of Content Analysis of Respondents' Comments on the New Facility

	Major Themes	Sub-categories
a	Good addition to the city	1) High appraisal of this new facility 2) Enhanced civic pride in the city's culture 3) Improvement of city centrality
b	Improvements needed for attracting visitors	1) Not good enough to attract visitors 2) Expecting more experiential arts and cultural activities along the trail 3) Ancillary facilities and conditions needed in attracting visitors
c	Lack of promotion and marketing of this facility	n.a.

a. Beautiful addition to the city

Comments under this category are further classified into three sub-categories:

- 1) High appraisal of this new facility, such as 'Love the cultural trail- beautiful addition to the city!' 'I love the cultural trail very friendly and clean.' 'Work out on the trail a lot- nice location, easy access, nice atmosphere.' 'Very attractive! Conveniently located plus connects other destinations.' 'Great benefit to living close by.' 'Unique place for residents and visitors.' and 'I take the trail to work, nice scenery on my way.'
- 2) Enhanced civic pride in the city's culture, e.g. 'The cultural trail is a wonderful cultural focal point for Indianapolis.' 'I love coming here every day; this trail will become a huge part of Indy culture.' 'Appreciate the trail and what it can do for the city.' 'I am proud of what is being done to improve Indy.' 'Great idea!' 'Indianapolis needs more projects like the cultural trail that will make the city stand out.'
- 3) Improvement of city centrality - 'Great to keep people active and involved in the city.' 'The Cultural trail is a great place to exercise and to enjoy the surrounding area.' 'It was a great place to exercise and visit to see scenery.' 'I really enjoy biking on the Cultural Trail.' 'I work at a hotel and many guests are interested in biking or running along the trail.'

b. Improvements needed for attracting visitors

While over half of the respondents who responded to this question expressed their excitement and support of this new facility, the other commentators offered their concerns and suggestions as how the Cultural Trail should be improved in attracting visitors. The second category includes all the comments and suggestions as how to capitalize on the new facility to attract visitors which is also further classified into three sub-categories.

- 1) Not good enough to attract visitors. Comments in this direction are such as ‘It helps improve the city, but it is not enough to attract global visitors.’ ‘I feel trail will be a nice addition to the people of our city, however, bringing in cultural tourism seems like a bit of stretch at this point!’ ‘This trail is highly unimpressive, esp. at night when most tourists are abound.’ ‘I hope improvement.’
- 2) Expecting more experiential arts and cultural activities along the trail. Such comments are ‘I would like to see more art not so ultra modern art as in Carmel area.’ ‘More ethnic activities besides black expo and circle city classic more events for ages 30+.’ ‘The cultural trail should be more tied into the city’s great sports culture and social culture.’ ‘Great idea, but how much is too much for cultural trail? When should some of funds be donated to arts?’ ‘The cultural trail sounds incredibly boring and not something the average person would want to do. Waste of money.’
- 3) Ancillary facilities and conditions needed in attracting visitors. Typical comments of this type are ‘Indianapolis doesn’t have a consistent nightlife. Besides bars and clubs, there is no encouragement for young adults to come downtown in the evenings. Downtown is not a very attractive place for shopping.’ ‘Lighting needed in problem areas.’ ‘Needs more lighting and spread in a more wide area in the city.’

c. Lack of promotion and marketing of this facility

There are serious concerns from the respondents that more promotion and marketing is necessary for the facility to become the city’s cultural focal point.

The typical comments with such concerns are ‘There is very little knowledge of the Cultural Trail and city tourism in Indy.’ ‘The Cultural Trail needs more advertising if it wants to be a prominent cultural focal point for the city.’ ‘I think Indianapolis Cultural Trail is an undiscovered gem for most people! I hope the city can find ways to continue to support and market this initiative.’ ‘I have not seen much about this trail in local papers.’ ‘Needs more promotion and signage of trail itself and the key cultural sites themselves to generate more buzz. Look into Boston’s Freedom Trail.’ ‘Do believe it will need heavy, extensive promotion.’

‘Not so many people are aware of the trail. There should be more marketing for the trail.’

All these comments are good indicators of how the Cultural Trail can invigorate the city life and in which direction the marketing and promotion of this facility should move towards. Overall, these comments have all echoed the results of the above quantitative analyses.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

One major purpose of this longitudinal study is to track the trend of residents’ increasing awareness and use of the Cultural Trail. It was construed that over time most residents should be well informed of and able to get at least one chance to use the facility. Moreover, it is

expected to see an enhanced perceptions of the residents in terms of the dimensions of 'attractiveness', 'awareness', 'pride' and 'uniqueness' with the complete opening of the world-class Cultural Trail. This longitudinal study, however, failed to prove this projected trend. It was hypothesized that the longer for the Cultural Trail to be built, the more important role to be played by the new facility as perceived by the residents in making the city a successful cultural tourism destination. This longitudinal study failed to evidence the expected change, either. Overall, there are no noticeable changes with regards to the residents' perceptions toward the Cultural Trail or with the facility's active role in the city's cultural tourism over the four-survey time period. This finding shows the city tourism marketers and stakeholders that the charm of the facility itself is not enough in making the city a successful cultural tourism destination.

One important indication of this study is that the majority of the participants were not well informed of the new facility by the city's tourism marketers or the internal marketing and promotional efforts on the trail did not exert substantial effects in the minds of the local people. In fact, most of the residents become aware of the facility not because of the city's cultural tourism promotional campaigns or through the news coverage from the public media, but mainly self-discovery. This study implies that the urban tourism marketers and related tourism government agencies should reconsider the existing marketing strategy by focusing on how to maximally capitalize on the new facility.

The respondents' comments on the Cultural Trail indicate that the city residents feel very passionate about the new facility. However, they are not satisfied with the no-activity status quo of the facility after its completion. The utility of the facility as a wonderful cultural focal point is not well performed as expected by the residents. Therefore, the residents look forward to further improvements, effective and successful promotion and marketing strategies, and its integration with the city's sport and cultural features, events and activities. Just as what's stated in one of the comments "Indianapolis Cultural Trail is an undiscovered gem for most people." The cultural tourism marketers need to take the challenge of marketing on how to make this 'gem' readily noticeable by both the residents and visitors.

Albeit the Cultural Trail project has been constructed and used for over two years, there is still a big percentage of local residents who have not heard about it and a bigger proportion of the residents who have not ever used the facility. Given this, the city marketers should make great efforts to engage the local residents in the promotion of the cultural Trail. As an initial step, the city government or tourism agencies should consider making the Cultural Trail a primary venue for city-wide expositions, cultural and international festivals or parades, as a result, to get more residents involved in the Cultural Trail. Local community's involvement in marketing decisions can help foster sustainable behavior among locals and tourists alike (Hassan, 2000). The majority of Indianapolis' current visitors are mainly visiting friends and relatives (VFR) (Wang et al., 2011). Local residents are considered to be major source of travel information to the VFRs. Residents' enhanced civic pride of the city as well as their favorable perceptions of its urban cultural tourism are believed to be able to render visitors a rich and impressive experience of the city and its tourist attractions.

This study suggests that the new leisure facility of the Cultural Trail in Indianapolis should play a vital role in enhancing the city profile as an urban cultural tourism destination. The challenge lays on how to ultimately capitalize on the Cultural Trail to promote the city's cultural tourism. According to Hayes and MacLeod (2007), trails that are developed to incorporate both educational and entertaining themes and materials and which immerse visitors in the story have the potential to be more successful. Cultural tourism as a phenomenon is concerned with marketing diverse cultural products of both a formal (e.g. museums, historic houses, visitor centers, etc.) and informal nature (e.g. open-air markets, cafes and bars, etc.) as discretely packaged cultural experiences (Craik, 1995). Popular cultural tourism is essentially experiential, often driven by the desire for insight rather than formal learning as a basis for understanding (Prentice, 2001). Visitors' experience of place is much enhanced by the linking of formal tourism products with informal products which convey a vivid sense of local culture, and trails ideally link these two types of visitor attraction to create a more holistic experience of place (Hayes and MacLeod, 2007).

Thus it is stressed that a successful designing of a cultural trail such as the Cultural Trail should integrate both the formal and informal cultural products, emphasizing visitors' engagement and experience in cultural activities embodying features of education, entertainment, esthetic and escapist experiences. Hayes and MacLeod (2007) suggest that one key principle for trail developers is concerned with providing a memorable and compelling theme and the dominant didactic style should give way to experiential and action based on language to entice and welcome the visitor. The city government of Indianapolis and its urban tourism marketers, therefore, are recommended to consider embedding some memorable and exciting cultural activities within the Cultural Trail, which should be annual, educational, entertaining and highly-visitor-engaged.

In short, the city of Indianapolis expects the Cultural Trail to play a key role in positioning and promoting Indianapolis nationally and globally as an urban cultural tourism destination. Findings from this study provide the Cultural Trail's developers and the city's cultural tourism marketers with important clues on how the trail product should be optimally utilized and promoted to maximize its potential. In analogy, the world-class Cultural Trail is like a fine-quality theatrical stage. The city tourism authority and marketers should realize that owning such a stage does not mean anything unless the world-class performance can be attracted to this stage and consequently makes the stage as well as the city well-known and attractive.

This study encompasses some limitations. One is that the participants may not be representative of the city populations due to the nature of convenience sampling implemented in the process of data collection. Over 60% of the respondents are young residents (35 years or younger) and only a small proportion of senior residents were covered. This may cause a sampling error due to the failure of catching all the age groups proportional to the population. These limitations should be considered when interpreting and applying the results of this study.

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Domestic tourism participation by public sector workers: a case study from Accra, Ghana

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ABSTRACT

Domestic tourism is said to be the backbone of the tourism industry. Domestic tourist consumption in the world's leading tourist destinations represents more than 60 per cent of total tourist consumption (Roa, 2004) and 83 percent of overall arrivals (Pierret, 2011). However, in developing countries domestic tourism is often marginalized in the interest of promoting international tourism, as tour operators focus their efforts on selling tickets and tours for foreign tourists. This study's objective is to examine public sector participation in domestic tourism in the Osu Klotey Sub Metropolitan Assembly of Accra, Ghana, employing a descriptive research design with stratified and simple random samplings of 109 respondents. We find that most respondents are self-motivated to travel domestically, and among those who do take part, VFRs rather than tourism-specific activities usually represent the main motivations. Moreover, a majority of domestic tourists report that problems they experience deter them from further patronage. Most respondents find the domestic tourism product to be unattractive, but confirm that better attractions could increase propensity to travel. In conclusion, our findings offer suggestions to help improve patronage of domestic tourism among Ghanaian public sector workers. Namely, the variety of activities on offer must not only be broadened, but also promoted more effectively through rigorous publicity efforts.

Keywords: domestic tourism, Ghana, developing world tourism, tourism, destination.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is among the new agendas for addressing poverty in less-developed countries (LDCs), and has been formally and prominently recognized by the UN's World Tourism Organization as a means for economic development (UNWTO, 2011). In many LDCs, the tourism industry represents a large percentage of the GDP, while providing a pathway for countries to increase their participation in the global economy. Most LDCs have relied upon

pro-poor tourism, ecotourism, and community-based tourism to attract tourists, protect the environment, and sustain local communities, and nearly all of these divisions of the industry depend upon attracting visitors from abroad.

Usually, the target market for such tourism activities is the international tourist, and this focus on international arrivals and receipts is underscored by their prominence in the UNWTO's (2012) World Tourism Highlights, among the organization's other publications and data portals. In Africa, domestic tourism has been overshadowed by international tourism, and Ghana is no exception. Evidence of this can be found in the government publication "Tourism Market Trends in Ghana" (2006), which is fixated almost exclusively on arrivals and receipts from foreign tourists. Scholars such as Asiedu (2005) have enumerated the benefits of international tourism with particular emphasis upon Ghanaian migrants' return.

Starting in 1973, government management of tourism in Ghana has gone through a number of stages. The Ghana Tourist Corporation was separated into two by National Redemption Council (NRC) Decree 224, forming the Ghana Tourist Control Board (GTCB) and the Ghana Tourist Development Company Limited (GTDC). The GTCB was to exercise the traditional functions of the National Tourism Organisation. In 1977, the Supreme Military Council Decree 80 amended NRC Decree 224 and established the Ghana Tourist Board (GTB). In 2011 the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) replaced GTB by an Act of Parliament, Act 817. The activities of each of these organisations have been focused upon the international tourist rather than on the domestic tourist. The overseas emphasis of tourism promotion is evident from the website www.touringghana.com/gtb.asp. The most prominent buttons on the web site include "Visas and Diplomatic Missions", "How to Get to Ghana", and "Tropical Health". In fact, the only mention of domestic tourism falls under the section on marketing, and states the goal of "promoting (it) and creating awareness of the benefits of tourism". From this, we can conclude that domestic tourism has not been a priority in Ghana. Even if Internet access were more widespread in Ghana, Ghanaians are limited to information that is put forth to find out about attractions and travel possibilities within their own country.

The aforementioned emphasis upon international tourism is due to the fact that in the developing world, earnings from international tourism are much greater than those from domestic tourism, and the two have little to do with one another. Moreover, a widespread assumption prevails that locals from developing countries lack the financial resources to take part in tourism activities. However, there is much more to it. Teye, Sönmez, and Sirakaya (2002) find unfortunate evidence of local resentment toward the promotion of Ghanaian attractions to foreigners based upon personal interviews. Their research intended to gauge local opinions about the re-development of slave castles in Cape Coast and Elmina, which are targeted to foreign tourists, but raise painful memories for Ghanaians. Pre-occupied with the attraction of foreign tourists, many African countries have lost sight of the domestic potential of tourism.

In developed countries, on the other hand, by far the greatest portion of tourism generated is by residents travelling within their own country (Coltman, 1989; Roa, 2004; Pierret, 2012)

and participation in domestic tourism is linked to industrial development (Oppermann, 1993). Hence, domestic tourism serves as a tool for further development in most already-developed countries. According to Eurostat (2011), about 77% of Europeans' holidays are spent within their country (Eurostat, 2011), and an even larger percentage of travellers remain within the European Union. Tourists can therefore be found in the most attractive European destinations almost year-round, bridging the seasonality gap in the tourism sector and thereby creating and sustaining more employment for local people.

Given its role in most developed countries, domestic tourism should be considered to be the backbone of the tourism industry. Consumption of domestic tourism in top tourist destinations in the world like Australia, Canada, France and the United States contributed more than 60 percent to the total tourist consumption in these countries (Roa, 2004). Driven by rising incomes, an increased standard of living, and ever-improving land, rail and air infrastructure, more people in 2007 travelled domestically in the top 10 generating countries in the world than ever before. With the benefit of improvements in information and communications technology (ICT) that virtually reaches all corners of some wealthy countries, people are more likely to leave their homes and workplaces to take domestic trips (Shresthra, 2010).

This paper examines the case of domestic tourism in Ghana, with special emphasis upon public-sector workers. The research seeks to unveil the motivations for domestic travel in Ghana, examine factors that inhibit the same, and to assess the attractiveness of the domestic tourism market with the aim of providing constructive suggestions for policy.

Located on the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa (Figure 1), Ghana is an interesting tourism case study because of its relative affluence among developing countries. Moss and Majerowicz (2012, 15) track Ghana's economic growth over the past decades, and conclude that it is emerging from "aid darling to a midsized emerging market". The implications of this emergence are not only a higher quality of life for Ghana's citizens, but also favourable recognition on the global stage. This, in turn, can help facilitate international partnerships (Goal 8 of the Millennium Development goals) by attracting foreign direct investment and international tourism. Evidence of Ghana's success can be found in the UNTWO's (2012) most recent *Tourism Highlights*, which reports a 16 per cent increase in international tourist arrivals in 2010 relative to 2009.

The present paper is organized as follows: Section 2 introduces the general literature on tourism's economic impact with paying special attention to domestic tourism, then briefly reviews the limited literature on tourism in Ghana. Section 3 introduces our methods and data. Section 4 includes our analysis, and we present our conclusions in Section 5.

LITERATURE REVIEW

An extensive literature has grown from a wide array of research on domestic tourism, with

particular reference to the developing world. Among the projects that inform this inquiry is an examination by Schlenke and Stewig (1983) of domestic tourism in association with economic development. The authors use Rostow's (1960) five stages of growth model—widely criticized as Eurocentric-- as a framework. They argue that domestic tourism participation comes with a country's progress toward industrialization, citing the examples of England, Afghanistan, Tunisia, Turkey, and Ireland, each at various stages of Rostow's framework. They speculate that as a given country develops and is characterized by "high mass consumption", more social classes begin to participate in domestic tourism.

Building upon this work, Oppermann (1993) analyses tourism development theories in the context of the Third World, interrogating development stage theory, diffusion theory, and dependency theory. He points out that each of these approaches is preoccupied by the formal sector, citing the important example of "drifter tourism" as just one type of that is overlooked. The author concludes that other existing development theories are too general, they do not pay sufficient attention to the informal sector, and therefore they neglect the true spatial dimension.

Brohman (1996) looks at the rapid growth in Third World tourism, calling for alternative appropriate policies to protect host countries and prevent problems realized by other outward-oriented development policies. He notes that many development countries have been successful at reversing trade deficits simply by embracing foreign tourists. However, he warns that a poorly-managed industry can result in problems of foreign domination and dependency, socioeconomic and spatial polarization, environmental destruction, cultural alienation, and loss of identity among host communities. Unfortunately, Brohman focuses mainly upon international tourism, but many of his cautionary suggestions nevertheless apply to domestic tourism as well.

Crouch and Ritchie (1999) introduce a competitiveness framework to examine the relationship between tourism and societal prosperity. Grounded in economic theory, the article explores destination competitiveness on the basis of natural endowments and government policy, citing evidence from specific industry examples and destinations. The authors examine both quantitative and qualitative data to build a destination competitiveness framework that can be applied to any location. Writing in the late 1990s, they conclude by reiterating that tourism and its effects should be managed and not "taken for granted", a statement that also holds true in the present time of sluggish global recession.

Teye, Sönmez, and Sirakaya (2002) examine residents' attitudes toward tourism development in the Third World, paying special attention to Ghana. The authors find that both residents and individuals in the industry are dissatisfied with the unintended impacts of tourism, particularly from abroad. Using factor analysis, they identify benefits including social interaction and cultural exchanges, but also costs related to welfare impacts, interference in daily life, economic costs, sexual permissiveness, and crowding.

Asiedu (2005) examines the return of Ghanaian expatriates to their home country, measuring the resulting incoming contributions of donations, expenditures, and investments as reported in the local press. Based upon the understanding that approximately one-fifth of Ghanaians live abroad, the author underscores the enormous economic importance of their return to the country. After discussing the relationship between migration and tourism, he offers a concise analysis of benefits by Ghanaian region and by month of the year, providing a breakdown of expenditures by major item. Asiedu's paper helps yield a clear understanding of the importance of family and community in Ghana, as well as the impact returning migrants have on the economy.

According to Ashley (2007), tourism's effects on a country's economy are numerous, and can be thought of as direct, indirect, or dynamic effects. Direct effects include income and wages from tourism that are earned by workers. Indirect effects include the power drawn from other sectors of the economy that service the tourism sector, including construction, transportation, agriculture and other industries. The dynamic effect of tourism concentrates on the livelihood changes that local people could adopt as a result of tourism interactions, which often create small business enterprises and impact the infrastructural and natural resource base of the destination. The proportion of women employed in an area's tourism sector through food and craft production can be seen as evidence of a positive effect of tourism.

Sahli and Novak (2007) argue that policymakers in many developing countries often overlook some economic costs of international tourism. Grounding their approach in trade theory, they argue that a tourism boom can incur costs that exceed gains, realizing a net impact that is ultimately detrimental to national welfare. Distinguishing between urban and rural settings in the destination country, they find that "immization" can occur when tourism is less labour-intensive than farming, in other words when tourists are intensive users of rural land, such as with golf, safaris, or hunting. The authors make a convincing argument for careful vigilance of the industry, but unfortunately stop short of plugging empirical data into their theoretical framework.

Typically, a locality's tourism activities inflate the local prices of goods and services. However, when domestic tourism is very high in an area, susceptibility to inflation process is reduced. This is because domestic tourist awareness of the actual value of goods and services in the country might deter industry workers from raising prices. Policy-makers should assess the benefits that domestic tourism brings to all stakeholders; these include the traveller, the tourism industry, its related sectors, and the nation as a whole. In Ghana, the removal of an annual leave component from compensation packages many years ago has discouraged most civil servants from travelling during their time away from work.

The introduction of the Tourism Development Plan for Ghana (1996 – 2010) and its associated Strategic Action Plan for Ghana served as a new birth of the tourism industry in Ghana. These plans are intended to guide the development and promotion of tourism in the country. Significant impacts that are attributed to these plans include a dramatic growth in domestic

tourism. In 2007, 74 per cent of visitors to the top 25 attraction sites in Ghana were domestic tourists. In 2008, this increased to the figure of 77 per cent of all visitors at 38 major tourist sites being local residents (Ghana Tourist Board, 2008).

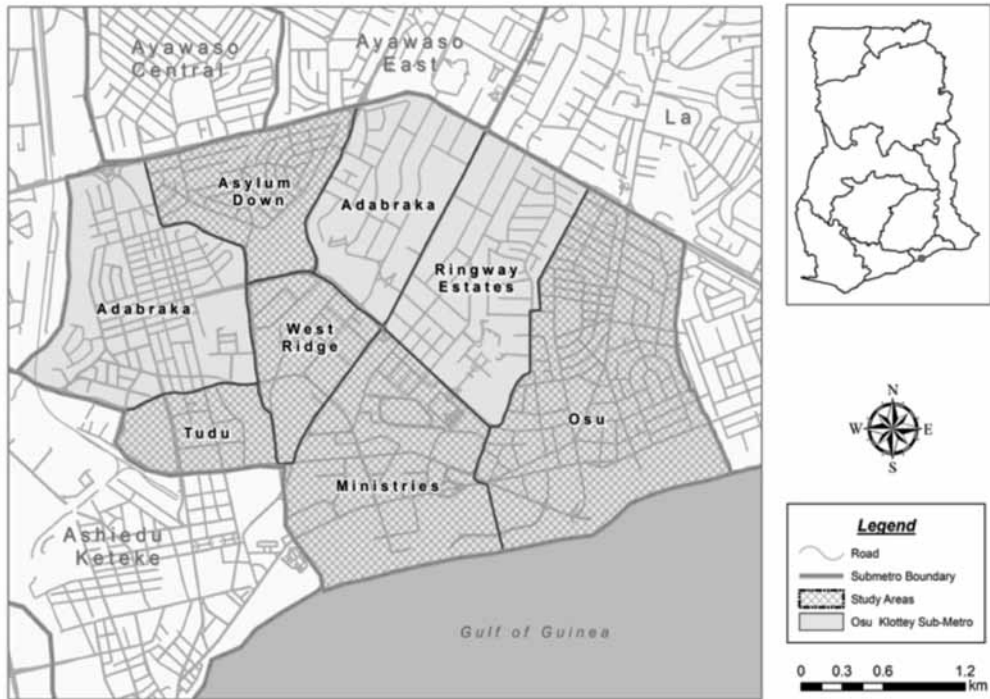
Reflecting upon the industry since the onset of the global financial crisis, Mensah (2011) puts forth a negative prognosis for international tourism. Even more important than the crisis itself, he attributes this “gloomy state of affairs” to Ghana’s “non-implementation of tourism policies, inadequate research and marketing efforts, (the) high cost of doing business in Ghana and low level of domestic tourism.” He goes on to cite the example of the UK, where domestic tourist arrivals actually rose in 2008, a year when international arrivals fell. Mensah (2011) laments the lack of effective marketing of domestic tourism in Ghana, as well as the fact that as poorer, few Ghanaians are inclined to indulge in tourism. He suggests social tourism as part of the government welfare system, with emphasis on school-aged children who will galvanize their love of travel as they grow into adulthood.

Noting that domestic tourism has economic benefits over international tourism, this paper seeks to unveil its constraints in Ghana, paying special attention to the attraction-rich destination of Osu Klottey. We begin with the assumption that domestic tourism requires both leisure time and scarce disposable income for participants, alongside other variables that might influence travel. However, we do not know what motivates (or fails to motivate) tourist in the first place, nor do we know the relative importance of inhibitors. In most developing countries where governments struggle to maximize employment, workers in the public sector are considered to be above average in terms of income, and for that matter are among the most likely to take part in tourism activities. However, public sector workers in Ghana are largely linked to the tourism sector to the extent that they provide services to enhance the tourism sector. They are therefore considered as tourism related organisations. There seems to be little to encourage them personally to participate in domestic tourism activities. In order to inform policy, it would be valuable to discover the factors that impede domestic travel, especially among public sectors workers, those who are most likely to participate in the domestic tourism industry.

METHODS AND DATA

The study area is the Osu Klottey Sub Metropolitan Assembly (Figure 1), one of eleven sub-metropolitan district councils of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. The district borders Ayawaso East, La, Ashiedu Keteke, Okai Koi South, and the Gulf of Guinea. Osu Klottey is divided into eight (8) main areas. These are Adabraka, Asylum Down, Ministries, Osu, West Ridge, North Ridge, Ringway Estates and Tudu.

Figure 1: Study Area of Osu Klottey, Accra Metropolitan Area.



Cartography: Dacio Osman, University of Cape Coast

Osu Klottey is considered to be the heart of Ghana because the Christiansburg Castle and the government ministries are located here, including the Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Town and Country Planning, Registrar General Department, the Ghana Police Service Headquarters, the Ghana Fire Service Headquarters, Ghana Immigration Service, Customs Exercise and Preventive Service, Ghana Investment and Promotion Council. Some tourist attractions that can be found in the area include the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum, Independence Square, the Black Star Arch and a number of heritage buildings leading to the Christiansburg Castle. However, most residents of the area are relatively poor by Ghanaian standards and they commute substantial distances to work.

Although Osu Klottey boasts many of Ghana's national treasures, the region is seldom visited by Ghanaians. Unfortunately, the level of awareness and promotion of domestic tourism is minimal, and for this reason its potential impact on the economy has been overlooked. Ghanaian tour operators rarely package domestic tours for nationals, hence domestic tour packaging is left to organizations that focus mainly upon provision of recreation for their members. Existing efforts by public sector operators to promote domestic tourism have not yielded much mainly due to the inadequate resource allocations in the public sector.

This research uses a survey questionnaire instrument to gather data because of the efficiency of the approach; surveys facilitate rapid collection of useful data. Data on the study were collected from four public sectors located within the Osu Klottey district of Ghana's capital city Accra, from January to March, 2011. Public sector respondents were targeted because they are viewed to be more familiar with the domestic offerings, and because they are expected to receive typical wages (private sector workers often receive higher incomes). Respondents were sought randomly at the Ministry of Communication, the Ghana Police Headquarters, the Ghana Education Service, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Economic Planning. Respondents for the study were selected through the simple random sampling method. In total, 115 questionnaires were administered and 109 were usable for analysis purposes, representing a 94.78% response rate. The sample represents eight percent of the total employees of these four ministries, disproportionately distributed.

The survey instrument consists of 43 questions, both structured and open-ended, but all self-explanatory. The instrument is organized into sections on motivation for domestic tourism, factors that inhibit domestic tourism, and the perceived attractiveness of the domestic tourism market. Respondents were also asked for socio-demographic data. At ten pages, the instrument is too lengthy to append to this manuscript, but a copy is available upon request.

The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents are summarized in Table 1. A majority of respondents (64.2%) are male, and the age ranges from 20 – 59 years, although most are under 39 years of age. The study captured public sector workers whose educational level were either secondary or tertiary and over 60 percent of the respondents have ever been married while 37.1% were single. These workers have an average of three children and receive salaries ranging from 50 Ghana Cedis (US\$28) to over 651 Ghana Cedis (\$365) per month.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristic of respondents

Socio-demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	70	64.2
Female	39	35.8
Age category		
20 – 29	38	34.9
30 – 39	39	35.8
40 – 49	21	19.3
50 – 59	11	10.1
Educational level		
Secondary	16	14.7
Tertiary	93	85.3

DOMESTIC TOURISM PARTICIPATION: A CASE STUDY FROM ACCRA

Socio-demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Marital status		
Single	39	37.1
Married	62	59.0
Divorced	2	1.9
Widowed	2	1.9
Salary range		
50 – 250	13	13.4
251 – 450	22	22.7
451 – 650	23	23.7
651 and above	39	40.2
Number of children		
None	47	43.2
One	14	12.8
Two	16	14.7
Three	17	15.6
Four and above	15	13.8

ANALYSIS

The tourism industry produces both durables and non-durable goods for the enjoyment and satisfaction of tourists. Such products must be attractive in order for people to patronise them. The attractiveness of a domestic tourism product is not only found in attractions themselves, but can also be thought of in reference to advertisement, accommodation facilities and services at the site, restaurant services, tourism information services and activities of tour operators in the generating region. Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Wanhill, and Shepherd (2005) define advertisement as any paid form of non-personal communication through the media that details a product that has an identified sponsor. Such media may include travel guides, newspapers, magazines, radio, television direct mail and billboards. Advertising is used to achieve a wide range of objectives that may include changing attitudes or building image as well as achieving sales. Advertising contributes to the marketability of a product or service.

PERCEPTIONS OF DOMESTIC TOURISM PRODUCTS IN GHANA

Responses to our “satisfaction” questions from our survey instrument are summarized in Table 2, revealing that domestic tourism products are generally not perceived as attractive by our respondents in Osu Klottey. In fact, the perception across the sample is overwhelmingly negative, especially with reference to advertising and tourist information services. We note that 77% and 73.5% of respondents find them either unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory, respectively.

Table 2: Satisfaction Levels of Industry Components as Perceived by Respondents

	V. Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	V. unsatisfactory	No idea
Advertisement	2.8	16.5	56.0	21.1	3.7
Accommodation Services	0.9	34.9	41.3	15.6	7.3
Accommodation Site	4.6	40.4	34.9	12.8	7.3
Restaurant Services	0.9	45.0	44.0	6.4	3.7
Tourist Information Service	1.8	22.9	55.0	16.5	3.7
Activities of Tour Operators	5.5	26.6	45.9	10.1	11.9

In other words, a vast majority of respondents (about three quarters) are not satisfied with the kind of advertisement on domestic tourism. Advertisement is one of the tools used in the promotion of domestic tourism. According to Cooper et al (2005) advertisement with sales promotion are the most widely used forms of promotion.

On the other end of the spectrum, the most satisfactory components of the industry in the eyes of respondents are accommodations sites (47%), restaurant services (45.9%), and accommodation services (35.8%). Accommodation is among the most important components of tourism and a key element of the tourist experience. Still, less than half of the respondents (35.8%) consider accommodation in Ghanaian tourist areas to be satisfactory in terms of affordability. Accommodation takes a considerable portion of tourist expenditure at a destination, as indicated by recent declines in international expenditures amid increases in arrivals (Mensah, 2011; UNWTO, 2012). Like international visitors, when locals consider the cost to be excessive, it reduces the length of stay at a destination and to some extent prevents people from travelling internally.

The appeal of domestic tourism products also includes restaurant services in attraction areas, tourist information services, and offerings by tour operators. These factors in part or in combination with other confounding variables influence people's decision to take part in domestic tourism activities. Table 2 clearly shows that respondents are not satisfied with the way in which these services are provided. Information about tourism products in the country makes the tourist aware of what is available, when it is available, factors that might affect the experience of the tourist, and how to even prepare for trips. Information plays a key role in creating the destination image, which is likely to stimulate demand in travellers.

Finally, tour operator offerings are generally regarded as unsatisfactory (56%, with nearly 11.9% of respondents reporting that they have "no idea" about this category. We speculate that few respondents are familiar with such professionals because they are less concerned with the domestic market. Virtually all tour operators in Ghana are motivated by earning foreign currency, involved in the sale of air tickets. This shows that tour operators are not interested in domestic tourism hence greater number of respondents find their services unsatisfactory.

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH UNATTRACTIVE TOURISM PRODUCTS

The notion of individuality extends to every aspect of life, and therefore the tourism product may be defined very differently by different people. To a consumer, a tourism product simply determines level of satisfaction, which can relate to goods and services provided by suppliers, such as transportation, accommodation, and food and beverages. If these components of the consumer tourism product fail to meet expectations, according to the consumerist gap model consumers (tourists) will be dissatisfied, leading to a marred experience (Laws, 1986). Therefore, it is important to understand the ways in which respondents rate these components of the Ghanaian domestic tourism product.

Table 3: Perception of Domestic Tourism Product

Domestic tourism	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of intermediaries	40	16.0
No varieties in activities	34	13.6
Substandard accommodation	41	16.4
No information on the product	70	28.0
Lack of interest	28	11.2
Poor food services	21	10.8
Others	10	4.0
Total	250	100.0

N=250 multiple response

Table 3 reveals that 28 percent of the respondents selected “no information on the product” as a reason for the Ghanaian domestic tourism product’s unattractiveness. Other factors include substandard accommodation (16.4%), inadequate domestic travel intermediaries (16%), no variety in activities in tourism activities at the destination (13.6%), lack of interest in domestic tourism activities (11.2%) and inadequacies of food services (10.8%). In addition, respondents cited a lack of good sanitation, as well as infrastructure problems related to roads and telecommunications.

With regard to information on tourism in Ghana, it is important to note that a plurality of respondents holds the view that they have either insufficient or non-existent. Some believe that tourism is simply too expensive, specifically citing services. Many believe that tourism is not packaged to suit the average Ghanaian, but rather the international tourist. Given the importance of domestic tourism to most economies (Mensah 2011; Pierret 2011), this is a clear indication of the need to look at some of these issues and consider ways to make the tourism industry more appealing to domestic tourists as well.

In assessing the attractiveness of the domestic tourism product, we find that insufficient information exerts a strong deterrent to travel. In Table 3, lack of information is the modal response for the reasons attributed to the unattractiveness of the domestic tourism product, and this observation corroborates the assertion drawn from Table 2 that respondents find

advertising and tourism information to be either unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory. An improvement in information technology and dissemination of information is likely to enhance the tourism product and promote domestic travel, as information brings about awareness creation and education.

Shresthra (2010) points out that in Nepal, improvement in information technology reaching all corners of the country, has made it possible for citizens to take domestic trips more frequently. Consider the convenience of comparing accommodations on the Internet while already underway, or booking a hotel room while traveling. Our findings here suggest that better information access would also benefit tourists case in the Ghanaian context.

MOTIVATION FOR TRAVEL

People travel for different reasons. Ryan (2002) points out that people have different needs, establish different goals to satisfy those needs, and take different actions to achieve those goals. Different people would therefore have different perceptions about travel. Thus purpose of travel will differ from one individual to another. Table 3 shows the purpose of travel by public sector workers in the study area.

Table 4: Purpose of Domestic Travel in Ghana by Respondents in Osu Klottey

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage
VFR	66	54.1
Curiosity	5	4.1
Attraction	10	8.2
Rest and Recreation	18	14.8
Shopping	7	5.7
Education	16	13.1
Total	122	100.0

Source: Fieldwork by the author, 2011 (N=109) (* total frequency = 122)

We know from Asiedu's (2005) research that Ghanaian culture values relationships, and these are often strong enough to pull expatriates back to the country even at great expense. Likewise at the domestic level, Ghana's close-knit families and communities are an important motivation for travel, and Table 4 shows that respondents' primary reason for travelling is Visits to Friends and Family (VFRs). The second most important category cited is rest and recreation, which constitutes 14.8 per cent of the responses. Other purposes of travel highlighted by respondents include education, visits to attraction sites, shopping, and for curiosity. People travel for various reasons; for some, these reasons are influenced by the kind of activity and by the destination itself. These findings extend to Ghana earlier work by Mak (2004), who suggests that people travel to spend time for family and friends, to be with others and have fun, for rest and recreation, and to broaden one's education. Following Plog's (2002) allocentric typology, others travel to discover new places, experience a different culture, or for excitement and adventure.

However, we find that the dominant reason for domestic travel among public sector workers in Osu Klottey is to visit family and friends. In visiting family and friends, tourists tend to utilise facilities within the homes of their family or friends. As a result, the economic contribution to the community or region visited may be limited because most of these services that are required are provided for free by the hosts.

FACTORS HINDERING PARTICIPATION IN DOMESTIC TOURISM

International tourism has been shown to be far less patronized than domestic tourism in terms of numbers in most developing countries (Pierre, 2011). However, in the eyes of service providers international tourism is more popular than domestic tourism due to the perceived more significant economic benefits derived from it. Domestically, some factors limit local participation in domestic tourism, and for that matter reduce the economic benefits from it. These factors are presented with their distributions in Table 5.

The final column (“mean”) refers to the average of the Likert scale values. The Likert scale ranges from 0 to 5, so all other things being equal the average should be 2.5. Any value above or below will illustrate the overall opinion of the respondents. Therefore, every response to a particular question weighs into the overall averages, calculated in SPSS.

Table 5: Factors Impeding Domestic Tourism

Factor	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mean
I am not interested	4.6	13.8	55.0	26.6	3.036
I have no idea of attractions in the area	17.4	22.0	39.4	21.1	2.642
Attractions are in deplorable state	15.6	42.2	38.5	6.4	2.330
Low standard of service	12.8	45.0	38.5	3.7	2.330
Inadequate time to take part	23.9	41.3	31.2	3.7	2.146
Inadequate finances for tourism activities	27.5	36.7	31.2	4.6	2.128
Prefer to travel outside the country	9.2	27.5	43.1	20.2	2.743
Family obligations	9.2	44.0	35.8	11.0	2.486
Inadequate information on activities	29.47	29.4	27.5	13.8	2.256

Our findings suggest that generally, Ghanaians are certainly interested in participating in domestic tourism, with over three quarters of respondents disagreeing to some extent that they are disinterested. In other words, a lack of interest does not prevent participation. It is therefore necessary to consider what other forces may be at play in deterring domestic tourism.

Fyall, Least, and Wanhill (2008) argue that that attractions are the “raison d’être” for tourism; they provide the motivation. Attractions generate the visit, give rise to excursion circuits, and create an industry of their own. Thus, poor knowledge of attractions will really affect tourism patronage. Like any other facility, an attraction’s state or performance determines whether or not people are drawn to it. According to the responses reported in Table 5, attractions that

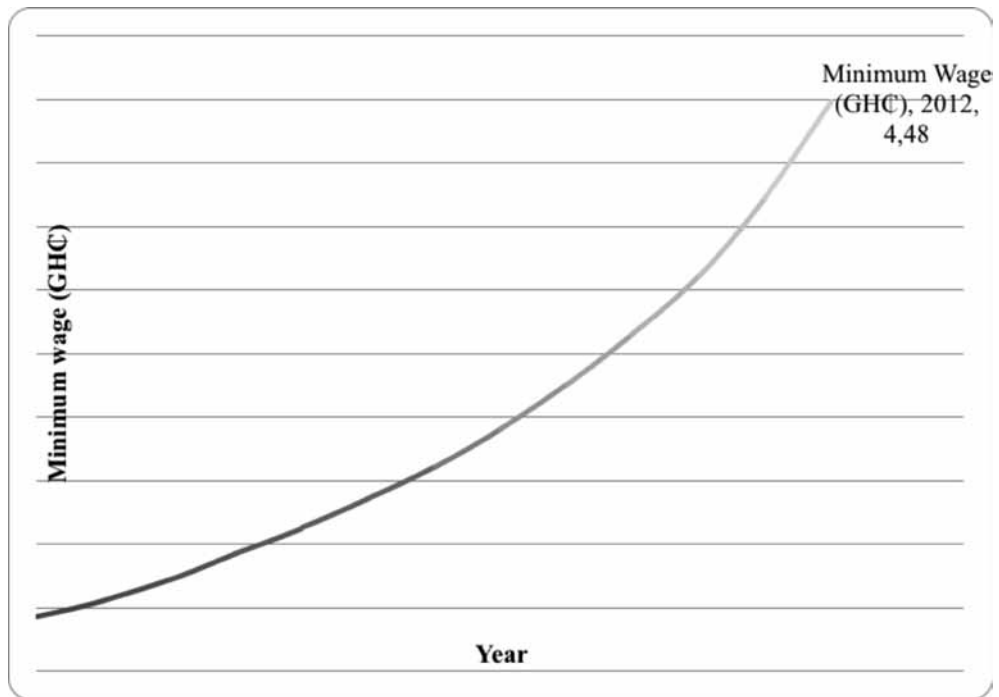
they are aware of are not perceived to be in a deplorable condition. However, there could be other factors contributing to respondents' inability to take part in domestic tourism.

Table 5 reveals two major factors that should be considered as far as participation in tourism activities is concerned: discretionary time and money. Time spent on vacation travel also has an opportunity cost measured vis-à-vis its value in the next-best use (Mak, 2004). The person who takes a trip could be giving up income earning opportunities, or the pleasure from spending, or the same amount of leisure time doing other things at home. Time is therefore a factor that influences domestic tourism participation. By examining open-ended answers, we discover that many respondents attribute inadequate time for domestic travels to pressures in the workplace.

Closely associated with time in terms of travel is money. Travel is costly and relatively high income levels are required to travel for vacations. A consumer who is considering taking a holiday trip has to weigh the potential benefits of taking a trip against the benefits of spending his/ her money in other ways (Mak, 2004). Most respondents (64.7 per cent) must overcome financial obstacles when considering domestic tourism, and this is revealed by their agreement that inadequate financial resources for tourism activities hinders their participation. These observations are in harmony with the existing literature that distinguishes domestic tourism in wealthy countries from the developing world. As Schlenke and Stewig (1983) established with earlier research, citizens of poorer countries lack the discretionary time and money necessary to travel, even domestically.

As argued by Schlenke and Stewig (1983) in reference to Rostow's (1960) Stages of Economic Growth, domestic tourism participation is thought to be closely linked to economic development. Consequently, in developing countries such as Ghana, the majority of the population is unlikely to participate in domestic tourism. As a result, most individuals are required to work hard with little leisure time and discretionary money. Because tourism represents a discretionary activity, most people are denied the required resources to partake in tourism activities. In other cases, family responsibilities and other life pressures prevent a number of people from participating in tourism activities.

Income also has a tremendous effect on travel, as disclosed earlier. Following Schlenke and Stewig (1983), we expect to find a higher propensity to travel amongst the higher social classes. If it is true that wealthier people engage more in domestic tourism, the gradual increase in minimum wage of workers in Ghana could have a substantial impact upon participation in domestic tourism. It is believed that with the increase in workers' wages, some of the people in the category of "deferred and no demand" could move to the "actual demand" category and take full part in tourism activities. Figure 2 shows the rise in minimum wage of workers from 2000 to 2012.

Figure 2: Minimum Wages in Ghana over Time (in GH¢)

However, our respondents within the lower income group indicate they would participate in tourism activities more than those earning higher incomes. This observation debunks the theory of economic development (marked by higher incomes) encouraging travel behaviour. As new data become available, more detailed interest in income levels should therefore inform further research on this relationship.

Other obstacles that are raised include a perception of low service standards, family obligations, and, once again the issue of inadequate information on tourism related activities in the country. All these factors are crucial to the survival of the tourism industry. Well-trained service providers should possess good communication and service skills, and these translate to service provision. Customer service is important because it satisfies customers and allows them to depart with a pleasant experience. This, in turn, can expand the client base and amplify the professionalism of the organisation and its reputation. Therefore, employees that provide good customer services are appreciated by both the customers and the organisation (Andrew, 2007).

Finally, we again see the importance of information and promotion in Table 5. In the view of nearly sixty percent of respondents, inadequate information on tourism-related activities

could serve as a hindrance to participation in domestic tourism. Tourism products and activities in the country should be advertised both locally and internationally. Advertisement for local markets should be tailored to suite local market in terms of cost, services and facilities.

MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT OF THE DOMESTIC TOURISM PRODUCT

The marketing and management of tourism products is essential for tourism development. Marketing expert Kotler (2003) defines marketing as “a social and managerial process where individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others.” Through marketing, new tourism products are made known to prospective tourists, helping them decide and also to modifying their travel itineraries. Marketing tourism products has proven to be difficult worldwide due to the fact that tourism is sold as an experience product, which is made up of many components, in contrast to tangible products (Middleton et al., 2002). Most public sector workers from the Osu Klotey district believe that tourism products have not been marketed to them, nor to others in the country. Our assessment of the Ghana Tourist Board (2010) website corroborates these assertions. Over ninety percent (92.7%) of the respondents consider marketing of tourism products in the areas to be inadequate. This ineffectual marketing of tourism products affects not only the development of the product itself, but also other tourism-supporting services in the country. Still, there are a few instances where marketing efforts have been improved. These include specific events that including the promotion of PANAFEST and Emancipation Day, which attract many international tourists, although their impact on domestic tourists is questionable.

Most often, the host government in question assumes the responsibility for managing tourist products and major attractions in the country. Nevertheless, tourism that is perceived as a private enterprise might best be marketed and managed by private enterprises.

TRAVEL MOTIVATION AND DECISION MAKING

Whatever the reason for taking a holiday, many factors both economic and non-economic determine whether people actually go on a trip (Mak, 2004). Dann (1981) identifies seven (7) elements that motivate tourists to travel, including

- travel as a response to what is lacking yet desired;
- destination pull in response to motivational push;
- motivation as fantasy;
- motivation as classified purpose VFR;
- motivational typologies;
- motivation and tourist experiences;
- motivation as meaning (the way in which tourists define their situations and respond to them).

Travel decision-making for domestic tourism is influenced by a number of factors, including family obligations, work pressures, and time and money constraints. These factors affect decision making on domestic tourism. Again, in the case of Ghana the strong family system

could influence one's decision to travel. Other people could serve as influencing factor as far as decision making on domestic travel is concerned.

Table 6: Major Influencing Factors on Domestic Travel in Ghana

Influencing factor	Frequency	Percentage
Myself	72	67.9
Colleagues at workplace	15	14.2
Friends	19	17.9
Total	96	100.0

Source: Fieldwork by the author, 2011

The decision to travel relies mostly on individual workers themselves rather than on other related variables that influence travel decision-making. As indicated by the vast majority of our responses, most public sector workers decide by themselves whether or not to partake in domestic tourism. Nevertheless, they are indeed influenced by other contending variables such as friends and workplace colleagues. Therefore, it can be said that the travel decision by public sector workers is mostly intrinsic and highly personal, an observation that might be valuable for industry planners.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In assessing the attractiveness of the domestic tourism product to public sector workers, we find that the various components of domestic tourism were unsatisfactory to prospective tourists. Although percentages for some of the components were not as high as others, it goes to show that the level of satisfaction in the domestic tourism products based on the facilities mentioned in the survey would have to be improved in order for domestic tourism products to flourish in Ghana.

A critical look at existing tourism information dissemination in Ghana is an excellent starting point, and certainly warrants more study. For starters, information dissemination could be enhanced through the distribution of brochures to institutions such as schools, government agencies, and corporate bodies. This would help the general public acquire knowledge of more of Ghana's tourism offerings. Ghana is no exception to the rule that provision of relevant information on tourism products and resources is vital in the tourism industry. While it represents a starting point, it is not enough to simply disseminate information; it is also essential to make prudent updates about the various components of the tourism industry. By using electronic media such as the Internet as well as video documentaries and print media, information about domestic tourism participation in the country can be distributed, thereby making tourist products attractive to the general public. The Ghana Tourism Authority (<http://www.ghana.travel/>) has made excellent progress in this regard with its web site containing news about festivals and highlighting special events such as U.S. President Barack Obama's

July 2009 visit. Arguably, however, this and similar web sites seem to primarily target visitors from overseas, presumably in pursuit of foreign currency. Sadly, it demonstrates obliviousness of the opportunity to serve the domestic tourism market.

As Ghana's economy continues to grow, policy makers should not only target international tourists, but domestic tourists as well. As their trademark, they should explicitly state their commitment to sell destinations not only to the international market, but also to satisfy the domestic market. For the accommodation sector in particular, this is the moment of truth. Accommodations employees are the first point of call as far as tourists are concerned. They therefore represent the establishment and form the firm's image. Hotel and other accommodation employees must understand customers and to some extent empathize with them.

Although tourism products are consumed *in situ*, facilities and new tourism products should be located where they could be easily accessible to their target clientele. However, there are instances where certain tourist destinations are not easy to reach due to substandard infrastructure or the complete lack of any fluid transport network. Of course, such effective isolation of attractions is detrimental to the domestic tourism product.

Furthermore, travel intermediaries should embrace domestic tourism promotion. In Ghana, most public organizations—be they religious groups or corporate bodies—organize trips on their own. Tour operators could help serve this market by partnering with these such organizations. Developing such products may be tasking at the outset, but with time proper marketing tools can be developed to re-orient the prospective domestic market for the industry.

Armstrong (2006) contends that people become motivated when they expect that a course of action is likely to lead to the attainment of a goal and a valued reward – one that satisfies their needs. As a result, whether participation in tourism activities is self-motivated or motivated by a third person, the objective should be satisfaction for the participant. According to the fieldwork reported here, a majority of respondents were self-motivated to travel, and when they do travel, it is predominantly for the purpose of visiting friends and family (VFRs).

Tourist destinations should offer different forms of activities in order to appeal to a variety of markets, but also so that tourists will have a variety of things to see, to do, and to buy, which in totality would give tourists the rich experience that they seek as travel value. Some of the activities traditionally sought for such enjoyment include football games, festivals, weddings, and funerals, all of which often serve as pull factors for people to travel.

Destinations vary, and with the differences in preferences, individuals make a range of choices. Our survey also reveals that most respondents would like destinations to have natural attractions, underscoring the importance of wildlife protection and the conservation of life forms. Some tourists require a destination with improved infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and water; and this kind of developments may have a detrimental impact on nature.

Our survey sought to unravel deterrents to domestic tourism participation. We find that in Ghana, most public sector workers are self-motivated to travel. Reasons for travel also depend upon peculiar characteristics of an individual. These characteristics include their age, income, gender, and marital status.

We also acknowledge that tourism as a facet of globalization impacts the host society itself. In some cases, it has in some cases led to acculturation, which in some cases even changed societal values, often to the chagrin of the hosts population (Teye, Sönmez, and Sirakaya, 2006). Family systems are gradually being trimmed down to the nuclear family, although this phenomenon is only very recent. Nevertheless, some families still depend on the extended family system in the Ghanaian society. Extended family commitments make it difficult for such families, especially those who are well-to-do, to partake in tourism activities. The responsibility of taking care of the aged and the young, as well as unforeseen events such as funerals, often curtails the potential for domestic tourism. Even so, careful planning, policy, and management approaches could put tourist destinations in Ghana amongst the most attractive in the world.

Our findings therefore show that the underlying hindrance to domestic tourism participation was a lack of or limited information and this could be easily improved through proper marketing strategies, media publicity, and proper management of tourism resources in the country. Better information and promotion would lead to an enhanced interest in tourism activities, resulting in increased participation on the domestic level as well as at the international level.

Participation in domestic tourism is a means to unlock a number of opportunities in the tourism industry, with the government and the individual partaking in tourism activities. As articulated by Mensah (2011) and Pierret (2012), domestic tourism yields economic benefits at the micro and macro levels that could support a country's Gross Domestic Product and reduce poverty. Domestic tourism could be used to address poverty reduction as a way of achieving the Millennium Development Goal 1, which is to reduce by half the number of people living in the world on less than one dollar per day. However, the linkages between tourism, development, and poverty need to be better understood so that promotion and development of tourism can facilitate progress.

Developing interest in domestic tourism as shown here with responses from public sector workers is a clear requisite for improving participation in domestic tourism. Such could be accomplished through various marketing strategies by individuals, groups and government agencies whose activities are related to tourism. Information on domestic tourism products should be made available to the public to enhance their interest and also serve as an enticement for participation.

In conclusion, our findings provide justification for some significant and straightforward policy recommendations. A number of private and public tourism organizations that should begin to better target the local market for domestic tourism purposes.

Ghana's Tourist Board needs to redouble its efforts to promote more domestic tourism, which it explicitly lists as one of its charges (Ghana Tourist Board 2010). With the collaboration of other government agencies, it should facilitate proper marketing and management of domestic tourism. Marketing, management and promotion of domestic tourism products should be a collaborative work for government, private individuals and local communities (Teye et al. 2002). This will enhance the sustainability of the tourism resources and increase the pull factor of the tourism products in a country. The role of government is necessary in setting policy and legislative framework for tourism. As a complementary role in tourism development and promotion, private sectors and local communities could focus on areas of common interest and target specific group and areas for tourism development.

Recognizing the benefits of tourism, public and private enterprises alike should focus marketing efforts to attract domestic tourists, especially public sector workers. Domestic tourism should be promoted in light of its potential positive impacts, spatial diversity, cultural affinity, and mutual benefits for environmental sustainability. In pursuing these initiatives, it should be remembered that the decision to travel depends on the individual and his or her assessment of the push and pull factors of a tourism product.

While this paper has made a contribution to the existing literature, a great deal more work remains to be done. Further research needs to more closely examine the demographic groups of participants in tourism activities. Such studies should examine age groups, occupation, marital status, and other variables, in the interest of better guiding tourism development and marketing new tourism products. These studies would bring to light participant interest and determine what might draw them to increase their tourism activities. Additional research should address the management and marketing of tourism within Ghana, both from the public sector and throughout the industry. This would help to address the limited awareness of the industry among residents (Teye et al., 2002), and ameliorate the problems facing stakeholders in the industry, while helping them build a better understanding of the industry that can guide tourism policy for the future.

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Government roles in rural tourism development: a case from Turpan

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ABSTRACT

Rural tourism has become a development tool for many rural areas, and during the development processes government (the public sector) plays different roles within the context of Western countries and China. The purpose of this paper is to explore government's various roles in local (village) socio-economic development through rural tourism in the Turpan prefecture. The study focuses particularly upon the Grape Valley scenery in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China. In so doing, it identifies a number of issues and challenges facing local socio-economic development through rural tourism in the Grape Valley. The study concludes that Chinese decentralized policy in tourism does not penetrate to the township and village-level of government. It also indicates that development through rural tourism is not sufficiently achieved due to the various political-structural and business-operational obstacles.

Keywords: Turpan, rural tourism, government, local development

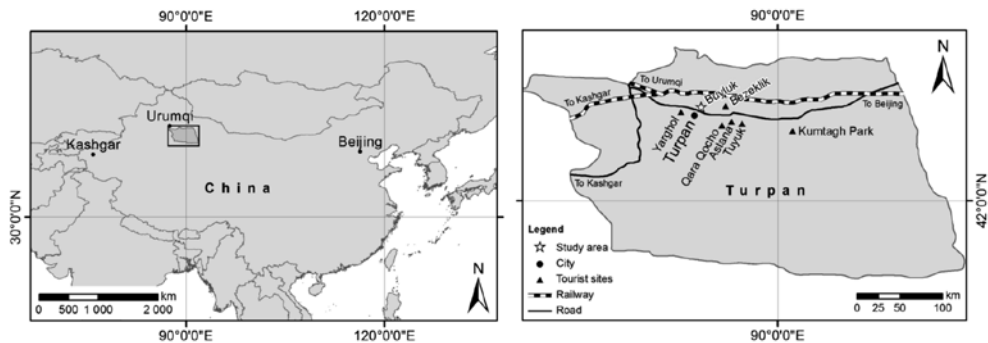
INTRODUCTION

As indicated by many scholars (Murphy, 1983, 1988; Haywood, 1988; Inskeep, 1991; Simmons, 1994; Sharpely, 2000), rural tourism has become a development tool for many rural areas and during this development processes various actors (stakeholders) play different roles (Verbole, 2000). In the Chinese context, during its transition from a planned economy to a market economy, decentralization policy (fiscally) in tourism (Sofield & Li, 2011) is implemented according to the Chinese 'open door policy' since the late 1970s. This policy 'only has penetrated to the county (municipal) level, and the township-level government does not have much authority' (Qun et al., 2011). The county (municipal)-level government is playing a leading role (Qun et al., 2011) in the rural tourism development processes, although Li

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(2004) argued that rural tourism development usually relies on the joint involvement of governments, tourism enterprises, tourists, and ethnic minority peoples. In addition, due to the Confucianism-rooted *Guanxi* (literarily meaning ‘personal relationship networking’) practice in China, the business bureaucracy collaboration between external enterprises and government officials prevail in the local and rural tourism development process (Li et al., 2007). Thus, other actors/stakeholders which include local family-owned small tourism enterprises and local community residents’ role in rural tourism development process are limited and/or not encouraged. (Swain, 1995; Fan, 2002; Li, 2004; Li et al., 2007), so much so that local socio-economic development through rural tourism is not sufficiently achieved. This is the case in the Grape Valley (“Buyluk” in Uyghur and “Putagou” in Chinese) in Turpan, China. Figure 1 below indicates the region under consideration for this study.

Figure 1: Location of Turpan in China and location of case study area in Turpan.



The Grape Valley residents have achieved limited local socio-economic development benefits through rural tourism, though the Grape Valley is only one of the five 5A scenery regions in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). Despite that it is only one of five, it is one of the highest ranked rural tourism destinations in China. The 5A ranking of a tourism destination is the equivalent of a 5-star hotel in the hotel rank system (Zhang et al., 2011). Rural tourism development in the Grape Valley in Turpan brought limited local socio-economic development at the village community level, though Turpan is one of the XUARs’ most important tourist attractions from 1978 to 2007, so much so that its tourists’ number and tourism revenue increased about 3700 times and 2800 times respectively, although there are fluctuations among different years (Xinjiang Statistics Bureau, 2008; TPTB, 2008).

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to investigate and evaluate the various roles played by different levels of government in the development of rural tourism in Turpan. We will investigate the role of various levels of government as tourism planner, tourism investor, tourism investment stimulator, tourism promoter, tourism educator, and tourism regulator.

GOVERNMENT, RURAL TOURISM AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Government roles in (rural) tourism development in China

In a European context, the public sector plays multiple roles in tourism such as: co-ordination; planning; legislation and regulation; entrepreneur stimulation; social tourism; management; research, education and training; subventions to operators; consumer protection; and promotion (IUOTO, 1974; Alejziak, 2008). But, the government in the West does not play as big a role as in China, because usually the tourism-related decisions are made by the privately-owned enterprises and organizations in the West (Bao&Sun, 2007).

In China, government plays an active role as planners, investors, investment stimulators, promoters, educators and regulators (Qun et al., 2011), even though decentralization policy in tourism is implemented according to Chinese 'open door policy' (Sofield & Li, 2011). China is a country implementing a 'conservative transition', one of the 'continuing state socialist societies that have transformed their economic systems but not their political structures and processes' (Hall & Roberts, 2004). What this means is that the traditional top-down political command structure still prevails. And, in this top-down decision-making system, different levels of government, except the township-level government (Qun et al., 2011), dominant roles in tourism development prevail. But government's various roles in rural tourism development (usually leading by tourism planning) are not sufficiently implemented, as shown in Li & Wall's (2008) studies that there various obstacles in the tourism planning approaches in China such as shortage of human resources and funds, lack of collaboration among various tourism development actors (government agencies, planning institutions, tourism sectors, private sectors), lack of community participation, lack of effective monitoring, evaluation and supervision. Besides, insufficient tourism planning supervision has led to many problems such as the abuse of power and corruption, so that to a large extent, local planning has become a political tool to satisfy power holders and business interests at the expense of public benefits (Li & Wall, 2008).

Further, there are regional differences in the Chinese fiscal decentralization policy during the transition period from a planned to a market economy that causes regional differences while considering the government's roles in the rural tourism development processes. In other words, in the relatively more developed Chinese coastal region governments are relatively free in terms of tourism development policy making and implementation, as shown in the Ying & Zhou's (2007) case study in Xidi Village, compared to the inland and western boundary regions such as the XUAR. This might be due to the 'China's current vertical bureaucratic system, which lacks a clear definition of governments' respective purviews and commitments in administration, enables the governments (prefectural and municipal level) to intervene into the rural cultural tourism development to an optional extent, according to their practical interests and needs.' (Ying & Zhou, 2007).

Besides that, the deeply Confucianism-rooted *Guanxi* (literarily meaning 'personal relationship networking') phenomenon in China (Li et al., 2007) that is characterized by instru-

mentality, reciprocity and unethical consequences causes unbalanced power relationships among rural tourism development actors. Fan (2002) classified *guanxi* into three major types, namely, 'family *guanxi*' (a special relationship based mostly on blood or kinship), 'helper *guanxi*' (the process of exchanging favours often based on relationships such as friendship, schoolmates and principal–subordinate tie and 'business *guanxi*' (the process of finding business solutions through personal connections mainly via an 'intermediary'). He further divided 'business *guanxi*' into two categories: 'B2B *guanxi*' (both parties are business people) and 'B2G *guanxi*' (one party is a business person while the other is a government official). These *guanxi* have to be purposefully cultivated and maintained by continuous and deliberate exchange of such things as gifts, banquets, and money in order to get benefits from *guanxi* participation. Since the *guanxi* study is not the main purpose of this study, only the 'B2G *guanxi*' will be discussed. Thus, due to these *guanxi* game rules, government officials can obtain promotion opportunities and increased personal income (formally or informally) from the higher levels of governments and business elites because of their contributions (by inviting external investment and solving the financial problems of the local government that urgently needed to promote tourism development and 'selling' prefer policy to the business elites). As most government officials are appointed rather than elected in China, local economic performance and political loyalty are the most important criteria in the evaluation of officials (Zhang, 2002). At the same time, by meeting the government's urgent need for investments, the external enterprises have been able to gain favorable development policies, such as easier access of business licenses, resources, venues, and protection. Thus, in this 'B2G *guanxi*' game, the governments and the external enterprises usually take the superior position among tourism development actors, as they control the necessary ingredients for tourism development including polices, funds, and community resources (such as lands and local cultural heritages) (Li et al., 2007).

After all, 'whereas the role of governments in western countries is often limited to establishing a favorable political, regulatory and economic climate in order to enable tourism to flourish, the role of governments in less developed countries is (or should be) more active, embracing entrepreneurship, management and promotion. In short, in many developing countries, governments are obliged to undertake a dual role; establishing policies and plans for the development of tourism, and supporting and managing the development of tourism' (Sharpley, 2008).

Rural tourism and local development

The rural tourism concept has many interpretations. According to the European Community (EC) 'rural tourism refers to all tourism activity in a rural area' (Roberts & Hall, 2001). Since the definition of the 'rural' is also the problematic, this leads to the appearance of various 'rural tourism' concepts in the tourism literature. But, the definition of 'rural' is beyond the scope this study, so it will not further discussed. Thus, Bramwell & Lane (1994) argued that 'usually rural tourism includes activities and interests in farms, nature, adventure, sport, health, education, arts, and heritage.' Pedford (1996) defined 'rural tourism' in socio-cultural ways and argued that rural tourism activities should be related to the 'living history of rural

communities such as rural customs and folklore, local and family traditions, values, beliefs, and common heritage.' MacDonald & Jolliffe (2003) further integrated rural and socio-cultural elements of 'rural tourism' and developed 'cultural rural tourism' definition in which they further argued that tourists visit rural areas in order to not only seeking information about the local culture and 'experiencing folklore, customs, landscapes, and historical landmarks', but also 'enjoying other activities in a rural setting such as nature, adventure, sports, festivals, crafts, and general sightseeing' as well.

The concept of development also suffers definitional problem and there exist different development thoughts. One of these thoughts that so called *Modernization theory* (Sharpley, 2000), empathizing economic growth as the core of development. According to this paradigm, development is assumed to occur as a result of the economic benefits (foreign exchange earnings, the multiplier concept) that diffuse from growth impulses (the tourism sector) or growth poles (resorts). Tourism's role in development is narrowly acknowledged as economic growth, contradicting more recent development theory such as sustainable rural tourism. Cecily & Tykkylainen (1998) also recognize this by referring to local development as 'the mobilization and management of resources in order to create wealth in a community. Local economic development and ensuring the continuity of a resource community (in the sense of retaining its common identity and culture) are not necessarily synonymous'.

Another development concept so-called *Alternative development* (Streeten, 1977; Redclift, 1987) breaks from the economic growth-based policies, proposes a broader resource-based, 'bottom-up' approach embracing human and environmental concerns. It empathize a grass-roots, community focus to development that achieving fulfillment of basic needs of people within community and encouraging self-reliance. *Alternative development* also advocates the importance of recognizing the environmental constraints to development. This school of thought provides the foundation for sustainable development (Sharpley, 2000) by linking the concepts of alternative development and sustainable tourism. The emerging literature on local community involvement in tourism development (Murphy, 1983, 1988; Haywood, 1988) shows sustainable (alternative) tourism became the focus of research that advocates (rural) tourism as a vehicle of local development. Thus, rural tourism has been considered the means of accelerating economic and social development and has become a development tool for many rural areas.

Nevertheless, though rural tourism, to some degree, contributes to local economic development, it can not be regarded as a 'panacea' for lagging rural areas, especially in the Chinese context. As Li (2004) pointed out, community participatory tourism is hardly implementable because of the presence of the political-structural (bureaucratic top-down political command structure and state manipulation of development), business-operational (B2B guanxi' and unwillingness of tourism developers to let the local residents participate in tourism) and socio-cultural ('low educated, simple-minded status of villagers') impediments that hinder community participatory tourism.

RESEARCH METHODS

In this case study, multiple research methods such as surveys, interviews, informal discussions, and review and analysis of secondary sources were used. During August 2011, surveys were conducted with key informants: local residents of the Grape Valley Villager Commission and local family-based small tourism businesses (AMAS, abbreviated from *Ailiwi milli örüp-adet sayahetchiligi* in Uyghur language). Similar self-administrative structured questionnaires were disseminated among the Grape Valley Villager Commission residents and the AMAS operators. Because most of the residence in the Grape Valley are Uyghur people (about 85%, author's survey) and most of the AMAS are operated or co-operated (farmers rent their yards for tourism business) by them, questionnaires in Uyghur were used during the survey. Informal face-to-face interviews were also conducted with some of the local residents and the AMAS operators. As the researcher is Uyghur himself, this eliminated the language barrier and guaranteed the reliability of interview. Structured questionnaires were sent to 57 AMAS operators all together and the valid respond rate is 77%. 650 questionnaires are distributed to the local residence and valid respond rate is 57%. In addition to statistical data provided by these sources, further secondary data was collected from relevant official documents and statistics, newspaper articles, and academic papers. The major area of inquiry is to seek to understand the role of prefectural and municipal level of government in local (village level) community development through rural tourism.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Rural tourism in Turpan: an overview

Beginning with the intention to alleviate poverty through tourism, China's rural tourism has undergone over 20 years of development (Gao et al., 2009). The Zhujiang (Pearl) River Delta, Beijing, Shanghai and Chengdu of China become the frontier of this kind of tourism development (Keyim et al., 2005). Since the 'New Socialist Countryside policy' made public in 2006, rural tourism has been viewed as a tool to facilitate social harmony and help construct the new socialist rural communities in China (Chio, 2011). Typically, rural tourism is called *Nongjiale* in Chinese (Chinese literature means: places where you can 'enjoy yourself in farmers' families) by local residents (He, et al., 2003). Facilities usually include houses, a courtyard, an orchard, transplant nursery, bamboo grove, or perhaps an additional fishpond and children's play-ground. Since, most *Nongjiale* are close to the city and transportation is convenient, most tourists do not need to stay overnight.

Located along the ancient Silk Road and being the 'Melting point of intersection of Eastern and Western culture', 'one of the cultural centers of Uyghur people' and 'Pathway of Buddhism into China', the Turpan Prefecture (including Turpan City, Toqsun County and Pichan County) was first area developed for tourism in the XUAR. Tourism in Turpan developed very fast in terms of tourists' numbers and tourism revenues since it was opened completely for tourists in 1979, just after Chinese 'open door policy' was initiated. From 1978 to 2007,

tourist numbers and tourism revenues increased about 3700 times and 2800 times respectively, although there are strong fluctuations among different years (Xinjiang Statistics Bureau, 2008; TPTB, 2008).

The Grape Valley in Turpan, one of the earliest Nongjiale developed place in China, gradually became Turpan's, the XUAR's and even China's key tourist attractions. The Grape Valley gradually became recognized as a sightseeing location after the initiation of the Chinese 'open door policy'. In the early 1980s, the Turpan Tourism Company constructed tourist attraction based on the grape vineyards there and began hosting the tourists (Yang and Liu, 2000). In 2001, the Grape Valley was recognized as one of the 4A class tourism sceneries of China and was upgraded to 5A scenery in 2007.

The *Nongjiale* in the Grape Valley, is locally referred to as "Ailiwi milli örüp-adet sayahetchiligi" (AMAS) in Uyghur and "Minzu minsu jiafang" in Chinese (Ethnic custom home). In recent years, this new type of small family-based rural tourism business, the AMAS, rapidly developed in the Grape Valley in 2009 there were 179 AMAS all together (China Daily, 2009). Table one below shows that the AMAS business in the Grape Valley is a quite recent phenomenon (71% of the AMAS started after 2003) and has many disadvantages such as weaknesses in financing and government support, insufficient marketing, highly seasonal, low overnight visitation capacity, lack of vocational skills (language barrier etc.) and tourism business experience, and high dependency on tourism income (Keyim et al., 2005; Keyimu et al., 2005; Keyimu, 2006; Wang and Dong, 2007; Authors' survey in 2011)

Table1: Basic facts about AMAS in the Grape Valley

The AMAS businesses are a recent phenomenon:

- 71% of the AMAS businesses started after 2003

The AMAS businesses have many disadvantages such as weak in financing and government support:

- 97% of the AMAS started tourism business with their own money without government support.
- Only 0.07% of the AMAS obtained very limited tourism business development subsidies from government.

The AMAS businesses are insufficient in marketing:

- 90.1% of the AMAS never advertised their business in any way.

The AMAS businesses are highly seasonal:

- 52.3%, 52.3%, 93.2% and 45.6% of tourists that visited the AMAS are hosted in June, July, August and September (multiple choice surveys).
- About half (46.5%) of the tourists stay in the AMAS less than one hour during their visit.

The AMAS businesses have low overnight visitation capacity:

- 13.2% of the AMAS can provide bed for tourists.
-

The AMAS business operators lack of vocational skills (e.g. language barrier) :

- 53.5 % of the AMAS operators, who are mostly Uyghur nationality, are not fluent in Mandarin Chinese.

The AMAS business are highly dependent on tourism income:

- 78.6% of the AMAS admitted that about 50 % of their household income came from tourism service.

The AMAS businesses have some competitive advantages than external mass tourism enterprises in terms of flexible service and the ability of providing relatively authentic tourism experience:

- The AMAS businesses usually run by the Uyghur farmers' family members and they have strong demonstration ability of Uyghur culture. 28.2%, 11.3% and 2.8% of the AMAS businesses family members can perform folk song and dance, tailor traditional handicrafts and deliver folktale respectively.

Source: Keyim et al., 2005; Keyimu et al., 2005; Keyimu, 2006; Wang and Dong, 2007; Authors' survey in 2011

Inappropriate involvement and influence of *Guanxi* mentioned earlier put the AMAS business in the Grape Valley into a very disadvantaged position in the rural tourism development processes. For example, some local residents imply that some of the leading officials (village head, Chinese communist party secretary of the village etc.) in the Grape Valley Villager Commission are running family businesses (the AMAS, small department store and small family restaurants) and cooperated with the external enterprises and tourism agencies. Their businesses are always better than their counterparts as the enterprises and tourism agencies are able to 'deliver' tourists to them. Thus the AMAS operators are forced to be involved in the *Guanxi* game circle in order to survive or flourish as their business are usually dependent on the tourists that come as packaged tourists to the Grape Valley rather than aim at visit them. The AMAS have to try to maintain good *Guanxi* with the officials of the Villager Commission, external enterprises and package tour operators in any expense, even have to bribe the tourist guide and bus driver, etc. This might indicate that there exist economic leakages in the case of the rural tourism development in the Grape Valley, suggesting that economic benefits of rural tourism for the local community residents represented by the AMAS may be limited.

Thus, the AMAS is a typical type of rural tourism phenomenon in Turpan and is mainly concentrated in the Grape Valley. So, in this article, rural tourism development in the Grape Valley will be studied as the representative of rural tourism development in Turpan, in order to analyze and evaluate prefectural and municipal level government roles in local (village level) socio-economic development through rural tourism.

Research findings and discussion

While the eastern coastal areas of China are more open and free in economic activities, the

inland and especially in the western border areas like the XUAR, the planned economy has survived. In these relatively planned economic development regions, including the XUAR, prefectural and municipal-level governments still strongly undertake various roles during the rural tourism development processes. Thus, in this case study area, prefectural and municipal-level authorities like the Turpan Prefectural and Turpan Municipality-level governments play various dominant roles in the rural tourism development processes.

The governments: as planners.

The Turpan Prefectural Government (TPG) is responsible for tourism development plan in Turpan. It is issued with the aid of some universities/research institutes thought the final decision is made by the prefectural government officials. Alongside with Chinese state's and the XUARs' Socio-economic 'Five years' Development Plans and Tourism Development 'Five years' Plans, the Turpan Prefecture Tourism Bureau (TPTB) issues tourism development plan under the leadership of TPG in every five years. Thus, tourism administrations like the TPTB and Tourist Scenic Spot Management Committee of Grape Valley of Turpan are responsible for tourism development in the Grape Valley and in charge of 'top-down' policy interpretation, implementation and making more detailed local tourism development plans. In recent years, the TPG and the TPTB issued tourism related plans (TPTB, 2005; TPNPC, 2006). These plans stress that the prefectural tourism industry development guiding principle is 'Government-led, Enterprise-based, Market-oriented operation'.

To build Turpan as a world-renowned destination of Silk Road culture, natural scenery and ethnic customs are set as tourism development goals. These plans emphasized promoting tourism based on the unique arid natural landscape, historical heritage, folk culture and costumes of ethnic minorities. Preservation of the natural environment, cultural tradition, and the costumes of ethnic minorities are also emphasized. Also stressed is the improvement of living standards of local residents led by tourism development, promotion of social development, and safeguarding national unity. Also stressed is the enhancement of external investment attraction by issuing preferential policies for external enterprises (financial support policy, preferential tax policies and destination emigration policies). Related to the research area, emphasized to develop the Grape Valley as 'Folk costume and eco-tourism areas' of Turpan, overlong the tourists stay time, establish the AMAS management system and service standards and organize local festival activities, etc.

In addition to those plans, the TPG also issued Turpan's Eleventh 'Five years' Rural Tourism Development Plan (2006~2010) (XPTPI, 2007). This plan sets the rural tourism development goals as:

- To consider rural tourism as the implementation of Chinese state policy of 'Construct the new socialist countryside' (Develop production, affluent life, civilization, clean and tidy village and democratic management) and solve the 'Three rural issue' (Agriculture, Rural areas and Farmers).
- To emphasized the rural tourism development principles of 'government-led, protect the site and wealth the people'.

- To protect the interests of farmers and herdsmen combining the scenic area development and farmers' participation, and by giving 'Three priorities' (priority to the interests of the farmers in the scenic area development, priority to solving the employment problems of farmers, priority to farmers' access to project right) during tourism development processes in the rural areas.
- To emphasize the provision of preferential policies (fiscal policy for rural tourism infrastructures constructions, promotion policy of rural tourism by connecting rural tourism marketing with the XUAR and the TPGs' domestic and international tourism marketing activities, vocational training and tax exemption policy for the local farmers owned/participated small rural tourism enterprises) in order to encourage and guide rural residents to participate in tourism business.
- To stress paying attention to and highlighting the local folk customs (food and beverage, folk dance, folk art) and history, architectural features during the establishment of tourism enterprises (external tourism enterprises and local family-based small tourism enterprises) and rural tourism product development.
- To emphasized strengthening market supervision, standardizing rural tourism in order to protect the overall interests of local residents, rural tourism enterprises and tourists.

However, as planners though the governments (TPG and TPTB) mentioned economic, socio-cultural, and ecological aspects of tourism development, these plans did not become implemented efficiently due to the existence of various limitations mentioned earlier. For example, in the Grape Valley Villager Commission, local residents' involvement is ignored in tourism planning under the excuse that local residents lack education and decision making capacity and the governments' lack of participatory planning implementation funds. In addition to the unbalanced power relationship among the government, external entrepreneurs, and the AMAS, the local rural residents are ignored in tourism planning. In other words, the local residents and their role in the rural tourism development process are ignored in the planning. And, these findings are parallel with Wang and Dongs' (2007) research in the Grape Valley that there is a lack of a reasonable community participation mechanism and legal system.

The governments: as investors.

The TPG is responsible for tourism infrastructural improvement with the aid and cooperation of relevant XUAR and state authorities. The TPG improves the tourism investment environment by improving hard and soft infrastructure, such as improved transportation networks, telecommunications and urban facilities, and customer complaints channels etc. Geographically, Turpan Prefecture is located at the intersection of transportation between the northern and southern parts of the XUAR, state highway No 312 and No 314 across the territory additional to local highway system. In recent years, the TPG accelerated the construction of regional tourism transportation systems under the aid of the Chinese state and XUAR government, increased accessibility to tourism destinations. For example, in July, 2010, Chinese National Civil Aviation and the XUAR Eleventh 'Five years' Plan project funded Turpan Airport (People's Daily, 2010). This airport has the yearly ability to process 400,000 passengers. It is only half an hour from the XUARs' capital airport Ürümqi Airport. The Ürümqi

Airport is one of the five biggest airports in China and is connected to the major cities of coastal China and airports in Commonwealth of Independent States, Pakistan, Turkey and Russia. At the same time, the TPTB promoted its tourism market by promising 50% tourism ticket discount in all tourism destinations in Turpan and by implementing a “buy one ticket get one free” offer for the charter flight tourists. Also, the TPG newly constructed or renovated tourism attractions such as Turpan Museum and Turpan Public Art Gallery etc. From 2006 to 2009, 26 ‘standardized tourist’s toilet’ in major tourism destinations were built. Online tourism information and complaints channels have been created. In the Grape Valley alone, the TPG combine with the aid of state bond matching funds, completed road construction, the upper and lower water pipeline reconstruction, and construction of iconic doors, car park, and other ancillary facilities. Many tourism attractions were wither constructed or renovated, such as the Grape Valley Amusement Park, Darwaz Folk Customs Park (Uyghur traditional rope walking) and Nasirdin Apandim Amusement Park in addition there was a 1.5 km long grape corridor constructed, along with renovations and construction of new residential housing along the 15km long Grape Valley tourism area. As a result, the Grape Valley set an example among the all tourism destinations in the XUAR by improving sanitation facilities.

Indeed, the TPG greatly improved tourism related infrastructure such as accommodation facilities, transport facilities, shopping facilities and food services in addition to improving basic infrastructure (communication, sanitation, water, electricity, etc). However, these infrastructural improvements are usually aimed to accelerate tourism development (increase visitors number, their expenditure and length of stay) by satisfying tourists’ needs without sufficient consideration of local rural residents and their AMAS business’ needs and interests. Basic infrastructure constructions in rural areas of Turpan, including the Grape Valley, are still lagging behind. For example, the sanitation facilities of the AMAS are poor, only 50.7% of them admitted that they have water flush toilets (Keyimu, 2006). The governments are not sufficiently implementing their rural preferential policies mentioned in rural tourism development plans and the AMAS businesses are not supported sufficiently. For example, almost all the AMAS (97.7%) operators are self-financed, weak in financing (53.5% of the AMAS invested less than 30 000 Chinese Yuan [CNY]) comparing to the 28 million CNY investment of the Xinjiang Western Tourism Development Co., Ltd (TSMCGV, 2010). 38.6% of the AMAS claimed that they got very limited business startup loans from banks (among them 64.8% the AMAS obtained less than 10 000 CNY from bank). Only 0.07% of the AMAS obtained tourism business development subsidies from the government of less than 2000 CNY. In addition to weak finance, lack of vocational skills and tourism business experience cause the AMAS business can not compete with the external tourism enterprises that are much stronger.

The governments: as investment stimulators.

Following the instruction and aid of state and the relevant authorities of the XUAR, the TPG and the TPTB encouraged external capital investment in tourism in the form of cooperative or wholly-owned investment as shown in Table two below. Thus, the governments invited external enterprises promoting tourism development which included tourism project invest-

ments in the rural areas. And thanks to these investment, from 2000 to 2006 tourism revenue in Tupan increased by 26% yearly (Xinjiang Statistics Bureau, 2008).

Table 2: Tourism investment and tourism development in Turpan

Name of the tourism investors:

- Xinjiang Daxibu Luyou Gufen Youxian Gongsi (Xinjiang Western Tourism Development Co., Ltd.),
- Xinjiang Dehui Touzi Youxian Gongsi (Xinjiang Dehui Investment Co., Ltd.)
- Xinjiang Delong Shiye Gongsi (Xinjiang Delong Industrial Company, bankrupted in 2004)
- Tulufan Huoyanshan Luyou Kaifa Youxian Gongsi (Turpan Flaming Mountain Tourism Development Co., Ltd.)
- Xinjiang Xiyu Guoji Luxingshe (XinJiang Western Region International Travel Service Co., Ltd.)
- Tulufan Luzhou Guoji Huayuan Dafandian Youxian Zeren Gongsi (Turpan Oasis International Garden Hotel Co., Ltd.)
- Wenzhou Shanghui (Wenzhou Chamber of Commerce.)

The amount of investment (2000-2009):

- One billion Chinese Yuan all together.

Upgraded cultural heritage tourism destinations:

- The Grape Valley; The Yarghol Ancient City; The Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves ; The Qara Qocho Ancient City; The Astana Cemetery; The Tuyuk Thousand Buddha Caves; The Emin Minaret; The Karez Folk Park etc.

Constructed tourism destinations:

- The Kumtagh Desert Scenic Spot; The Qizil tagh (Flaming Mountains) Tourist Attractions; The Turpan Dukes House etc.

Tourism facility constructions and job creation:

- Constructed more than 50 ‘Star hotels’ and ‘Resident hotels’, including 22 ‘Star hotels’ with the capacity of 7000 beds.
- Hotel business created 120 million Chinese Yuan revenue and 2500 job opportunities.
- 120 hotels owned restaurants and ‘Resident small restaurants ’ employed about 1500 staff.

Source: Adapted from TPTB (2008-2010).

Indeed, external tourism investment accelerated tourism-related infrastructure construction and thus created some job opportunities for locals. But, at the same time, usually external tourism enterprises dominated tourism businesses in rural areas such as the Grape Valley so that the benefits of tourism to the local rural community residents are limited. For example, in the Grape Valley local residents’ satisfaction level for the job opportunity and income increase that driven from tourism business is only 49.36% and 64.36 % respectively (Xiong and Han, 2005).

The governments: as tourism promoters.

The TPTB enhanced tourism promotion by utilizing different kinds of media. The TPTB cooperate with the domestic and international media such as Xinjiang Air Travel Newspaper, The Xinjiang Daily, Western Magazine, China Youth Daily, China Central Television, Urumqi Television and Australian National Television to promote tourism of Turpan. The TPTB organized or participated in domestic and international tourism fairs staged in Chinese coastal cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and some foreign countries like Japan and South Korea in order to attract more external investment while promoting tourism at the same time. In 1990, the TPG organized 'The 1st China Silk Road Turpan Grape Festival' which commemorate the 2100 year opening of the Silk Road and this festival is organized annually since then. Turpan's tourism destination promotion also has Chinese characteristics in that it takes advantage of tourism rankings: In March 1988, Peng Zhen (formerly a Chinese high official), handwrote the 'Grape Valley' calligraphy in Chinese and now it has become a symbol of the Grape Valley Amusement Park (TSMCGV, 2010); In 1998, Turpan city was named an 'excellent tourism city in China' and in 2007 was named a 'national historical and cultural city in China'. In 2007, The Grape Valley was upgraded to 5A scenery (TPTB, 2008). And, this prestige will help to get support from higher levels of governments (Qun et al., 2011).

Following the growing notoriety of the Grape Valley, different tourism enterprises run business in the Grape Valley simultaneously. But continued unfair business competitions among these independently operated tourism entrepreneurs caused development chaos in the Grape Valley. In order to solve this problem, the Turpan municipal government established the Tourist Scenic Spot Management Committee of Grape Valley in 2004 that responsible for tourism development in the Grape Valley (TPTB, 2008). Since then, this committee implemented 'One ticket policy' that all the tourism spots within the Grape Valley scenery are allowed to be visited only after the tourists buy a package ticket at the main gate leading to the Grape Valley.

The TPG also utilize internet marketing for destination promotion. Recent years, the Tourist Scenic Spot Management Committee of Grape Valley of Turpan established a website that run in three languages: Chinese, English and Japanese (though foreign language websites are not running perfectly) to promote tourism in the Grape Valley. This website includes information including brief introductions to touristic spots in Turpan and the Grape Valley, tourism investment, Turpan area travel agencies, domestic flights and train schedules, Turpan municipal transport, Turpan and the Grape Valley tourism route recommendations, Uyghur residential life and costumes, Uyghur music, art and dance culture and short news about the AMAS development in the Grape Valley (TSMCGV, 2010). In 2007, the TPG established the Unified Tourism Marketing Services Limited and started to run business in May in the same year (Wang, 2009). This company is supervised by the TPG Tourism Management Committee and the Turpan Tourism Association that are subsidiaries of governments instead of independent organizations. The Unified Tourism Marketing Services Limited was established by merging 8 tourism enterprises and a cultural relics unit that run business in 16 tourist spots all

across Turpan. It selected seven big travel agencies in the XUAR as a marketing agent. It has invested and constructed Turpan Tourist Service Center and unified the attraction's electronic access control system and monitoring system.

However, the government's (the TPG and the TPTB) role as tourism promoters is not efficient while considering the unstable and declining tourists numbers and tourism revenues in Turpan. For example, from 2006 to 2007 tourist numbers and tourism revenues by the 'China Silk Road Turpan Grape Festival' decreased by 14.3% and 14.5% respectively (Qin wei, 2011). According to the statistics of the Unified Tourism Marketing Services Limited (Wang, 2009; TPTB, 2010), from 2006 to 2007 ticket revenues and tourists numbers in Turpan increased 88.12% and 38.83% respectively, but in 2008 these figures decreased by 45% and 38% respectively. In 2009, from January to November ticket revenue further decreased by 32.7%. Government marketing activities usually prefer to market external enterprises that had good relations with governments (business-bureaucracy collaboration) and different media, and can afford the high marketing fee. The marketing of the AMAS is not included in the government's task as planned, except the very limited introduction about the AMAS on the Tourist Scenic Spot Management Committee of Grape Valley of Turpan's website and outdated advertisement at the site of Turpan Tourist Service Center (author's survey in 2011). 90.14% of the AMAS admitted that never advertised their business in any way (Keyimu, 2006).

The governments: as educators.

The TPTB cooperated with the Turpan Vocational Education Center, the training center of the XUAR Tourism Bureau, and Xinjiang Vocational University to train tourism management staff and tour guides. Their goal was to strengthen the training of qualified personnel, especially in marketing and promotional personnel that proficient in history, culture, and ethnic customs of Turpan. Until at the end of 2009, there are more than 300 scenic tour guides obtained relevant certificates (TPTB, 2010).

However, though the governments were concerned to train tourist guides and tourism management officials, the results are still not satisfactory. There is still a lack of qualified tourist guides and tourism management officials that are acquainted with local culture, language, and history. These unqualified staff and tourist guides sometimes provide insufficient and/or distorted information to the tourists about the local folk costume and arts. For example, although there is no evidence to support that the famous Uyghur folk story character Nasirdin Apandim lived in the Grape Valley, a local resident is hired to be pretend to be a descendent and tourists are lured to take pictures for a charge.

The governments: as regulators.

The TPTB implemented tourism-relevant laws and regulations of the Chinese state and the XUAR. And combined with those regulations, the TPTB also issued relevant regulations that suit the local situation which includes the AMAS related regulations.

According to these regulations, the assessment of hotel stars and travel agencies are standardized and strengthened so that the safety of tourists and tourism activities are further ensured.

The Turpan municipality government organized the police and agricultural supervisory departments evacuated the *La ke renchun* (people that lured tourists to visit their AMAS with competitive prices and sometimes cheating) that gathered in front of the main gate of the Grape Valley. It also intensified the handling of complains about tourism service in the AMAS. Tourists complaints about the AMAS tourism services are reported to the XUAR Tourism Bureau and these complains are publicized in the media and travel agencies. Travel agencies are required to organized tourism activities in the registered AMAS operators that published on the official website of the XUAR Tourism Bureau in order to protect the legitimate rights and interests of tourists. The AMAS required having a clear price tag and if the AMAS operators were found to bribe tour guides in order to lure tourists to buy goods and pay a higher price, their business license will be cancelled and the tour guides license will be cancelled too.

However, though the TPTB stress the supervision of the AMAS, it did not mention how to regulate the complex relationships among the governments (the TPG and the TPTB), enterprises (external enterprises and the AMAS) and the local rural residents. Further, the regulatory role of the TPTB is limited, as tourism involves many different government departments each with its own responsibilities and limitations, so there is no one department that has full authority (Qun et al., 2011). Thus, in the study area, unregistered tourism business activities such as *Heidaoyou* (unlicensed illegal tourist guide) and *Heiche* (illegal taxis) exist. Lack of standardized market regulation and vicious competition among the AMAS businesses in the Grape Valley curbed the enthusiasm of local rural residents involved in tourism to a certain extent (Wang and Dong, 2007). In conclusion, prefectural and municipal-level governments' various roles in local socio-economic development through rural tourism at village-level in Turpan are not successfully implemented while concerning the equal benefits to all stakeholders, especially concerning the economic benefits to the Grape Valley residents and their AMAS businesses.

CONCLUSION

As illustrated above, government (the TPG and the TPTB) and external tourism enterprises (through business-bureaucracy collaboration) played various dominant roles during the socio-economic development through rural tourism in the Grape Valley, Turpan, though there exist other stakeholders such as the local small farm family-based rural tourism businesses (AMAS) and local rural residents. The local residents of the Grape Valley and their AMAS business are usually excluded from local socio-economic development processes through rural tourism that rural tourism can not be claimed a useful local development tool while considering local residents economic achievement.

Though community-based tourism is considered by some Western and Chinese scholars as a valuable approach to enlarge socio-economic benefits of tourism to the local community, the political-structural (bureaucratic top-down political command structure), business-operational (business bureaucracy collaboration) and socio-cultural ('low educated, simple-minded status of villagers') barriers hinder community participatory tourism in the Grape Valley in Turpan. Those obstacles during rural tourism development processes such as bureaucratic top-down political command structure, business-bureaucracy supported external enterprises control over local (tourism) development and local rural residents' lack of development related capacity (e.g. insufficient vocational skills and financial resources, and insufficient decision making and implementing power that equal to other stakeholders such as government and external enterprises etc.) causes limited socio-economic benefit to local rural residents such as limited direct or indirect tourism income and job opportunities. Due to the AMAS minimal or complete lack of experience in bottom-up development (usually the AMAS is planned, organized and supervised by government officials without community consultation), their small sizes, and business instability because of the high seasonality and less profitability, the AMAS businesses contribute little in a socio-economic sense at the local rural community level.

The prefecture and municipal-level governments' dominant role in local socio-economic development through rural tourism and the various obstacles that prevent community-based rural tourism in the Grape Valley, Turpan will not vanish in the near future. Under these circumstances, it might be wiser to consider promoting so called "economic benefit-oriented communal approach" (Ying & Zhou, 2007) in rural tourism development. In the long run, this economic benefit-oriented community participatory tourism (communal approach) will contribute to promote the community's full participation in rural tourism development on the long run. Because '...the ability of the community to participate (tourism) can grow. As the tourism industry develops, they (rural residents) will gradually become managers of tourism, supervisors of its impacts, and masters of community development...'. (Bao & Sun, 2007) and 'It is only when priority is given to the developmental needs and interests of local communities over the goals of the tourism industry itself that broader social development will be achieved' (Simmons, 1994; Brohman, 1996). But, this communal approach requires the governments (the TPG and the TPTB) must consider the benefits of the Grape Valley community residents and guarantee their rights of tourism related decision making, development and operation. So, implementation of active community participatory tourism or empower the AMAS business operators in the Grape Valley requires the development policy and practices that comprise continuous learning and innovative processes which should be developed in a local rural context in order to strengthen the skills, resources, and conditions of micro, community-based family enterprises (AMAS) that might mostly represent rural residents' benefit.

The government needs to adjust its favorable policy towards external enterprises, by making great efforts to improve coordination and cooperation mechanisms among various rural tourism development actors in the Grape Valley, because rural tourism has been viewed as a tool to facilitate social harmony and help construct the new socialist rural communities in China

(Chio, 2011). The need to ensure rural resident's participation rights by relevant legislation and needs to assure long-term preferential policies (low interest loans, tax exemptions etc.) towards locally-owned micro rural tourism enterprises (AMAS) is highlighted in this study. Indirect community benefits should also be encouraged by connecting rural tourism activity with the local supply chain of agricultural production, farming, and handicraft. It needs to enhance communication and education among the government, the enterprises and the local residents in order to actualizing community based tourism in the Grape Valley.

Further studies needed to address the role of NGOs and similar civil organizations in rural tourism development in the Grape Valley, which are still not existent or in the preliminary stage that need to create and/or transform into real civil organization from official and semi-official status. As the creation of the local NGOs might help further decentralize governance, prevents bureaucracy and corruption. Also, the establishment of efficient local NGOs might operate as mediators between different rural tourism actors (stakeholders) that in most cases rarely cooperated and collaborated. It would also be of assistance to establish links between the local government and grass-root residents that are usually ignored during the development policy decision making processes. And, on the long run this will help establish and strength bottom-up governance and development practice that barely exist in the XUAR at the moment.

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Global problems, local solutions: the case of lake tourism development

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ABSTRACT

Although lakes have long been a focal point for leisure and tourism activities, they became prominent in international tourism research only at the beginning of the 2000s. Lake tourism as a concept is multifaceted. Lake tourism refers not only to tourism on the lake itself, but also in the areas surrounding the lakes. Lake tourism could be valued and understood in the same way as alpine tourism or forest tourism have been recognized as subfields of tourism. This article is a review of contributions to the five lake tourism conferences held in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2012. The conferences gave a good overview of lake tourism development on both natural as well as on artificial lakes or reservoirs. As a conclusion it can be claimed that lake tourism development faces global problems, which should be resolved by local solutions.

Keywords: lake tourism, lake tourism conferences, local development

INTRODUCTION

Water is one of the most powerful symbolic resources mobilized by the human imagination and plays a central symbolic role in many forms of spiritual and social practices. Early on, European explorers understood the value of lake destinations and in the period of Romanticism, the touristic value of lakes was publicized by visual artists and poets inspired by lake environments (Aitchison et al., 2000). As a consequence, there arose a demand for tourist services in lake destinations, which together with the rapidly developing travel of the modern period led to the large-scale commercial exploitation of lake environments (see e.g. Ryhänen, 2001; Tuohino, 2008). Against this historical background, it may be pretty difficult to understand that research literature on lake destinations as a phenomenon linked with tourism is still relatively complicated to find.

Ritchie and Crouch (2011, 331) stated that “a destination’s physiography and climate can be deemed the parameter of core attractiveness around which other factors must be creatively

developed.” Kokkonen (2003) in turn argues that special destinations, like lakes, are characterized by their distinct, often unique, resource base for their tourism development.

Itkonen and Kortelainen (1998) divide lake resources into physical, functional and symbolic resources. From the tourism point of view, lake resource forms a physical framework for the detection and experience setting manifested as a visual experience and a sensory based landscape experience. As a functional resource, lakes provide opportunities for versatile recreational and leisure activities. Lakes as water and a water system provides comprehensive frame for variety of independent or guided activities and tourism products or services built by local tourism entrepreneurs. As a symbolic resource lake has many subjective experienced symbolic meanings, e.g. as a lake landscape. (Pigram, 1995; Itkonen and Kortelainen, 1998; Ryhänen, 2001).

Although lakes have long been a central point for leisure and tourism activities, lakes became foci of international tourism research in the beginning of the 2000s. A good example of this is the first lake tourism-focused book “An Integrated Approach to Lacustrine Tourism Systems” (Hall and Härkönen, 2006a).

LAKE TOURISM

Lake Tourism as a concept is multifaceted. Lake Tourism is not only tourism on the lake itself, but also on the surrounding areas of the lakes (Tuohino, 2008). Hall and Härkönen stated (2006b, 5) that “The idea of lake tourism reinforces the idea that there are certain geographical entities that, because of their particular environmental characteristics are often designated as a separate type of tourism in which the specific environment serves to attract particular activities and which serve to convey certain environmental images as a part of destination promotion. Therefore lake tourism can be distinguished and therefore understood, in much the same way that alpine or forest tourism have been recognized as a subfield of tourism studies.” Smith (2003) noted that the following five perspectives can be found in lake tourism research: lake tourism as a human experience, as a social phenomenon, as a geographic phenomenon, as a resource user and as a resource. He summarizes that lake tourism is not only creating and communicating knowledge but also applying knowledge as involved and ethical members of the larger tourism community.

The condition of lakes and waterways has become global and has become recognized as an essential element of sustainable development (Hall and Härkönen, 2006b). This is supported by the fact that five major international conferences (Savonlinna, Finland 2003, Thousand Islands Lake, Hangzhou, China 2005, Gyöngyös, Hungary 2007, Thunder Bay, Canada 2009 and Stare Jablonski, Poland 2012) were held in this topic in the recent years. The lakes related to the conferences were Lake Saimaa in Finland, Thousand Island Lake in China, Lake Tisza in Hungary, Lake Superior in Canada and Szelağ Mały on the edge of Masuria in Poland.

This literature review based article provides the reader with a comprehensive overview of the lake tourism conferences and the research within a theme and helps reader place that information into lake tourism research perspective. The aim is first of all to summarize the results and recommendations of the above mentioned conferences and to discuss about the future of lake tourism development. The value of the paper is to stimulate given context and to inspire fresh research perspectives in multicultural environment of lake tourism research.

Primary references according to Riddick and Russell (1999 cited by Vaske, 2011) are publications that contain results from actual studies while secondary references include texts, books, and research review articles. In the case of lake tourism research, we believe that the majority of the articles have been published in the publications related to conferences held. Vaske (2011, 36) continued by stating “that sometimes it is easier to summarize the findings in tables or figures to provide a big picture overview of a topic.” This article also summarizes the main results and recommendations in the table to provide an easier overview on each conference. In this article, the primary references are the proceedings of first lake tourism conference (Härkönen, 2003), the Thousand Island Lake Consensus (2005), the handbook of lakes and reservoirs (Németh and Dávid, 2007) and community workshop report (McIntyre et al., 2009).

The paper proceeds in chronological order. Due to the nature of the paper there are also some limitations. As the paper is first and foremost focusing on the themes raised up in the lake tourism conferences the other e.g. lake-related papers with a strong biological or hydrological emphases are excluded.

CASE LAKE TOURISM CONFERENCES

Today’s tourists travel long distances and spend significant amounts of money to enjoy the recreational properties of sea shores, springs, waterfalls, rivers, and lakes. However, there is a gap in knowing, what tourists are searching for and how to manage these increasing tourism flows. Based on these ideas the importance of lake tourism research was raised up in Savonlinna Finland in 2001.

The Lake Tourism Project (2001-2003) can be considered as a starting step of lake tourism research and the chain of lake tourism conferences. One of the main aims of the project developed by University of Joensuu (since 2010 University of Eastern Finland), was to network international lake tourism researchers and to arrange the first international conference. In that time, the “Lake Tourism” term was not much used among researchers.

The First International Lake Tourism Conference in June 2003 looked at the dilemma of lakes in tourism. The lakes were approached as destinations, setting for different destinations as well as destination resources with discussions of marketing of lakes and lake images (Härkönen, 2003). Research themes of the conference were grouped under four themes:

lakes as a tourism destination (e.g. Gardiner, 2003; Goossen, 2003), nature and culture as a resource in lake tourism development (e.g. Cooper, 2003), planning and management of lake destination development (e.g. Gartner, 2003; Lime et al., 2003) and value added services and marketing of lake destinations (e.g. Erkkilä, 2003; Tuohino, 2003). Within the above mentioned themes, also the environmental issues came up. Dávid (2003) raised ecotourism as a new sustainable tourism development strategy, Furgala-Selezniow et al. (2003) environmental protection and natural environmental assets, Wisniewski (2003) water quality and restoration methods, Määttä (2003) balance of conservation, recreation and tourism, Rózański (2003) quality of environment for recreational purposes and Stedman et al. (2003) lake quality and over use of lakes.

The first lake tourism conference was closely connected to the meeting of the International Association of Tourism (IAST). The key issues raised up in the lake tourism workshop of IAST were focused on four themes; operational environment and its challenges, business models and measurement of successful business, knowledge management and transfer of knowledge and innovations as a builder for success (Tuohino and Härkönen, 2003b). On the other hand, the uniqueness of the Finnish lake environment was called into question and the unique and differentiating selling points were brought into discussion. The positioning of the destination could be done after defining and recognizing the own identity and its features. It was also stated that it is problematic to discuss the measurement of successful business due to its multifaceted nature. Success means different things to different businesses or entrepreneurs and thus it is not only based on quantitative indicators but also on qualitative adjuncts and attributes. In addition, it was declared that the supporting of the operational environment in the destination could be more useful and important from the point of effectiveness than giving money for separate short-term projects. Knowledge and knowledge transfer were deemed key words in tourism development. However, it was identified that for the academics the interaction with the businesses may be problematic and therefore there is gap in knowledge transfer. The concluding message from the international experts was that both local operational environment and local culture must act as catalysts in innovation creating processes and especially in image marketing strategies. After the conference, the ten theses of lake tourism development was presented (see Table 1 in the end of the sector) (Tuohino and Härkönen, 2003a.)

The second conference in Hangzhou, China continued the discussion of lake tourism development, communication and functions of lakes. The protection of lakes arose as a higher priority than in the Savonlinna conference. Non-Chinese presentations in the conference were mainly given by representatives of Living Lakes International network and were thus strongly paying attention on the conservation and protection of natural resources. In the end of the conference, the Thousand-Island Lake Consensus with 12 statements was declared (see Table 1 in the end of the sector). In the declaration three main issues were brought up, namely the functions and protections of the lakes, lake tourism development and communication and cooperation among lakes. The problems in pollution and the need for urgent protection of lakes were recognized and the sustainability was highlighted. In addition, turning environmental

advantage into economical advantage, with decreases poverty and increases incomes and promote regional economical development were mentioned. Lakes were deemed an important resource of the Earth and mankind and their role in people's life was seen irreplaceable (China International Lake Tourism Forum).

A sustainable vision of lake tourism was the key theme of the third conference in Hungary and the presentations were strongly focused on the challenges for tourism management at reservoirs, as well as around the special tasks in tourism and the sustainable development of the resources. In addition, issues of climate change and its effects for lake tourism were discussed. The conference focus was on the multiple utilization of reservoirs (e.g. Dávid et al., 2007; Galgóczy-Németh, 2007; Bujdosó and Radics, 2007), sustainable development of the resource (e.g. Druva-Druvaskalne and Slara, 2007), ecotourism at lakes and reservoirs and challenges for tourism at reservoirs (e.g. Mamcarz and Mionskowska, 2007). Lake tourism in the light of the climate change (Baros et al., 2007) and the use of lakes in the context of health (Molnár, 2007) and wellness and wellbeing (Tuohino and Kangas, 2007) were also discussed as well as the management of lake tourism in the boreal forests of northwestern Ontario (McIntyre et al., 2007). Rátz (2007), in turn, focused on the adaptation and assessment of the destination life cycle model and used Lake Balaton region as a case (Németh and Dávid, 2007).

The fourth conference in Thunder Bay, Canada strongly followed the previous themes of sustainability and protection of lakes. The declaration of the Canadian Government in 2007 of the Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area was a guiding document of the conference from Canadian perspective. For this reason, the 4th lake tourism conference explored the potentiality of lake conservation areas with a strong Canadian perspective to contribute to social and economic sustainability.

The conference presentations focused on the conservation and sustainability of the lakes (e.g. Hall, 2009; Lemelin, 2009; Rodriques and Rodriques, 2009; Walton, 2009), management challenges on the remote lake areas (Hunt, 2009), climate change issues (Thornbush, 2009), the institutional vacuity and the management of Great Lakes coastal zones in Ontario (Payne, 2009) and about conflicts between in wetland protection and recreational development Johnston and Lemelin (2009). Visitor perceptions and attitudes towards wind farms were examined by Shepherd and Dilley (2009) in a case of the Lake District national park in the UK, while Tuohino (2009) viewed Italians' and Germans' tourists' perceptions of Finnish Lakeland as a leisure and tourism destination. Ratz and Michalkó (2009) continued the health theme by presenting the health tourism development at Hungarian lake destinations.

Communities and community-based tourism were in a strong role in Canadian conference. Matthews (2009) examined the building and empowerment in a community-based tourism development on the north shore of Lake Superior and used as a case The Red Rock Indian Band, while Bennett et al. (2009) focused on building local capacity of indigenous tourism development related to conservation in the east arm of Great Slave Lake in the community of Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation.

In the significant role of the 4th lake tourism conference in Canada was the workshop which took place in Nipigon/Red Rock. The workshop was divided into three segments; the researcher panel, the community panel, and the world café. Central themes brought up and focused upon by the research panel were on the unique environment and natural heritage which could be developed into viable product offerings. In addition, among panelists there was a strong sense of the economic diversification potential, and the opportunities for employment. Additionally, the panel raised focus points of management. In the community panel, questions were posed about the Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area and other tourism issues in the region. Panelists focused on the importance of building awareness and acceptance for tourism development in the area, including the need to build community and external partnerships. In addition, the educational issues rose up in order to better serve tourists as well as preserve local tradition. Participants built upon previous concepts, and brainstormed several ideas and applications for the tourism industry in the area. The world café mixed groups of researchers and local people of the community and focused on the implementation of tourism development in the area. Most of the areas mentioned already in the previous panels came up again. Participants built upon previous concepts and brainstormed several ideas and applications for the areas of tourism development. Results of the workshop are presented in Table 1. *The report “Community Workshop: Ideas into Actions”* is a compilation of all ideas and suggestions that were discussed during the workshop (McIntyre et al., 2009).

Table 1: International lake tourism conferences 2003-2009: results and declarations

<p>Savonlinna, Finland, 2003</p> <p>Source: Tuohino & Härkönen, 2003a.</p>	<p>Ten theses of Lake tourism development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The basis of lake tourism development (LTD) is in recognition and identification of specific features of own lake area, its natural and cultural history. It is time to dive deeper into own lakes to gain new perspectives and new experiences. 2. LTD calls for fading out the administrative borders. Tourists are not interested in geographical, administrative or organizational borders but the destination itself is the issue. We need only one first mate of the boat! 3. LTD must be based on research. Sailing on the ocean of research need criticism, open social interaction and sharing of knowledge. 4. LTD requires daring to be different. The world is full of similar kind of lakes and lake environments. There is a need of profiling and differentiating a lake. 5. LTD demands openness and curiosity. Sharing information and benchmarking on national and international level is an investment for own competence. To see close, you have to go far. 6. Lake tourism product/service must be readily available for purchasing and easy accessed. Even the excellent product or service is nothing, if the customer does not find or get it.
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Lake tourism is a combination of various things. There is a need of service chains, service centers, routes and rowing in the same boat to get service nets to prey on customers. 8. Lake tourism is not only the scenic beautiful landscapes, but also learning new things and activities. It is time to release the old ways of thinking. It is time to blow the spirit of the lakes. 9. Lakes are not only for tourists, but also for locals and leisure-time residents. Why to go further to get fish? Locals and leisure-time residents are more stabile, more potential users of the lakes, but on the other hand, they are also blind for the offering of their home lakes. 10. LTD must be year around activity, bring added value for a customer and profitable business. The wintry lake has its own magic Lake waters must be deployed into tourism seriously, but with a smile. Riding on the crest of the wave could be possible only with high skills and quality.
<p>Thousand Island Lake, China 2005</p> <p>Source: 2005 China International Lake Tourism Forum. Thousand-Island Lake Consensus</p>	<p>1. The functions and protection of lakes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lakes are important and complex resources of mankind: they are indispensable in work and in life; their water serve as a source of drinking-water, as well as they play a relevant role in flood control, irrigation, electricity production, transport, agriculture and tourism. - Lacustral ecosystems, in general, are relatively vulnerable, thus they are regarded to be non-renewable natural resources. By today, a significant percentage of the lakes of the world have become polluted to a certain extent, reaching an amount of water which could satisfy the drinking water needs of 1 billion people. - Lakes are one of the important sources of tourism and free-time activities: they function as leisure, entertainment and spare time environment, place. <p>By all of the above-mentioned, the topic of necessity of intensive protection or placing lacustral resources under urgent protection is proposed. They draw attention to the necessity of raising environmental awareness and the spreading of sustainable branches and practices tourism as well as can help to decrease unfavorable environmental effects to the greatest possible extent.</p> <p>2. Lake tourism development</p> <p>Tourism development projects can induce economic growth; can play a major role in the promotion of social development of backward regions and in the creation of a balanced urban-rural development. Consequently, the followings must be aspired:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moderate tourism development should include the protection of lakes. - Environmental advantages should be converted to economic-social benefits; thus the utilization of possibilities within tourism through the windup of pauperization and growing incomes can become one of the poles of economic growth and can contribute to the economic development of a given region. - The realization of the four principles (environmental protection, rational use of resources, consistent management and sustainable utilization) of lake tourism development, the science-based planning, the follow-up of tourism development plans and the prevention of serious damages resultant from inadequate development (seen from both the side of tour organizers and lake administrators). - The promotion of the transition of lake tourism as presenting spectacles into a free-time type attractively, the increase of market competitiveness - for these, the development of individual products suitable for local conditions. <p>3. Communication and co-operation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lake tourism is at the beginning stage of development in many countries of the world (e.g. China) and is in continuous transition. That is why, in order to protect and touristically develop great lakes, it is necessary to discuss different changes, management and development models. One way of this can be the organization of international institutions, alliances connected to lake tourism. <p>These are not only great opportunities for setting up of connections, but also for the exchange of experience and the development of educational systems.</p>
<p>Gyöngyös, Hungary, 2007</p> <p>Source: Németh and Dávid, 2007</p>	<p>1. Results</p> <p>Water is an essential tourist attraction, whether it is an ocean, a river, or a lake. Though coastal tourism represents a considerable share of the market, lakes and reservoirs are increasingly considered as important resources, too.</p> <p>The role of lakes as tourism-motivators or assets has a rather broad spectrum.</p> <p>As researches in the field of limnology, hydro geography are getting broader, tourism experts also show increasing interest in the utilisation of lakes as resources of tourism. The role of lakes as tourism-motivators or assets has a rather broad spectrum, and developments often raise environmental issues, too. International discussion and sharing practices, experiences were necessary for long. The main conference themes were formed around the challenges for tourism management at reservoirs, as</p>

	<p>well as around special tasks in tourism and the sustainable development of the resources (ecotourism, conservation).</p> <p>2. Conclusion As a conclusion of the conference in 2007, future lake tourism developments must be considered from the aspect of environmental protection and should take into account the possible hazards of global warming, too.</p>
<p>Thunder Bay, Canada, 2009</p> <p>Source: McIntyre et al., 2009</p>	<p>Key points raised by the research panel</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unique nature and its importance as a tourism attraction 2. First Nations culture 3. Large area of public land for outdoor recreation/tourism activities 4. Need to provide packaging of tourist opportunities 5. Ecotourism opportunities and sustainability 6. As a target group people with similar interests (nature, culture, lifestyle preferences) 7. Remote area and its attractiveness 8. Need to think value-added products, amenity migration 9. Winter as a new potential 10. Change from resource to service industry <p>Focus points of management raised by the research panel</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing a vision for communities and the region 2. Engaging the whole community 3. Enhancing communication among local tourism/economic planners, resource agencies, tourism associations, government departments 4. Developing partnerships and networks across the region 5. Developing a strategic and adaptive approach to tourism marketing 6. Having realistic expectations about the degree of involvement and support from local people and the outcomes of tourism development <p>Community panel</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lake Superior NMCA was seen by all as a potential major tourism attraction, because of its international significance as a world-class conservation area and its unique natural and cultural heritage. Also the importance as an economic developer and partner was recognized. 2. Secondly the key issues like product development, the needs for communication and education as well as for strategic development were raised up. 3. Thirdly the vision for the five and 20 years was focused on. <p>World Café Mostly the same areas as in the previous panels.</p>

The fifth conference in Poland in July 2012 continued the themes of the previous conferences, with environmental issues playing a central role in many of the presentations. Several presentations continued the theme of sustainability, conservation, and protection of lakes. Health and wellness/wellbeing aspects of lake recreation and tourism, gastronomy in the lake context, tourist activities at lakes and lakelands, water quality, lake conservation and renovation versus lake recreational potential and tourism in the concept of sustainable development or management of lakes and lake districts were also discussed in the sessions (Programme and Abstracts of the 5th International Lake Tourism Conference).

GLOBAL PROBLEMS, LOCAL SOLUTIONS

The article provides an overview of the lake tourism conferences and helps place that information into lake tourism research perspective. The nature and its uniqueness, local history and culture, marketing, product development, sustainability, conservation and protection of lakes as well as economic and social issues were the key points that rose up during all five conferences. Local priorities emerged in each conference and the themes of the conferences.

The differences were in the emphases of the themes. In the first conference in Savonlinna, the main focus was in understanding of lake tourism as a concept and sub-theme of nature tourism, its possibilities and challenges, while in China sustainability and protection of lakes were key issues. In addition, it was recognized that lake tourism has an important role in local social economic development. In Hungary, the emphasis was on sustainability and environmental protection but also on hazards of global warming and its reflections into lake tourism development. In Canada, the main emphasis was on communities and community-based tourism development while sustainability arose again in Poland.

These five conferences also gave a good overview of lake tourism development on both natural lakes (Finland, Canada, and Poland) as well as on artificial lakes or reservoirs in China and Hungary. It came also evident, that there are differences in context of sustainability. In Finland, sustainability and water quality are not as strongly emphasized as in e.g. China, Hungary or Poland. On the other hand the volumes of tourism activities varied strongly between the lakes and thus reflected also into discussions and themes of the conferences.

Strong local emphasis was also present in four conferences. While in Finland, most of the speakers and delegates were foreigners, in Hungary, China, Canada, and Poland the main group of delegates were from the particular country. This change could also reflect the role of lake tourism research and its increase during the last ten years.

While summarizing the results of five lake tourism conferences into one sentence, we argue that lake tourism development faces global problems, which should be solved by local solutions.

DISCUSSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Since the 2000s, lake tourism research has taken quite a leap forward. Today it can be said that lake tourism researchers are walking towards the international lake tourism research cooperation, if not always hand-in-hand, at least to the same direction with a common understanding about lake tourism as a term, but also as content. The chain of lake tourism conferences is a good evidence of this cooperation. In addition, a network of lake tourism researchers has been woven and research cooperation between researchers is increasing all the time.

However, there are still much to do. The cooperation between academics and the private sector need to be more open and the common language must be found between the actors. One big challenge would be the transfer of knowledge, i.e. how to transfer academic research results into practice and further how they will be utilized in the local and regional development of lake tourism.

Nor can it be forgotten that lake tourism conferences also act as forums for getting familiar with other cultures and other lake environments, but also forums to meet again and again new local actors in lake various lake environments. Social programs of the conferences have offered local experiences both on the lakes but also on the shore lines of the lakes; local music, gastronomy, community living, cruises on the lakes, etc. All these activities together with conference presentations have given in addition to the enjoyment of good local food and socializing events new perspectives into each delegate's own research.

As mentioned earlier, the future of lake tourism research looks bright. Sustainability of the lakes as well as climate change (see e.g. Dávid et al, 2012) and its impacts on lake tourism are likely to take on an even more significant role in the future. New research opportunities are rising across lakes, including the role of the lake in the content production, e.g. in the sector of the wellness and wellbeing tourism (see e.g. Hjalager et al., 2011; Tuohino et al., 2012). Also the customer surveys and the role of customers will certainly play a greater role in future research activities.

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