TOURISM TODAY

Special Edition
CULTURAL TOURISM

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**College of Tourism
and Hotel Management**

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Editorial Board

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 in Cyprus and Ball State University in the USA. The journal 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.

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*, the College of Tourism and Hotel Management, nor Ball State University.

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Note from the Editor

Welcome to the sixteenth edition of Tourism Today. Both the College of Tourism and Hotel Management and the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at Ball State University for several years now have supported Tourism Today. As the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at Ball State has disbanded, the Department of Management is now a supporting institution at Ball State. The cooperation between these two institutions on different sides of the Atlantic enables Tourism Today to continue to be a quality peer-reviewed journal as an outlet for academics as well as a resource for academics, students, and those in the industry. The journal remains available to everyone free of charge online.

There has been a sad change to the Editorial Board. Dimitri Tassiopoulos has recently passed away. I was grateful that I had had the chance to meet him years ago. He was an enthusiastic supporter of Tourism Today when we began the journal many years ago. He was a lovely person and a great help and I am sure that I am not the only person who has fond memories of him. We wish his family and friends the best. It was a pleasure to have known him and to have collaborated with him with Tourism Today.

This edition is our third time we have showcased a guest editor. This time, we had the fortune of having Jim Butcher working with us to put together a special edition on cultural tourism. The articles are broad and use many different approaches and deal with very different takes on cultural tourism. There should be something for everyone in this edition. There are contributions exploring cultural tourism in Ireland, Montserrat, Iraq, and Nigeria, Malta, and Central Europe. There is also an excellent more theoretical piece from Greg Richards exploring the notion of local tourists in their home cities, using a sample of tourists in Barcelona to illustrate the point. The variety of topics and approaches ensures that there is something for everyone in this edition.

As has been the case since the launch of Tourism Today many years ago, comments that assist us in improving the journal are appreciated and are very much welcomed. We encourage readers to support the journal by submitting quality research for our consideration and spreading the word about the journal to friends and colleagues.
We wish you an enjoyable read.

Craig Webster
Editor-in-Chief, Tourism Today

Note from the Guest Editor

The papers in this issue are a selection of those presented at the 2017 ATLAS 25th Anniversary Annual Conference, held at Canterbury Christ Church University in the UK. Reflecting the conference overall, and ATLAS's traditions, it features a variety of authors from the most experienced through to those looking to establish themselves. The broad theme of the papers in this edition was originally 'cultural tourism', but this has been broadened out to accommodate the papers received for consideration. The subject matter is diverse, ranging from case studies through to novel concepts, from small resorts to disaster tourism. The papers provide a snapshot of the scope of today's tourism research, again, very much in the ATLAS tradition. Thanks are due to Leontine Onderwater and Jantien Veldman at ATLAS, and Craig Webster at Tourism Today, for their cooperation and hard work.

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Tourists in their own city - considering the growth of a phenomenon

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ABSTRACT

The once clear dichotomy between tourists and locals is becoming more vague as a wider range of travel and tourism practices emerge. This paper examines the role of people as 'tourists' in their own city as part of a social reproduction of tourism as a lifestyle or as a consumption strategy. Borrowing from the 'tourist in their own city' concept developed in 1997 by Van Driel and Blokker, it considers the extent to which the viewpoints of residents and other 'tourists' vary and coincide. Arguably our experience as tourists gives us new viewpoints on our own city, and also to new views of the tourist as 'temporary citizens', or of locals 'tourist suppliers in their own city'. Using data collected from both 'tourists' and 'locals' in Barcelona, this analysis considers how the growing integration of everyday life and tourism is producing growing numbers of 'tourists in their own city'.

Keywords: Urban tourism, cultural tourism, tourist space, tourist practices

INTRODUCTION

Tourism used to be a relatively well-defined activity carried out in specific types of places at certain times. Conventional models of tourism are based on spaces such as the beach, where the tourist goes during the season to practice leisure and find extraordinary experiences outside everyday life (Urry, 1990). Or to visit specific tourist attractions marked out as important places to see (McCannell, 1976). But the rapid growth of tourism in recent decades has spread tourism-style consumption to the furthest corners of the globe and to everyday, mundane places as well. Russo and Richards (2016) have argued that tourism has undergone a number of 'turns' in recent years that have changed the content, meaning and location of tourism consumption and production. These are the mobilities turn, the performative turn and the creative turn. Each of these turns has helped to shift the location of tourism in different ways. Increasing mobility has spread tourism physically, the performative turn has departed from a critique of McCannell to emphasise that tourism can be performed by anyone, anywhere and the creative turn:

"repositions cultural tourism as encounter, relationship and negotiation within the symbolic/cultural domain in tourist destinations. This has a bearing on how tourism experiences are organized and promoted, as the target is shifted from object and place to the actors of the cultural landscape and their interaction in a process of exchange."

Tourism has therefore been significantly repositioned from an activity undertaken by 'tourists' in specific 'tourist spaces' at specific times. It is now a mobilised, de-differentiated process of meaning construction engaged in by almost everybody in the developed world (either in terms of consumption or production). One result of this has been the emergence and analysis of 'new localities' in tourism, or places which are not traditional tourism places, but which have been created and shaped by more recent tourism trends. These include the Airbnb apartment, the 'poshtel', the albergo diffuso, the dark tourism attraction, etc.

Cities, as major hubs of tourism, have been particularly important in these developments. They have often been the places where new tourism trends have been signalled, and the concentration of tourist sites in city centres has been one of the driving forces for the development of attractions and experiences in 'new' areas of the city (Maitland, 2010). But cities are not just important as major destinations for tourism: they are also major origin markets. The bulk of the world's tourism flows originate in cities – these are the places that tourists come from. In order to become 'tourists' in the traditional sense, of course, they have to leave their own city, and visit places 'outside their normal environment', as the UNWTO definition puts it.

But in fact, the nature of modern urban living means that the concept of 'normal environment' is changing as well. The modern urban dweller does not live in the city as a whole, but rather in a series of villages or enclaves that are frequented on a regular basis for work, leisure, shopping, etc. Other parts of the city are off the physical and mental map – just as unknown as exotic, faraway tourism destinations. In this sense there is a lot of scope for urban dwellers to become 'tourists in their own city', visiting the other parts of the city with the same sense of curiosity and exploration as they would have when on holiday elsewhere.

This was the premise of a 1997 strip cartoon entitled A Tourist in His Own City (Van Driel and Blokker, 1997). In the cartoon, an unemployed Amsterdammer decides to discover his native city, "with the inquisitiveness of a tourist, but with the knowledge and experience of a long-term resident". He dons a safari outfit, and begins 'work' as a local tourist. The device employed by the protagonist of A Tourist in His Own City is to find new viewpoints from which he can gaze on the city. As cities almost everywhere are rapidly developing, and often expanding upwards as well as outwards, there is arguably a growing supply of such experiences for local tourists.

The point made by the cartoon is that tourist strategies, such as taking pictures or gazing on the landscape from a privileged vantage point, can be employed everywhere. What has facilitated the extension of such strategies is the expansion of tourism itself. Vastly greater numbers of people are familiar with the rituals of tourism consumption, and can enjoy them everywhere.

At the same time the production of tourism has also been democratised. Even though the towering heights of the tourism industry are dominated by large-scale providers, the need to provide individualised, just in time experiences means that the vast majority of tourism suppliers are small scale. With the extension of information systems people outside the formal tourism system have also been enabled as suppliers of tourism services and experiences. For example, Airbnb now has a global network of hosts, supplying accommodation to hundreds of thousands of guests worldwide. Airbnb also claims that it is spreading tourism to new areas of the city, enabling tourists to experience the real 'local'.

We are therefore witnessing a much more widespread landscape of tourism production and consumption, which is turning the city into a mass destination, which is being visited by its own residents, as well as tourists from further afield.

This paper examines how the growing integration of everyday life and tourism is producing a growing number of 'tourists in their own city', and it analyses the newly emerging patterns of production and consumption that result.

METHODS

Different data sources were used to chart the tourism behaviour of residents and visitors in the city of Barcelona. In particular, a survey of resident perceptions of tourism has been carried out since 2005 by the Municipality of Barcelona (Richards, 2005). This includes questions on visits to 'tourist' areas of the city by residents. This enables us to chart changes in visitation by residents over time. In addition the city has recently conducted a specific study of the relationship of residents to tourism, including their attitudes to tourists, their interaction with tourists and their own use of tourist facilities such as hotels.

Comparisons with patterns of tourist visitation cam be made through the regular reports published by Turisme de Barcelona, as well as surveys carried by ATLAS for the ATLAS Culture Tourism Project. The involvement of residents in the supply of tourism services has also been charted by a number of recent studies of Airbnb in the city (Russo and Richards, 2016).

THE RELATIONSHIP OF RESIDENTS TO TOURISM

The data collected on the attitudes of residents to tourism show a steady increase in resident-tourist interaction, in line with the overall growth of tourism in the city. In 2005 and 2006 around 31% of residents said they lived in a district 'with lots of tourists'. By 2013 this figure had risen to 35,6%, and 64,4% said that they had had social contact with a tourists in the past year. So there are indications that residents are more likely to come into contact with tourists in the areas they live in, particularly if they live in the city centre. A comparison of the ATLAS survey of tourists and the Municipal resident survey shows that many key sites were visited by

large proportions of both groups (Figure 1). In general, tourists were more likely than residents to visit individual attractions such as the Gaudi sites La Sagrada Familiar and Parc Guell, and residents were slightly more likely to have visited districts of the city such as the Barri Gotic or Port Olimpic. Even so, these figures indicate a considerable spatial overlap between tourists and residents.

Figure 1: Proportions of residents and tourists visiting key sites in Barcelona, 2004 (Source: ATLAS Surveys of cultural tourists and Richards, 2005)
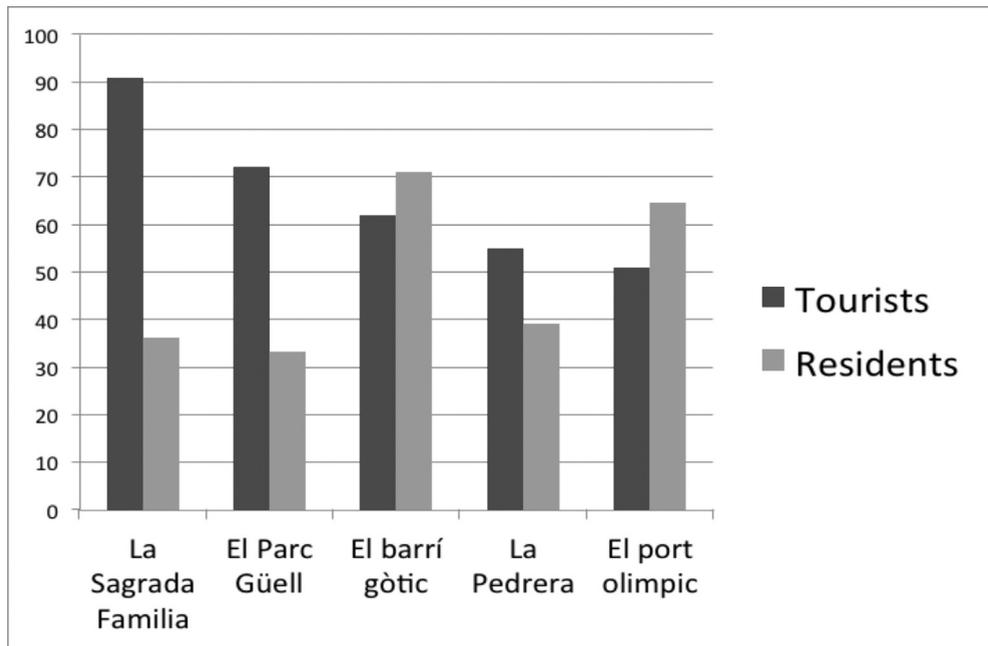
In the period since the first measurement of resident attitudes to tourism in 2005, there has been considerable debate about the growing tourist pressure on the city. The number of tourist arrivals rose from 3.1 million in 2006 to 7.8 million in 2014, making it the fourth tourist city in Europe after Paris, London and Rome. Although some commentators have suggested that Barcelona has effectively become a giant theme park, there seemed to be far less concern initially among ordinary citizens. The number of residents indicating that they thought Barcelona had reached its limit to accommodate tourists fell from 41% in 2007 to 25% in 2012.

The apparent gap between the rhetoric of growing problems with tourism and the behaviour of local residents is also highlighted by the growing number of visits by residents to sites frequented by tourists. Between 2005 and 2015, visits by residents to major tourist sites grew, with the exception of La Pedrera, a major Gaudi building, which remained static (Figure 2). Perhaps most tellingly, residents have not stopped visiting the Ramblas or the Barri Gotic, in spite of

claims that these sites have been 'overrun' by tourists and therefore avoided by residents. Even though it might be hard for residents living in the city centre to avoid 'visiting' the Ramblas or the Cuitat Vella, these areas are still visited by residents from other areas of the city as well. And even Parc Güell, a relatively isolated site in the district of Gracia, was visited more by residents in 2015 than in 2005. Interestingly, however, the percentage of residents visiting Parc Güell has declined since a peak in 2011. This may related to the fact that an admission charge was introduced for the most emblematic parts of the site in 2013, and there is now a system of advance booking that tourists have to use. Local residents can still enter the park for free, but to do so they need to obtain a card from the municipality, as the Park Güell website explains:

> "Local people from the districts adjoining Park Güell (El Coll, Vallcarca-Penitents, La Salut, El Carmel and Can Baró) have free entry to it all the year round using personal and untransferable cards. Residents in these neighbourhoods can ask for their card through the City Council offices."

> http://www.parkguell.cat/en/local-residents/ (accessed January 6th 2017)

This illustrates the ways in which the ability of locals to be 'tourists in their own city' may be restricted by the pressure from 'real' tourists. Paradoxically the more this happens, the more these tourists might shift from their own city to somebody else's.

Figure 2: Visits to sites in Barcelona by Residents, 2005 and 2010 to 2015
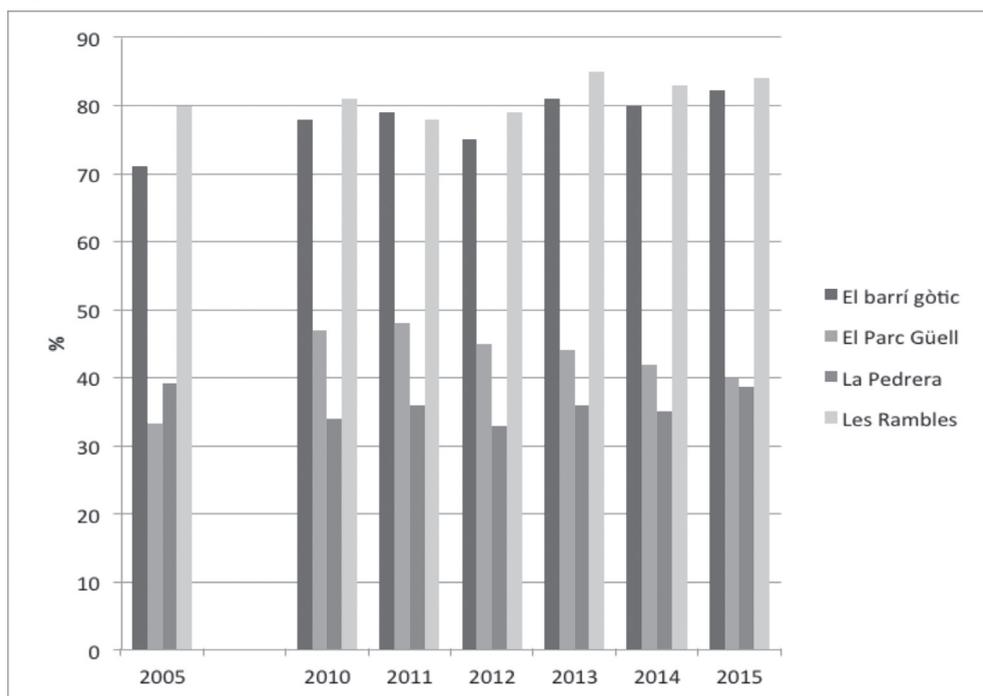
The spatial coincidence of tourists and residents seems to be continuing. In 2013 residents also indicated that they like having contact with tourists (77,6%), and again, this figure has increased in recent years. However, the level of satisfaction with these contacts is decreasing, from 90.3% of residents being satisfied in 2010 to less than 80% in 2015 (Figure 3). The particularly sharp drop in satisfaction with tourist contacts in 2015 may be related to growing incidents of uncivic behaviour by tourists in particular 'hot-spots' such as Barceloneta (Richards, 2015). A new Mayor, Ada Colau, was also elected in 2015, with part of her platform being the control of tourism development in the city.

Figure 3: Percentage of residents who felt 'satisfied' with their contacts with tourists (resident surveys, Ajuntament de Barcelona)
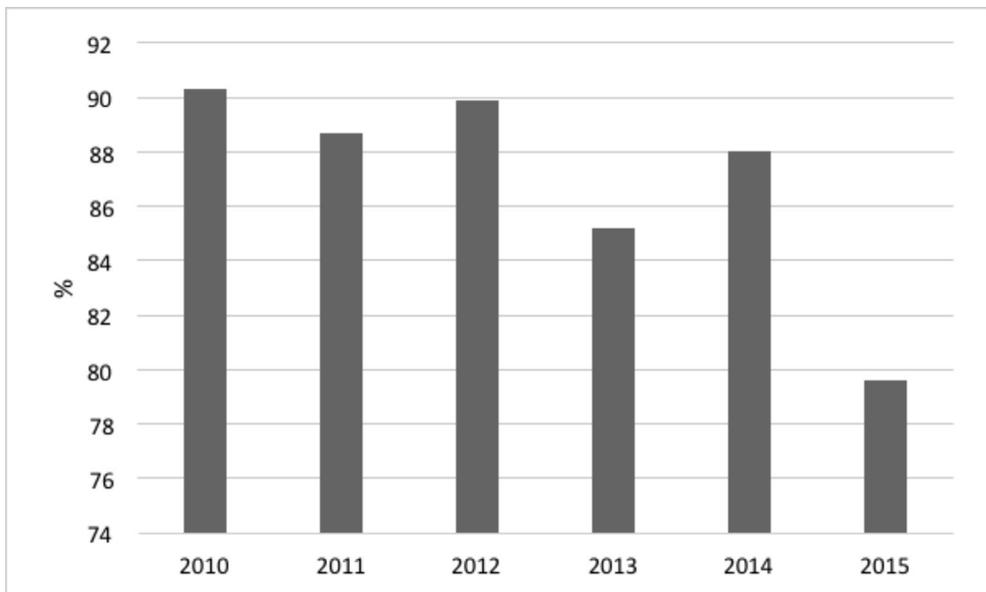
In spite of the increases in tourist pressure, and signs that residents may be becoming less satisfied with their increasingly frequent tourist contacts, residents generally recognise that tourism is beneficial to the city (Figure 4). Even though recent developments may have caused a decline in people agreeing that tourism is beneficial (from a peak of 96% in 2012 to just under 92% in 2015), recognition of tourism benefits was still higher in 2015 than in 2007. This suggests that residents are able to distinguish between the benefits and costs of tourism, and are probably developing a balanced view of these issues.

Figure 4: Percentage of residents agreeing with the question 'Is tourism beneficial for Barcelona?' (Resident surveys, Ajuntament de Barcelona)
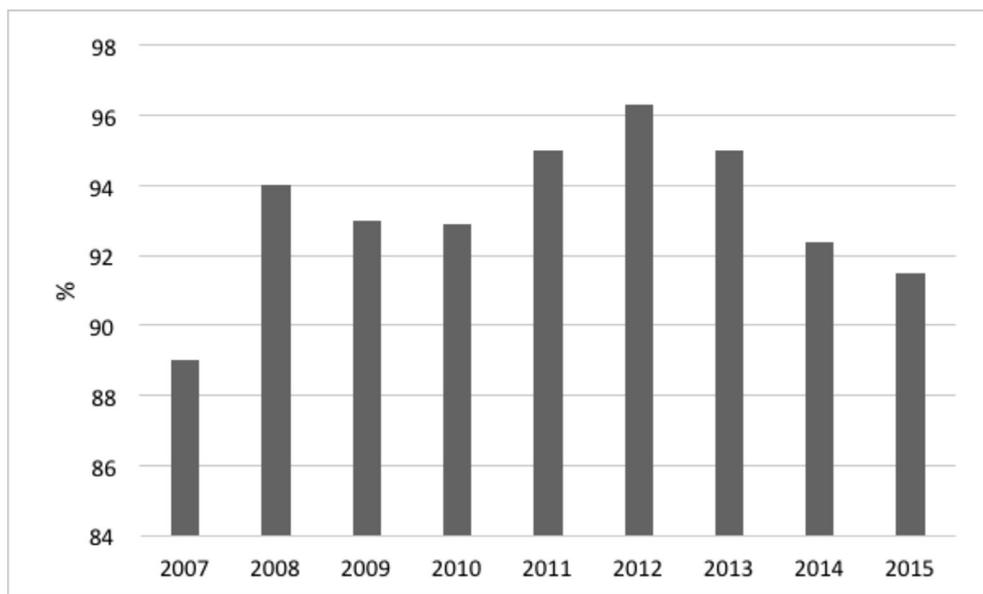
One of the reasons why residents recognise the benefits of tourism is because of their own involvement in the production of tourism services. In addition to the 8% or so of residents employed in the formal tourism sector, there is a growing informal involvement in tourism. The residents of Barcelona are not only mirroring the behaviour of tourists in terms of their visits to attractions, but they are also becoming part of the tourist industry. A study in 2013 found that 49.3% of Barcelona residents had on average of 4.6 friends or family staying with them each year. This extensive informal hospitality is also complimented by a growing 'sharing economy' stimulated by Airbnb and similar platforms. For example, the number of Airbnb listings in Barcelona grew from around 12,000 in April 2015 to almost 15,000 at the beginning of 2016.

It is interesting to note that in Barcelona and many other destinations, the growing co-creation of tourism between residents and tourists is actively being used to develop and market tourism. Because tourists are often now seeking something distinctive and 'authentic' in the destinations they visit, the 'local' dimension of place is now being increasingly emphasised. Places frequented by locals are often sought out by tourists as a marker of 'real' or 'authentic' experiences (Russo and Richards, 2016). Many destination marketing organisations are therefore trying to enlist 'locals' to entice tourists to visit. One notable effort was the Melbourne Remote Control Tourist project, 'an interactive web campaign that let potential visitors explore the city for themselves through the eyes and ears of four real-world tourists', who traversed the city, directed by people visiting the website, recording their experiences via live video feed. This was enormously successful:

"Over the five-day period, the Melbourne Remote Control Tourist generated over 43 million earned social media impressions, including 35 million from Twitter alone. We had people in 3,888 cities from 158 countries interacting with the site. Our tourists were responsible for almost 3,000 unique requests. They traveled 109 km, took over 1,500 Instagram photos, and checked in at 321 locations. Through hundreds of global news articles, social and PR, we estimate that the project had a global reach of over 235 million people."

So the 'locals' have become ambassadors or even marketeers for the destination. Their own tourism consumption is being used to entice 'real' tourists to visit.

THE CONVERGENCE OF THE TOURIST AND THE LOCAL

So what is driving the development of 'local tourism'?

One major factor is simply the growing scale of tourism. Effectively, most people in the developed world now enjoy tourism, and they tend to transfer the practices of doing tourism abroad to the context of home. Tourism has already helped to globalise the croissant and the pavement café, and now this effect is extending to the way that we consume the city in general.

This reflects a general shift in the object of tourism, as the search for the exceptional and unique has been replaced or supplemented by a search for the ordinary or the everyday (Richards, 2011). As more and more tourists have visited the crowning heights of other cultures, they increasingly seek out the less obvious features that their friends and compatriots have not yet found.

There has also been an extension in the means of 'doing tourism' into the realm of everyday life. Whereas at one time the camera was the iconic accessory of the tourist, today many carry cameras all the time, in the form of the smartphone. The result is that even those areas close to us can be photographed and displayed in the same way as more 'exotic' tourist sights.

The relationship between 'home' and 'away' has also changed as populations in general have become more mobile. At one time, tourists used to travel from a relatively limited set of origin regions to discrete tourist destinations, with an overwhelming flow from north to south in Europe. Migration and general mobility has blurred the lines between origins and destinations, with the tourist origins themselves also becoming the target of tourism. Expats arriving in a new country will often explore these places as a form of tourism, even though they are living there as 'locals'.

Our relationship to the places we live in has also changed over time. Spatial segregation in many cities has meant that many people would sooner visit an unknown destination on the other side of the world than areas of their own city. This is essentially the message contained in the original

Tourist in his own city cartoon. Areas of Amsterdam had become segregated to the extent that different population groups were not aware of what was going on in other parts of their own city. This realisation was a major driver for the development of 'urban safaris' in cities such as Rotterdam in the 1990s, and these types of experiences have increased in popularity ever since.

All of these observations suggest that the phenomenon of the tourist in their own city is not really a surprise, but rather a logical outcome of a number of social and cultural processes linked to the development of tourism and society in general in recent decades. Although it may be argued that local residents cannot be 'tourists' in their own city in the formal sense, we are increasingly consuming places, including those we live in, in a touristic way. Such is our desire for tourist-like experiences that we continue to visit tourist places even after they have apparently been 'overrun' by tourists and uninhabitable for locals. One question that remains to be explored is what type of experience do these 'tourists in their own city' have in such places? Is the experience of the locals similar to the tourists who have apparently taken over these spaces? Or is the feeling one of nostalgia for a lost place that can now only be visited in a tourist fashion?

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Heritage tourism and the curious tourist: the perspective of a small Irish town

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ABSTRACT

A small seaside tourist town located on the south coast of Ireland, Youghal is a town with a difference. In terms of history, stories, buildings and artefacts, it boasts connections with historical figures such as Sir Walter Raleigh [Mayor (1588-1589)], Richard Boyle, 1st Earl of Cork, Oliver Cromwell, Queen Victoria ('Youghal Lace' for her coronation veil), Tom Thumb[1], a town witch and witch trial, Viking and Anglo Normans settlers, Medieval buildings and town walls (1250 AD) that still stand. This research examines the heritage town and its current tourist offering. Empirical data was gathered using in-depth interviews and projective techniques. The qualitative element consisted of interviews with twenty-two key people drawn from local industry, the business community, residents and politicians. Additionally, 71 people were randomly picked to participate in projective techniques.

Keywords: Cultural Tourism, Heritage, International Heritage, Natural & Built Environment.

INTRODUCTION

Youghal is all about Tourism. All we have left is our Tourism – it's a hidden gem!

Commissioned by the Youghal Socio Economic Development Group (SEDG) in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland[2], this research seeks to examine the tourism product offering in the cultural heritage town of Youghal. The aim of this research is to identify and analyse the region's tourism product and services offering. This will determine the area's strengths, gaps and opportunities, aligned with appropriate markets and potential investment attraction. The findings of this study will provide a clear understanding of the tourist offering, while also identifying gaps in the tourist

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[1]   The Dwarf Tom Thumb's (1838-1883) glove is displayed in the Visitor centre in Youghal today. It was presented to Lady Adelaire of Ballynatray House, Youghal at the end of Tom's visit there.

[2]   Fáilte Ireland (FI) is the National Tourism Development Authority supporting the tourism industry & working to sustain Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourism destination. FI work with other state agencies and representative bodies, at local & national levels, to implement and champion positive and practical strategies that will benefit Irish tourism & the Irish economy. FI promote Ireland as a holiday destination through their domestic marketing campaign (http://www.failteireland.ie/)

product proposition. The first section of this paper will outline the current offering and examine relevant literature, the second section will present the empirical data generated from this study which used projective techniques and in-depth interviews from respondents, and the last section will outline the gaps in the offering and provide recommendations for future practice to better enhance the tourist product offering and generate economic growth for this heritage town.

During the period of the Irish financial crisis and corresponding economic downturn in Ireland in 2008 and subsequent years, the Town of Youghal suffered a seriously detrimental impact on local trade, business, and employment, especially the retail sector. The Town Council had a pivotal role in supporting the Town, and were responsible for the commerce and the overall well-being of Youghal, but the dissolution of Town Councils throughout Ireland in June 2014, when the Local Government Reform Act 2014[3] was implemented, left the Town without local support. The East Cork Municipal District has now taken over from the Town Council leaving Youghal in a much weaker political position.

The Youghal Socio-Economic Development Group (YSEDG)

In 2007, The Youghal Socio-Economic Development Group (YSEDG), a strategic policy group, was established so that Youghal could exploit its significant international heritage, natural amenities, and its hosting of large-scale contemporary cultural and arts events. The group is made up of local, county-wide and regional agencies, together with local authorities, the tourism and business community, and community groups representing Youghal. Since it was established, YSEDG has become Youghal's very own 'Task Force', positioning Youghal as a desirable place to live, work, visit, and invest. Youghal's heritage-led regeneration strategy has seen YSEDG deliver conservation and restoration works to Youghal's Town Walls and The Clocktower Gate Building. Youghal also benefited from the Historic Towns Initiative[4] Pilot Programme along with Listowel, Co. Kerry, and Westport, Co. Mayo. In 2014, Youghal received €40,000 in funding to complete the Historic Towns Initiative (HTI) pilot programme. This funding follows an initial allocation of €120,000 to Youghal from the programme in 2013. This initiative has seen the re-launch of the heritage painting scheme, the marketing and branding of the 'Raleigh Quarter', and the refurbishment of the Nealons Quay and Market Square area of the town:

> I am . . . very pleased to be able to offer funding to all three towns again in 2014. The enhancement of the heritage of our historic towns can make places better to live in and . . . increase economic activity, (Dennihan, 2014).

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[3] An act of the Orieachtas (the legislature of Ireland) providing for a major restructuring of local government in the Republic of Ireland with effect from the 2014 local elections. It merged some first-tier county & city councils, abolished all second-tier town & borough councils, & created a new second tier of municipal districts covering rural as well as urban areas.

[4] The Historic Towns Initiative (HTI) is a heritage-led regeneration programme undertaken jointly by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the Heritage Council and Fáilte Ireland. To date the initiative has resulted in a series of innovative programmes of works that have enhanced the heritage character of each town, aiming to create a desirable place in which to live, do business and to visit.

LITERATURE

Since the 1970s, cultural tourism has begun to be recognized as a tourism product category rather than a niche and specialized activity and is considered the "oldest of the 'new' tourism phenomena" (Haydn, 2003). McKercher and du Cros (2002) suggest that cultural tourism represents tourism which is derived from special interests, and involving participation in visiting cultural destinations. Between 35 and 70 per cent of international travellers are now considered cultural tourists. Cultural destinations can be very diverse, including historical, artistic, scientific, lifestyle, heritage and social offerings. Such tourism destinations have become fashionable as disposable income grows and information is made available (Hadyn, 2003).

Distinction can be made between tangible and intangible heritage. The tangible kind includes physical assets such as historic towns, buildings, archaeological sites and cultural landscapes. Intangible heritage is represented by "softer" aspects of culture, people and traditions, (Hadyn, 2003). Chaplin (2003) outlines that a failure to appreciate the nexus between tourism and cultural heritage management results in the suboptimal delivery of cultural tourism. The management of the combined cultural heritage segment tends to work in isolation, leading to many lost opportunities for providing quality experiences. Based on their combined experience, McKercher and du Cros (2002) reveal the close relationship between the subjects and the imperative for professionals to engage in a dialogue (Chaplin, 2003). Tourists visiting historic locations for different reasons should have implications on the marketing of heritage attractions. Psychographic segmentation according to perception of the site should be examined for such tourists. Managers of historic destinations are advised to identify tourists based on their perceptions and provide them with different angles of interpretation (Poria *et al*., 2006).

Whether local, national or international, governments share the responsibility for the protection of cultural and heritage sites for present and future generations, (Pereira Roders, van Oers, 2011). In former times, attention was centered on the conservation of these facilities, primarily as individual buildings or structures; nowadays it entails complex processes of management to deal with change of uses, changes in the surroundings, a widening circle of stakeholders and competing demands regarding environmental, economic, social and cultural requirements. As such, management practices have been progressing towards a more holistic approach, where the cultural significance (i.e., range of values attributed to these facilities, from existence to use values and from socio-economic to environmental and cultural values) is taken into account, whenever changes need to be applied to these or other surrounding facilities (Pereira Roders, van Oers, 2011).

As a key resource, cultural heritage has become a driver for development, which, when properly managed, can enhance the liveability of surrounding areas and sustain productivity in a changing global environment. Governments, however, need to have clear strategies and effective methods for planning, designing, executing and managing these facilities in order to optimize their production and consumption potential, while preserving and, where possible, enhancing their cultural significance, (Pereira Roders, van Oers, 2011).

The subject of partnership (or its lack) between managers of cultural heritage assets and cultural tourism, is a neglected area of research (Chaplin, 2003).

METHODOLOGY

Initially, extensive secondary desk research was undertaken to investigate in detail the current tourist offering in the town of Youghal. This was followed by face to face meetings with relevant protagonists who were previously, and are currently, responsible for the Town's tourist offering. In parallel, four visitor journeys were undertaken over a seven-month period during summer peak times, and winter off-peak times to gain a further understanding of what the town had to offer during both periods of the year. From this, and for the empirical contribution, a qualitative approach was deemed the best approach to gather the new data in this study. First, projective techniques were executed with 71 people with no connection with Youghal who were asked to offer the first word that came to mind when presented with the word 'Youghal'. The aim here was to see how non-related individuals to Youghal perceived the Town. Projective techniques are based on psychology and are mainly used to get inside the participant's mind – to seek inner thoughts and feelings, to gain an insight - to get to the subconscious. Projective techniques identify a respondent's 'first thought' when a certain brand is mentioned.

For the face to face interviews, 22 in-depth interviews were carried out with participants who were drawn purposely from the local community and who had a direct involvement with the commerce of the town, for example; local business owners, tourism service providers, owners of historical buildings, local politicians, historians, event organisers, archaeologists, and contributors from YSEDG & Fáilte Ireland.

YOUGHAL'S BUILT HERITAGE

Youghal is unique in that the town possesses a distinctive internationally recognised 'built heritage', with twelve archaeological sites and monuments in state or local authority ownership, and fifty recorded monuments in the town development plan area (Noonan, 2013). Youghal is one of a national network of Walled Towns of Ireland. The built heritage which attracts culturally curious tourists every year is recognised in many reports as a significant asset. Youghal is designated as a heritage town by Fáilte Ireland, (Rapid Area Report, 2010). Twelve sites of specific interest are as follows: Green's Dock [OUTDOOR], Benedictine Priory of St. Johns [NO PUBLIC ACCESS], The Magazine [NO PUBLIC ACCESS], Market Place [OUTDOOR], Red House [NO PUBLIC ACCESS], Tynte's Castle [LIMITED PUBLIC ACCESS], Boyles Almshouses [LIMITED PUBLIC ACCESS], St. Marys Collegiate Church [PUBLIC ACCESS],Town Walls [OUTDOOR], The College [LIMITED PUBLIC ACCESS], Myrtle Grove [NO ACCESS], Clockgate [NO ACCESS], The Watergate [OUTDOOR].

CONSERVATION: Built & Natural Environments: HISTORIC TOWNS

In 2012, Youghal was chosen to take part in a pilot scheme involving three historic towns, including Westport, Co. Mayo and Listowel, Co. Kerry. The pilot was led by The Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and The Heritage Council of Ireland. The scheme sought to combine the conservation and protection of the built and natural heritage of the participating historic towns through effective urban renewal while maximizing the economic value of tourism in the towns. For Youghal, areas that benefited from the funding included Nealon's Quay & Barry's Lane. Another key initiative arising from this scheme was the branding of 'The Raleigh Quarter'. In recent years, Youghal Town Council invested in the 'Historic Quarter', which lies in close proximity to Youghal's Medieval Town Walls and Gardens. St. Mary's Collegiate Church, a National Monument of significance in also in this vicinity. It is also the area where Sir Walter Raleigh's former home sits; Myrtle Grove (currently in private ownership).

Ongoing Conservation & Developments

Clock Tower

> *The story of the Clock Gate Tower is the story of Youghal (Scroope, 2013).*

Youghal's iconic Clock Tower, a listed building benefited from essential conservation and restoration works being undertaken in 2013, financed by SECAD and match funded by Youghal Town Council to the value of €243,000. The story of the Clockgate, spanning 600 years, is unique on a national and international level. Its story as a gaol precedes that of Cork CIty Gaol, Kilmainham Gaol, Dublin, and Wexford Gaol heritage sites. It represents a unique opportunity to provide an inspiring and interesting experience to the 'high-value' cultural visitors to the town and region and a major boost to the local economy. The future of the Clock Town is now dependent on how it will be received by the public. The final funding was awarded by Fáilte Ireland in November, 2015, and it opened to the public in November 2016. It is estimated that it will contribute €400,000 to the local economy. The importance of the Clock Tower will "revolve around the story it will tell and how this is interpreted". Accesses to this important building will now "fill a gap in the product offering for the Town", [Deirdre Cole, Project Officer, Fáilte Ireland].

St. Mary's Collegiate Church

St. Mary's Collegiate Church is one of the best preserved medieval church sites in Ireland. The built and archaeological fabric of the site is of unique cultural national and international significance, with a nationally significant collection of tomb sculptures containing examples from the 13th-7th centuries. Radio-carbon dating places the roof in the middle of the 13th Century (AD1223-AD1281). The church has seen expansion, destruction and repairs from the 13th Century to the present day [youghalonline.com]. The Church is currently in receipt of funding from The Department of Heritage Arts & the Gaeltacht for repair to the Church Floor [€18,000]. This is additional funding from the original grant of €60,000 made under the 'Buildings in State Care 2014' fund, [June 2014], and [€20,000 September 2013], for essential conservation

works. During the repair, in October, 2014, previously unknown important burial sites were discovered, — the tomb of John Fitzgerald, Earl of Desmond who died in 1662, & three other tombs, together with a 200 year old central heating system and a vaulted chamber.

MAIN EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Projective Techniques

Interestingly, but not surprising due to the sea aspect of the Town, the results of the projective techniques found that from the 71 respondents, 'sea (12) & beach (10)' came to the fore as the 'top of mind' associations with Youghal in this test. These results were used to feed into the qualitative in-depth interviews.

Table 1: Projective Techniques-Results on Youghal – 71 Responses
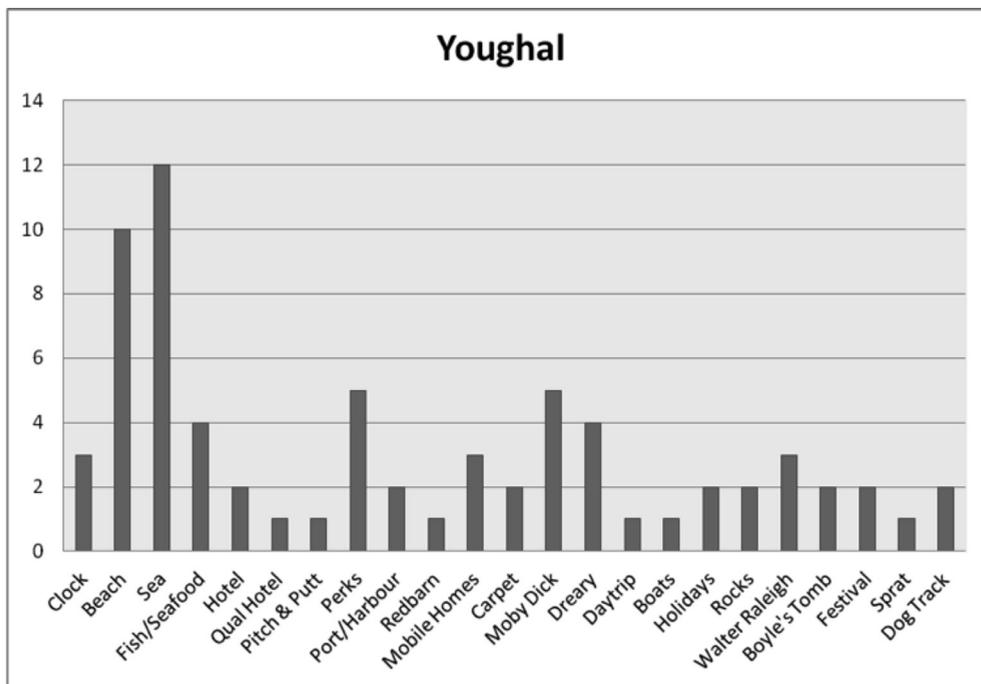
The findings from the in-depth interviews were interesting and one interviewee put it in context. *Youghal has it all! . . . but, who knows about it? Marketing the town is a bigger challenge than anything else facing it . . . !*

The findings from the in-depth interviews however reveal gaps in the tourist product offering in Youghal such as: the bad quality of the sea water, the urgent need to regain the 'blue flag' beach

status, limited toilet facilities & changing facilities, no boating facilities or angling stands, the need to update immediately the Town & Beach area, the need for more bed nights during peaks seasons, better signage, better infrastructures, more and improved walkways, more ancestral and historical connections highlighted, promote more culture, more marketing and PR, the urgent need to develop set-down water facilities, the lack of visitor moorings and the need for a floating breakwater that would work as a floating pontoon and could take 20 berths. Most especially, there is an urgent need to examine the possible development of a Marina for Youghal. A study of the Marine Leisure Industry estimated that almost 1.5 million adults in Ireland partake in some form of water based activity, contributing approximately €434m to the (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2011).

DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

A Marina

A need for a marina has been identified for Youghal and is documented in the southern marine strategy. Marine tourism is growing with visitor nights increasing. "For a seaside town, it is shocking that we do not have a marina for visiting boats". The Irish Government outlines that the Irish coastline offers spectacular tourism and leisure opportunities and a rich maritime culture and heritage (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2011). In February 2012, a consultation document entitled *Our Ocean Wealth: Seeking Your Views: New Ways; New Approaches; New Thinking* was launched by Minister Simon Coveney T.D.

The economic importance of the sea is a key feature of Government and on June 18, 2014, the first conference on Ocean Wealth was held in Dublin Castle (ouroceanwealth.ie). Ireland has over 9,000 kilometres of coastline and there has been some expansion in marina development in the past few years, with numbers growing from less than 10 in 1996 to over 22 in 2006. Marina development in Ireland needs to expand by at least 50% in the near future to facilitate forecast demand. In relation to Tourism & Leisure, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, (2011), outlines that the Irish marine tourism and leisure sector is significantly under-utilised. Marine tourism and leisure is estimated to represent 7% of our overall tourism and leisure sector and contributed €453 million to the Irish economy in 2007. Marine events such as the *Volvo Ocean Race* (2009 & 2012) alone can generate in excess of €50 million in revenue for the economy. Marine leisure is a lifestyle pursuit of increasing importance contributing to the local economy and to our human and physical health.

Dedicated angling tourism accounted for 173,000 visitors in 2010, and a spending of €58 million. Ireland has become one of Europe's top destinations for whale watching, bird watching and outdoor activity enthusiasts (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2011). Ireland has a growing reputation as one of the world's best cold water surfing locations. Cruise ship tourism continued to grow with a 12% increase in 2010; with over 200 cruise liners carrying over 305,000 passengers (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2011). The benefits of a Marina to a local economy are substantial. It is estimated, for example, that a 250

berth marina in Skerries would potentially benefit the local economy by between €850,000 and €1.2m per annum (skerriessailingclub.com). Youghal needs a marina, and similar projects have been undertaken successfully in the past, for example, the Carrickfergus Marina, which was completed in 1998 and now has a 350 berth multi-award winning marina development. Spending by the local Authority of £4m attracted an investment of £25m by private developers and the creation of over 300 jobs in the area. This has become an international case-study in how local government & private partnership can work for the benefit of the entire community (skerriessailingclub.com).

ACCOMMODATION

More bed nights are needed in Youghal, ideally another hotel of at least 4 or 5-star rating. Successful weekends such as that of the *Queen of the Sea* have resulted in a dearth of accommodation for visitors with the surplus travelling to Co. Waterford for accommodation. Many of the Section 23 properties that were originally developed and operated as self-catering accommodation have been sold and are now privately owned and not available for the tourist market. One participant stated that "we need more upmarket accommodation and a conference centre. "Despite the Walter Raleigh being an excellent hotel, more facilities are needed in the town. If people visit, they need places to stay". There is also a current need to update the caravan & camping facilities as there is not enough capacity at present.

WATER TOURISM

A key strength for Youghal is its sea frontage. 'Sea and beach' were the most cited results from the projective techniques in this research. There is however, a serious lack of water related activities. One contributor outlined that "more water activities are needed such as adventure kayaking, canoeing surfing etc., Whale & Dolphin watching & more river trips at two hourly intervals". This research finds that water tourism activities must be supported & developed. Issues of space allocation, huts for rental of boats, kayaks, canoes etc., & changing facilities must be addressed immediately. Insurance issues were also mentioned by previous boating providers as a major barrier to the continuation of their business.

WATER QUALITY

While acknowledging that the water quality in the sea at Youghal is currently substandard, the Youghal Main Drainage Scheme sought to address this issue in 2014(this project, however, has now been further delayed). Youghal lacked a proper wastewater treatment, and this has seriously impacted on the town, especially the quality of the bathing water. This has been a major setback for the Town for the past summer season of 2015. Concern was expressed as follows: "the Front Strand has lost its bathing status this summer as a result of consistent 'poor' water quality ratings by the EPA – something must be done". While the new Water Treatment Plant will eventually be in situ, however, to compete effectively, and enhance the product offering, Youghal will need a carefully drafted plan and strategy to regain the 'Blue Flag' status for its 4 beaches in the future.

ANGLING

It is a significant loss that the angling club in Youghal no longer exists. Angling is a major tourist activity for Ireland. Angling tourism in Ireland is worth €0.75 billion to the Irish Economy and supports 10,000 jobs in rural Ireland (Inland Fisheries Ireland, 2013). "Angling stands would be great on the Quayside, also an upgrading of the Jetty". The lack of angling facilities is a tourist void that needs attention. The potential for angling should be addressed as there is an opportunity to attract anglers into the region, given the substantial resources available, thereby boosting the local economy.

WALKWAYS

Walkways from the town need to be extended so there are "connections with the town to the Quality Hotel & Red Barn strand". The consensus of this research is that there is a wonderful opportunity to develop the Marsh Land walks—"a wonderful wildlife amenity" and to "create a number of walk and cycle tracks". This research recommends the development of the old railway line and station and to examine the possibility of developing a 'Greenways Projects'. Westport in Co. Mayo in the West of Ireland has developed 42KM and a similar opportunity exists for Youghal. The old train station is apt for development and a plan should be established for same with the inclusion of tea rooms and a museum.

HERITAGE

More investment is needed in the built environment. A heritage building development plan should be developed to identify funding opportunities. The continuation of the development of the historical structures in the town is vital as this historical aspect is a main differentiator (Chaplin 2003; Hadyn, 2003). Build upon the development of the Raleigh quarter around St. Mary's Church as well as the town walls. "Heritage is our differentiating factor", our town walls are a 'stand-out' feature". The clock tower needs to be available to the public with immediate effect. The re-opening of the Clock Tower will appeal to the 'culturally curious' visitor market, providing a first class interpretive and animated heritage site in the heart of Youghal. All contributors are in support of the Clock Gate refurbishment. "We capitalise on the strengths and gems that we have in the town". A major void in the offering is the absence of a dedicated museum space as Youghal has a wealth of history that can rival any other medieval town. Historical spaces like Tynte's Castle could be used. "It is potentially a smaller Bunratty Castle, Co Clare. Some of the people and events in the life of the castle could easily be exhibited. For example, William Penn had a Castle in Shanagarry, nearby. In his diary, he mentions visiting Lady Tynte in Youghal.

MARKETING

The findings reveal that "Youghal has significantly improved the marketing of the historical and heritage offering", but more support structures are needed. Additional resources need to be directed towards a new official website for Youghal: www.youghal.ie. This upgraded and updated site would be 'mobile enabled' and engage in all associated online social media forms. More marketing of the larger festivals is needed and Youghal must appeal to the 'culturally curious' and 'heritage tourist' and not just be associated with 'sea and beach'. This association was very much to the fore in the results of the projective techniques. Youghal can easily appeal to a wider heritage tourist, and also, to an older demographic—the 'grey market'. The historical aspect of the town is under promoted and there is limited visibility and knowledge when one travels away from the Youghal area. Also, many of the main sites have no public access which must be addressed for future competitiveness.

THE HERITAGE OF MYRTLE GROVE

In relation to Myrtle Grove, the historical home of Sir Walter Raleigh, much debate ensued in this study as there is no public access to this important historic house. Participants outline that "if we had access to develop Sir Walter Raleigh's villa, then we might develop a world class facility around it (think of Ann Hathaway's cottage, or, Shakespeare's house – England). Owners and family members living at Myrtle Grove outline however that "people must remember that Myrtle Grove is somebody's home and is in private ownership and not something that can be taken for granted by the town of Youghal". Constructive goodwill does exist from family members regarding the future of this iconic building, its gardens, and stables. Sensitivity in any discussion or negotiation concerning its potential development as a pivotal tourist attraction for Youghal will be needed and is recommended.

CONCLUSION

This research has found that Youghal has a unique tourist product offering. The appeal to its target market through cleverly targeted marketing messages should, therefore, counteract the negative effects experienced during the recession. Combining heritage and culture, history, and nature in one accessible setting should now be the key message. In possession of a wealth of vital ingredients, it can be a major and distinctive visitor attraction and tourist 'must see' destination, on a par with any of Ireland's current leading tourism centres. Cork County Council is currently in the process of preparing a new Heritage Regeneration Strategy for Youghal, and, as outlined, (Hadyn, 2003; Chaplin, 2003; Poria *et al.*, 2006) heritage and culture are important tourism drivers. The Plan is a strategic approach to the social, economic and heritage development of Youghal up to 2020. In terms of 'must have' developments, the development of a Marina is paramount. A steering group should be appointed to lobby Government. There may be an opportunity for a public/private partnership or a private investor to develop the Marina in the

future, thereby facility access for visiting yachts and boats to the region. Given the correct impetus and determination, Youghal is set to become a commercially successful thriving economic tourist hub, providing a superior quality of life for resident and visitor alike. If evolutionary planning, relevant expertise, common purpose, goodwill and hard work are correctly and urgently synchronised and aligned, then all investment, whether public, private, or philanthropic, will deliver rich returns.

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"Dark Tourism" - web content evaluation of visitor experience at selected European torture museums

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ABSTRACT

Dark Tourism is an attention-grabbing headline for any news story, article or even television program. Often regarded as a cultural tourism niche, this complex phenomenon has turned into a sometimes popular, occasional polemical and often sensitive subject for a large variety of authors. Scholars have come up with different names, labels and definitions for dark tourism to avoid the negative connotations. Academics have labeled it as thanatourism, fright tourism and black spot tourism amongst others. Recent research focused on visitors' motivations and used a categorisation that divided the sites into shades of dark and light. However, the question remains how tourists experience dark tourism and what perceptions they have towards it. By using content analysis and netnography, this research takes a look at the visitor' experience while visiting dark sites and offers a framework of the terminology used to describe dark tourism. Keeping in mind the often controversial face of dark tourism and the visitors' possible biased reaction, this article, by studying the online reactions and reviews of visitors, offers insights into visitors' experiences and reactions towards the commercialisation and commodification of sites associated with death, tragedy and suffering.

Keywords: Dark Tourism, European Torture Museums, Netnography, Web Content Analysis, Dark Tourism Spectrum, Visitor Experience.

INTRODUCTION

Initially known as 'black spots' (after Rojek, 1993) tourist attractions that are related to death and dying have attracted the attention of the academic world and since the introduction of the concept of dark tourism by Lennon and Foley (1996) many articles and books on this subject have been published. Although some prefer the concept of thanatourism as introduced by Seaton (1996), this research, focusing on communication between suppliers and consumers, opted for the definition of Lennon and Foley (1996) and the categories suggested by Stone (2006). The locations chosen for the case studies were four torture museums in Western Europe that could be classified as belonging to the second and/or third category as suggested by Stone (2006), e.g. dark exhibitions with educational elements and/or dark dungeons. In two cases the exhibitions were offered in original dungeons therefore both categories seem applicable. The four case

study locations were: 1) the Prison Gate museum ("Gevangenpoort") in The Hague, Netherlands, 2) Castle of the Counts ("Gravensteen") in Ghent, Belgium, 3) The Medieval Crime Museum ("Kriminalmuseum") in Rothenburg ob der Tauber , Germany, and 4) The Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments in Prague, Czech Republic. These museums were chosen because of their location and the fact that visitors left reviews on TripAdvisor.

It seems, however, there are still more questions than answers. For this paper, the definition offered by Stone (2010) will be used:

> *"The phenomenon by which people visit, purposefully or as part of a broader recreational itinerary, the diverse range of sites, attractions and exhibitions that offer a (re) presentation of death and human suffering has been labelled as dark tourism" (Stone, 2010, p. 38).*

It is not in the academic world, but in the general media that the combination of the words 'dark' and 'tourism' undoubtedly provide an attention-grabbing headline (iDTR, nd). There has been a growth of consumer generated content/review sites, which are considered an important information source (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2006). TripAdvisor is the world's largest travel site, hence the use of online reviews for this platform. The relation between dark tourism and the media is interconnected: communication technologies can be essential to the events associated with death as well as are present in the representation of these events for the audience (Yuill, 2003).

OBJECTIVE & RESEARCH METHODS

The objective of this research is to determine what terminology was used in online reviews (on TripAdvisor) of the selected museums, in order to understand how dark tourism attractions are perceived and evaluated by their visitors and to recommend to dark tourism sites how to effectively communicate with the visitors. To achieve this aim, this research used a mixed approach combining desk and field research techniques such as content analysis, netnography, and semi structured interviews (see Image 1). The first two methods took the shape of code books where the personal and physical contexts of the visitors were analyzed according to the interactive experience model by Falk and Dierking (1992) and the last one looked at the identity of the resource as perceived by its management.

Image 1. Outline of the Methodology (Duia, 2015)
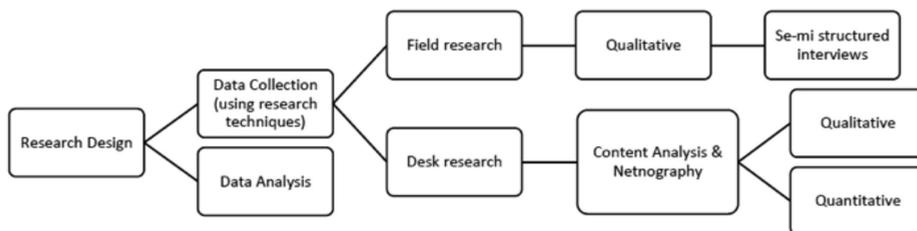
Once the framework was designed, the data were collected and analysed using a Coding System, which is a comprehensive written Code Book, where the reviews were analysed by looking at the text, frequency of words and meanings. The Code Book was designed partly prior to the field research (using terms from the Dark tourism literature) and during the data collection phrase. During coding, issues and messages were identified by either, or a combination of word matching (i.e. an exact match), word frequencies and presence of similar phrases. The Code Book consists of all the reviews per museum, which were edited and labelled accordingly. The categories for the Code Book were 1) Personal Context: motivations, expectations, interests, knowledge, and 2) Dark terminology: terms used by scholars and by visitors (which was added to the personal context results).

The reviews were analysed qualitatively with visitors' quotes and quantitatively with frequency tables. The Code books were firstly analysed manually, and later the Concordance program was used, which is a software used for text analysis. Together with this program, an online tool (Text Analyzer) was used to find the most frequent phrases and frequencies of words and count them. Furthermore, the terms were analysed qualitatively looking for meanings of the positive and negative experience terms (phrases, catch words) stated by visitors. The quantitative content analysis looked into frequency and online media reach of terms, phrases and catch words related to personal contexts and dark tourism. Word frequencies were supported by quotes and explanations of the visitors. The terminology related to dark tourism was divided into two sections: terms used by scholars and by visitors respectively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

DARK TOURISM
What is so 'dark' about dark tourism? There is no universal typology of dark tourism, or even a generally accepted definition. Lennon and Foley (2000) offer no explanation for their choice of terms and state that they 'do not wish to enter into any philosophical debates' over its use (Lennon and Foley, as cited in Bowman and Pezzullo, 2010, p. 188). However, the negative presence of the term is distinctive in western cultures: 'dark' is understood as a place without light (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010).

Due to its controversial aspect, dark tourism has received many alternative terminologies. Seaton (1996) refers to death-related tourism as thanatourism, while other labels include morbid tourism (Bloom, 2000), black spot tourism (Rojek, 1993), milking the macabre (Dann, 1998) and fright tourism (Bristow and Newman, 2004).

At the same time, MacCannell (1989) pointed out that naming and framing sites matters. By labelling certain tourists or tourist sites 'dark', an implicit claim is made that there is something disturbing, troubling, suspicious, weird, morbid, or perverse about them, but what exactly that may be remains elusive and ill-defined because no one has assumed the burden of proving it (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010). Furthermore, as dark tourism products are complex in design and

purpose, and diverse in nature, it is perhaps clear that the universal term 'dark' as applied to tourism is too broad and does not readily expose the multilayers of dark tourism supply. Miles (2002) argues there is a distinction between 'dark' and 'darker' tourism, that is, a greater notion of the macabre and the morose can exist between sites.

On the basis of the dark tourism paradigm of Miles (2002), Stone (2006) proposed a spectrum of dark tourism supply which classifies sites according to their perceived features, and from these, the degree or shade of darkness (darkest to lightest) with which they can be characterised. This spectrum has seven types of dark tourism suppliers, ranging from Dark Fun Factories as the lightest, to Dark Camps of Genocide as the darkest. A specific example of the lightest suppliers would be dungeon attractions, such as the Black Death or Jack the Ripper establishments in the United Kingdom, or planned ventures such as Dracula Park in Romania. In contrast, examples of the darkest sites include genocide sites in Rwanda, Cambodia, or Kosovo, as well as holocaust sites such as Auschwitz Birkenau.

THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The interactive experience model by Falk and Dierking (1992) seeks to understand museum experience from a visitor's perspective. Also, the subjects that are underlined are: reason why people visit a museum, what they do there and what they will remember and evaluate post visit. All museums involve three contexts, which are seen as windows through which the visitor's perspective can be viewed (Falk & Dierking, 1992): personal, physical and social. For this paper, the focus is on the personal context. This context includes motivations, expectations, interests, beliefs, knowledge of the content and design and experiences. Such characteristics help to mold what a visitor enjoys and appreciates, how he/she wishes to spend his/her time and what experiences he/she seeks for fulfillment. The personal context has the greatest influence on the visitor's museum experience and it is important for the museum managers to understand the significance of this context in order to communicate effectively with their audience and be aware of their visitor's evaluation and perceptions. The Code books reflect the personal context of each museum and the specific terminology used in describing the visitors' experiences.

IDENTITY AND IMAGE

The Mind-the-Gap model by van der Grinten (2010) makes it possible for organisations to make an analysis between their desired identity, actual identity, physical identity and image. First, the desired identity refers to the intended image: the associations, messages that the management wants their audiences to have about their organisation. Second, the actual identity represents the associations that organisational members (employees) hold about the organisation. And thirdly, the physical identity is concerned with all the elements of an organisation with which stakeholders get in touch, such as websites or social network sites where the audience sees all kinds of visual and textual content (Van der Grinten as cited in Bruggen, 2014, p. 9).

The framework by Van der Grinten (2010) was adapted to match the objective of this research. The model is used in an adapted version as it only serves to help find discrepancy between terminologies used by the museums in their communication. With the gap analysis proposed by

Van der Grinten, the possible gaps between two main aspects are determined: desired identity (museum organisation) and online identity (official websites). Equally important to the visitor experience is the identity of the organisation. For the organisation to communicate their message effectively, a gap analysis is used to see if there are any gaps between what message the museum organisation desires to transmit to their audience and what their actual online identity is.

CONTENT ANALYSIS AND NETNOGRAPHY
Content analysis was used to describe how a controversial issue is depicted, how something is covered by, portrayed in, or represented in the media (Krippendorf, 2003). Although this research method has many advantages such as being unobtrusive, data is easily accessible and can produce highly reliable quantitative results. However, this method has its limitations due to its descriptive aspect and data possible being lost in translation. The second research approach, netnography was first proposed by Robert Kozinets (2002) within the framework of consumer research. As a marketing research technique, "netnography", or ethnography on the Internet, uses the information publicly available in online forums to identify and understand the needs and decision influences of relevant online consumer groups (Kozinets, 2002). Netnography provides researchers with access to groups of people who may otherwise be difficult to reach. Furthermore, in online interactions participants, in the absence of an inquisitive researcher might open up more, and on their own terms. However, the authenticity of participants cannot be verified and there is no access to non-verbal communications.

These research methods were used not only to evaluate the visitors' experience in the museums and identify the specific terminology related to dark tourism, but also to discover gaps with respect to the image and identity of the torture museums.

RESULTS

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS, THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE
The following visitor's quotes from Trip Advisor give insight into the personal context of the visitor experience, namely motivations, expectations, interests, knowledge, feelings and reactions, all in regards to the museum. In terms of terminology, the results were collected between January 1st and April 12th 2015 and showed that visitors perceived their experience at the museums as being very interesting, arousing their interest and curiosity.

➢ Prison Gate Museum, The Hague
   "You also hear some interesting stories about famous Dutch historical figures who were prisoner in there." (Respondent 1, The Hague); "You get to read a bit about the history of the Prison and its inhabitants." (Respondent 2, Chilliwack, Canada); "Definitely worth a visit if you're into culture like me!" (Respondent 3); "amazing, an excellent place to visit. It was incredible to learn about prison 600- 700 years ago" (Respondent 4, Melbourne, Australia).

➢ Castle of the Counts, Ghent
"The room with the torture instruments made quite an impression on me." (Respondent 5);
"The torture relics were a highlight." (Respondent 6, Arizona); "the museum offers some-
thing for everyone, from cultural visitors to history geeks, castle fans, medieval enthusiasts,
S&M devotees" (Respondent 7, Melbourne, Australia) and "architecture or history lover
visiting" (Respondent 8, Washington DC, District of Columbia).

➢ The Medieval Crime Museum, Rothenburg
"Educational and disturbing at the same time." (Respondent 9, Germany); "Be prepared to
emotionally be challenged here." (Respondent 10, London, United Kingdom).

➢ The Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments, Prague
"Very interesting. Lots of different exhibitions inside showing you what happened in history
to do with torture." (Respondent 11, Blackpool, United Kingdom).

Also, they evaluated their visit as an educational experience, where they learned about the dark
history of crime, punishment, torture and the dark side of humanity.

➢ Prison Gate Museum, The Hague
"A visit here helps you to picture life in Den Haag hundreds of years ago" (Respondent 12,
Leiden); "Torture stuff is awesome" (Respondent 13, Seattle). "Being locked up in a dark
cold cell for a couple of minutes is enough for anyone." (Respondent 14, The Hague).
➢ The Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments, Prague
"A testament to the dark side of the human psyche" (Respondent 15); "the darker side of
man during medieval times" (Respondent 16, Tel Aviv, Israel); "dark ages" (Respondent
17, Zurich, Switzerland); "dark pages of mankind" (Respondent 18, C Budapest, Hungary).

In terms of dark tourism terminology there was no direct reference made to dark tourism, but
many visitors described their experience as being scary and frightening.
➢ Castle of the Counts, Ghent
"Frightening examples of the human imagination" (Respondent 19, Ireland); "The relics
of prison/ torture were very scary but fascinating" (Respondent 20, The Woodlands, Texas);
"Charming and Scary. It is an imposing edifice. The torture exhibit gave me the creeps."
(Respondent 21, Oregon).

➢ The Medieval Crime Museum, Rothenburg
"Actually quite frightening with its tools of torture displayed but for the adult - it's a maca-
bre place of interest to be sure." (Respondent 22, Nova Scotia);

➢ The Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments, Prague
"Scary...as scary as humanity is." (Respondent 23, Finland)

Other labels which were recognized in the visitors' reviews were: macabre, morbid tourism, negative sightseeing, gruesome, graphic, unusual and different.

➢ Prison Gate Museum, The Hague
   "Gruesome Medieval Justice" (Respondent 24, The Hague) and a reminder of the "cruel history" (Respondent 25);

➢ Castle of the Counts, Ghent
   "Which is a dark subject, but it was very fascinating." (Respondent 25); "gruesomely fascinating" (Respondent 26, United Kingdom); "a really scary collection of torture equipment."(Respondent 27, London); "it is cold, dark and imposing just as a medieval castle should look on the outside." (Respondent 28, Bangalore, India); "morbid but fantastic, if the Inquisition tickles your morbid interest" (Respondent 29 Sydney, Australia).

➢ The Medieval Crime Museum, Rothenburg
   "If you like macabre history, this is your place. "(Respondent 30, Germany). "I have visited a number of museums in Germany, but none as bizarre as Kriminalmuseum" (Respondent 31, Malaysia); "fascinating and gruesome at the same time" (Respondent 32, California); "criminally delightful" (Respondent 33, New York).

➢ The Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments, Prague
   "Displays were really informative and gruesome" (Respondent 34).

In general the visits were described as an interesting and educational experience that provided insight into such subjects as the Middle Ages, crime and punishment and the location itself. According to most reviews the authenticity of the buildings in The Hague and Ghent as former prisons definitely contributed to the experience.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS, THE VISITORS
The most frequently and commonly used terms, words and phrases of each museum were collected and analysed accordingly. Even though there were many references made to the dark history rather than directly to dark tourism, it is known that dark tourism was a label given to visitation to sites which are historically associated with death, disaster, tragedy or the seemingly macabre (Stone, 2008). History and dark tourism are interdependent, as the majority if not all dark tourism sites are related to history. Moreover, some of the terminology and definition given by the scholars was used also by the visitors (Table 1) such as:

➢ Dark Tourism by Foley and Lennon (1996): dark history, dark times, dark side, dark subject, dark stories, dark ages, dark pages of history.
➢ Negative Sightseeing by MacCannell (1989): dark and negative.
➢ Morbid Tourism by Bloom (2000): morbid interest, morbid experience, morbid antiques.
➢ Death Tourism by Seaton (1996): death on the enemies.
➢ Fright Tourism by Bristow (2004): frightening examples of human imagination, frightening experience.
➢ Macabre (used in Stone's definition): macabre place, macabre history.

Table 1. Dark Tourism Terminology (Museums)

Museum/Terms	Dark	Morbid	Death	Fright	Negative	Macabre	Torture
The Hague Museum	2	0	0	0	0	0	**10**
Ghent Museum	6	2	2	1	2	0	**106**
Rotheburg Museum	2	0	0	3	0	2	**56**
Prague Museum	6	1	0	0	0	0	**24**
Total frequencies	**16**	**3**	**2**	**4**	**2**	**2**	**196**

Regarding their museum experience, results have shown that the majority of visitors rated their visit as being 'interesting', this word being mentioned with a percentage of 76% (N=21, Prison Gate Museum, The Hague), 29% (N=212, Castle of the Counts, Ghent), 76% (N=104, The Medieval Crime Museum, Rothenburg) and 75% (N=35, The Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments, Prague).

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS, THE MANAGEMENT

The interviews with the management gathered substantial data on their desired identity which was compared with the online identity (official website) according to the Mind the Gap model by Van der Grinten (2010). In general the management wanted visitors to see their identity as being serious and historical museums which are there to educate the visitors about the dark medieval history of torture.

> "[Prison Gate Museum] tells the story of crime and punishment across the centuries linked to national history as well and we use the building and the objects we have to bring the story to the public. I want (visitors) to have learned something, about some historical stories, and a bit about crime and punishment in history, and of course we want them to have… maybe not inspired but you know, get them excited about the history, the museum and maybe about the Hague. " (Mesker, 2015).

> "[The Medieval Crime Museum] We want to give the visitors an insight into the legal relationships of our ancestors, but not an emotional one which you can see in London Dungeon, which places emotions with shocking effects" (Hirte, 2015). "The best for me, as a director, is if the guest leaves, and thinks that 'well it was a strange time and I am glad I am living now here and not to judge the other of being stupid or brutal or cruel because I know why they used the torture." (Hirte, 2015).

> "[The Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments] The mission of this exhibition is to introduce historically a dark period of the culture of the Middle Ages" (Leonardi, 2015).

A connection with the concept of dark tourism was not spontaneously made by the management and in fact some considered it a negative connotation.

> *"[Prison Gate Museum] I heard of it, also from you, but it rings a bell (dark tourism) "the most important thing is to historically correct, not that we don't want to be associated with it, it's just another cultural aspect. So we don't really talk or think about it. It's almost as separated with us as a movie theatre is. So we are neutral to dark tourism." (Mesker, 2015).*

> *"[Castle of the Counts] I never heard of it (dark tourism). I never thought of it. I think we should first be more common with this, dark tourism, and think of it. " (Eeckhout, 2015).*

> *"[The Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments] I think the dark tourism is fine, but should not be the only time to visit cultural activities. We absolutely not! But I think the common feeling can be, unfortunately." (Leonardi, 2015)*

However, after further explanation they agreed that their attractions could be considered as elements in of the dark tourism spectrum, and some even requested more information about this subject.

> *"[Castle of the Counts] can be associated with dark tourism because it is about dark history, it a piece of dark history and this context I would use the word dark. It could be a part of it, a piece of the history it is a dark history." (Eeckhout, 2015).*

> *"[The Medieval Crime Museum] Yes, I am familiar with dark tourism and some years ago I was interested in this. We know that there is a market, and we try to go the middle way… We do not change our mission to get more of these guest. Do I want the museum to be associated with dark tourism? Yes and no. But yes, because of the topic we are taking with. It's definitely a part of our dark history, because killing a person as a murderer or an executioner, it's against the commandments. Generally speaking yes we are." (Hirte, 2015).*

> *"[Castle of the Counts] I would like to know more about dark tourism. For us it is new, but it is not something that we will say 'Oh no we don't want this' because the history is a part of it, so why not? It would be nice if you could introduce us to this topic." (Eeckhout, 2015).*

Although the museums had a substantial amount of reviews on the world's largest travel review site TripAdvisor (Prague: 35; Ghent: 212; The Hague: 21 and Rothenburg: 104) these were not (yet) considered as a possible relevant contribution to the museums identity by the management. Some of the museums do not have a very strong online presence but, according to the management depend upon the unique location, historical authenticity, and word of mouth recommendations

to attract visitors (The Hague): *"location and the fact that the building itself is very old, from 1280, so we are the oldest building still standing and we have a lot of objects that tell the story that we actually use for crime and punishment and torture. And also a lot of historical famous people were there: Cornelius de Witt"* (Mesker, 2015).

The museum in Ghent emphasizes the history and renovation of the castle on its website and the first mentioning of the torture museum can only be found after clicking the page that mentions the museum of judicial objects. According to the management the local history should be offered in an entertaining manner, due to the fact that many visitors are children: *"we want to make stories, better stories that not only attract entertainment, the good mixture of history and kind of entertainment. History for everyone, a tale base on real facts."* (Eeckhout, 2015).

In Rothenburg, the management seems more aware of reviews, since they feature the TripAdvisor logo on their landing page and encourage visitors to write or read reviews. Entertainment is not part of the mission and the focus is on education and even research: *"we are very serious, research museum so every fact that you read here is the total truth, not an invention; "the message we want to give to our visitors, it was strange, foreign, different, of course now are new procedures so there is no need for torture, this is our message to send across 'It is different!'."* (Hirte, 2015).

Surprisingly the museum in Prague does not have an official website, but can only be found amongst other through the Prague City Line website which gives an extensive overview of the city's sights and attractions. According to the management a website is not needed because the museum has "enough followers" all over the world. In contrast with the other locations there is more emphasis on morbidity and people with "a weak stomach" are recommended not to visit.

Dark tourism did not receive much interest from the museums. Only the respondents in Rothenburg and Prague have previously heard about it. When asked if the museum is considered part of the dark tourism industry, the respondent from The Hague claimed his opinion is neutral, the one from Rothenburg acknowledged his museum is a dark tourism attraction. While the respondent from The Hague would be willing to consider the opportunity of being labelled as a dark tourism attraction, the one in Prague would definitely refuse to be associated with it.

PERCEIVED IDENTITY VERSUS ONLINE IDENTITY
Regarding the possible gaps between desired and online identity it can be stated that there is no difference between these for The Hague where the website contains the mission as expressed by the management. The same can also be said for the museum in Rothenburg. In the case of Ghent there was a gap between the desired and the online identity, as the mission of the museum is not made clear and there seems to be no clear choice between history and entertainment, or stories and facts. The fact that the Prague museum did not have a website made it impossible to compare the desired identity to the online version. The main gap which was found in all four museums was exactly the terminology. Although they all exhibit torture instruments and objects, they prefer to not be named a torture museum, with the expectation of the one in Prague.

FROM LIGHT TO DARK, TORTURE MUSEUMS COMPARED TO STONE'S DARK TOUR-ISM SPECTRUM

A combination of desk research, non-structured interviews and in situ observations also allowed the researchers to define the position of the four sites within the dark tourism spectrum provided by Stone (2006). When comparing the museums within the dark tourism spectrum The Hague should be positioned as darker because of the fact that a well-known Dutch politician[1] was kept a prisoner and tortured there. The location ranks higher on a scale of political influence and ideology. The Prague museum ranks lowest since they only exhibit a range of torture instruments. Both The Hague and Rothenburg put more emphasis on education and therefore should be regarded as darker than the other two locations. And the same can be said when comparing the emphasis on conservation or commercialization.

When analyzing the authenticity, The Hague stands out as the darkest site. Although the Ghent castle did have political prisoners, the present exhibition is in one of the former courtrooms that has no direct connection with torture and therefore it is ranked as less authentic than the exhibition in The Hague. The Rothenburg collection used to be located in the original torture chamber but moved to another historical building because of the growth of the amount of artefacts. Regarding the supply as non-purposeful or purposeful The Hague and to a lesser extent Ghent could be considered as the former since these buildings were originally built to house (and torture) prisoners.

When looking at the tourism infrastructure again The Hague should be considered darker than the others, allowing only guided tours for small groups. The attention given to education and research in Rothenburg would position this museum as just one category lighter than the previous one, while Ghent and Prague should be considered as the lightest. Within Stone's categorisation of dark dungeons and exhibitions The Hague could be considered as having a darker shade, while Prague and to some extent Ghent should be considered as lighter versions.

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[1] Famous patriot Cornelis de Witt was incarcerated in the Prison Gate, who was held on the charge of plotting the murder of the stadtholder.

Table 2. Torture Museums compared to Stone's Dark Spectrum

Sights of death and suffering	Darkest	Darker	Dark	Light	Lighter	Lightest	Sites associated with death and suffering
Higher political influence and ideology		H	R	G		p	Lower political influence and ideology
Education orientation		HR		pG			Entertainment orientation
History Centric		H	R		G	p	Heritage Centric
Perceived authentic		HR			G	p	Perceived inauthentic
Location Authenticity		H		R		Gp	Location inauthenticity
Supply Non-purposefulness		H		G	Rp		Supply Purposefulness
Lower Tourism Infrastructure		H	R		Gp		Higher Tourism Infrastructure
		H	R	G		p	

(H) The Hague- Prison Gate Museum (R) Rothenburg- The Medieval Crime Museum (G) Ghent- Castle of the Counts (p) Prague- The Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments

CONCLUSION

Summarizing one could state that all these researched dark sites are providing their visitors with information about former, often medieval punishment. However some put more emphasis on education than others and this might influence the experience of the visitors and therefore their

reviews. Their desired identity was mostly in line with their online identity found on the website, but in the case of Prague no website was available for making this analysis. Furthermore this research revealed that the terminology used by visitors in relation to their experiences and the concept of dark tourism is not obvious. The content analysis results justify the conclusion that the dark tourism terminology used by the academia is not the same as the ones used in the visitor reviews, but that generic expressions confirm the fact that certain locations might well be classified as darker or lighter versions of dark tourism attractions and that within certain categories lighter and darker shades might be applied.

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Sustainable tourism and cultural landscape management: the case of Idanre Hill, Ondo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Idanre rural community has increasingly attracted both domestic and international tourists because of the natural and cultural landscape, and the historic heritage found in the area of Ondo state, Nigeria. This is in part due to the development projects in the form of building and maintaining tourists' facilities at Idanre Hill supported by the Ondo state government. Managing tourism development in a sustainable way in Idanre becomes imperative in order to maintain the cultural and natural environment. The paper aims to understand how issues of sustainability are being conceptualised by the tourism officials responsible for managing the attraction, and how they incorporate sustainability issues into their tourism development and management plans. Semi-structured qualitative interviews were used to gain insights into these issues. The research suggests ways in which the Ministry of Tourism in the state can improve their strategic plans for the sustainable management of Idanre Hill.

Keywords: ancient town, cultural landscape, tourism development, sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Recently, with the increasing demand for cultural and ecological tourism, a greater range of local destinations is becoming more popular (Fisher, 2006). Most of the tourism activities in the local areas are directly or indirectly related to the environment in which they take place. For destinations to survive, stay competitive and continually meet the demands from tourists, it is essential that they plan to be sustainable. Sustainable tourism has become a major area of focus within the body of tourism literature as people seek ways to ensure that tourism development does not hamper the environment and at the same time contributes to the social and economic aspect of the area where development is taking place.

Idanre community represents a popular tourist destination reflecting the evolution of historical, cultural and social development. Therefore, it is imperative to protect tourism development in Idanre to ensure sustainable development of the destination. Also, considering the challenge that tourism managers are often confronted with in Idanre, including issues posed by the local community members who disturb and sometimes threaten the managers of the site. To avoid such conflicts and to ensure success on the part of the management it is necessary that local communities be involved in the planning and implementation of the tourism plan and strategy for the cultural landscape (Fadamiro and Adedeji, 2016).

Sustainability is important for policy makers and administrators in tourism management, especially so in cultural destinations. Government and non-government organisations (NGOs) are aware of past environmental and socio-economic problems and as a result of that they plan to avoid unsustainable development in the future (Lei Tin and Russell, 2014). Numerous organisations such as UNEP, UNDP, NGO's and national development agencies have formally embraced sustainable development as a development strategy (Weiss and Thakur, 2010). Moreover, Lu and Nepal, (2009) found that sustainability is poorly represented in tourism research on developing countries, especially in Africa, and Central and South America. These authors found the need for more research in the area of sustainable tourism in developing countries in Africa, of which Nigeria is one.

Further, rural modernization has been said to have a huge impact on traditional landscapes, thereby making them gradually lose their social identification (Yihui *et al*., 2008). For example, the way the people define themselves as members' of a community and their decision whether to cooperate with tourism development in their community. Similarly, as identified by Fadamiro *et al*. that urbanization and modernization often decrease the cultural value of cultural landscapes (2013). For instance, when the local people belief that tourism development can change the cultural value of their community. Tourism development is resource-oriented, and usually requires the development of facilities to ensure that tourists have a good experience at the destination. Also, the requirements of protecting the core areas of cultural landscapes as mandated by UNESCO for Idanre hill. For these reasons, having a comprehensive sustainable plan can help the development process. A major area of concern for Idanre hill has been that of protecting the ancient Idanre landscape as tourism development causes conflicts of interest between the local community and the government. The importance of protecting and managing cultural landscapes has been echoed by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). As a result of these trends referred to above, the growth in demand for rural destinations and cultural landscape, the importance of sustainable development as indicated by the international bodies UNESCO, IUCN and UNDP, the need for tourism development to preserve local community cultural value etcetera. This aim of this paper is to discuss a sustainable way to develop, protect and manage the resources of the ancient Idanre community.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF IDANRE HILL

A cultural landscape is a geographic area, which includes both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife animals therein, usually associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values (Birnbaum,1994). Idanre hill is a cluster of hills that surrounds Idanre town, the hill is significant for the bio-physical landform features and it role as a cultural landscape (Adisa, 2010). Oke Idanre hill consists of high plain and valleys of about 3,000 feet above sea level. Its physical attributes include Owa's (kings) Palace, the Shrines where the gods are worshiped, Old Court for settling cases among the members of the community, Belfry a bell tower which houses the community bell, a noticeable footprint called

Agbooogun foot print, thunder water (Omi Aopara) and burial mounds and grounds. It also has diverse and variegated eco-systems of flora and fauna. In addition, Oke Idanre contains very important bio-physical and landform features whose interaction with the physical features created an enduring cultural landscape within the setting (UNESCO, 2016). On October 8, 2007 the site was added to the UNESCO World Heritage tentative list in the cultural category in keeping with UNESCO's aim of securing world cultural and natural heritage (UNESCO, 2016). The people of Idanre have lived on the rocks for almost a millennium. Since their emigration down the hill in 1923, the topography, vegetation, fauna and flora have remained largely undisturbed. Nevertheless, the festivals celebrated by the people of Idanre still provide occasions for a reconciliation of the people and their natural environments as well as re-enactments or historical episodes in local Idanre history (UNESCO, 2016).

The natural landscape serves as a host for the following festivals in Idanre; Ogun festival, which is partly celebrated on top of the hill in October; Orosun festival; Mare mountain festival; and Ije festival which lasts for seven days. Aside from these festivals that make the site a living tradition, the fauna and flora of the hill are unique. There is a special species of tailless animal called Hyrax that lives on the rocks, which because of hunting are becoming extinct, and also the monkeys spotted near Orosun hill. The site is home to a group of bats, and the people hold a unique festival of bats every year (Usé) festival (UNESCO, 2016).

Cultural Heritage in Idanre
The cultural heritage found in Idanre includes the "unreadable letters" which is believed to be a mysterious handwriting etched on the rock (Idanre, 2016). It has not been deciphered by anyone since it was noticed on the rock (ibid., 2016). Also, Agbogun footprint is a spectre of a mythical shoeprint which could fit into the size of anyone who put their foot into it, regardless of the size of their foot (Idanre, 2016). It is believed that the imprint was made by the first Oba (King) of Idanre Agbogun (Olorunipa, no date). The footprint served as an effective detector of witches and people who committed wicked acts (Olorunipa, no date). The Arun River is a mysterious river in a serene corner of the hill which derives its source from the hot confines of Aghagha Hill (Adisa, 2010). It is believed that the Arun River has natural power to heal all kinds of illnesses and diseases (Idanre, 2016), and for spiritual cleansing (Adisa, 2010). The ancient palace and courtyard is the venue where the Oba usually held court meetings on the top of the hill at the time the people of Idanre lived there. The palace houses some historical monuments on the history of Idanre town (Adisa, 2010). Furthermore, on the Aghagha hill one can have a view of most parts of the Idanre settlement and the towering rock like the orosun hill (Olorunipa, no date). Lastly, the Owa's Palace is an historic building where the Owa (King) lived and still hosts traditional rites and festivals in Idanre town (The National Commission for Museums and Monuments, 2008).

Festivals Celebrated on Idanre Hill
Firstly, Orosun festival is celebrated annually in May, in honour of Orosun, the wife of Olofin, the progenitor of the Idanre people. She was believed to be the famous Moremi, who had offered her only son for sacrifice in order to save Ile-Ife the cradle of the Yoruba from destruction. She

was credited with providing a cure for childhood killer diseases and restoring the fertility of barren women (Olorunipa, no date).

Secondly the Ije or Iden festival is staged every December, a period of grand scale worshiping of ancestral spirits in appreciation of their protective powers over the community. At the Ije festival the Owa wears the beaded crown of Oduduwa which the founder of Idanre (Olofin) brought from Ile-Ife (Olorunipa, no date).

Thirdly, the Mare mountain climbing festival which was introduced in 2009 is held annually in December. This attracts participants from Nigeria, South Africa and Europe (Idanre, 2016). "MARE" meaning "don't fall" is an international mountain climbing festival, which celebrates the land, the people and its rich culture (Adisa, 2010).

Finally, the Usé (bat) festival takes place every February. It reveals vividly man's interaction with nature evidenced in the topography of Idanre. The festival celebrates a congregation of bats which dwells in the Owa cave, and the people believe that the bats are divine messengers (Olorunipa, no date).

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Tourism development offers opportunities for generating income and employment. Its impact on the environment is also well acknowledged, hence, the emphasis on sustainable tourism (Ayeni and Ebohoh, 2012). While tourism is broadly being valued because of its various benefits, other negative impacts can emerge in tourism development process (Canavan, 2016). The growth in resort development often leads to natural and cultural landscape alteration or even damage, which residents are often not happy with. This can also undermine the attractiveness of tourism in the area (Canavan, 2014). While, tourism activities occur in diverse locations and is often attracted to areas with fragile resources and unique natural heritage and cultural attractions, tourism planning and management is essential (Copper, 2016). Hence, sustainable tourism management has helped with the regulation and care for tourism resources, to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive ones (Buckley, 2002). Fadamiro and Adedeji (2016) highlight the importance of minimising the negative ecological impacts of tourism activities whilst recognising the economic, social and cultural as well as political gains.

Sustainability is the long-term enhancement and conservation of both cultural and natural resources (Fennell, 2008). There has been an increased concern in sustainable tourism development planning (Alipour and Dizdarevic, 2007; Hall 2008). Sustainable tourism provides tourists with destinations or attractions where their tourists activities have a lesser negative impact on the environment (Eugene, Judith and Ushie, 2011). Organisations and policy makers have been quick in adopting sustainable tourism in their policies. The issue seems to lie in the question of whether the sustainable policies formed can indeed foster both social and environmentally sound development. Scheyvens (2011) maintained that political and social issues need greater attention to improve the prospects for achieving sustainable tourism development. Aspects of

sustainability include environmental, economic, social and political (ibid., 2011). Similarly, a sustainable approach to planning involves sustainability in economic, environmental and socio-cultural dimensions (Ruhanen, 2004). Ensuring public awareness on the significance of traditional values is key, and at the same time encouraging the community to be actively involved in the process of landscape management is capable of bringing the much acclaimed economic, social and cultural benefits from tourism (Otilia-Elena Vicol, 2013). Therefore, sustainable tourism development needs to encompass these aspects. Likewise, sustainable tourism development involves sustaining activities of people and tourism institutions to harmonise with all other elements like the environment, history, and socio-cultural values (Ekinci, 2014:178). The UNWTO defines sustainable tourism as tourism which takes into account the current and future economic, environmental and social impacts, and also addresses the visitors, industry, environmental and host communities needs (UNWTO and UNEP, 2005).

The definition of sustainable tourism is further elaborated by UNWTO (2013) in three points: First, they cite a need to 'make the best use of environmental resources as a significant element in tourism development, maintain the ecology and help to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity; second, the need to respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance; third, to ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation' (UNWTO 2013: 17-18). Further, sustainable tourism needs effective governance to promote in the pursuit of economic, socio-cultural and environmental goals of sustainable development (Bramwell and Lane, 2011). According to Inskeep sustainable tourism *"meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems"* (1991:461). Hence, sustainable tourism, simply put, is concerned with both current and future impacts of tourism development.

Sustainable development planning ensures sustainable development of all the destination elements through integrated planning approaches (Copper, 2016). That involves the public and private sector (Gunn and Var, 2002), as well as the community as noted by (Tosun and Timothy, 2001). An important way to assess sustainable tourism development is by examining how the needs of the host population can be met in the form of improved standards of living both in the short and long term (Liu, 2003).

Sustainable tourism involves preserving the natural resources upon which tourism depends, and sustainability involves developing tourism resources to enhance tourists experience (Ekinci, 2014). Specifically, Ekinci highlights two key things that are important to sustainability which are preserving resources and developing new facilities. Ekinci further highlights that since, tourism activities are environment-based it is important to ensure the sustainability of the resources

used by tourist (Ekinci, 2014). Additionally, sustaining the natural resources features, human, flora and fauna in an area where tourism takes place should be central in any tourism management function (ibid., 2014).

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The study of cultural landscape is essential as it is considered a very important factor in the regional development process. "Cultural landscapes are at the interface between nature and culture, tangible and intangible heritage, biological and cultural diversity. They represent a closely woven net of relationships, the essence of culture and people's identity" (Rössler 2006:334). The European Landscape Convention defined landscape as a resource having market value, that can be used for major economic activities such as tourism. Cultural landscape has remained a vital resource for rural tourism as they comprise of various elements such as religious edifices, monuments, traditions and crafts which represents a focal point of tourist activity (Otilia-Elena Vicol, 2013). Stoffelen and Vanneste (2015) emphasised that cultural landscapes have a key position in most rural tourism destinations in the form of tourism assets and boundaries for tourism development. They indirectly provide the framework in which tourism is often envisaged as a regional development tool (Stoffelen and Vanneste, 2015). Cultural landscapes such as Idanre hill have a noticeable imprint of human activities. It is characterised by a balanced relationship between an ecological system and human influences (Fatimah, 2015). The rural cultural landscape is attractive as it captures evidence of human interaction with nature (Otilia-Elena Vicol, 2013; Beagan and Dolan, 2015). Landscapes are valued environments where people live everyday, a heritage, scenery with aesthetic and recreational qualities, and often important have biodiversity features (Plieninger, et al., 2014). Landforms in cultural landscape created by nature and human culture both exist because of each other (Buckley, Ollenburg, and Zhong, 2008). Cultural landscape is a combination of both nature and culture as its elements, and the relationship between human and their natural environment is a significant factor. As Fatimah (2015) highlights, human and its natural environment are a unity, having inseparable connection. Cultural landscapes are integrally dynamic, with changing conditions, as a result of its cultural and natural forces and therefore necessitate adaptive management (Beagan and Dolan, 2015).

Cultural landscape management is important in planning and in the conservation of heritage, and more significant for communities as a result many regulatory agencies, and organizations, have incorporated cultural landscapes management into their strategic plans. Cultural landscapes management is necessary to protect the outstanding universal value of World Heritage sites for both the present and future generations (Mitchell *et al*., 2009). A crucial role in this form of management is to guide change in the cultural landscape whilst retaining important values (ibid., 2009).

According to Yihui *et al*. (2008)'s conceptual model of integrated zoning and landscape coordination which consists of the core, buffer, and transition zone. The core zone comprises of the high rank architectures of sound preservation. The cultural factors in this zone are under strict protection without any construction of new facilities. Tourist activities permitted here are usually

of low impact. The buffer zone is constituted by human landscape and natural landscape. New constructions and renovation of buildings are allowed in this zone, but they must be consistent with the cultural characteristics of the core zone. Finally, the transition zone is the open natural landscape area beyond the buffer zone. The core zone of Idanre hill comprises of the ancient monument and no construction is allowed in the area. In the buffer zone there are guest chalets built in a traditional architectural plan style, an indoor game area and the reception. The transition zone is where some local stalls for the community members are built and the road leading into the attraction.

METHODOLOGY

This paper is based upon empirical data collection using semi-structured qualitative interviews which were conducted with the tourism director in Ondo State and the managers at Idanre hill resort in summer 2016. The interviews were recorded on an audiotape and then transcribed by the researcher. This was analysed in addition to recorded comments in a fieldwork journal. The interviews were aimed to understand the meanings of sustainability as it is understood by the management of Idanre hill, and how they incorporate sustainability issues into their tourism development and management plans. By reading and rereading the transcribed data it was possible to identify concepts in the form of words, phrases and sentences that reoccurred, and also differences in the opinion expressed, that are connected with the social, environmental and economic aspects of sustainability. Data analysis was structured under three main themes of sustainable tourism which are the recurrent issues raised by the interviewee on sustainability.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To questions to be addressed are: *how issues of sustainability are being conceptualised, and how they incorporate sustainability issues into their tourism development and management plans.?* The findings were summarised according to the three pillars of sustainable development the environmental, socio-cultural, and economic aspects and the participants' opinion on sustainability principles. This is consistent with Ruhanen's opinion that sustainable planning approach encompass all the dimensions of economic, environmental and socio-cultural sustainability (2004, Inskeep, 1991).

From the perspective of *environmental sustainability*, one of the participants believed that tourism development like any other form of development can have either negative or positive impacts on the environment. However, the participant also said that having an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) plan will help to mitigate or control the expected negative impact of tourism activities in Idanre:

"There is no sector that does not have impact whether negatively or positively on the environment and that is the reason everybody must ensure they do Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

You must carry out that in order to know the the impact of the business you are bringing on the environment, definitely you know that its going to affect the economy...… You must carryout the EIA that will guide you, and you will know that this thing we want to do this is the impacts on the environment how do we mitigate it how do we control it" (Participant A). This supports Beagan and Dolan (2015)'s opinion who noted that adaptive management which encompass environmental assessment in cultural landscape management is necessary.

Also, one of the participants mentioned that their construction activities must not destroy the environment given the UNESCO rules regarding construction of new structures in the attraction which they have to abide by. The area consists of the core and buffer zones. The core zones comprise of the ancient monuments, natural landscape and they are not allowed to carry out any new development activity within the core zone. In the buffer zone new facilities can be built to ensure a good tourists experience and to meet the demand from tourists as a result of tourism development. This is coherent with Yihui *et al.'s* (2008) conceptual model of integrated zoning and landscape coordination.

According to Participant A, the UNESCO rule states that no "new development can be done in the core zone area, but we are allowed to construct whatever new structure we want within the buffer zone. Because the core area is where the ancient monuments are, and they want us to maintain the natural structure".

In terms of the *Socio-cultural aspect*, all the participants recognised that the community must be carried along in decision making to ensure sustainable tourism development. This supports the idea of Tosun and Timothy (2001) who emphasised the importance of community participation in tourism, and more specifically for developing countries. They also point out that there is improvement in the standard of living of the local people since the attraction began operation it provides job for some of the community members and brings development to the area. As Liu (2003) puts it, a way to assess sustainable tourism development is by examining how the needs of the host population can be met in the form of improved standards of living both in the short and long term.

"In the state we believe that, for tourism to survive overtime, every relevant stakeholder must be carried along in the development of the sector. Like yesterday we went to Idanre community to hold a meeting with the three three notable Oba's (Kings) all on the issue of tourism development and sustainability of the sector in their place. Because we believe that with community participation and support the sector will continue to strive. Immediately we loose the community's support then it becomes a problem for us to sustain that sector within the region. Also we employ some of the community members as tour guides here like the one who took the tourists uphill now is an indigene of this community" (Participant A).

Another common theme was on the need to promote the culture of the community and not to reduce its cultural value. Fennell (2008) maintains that sustainability is the long-term enhancement and conservation of both cultural and natural resources. The participants stress that they

ensure the activities of the attraction does not have a negative impact on the local culture which also serve as a heritage. 'They do this by encouraging the local people to perform the sacrifices they do not want the tourists to see at night when tourists are away and showcase only those aspects that they want tourists to see so as to preserve their cultural heritage' (Participant A). This action in a way however does impact the culture of the local people of Idanre. Further, as expressed by participants A and B that the management activities at Idanre Hill revolves around the protection of the cultural heritage and values, as they constantly deliberate on ways of preserving the cultural values with the community members.

Again consistent with the *economic* aspect of sustainability, the participants point out the importance of economic activities. That during the festival celebrations in the community the community members are being allocated windows to allow them display and sell items at the attraction such as souvenirs and food etc.

All the participants recognised the need for sustainability in the management of the attraction and they expressed this throughout the interview process either implicitly or explicitly. However, it was conceived by the researcher that sustainability is more understood by the people at the State/Ministry level rather than at the attraction management level even though the state ministry has plans that support sustainable tourism, operationalising the plans at the attraction/ community level could be problematic. It reveals that the authority need to pass this knowledge to the managers of attractions within the state so they really understand what it is in practice and can effectively ensure the implementation of sustainability plans at the level of the attractions. Participants at the attraction level emphasised that they need training in sustainability and other aspect of their job to help them perform better and be able to compete with their counterparts in other countries. This training could also be extended to the local community as well so they are aware of the concept of sustainability.

Furthermore, certain things that hinder sustainable tourism management plans were reiterated by the participants. They all agreed that a major problem has been funding as tourism development needs money to invest in capital projects. The government is trying to encourage public private partnership as they believe that the private sector has the capital to invest in tourism development. Again, they expressed the idea that the government attitude towards funding for tourism should change, and that there should be more willingness on their part to support the growth of the industry.

Further, the local community also pose problems to the attraction management at times becausethey believe that the attraction belongs to them and they sometimes disturb the activities going on around the attraction. For example, at times when tourists visit the attraction the local people say they want to take the tourist uphill, highlighting that the attraction management has done enough that once it is 6 o'clock they will take over as tour guides (Participant A, B and C). This is in spite of the facts that it has been agreed by the community and signed by the king of Idanre on behalf of the community for the attraction to become a state monument as part of UNESCO's requirements to enlist it as a cultural landscape. It is worthy of note that the ownership

of the attraction is jointly by the community, the state and federal government (The National Commission for Museums and Monuments NCMM, 2008).

Moreover, there was a consensus among all the participants on some other issues that include the: challenge of physical constraints due to the rock formation in the area and UNESCO's restriction at Idanre hill. Only limited space is available for the construction of new buildings like chalets for tourists to lodge and the already constructed chalets are very close to the rock. Additionally, security issues arise as the local people sometimes scare the visitors because they are allowed to go uphill free of charge, and they sometimes go there to smoke. Finally, lack of good electricity supply in the community which makes the management at Idanre Hill spend most of the money realised on purchasing fuel to power the generator.

CONCLUSION/ RECOMMENDATIONS

The research findings are relevant to sustainability planning in tourism. The participants agreed that tourism expansion in the area need not cause landscape damage. Tourism is seen as having a significant and positive economic role, as it provides jobs and supports the development of new facilities in the community. Due to the fact that the attraction sometimes experiences lack of support from the community, it could be that benefits is not distributed evenly within the community, as this can go a long way in determining their attitudes towards protecting resources and tourism development generally. For example, as identified by Yihui *et al*. (2008), sustainable tourism development ought to begin with community development as this will induce the residents to participate in tourism development activities. Likewise, the political issues from the government can pose a challenge to their efforts of operating sustainably. Two of the participants emphasised the current problem of funding from the government who have been a major sponsor of development projects at the attraction in previous years. This is no longer so since the new government in power seem to be focusing on developing another sector. It could be said that an alternative source of funding for maintaining the attraction should be sought so as to avoid problems associated with loss of traditional landscape the degradation of the area or threat to the sustainability of cultural and natural environments since tourism development need to be budgeted for.

Additionally, to ensure the sustainable future of tourism development in Idanre hill, it requires a proper understanding of some of the issues that hinder the management of the attraction in a sustainable way, so as to better achieve the strategic aim of preserving the environments, protecting cultural values, meeting the needs of the local community, guaranteeing the sustainable use of resources, and more importantly devising a means to meet the objectives by integrating same into planning as well as practice. This study is limited as it does not examine cultural landscape zoning. Future research can investigate the land use planning in the area as it can contribute to achieving sustainable tourism development in Idanre hill. Other stakeholders involved with Idanre hill tourism development such as the community tourism entrepreneurs can also be interviewed to get more insights into the issues.

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Cultural tourism and identity locations: how visitors experience contemporary heritage

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ABSTRACT

Some locations may represent better than others the true identity and the historical memory of a city and its community. This paper analyses the development of the city of Valletta and the making of the Grandmaster's Palace, and how the latter has influenced the idea of the city in the past as well as today. The Grandmaster's Palace also houses the State Rooms, a museum that preserves the history of Malta and the Maltese, providing a key to understanding for visitors who experience the island for the first time. The Palace then embodies the concept of *auctoritas*, the ideal power of command that makes it a unique place of its kind.

Keywords: Grandmaster's Palace, *Auctoritas*, Memory, Identity, Museum Experience

CULTURAL TOURISM, MEMORY AND IDENTITY

Cultural tourism is changing its shape, tastes and styles. In the contemporary world the sense of belonging and identity of locations is acquiring a complex meaning that sometimes collides with a lack of memory. Nevertheless, the concepts of memory, identity and cultural heritage are related to each other. Visitors need specific educational tools to experience a type of tourism respectful of places and their history.

This paper, part of a wider project, focuses on visitors' expectations, and how they experience identity locations in art cities. The case study presented is the Grandmaster's Palace in Valletta. It was formerly a site occupied by the Knights of Malta, then becoming the official abode of the British Governors and, more recently, the Presidential Palace of the Maltese Republic. The State Rooms are part of a museum path that mixes historical past and present in a diverse blend of events and artworks.

The works of art and the artistic heritage are consequently ideological and cultural symbols of a community (Rowlands, 1993). They represent collective and cultural memory, keeping each historical phase as a crucial moment through which to understand the modern identity of a location. This premise is the basis of the research on museums' identity, especially for those museums that have a close connection with the venues of political power. The connection between art and politics has always been present in the history of mankind and has grown ever stronger over the centuries.

Furthermore, when an identity collection is located within a building that for many years has been identified with the symbol of local power, the link between cultural heritage, community and history is deeply rooted in the urban fabric.

The shaping of the urban space implies, more than the design of the physical space of the city, strengthening connections between aesthetics, knowledge and instances of the government. This research aims to contribute to the complex relationship between art and politics, analysed from the perspective of museums as "history-in-the-making", and specifically museums housed within government buildings. They represent a privileged point of observation for the analysis and understanding of cultural identity. They can be considered as keepers of a virtuous process of societal development, due to their centuries-old influence in the perception and interpretation of the cities. Museums have definitely contributed to the construction of the collective memory thanks to their strong cultural identity. Memory and identity are closely related and from their continuous mutual exchange and enhancement one can experience a real growth in the sense of belonging (Connerton, 1989). The way one perceives, comprehends and interprets the surrounding world is also influenced by the environmental context; the cultural heritage housed in museums can contribute to the making of that complex process that is the development of personal and collective identity (Crane, 1997).

MUSEUMS AS COLLECTIVE MEMORY LOCATIONS
Museums have usually been examined and studied through the eyes and perception of visitors, observing their reaction to collections or displays. Since the very first survey conducted in 1962 (Bourdieu-Darbel, 1966), the focus has been concentrated on the audience. The sociological aspects were important to realise who were and who could become the new museum visitors and tout court the citizens of post World War II societies.

Further surveys have been done to study the audience in depth and to orientate the museum's offering, so much so that the identity of visitors has been well studied and interpreted in past decades (Falk, 2008, 2010). Nevertheless a lack of interpretation in museum identity is evident. This research aims to reverse the perspective focussing on the making of museums as identity keepers by means of their history, their social function, their relationship with power and politics. It retraces the making of the museum not only through the lens of audience, but through the main historical events and personalities who left their mark that will contribute to the reconstruction and knowledge of the museum identity.

The birth of the museum idea in the eighteenth century has contributed to the creation of a multifaceted interpretation and a more complex sense of modern societies' identity (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007). The museum has been seen since the very beginning as a place where citizens could collect the major symbols of their own history and tradition. It is interesting to note through these passages how art has always had a value of identity, often being used as an instrument of power and, in wartime, as the objects the victor targets when he wants to destroy the defeated power or opponent. Throughout the centuries art has been linked to politics in different ways. The French Revolution, the Napoleonic era, the Italian Risorgimento, colonial looting,

the policy of Hitler towards art, the First and the Second World Wars, and the policy of refunds after the end of a conflict are some of the recent historical events that underscore the interconnections between art and politics.

In Europe there have been many episodes of plundering during the wars. One of the best known relates to the Amber Room in the Palace of Empress Catherine, located in the present day town of Pushkin, in Russia. The Amber Room was donated by a Prussian king to the empress in the eighteenth century, but was captured by the Germans on their approach to Leningrad in 1941 and was then brought to Konigsberg, now called Kaliningrad. It was kept there until the beginning of 1945, and then disappeared. It is likely that it was lost in the wreck of a German ship that sailed from Gdansk, torpedoed by a Soviet submarine. This is a typical example of how art has been a subject of war and has had a relevant meaning in the conflicts perpetrated throughout history, changing the way people looked at the artistic heritage (Danchey and Lisle, 2009). On the one side, it was the symbol of supremacy and of a new political order; on the other, it was the sign of a lost identity. This is true in the case of the Menorah, the seven-branched candelabrum that the Romans brought into the city after the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem and depicted in relief on the Arch of Titus in Rome. By moving the Menorah from Jerusalem, the symbol and sign of Jewish identity was uprooted and removed.

The works of art and the artistic heritage are thus ideological and cultural symbols of a community (Haskell and Penny, 1994). They represent a collective and cultural memory keeping every single historical phase as a crucial moment to understand the modern identity of a venue.

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

Furthermore, when an identity collection is located within a building that for many years has been identified with the symbol of local power, the link between cultural heritage, community and history is deeply rooted. The Grandmaster's Palace in Malta has embodied the meaning of all major historical, political and artistic events; it became a symbol of local power and the favourite place of all rulers who passed through and leave out the island (Cassar, 2004). The Palace has played an important role in the construction of the urban fabric as centre of attention and interests from different points of view. The shape of the city of Valletta has been deeply influenced by the presence of the palaces that can be seen as elements of specific city planning. Actually the location of the Palace determined a different axis of urban development and a convergence of interests towards the city centres. The political role was emphasized by the facing square, which provided a unique perspective in relation with the other buildings that stood nearby. The Palace together with the square becomes the representative places of institutional power, but also the place where the population could join in occasion of feasts and celebrations. The shaping of the urban space implicates, more than the design of the physical space of the city, strengthening connections between aesthetics, knowledge and instances of the government.

In historical and cultural venues identity is enriched by centuries of events, personalities and works where the stratification can sometimes hardly be distinguished and defined. Museums can be particularly overwhelming because of the density and diversity of their collections speaking a

peculiar language that needs to be translated (Preziosi and Farago, 2004). So for this case study, monuments and places were chosen that could contain, together, both historical and cultural instances in well-balanced proportions. In other words, a venue where the identity, history and memory are representative of a whole community; where the idea of identity is multifaceted and comprehensive of historical, cultural, social, and urban characteristics. However city museums, house museums, or private collections can reflect only part of these distinctions, whilst, historical palaces completely mirror identity, being the result of a century-old process of cultural and collective memory. This is especially true when these historical palaces are turned into museums, as they have played a relevant role as institutional and political buildings related to a recognised power.

In fact, the Grandmaster's Palace in Valletta is closely tied to the concept of *auctoritas*, formerly restricted to the political history of ancient Rome where this term was used to refer to the prestige, influence and ability a person had achieved in the Roman society. However, *auctoritas* was not merely political since it had a specific content and symbolized the "power of command" of heroic Roman figures. The etymology derives from Latin *augeo* (meaning to increase), so the *auctor* could be literally interpreted as the one who gives increase to the act or the juridical setting. Politically, *auctoritas* was connected to the authority of the Roman Senate, which was held by the magistrates or the people. In this context, *auctoritas* could be defined as the juridical power conferred by the authority.

In the Grandmaster's Palace this *power of command* is rooted in the idea itself of the venue having been used as the institutional residences of all the kings, rulers and commanders who have passed through Malta.

THE GRANDMASTER'S "CITTÀ NUOVA" AND THE ORDER OF ST JOHN

The city of Valletta experienced a period of great splendour in the sixteenth and seventeenth century when, in the aftermath of the Great Siege of Malta, the Grandmasters and the Knights Hospitallers built it as a symbol of their confirmed presence in the heart of Mediterranean. In the centuries that followed the interest of its strategic location practically supplanted the cultural, architectural and artistic values of the imposing buildings erected in Valletta, until the memory of their presence was almost lost. Travellers passing through the island had a poor opinion of it: "To a great many Englishmen the name Malta appears to call up but a single idea. We think of a dot upon the map of Europe, which represents, we know, a very important naval and military station, and are apt to suppose that the whole interest of this insignificant-looking place is wrapped up in its strategic value" (Flower, 1897). At the end of the nineteenth century the perception of Malta suffered a lack of consideration from an architectural and artistic point of view. The main purpose the island has had in the Mediterranean was defence from the Ottoman Empire and defence from the piracy (Scarabelli, 2009) and this still characterised the idea of it held by the European aristocracy.

However, the travellers who reached Malta and Valletta in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Brydon, 1773; de Boisgelin, 1805; Galt, 1812; Colt Hoare, 1819, Angas, 1842) were all admiring of by the impressive and lavish locations they visited and found out that the "little island contains any building worthy of notice" with "no trace of littleness about the churches, the palaces, the castles of Malta" (Flower, 1897).

The history of Malta and the foundation of Valletta are therefore closely tied to the presence of the Hospitaller Order of St John. In 1530, Grand Master de L'Isle d'Adam had accepted the island and its dependencies as their base from Emperor Charles V. The Knights had spent many years peregrinating along the Mediterranean before finding a new headquarter (Cassar, 2000b). Due to its proximity to the harbour, the first Grand Master Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam (1530-1534) first settled his abode in Fort St Angelo, and a makeshift *collachio* and other official buildings including the Auberges of the eight *langues* – namely the eight different native nations of the knights - were in Birgu. Mdina was, and remained, the capital city of Malta until 1798. It was then with Grand Master de Vallette (1557-1568) that the Order went through one of the key episodes of its history with the Great Siege of 1565 against the Ottoman armada of Suleiman the Magnificent. De Vallette led the knights in defending the entrance to the great harbour (from Fort St Elmo to protect Birgu and Senglea) but after only four months (18th May – 8th September) of bloody and heavy bombardments the Ottoman fleet put to sea back to Constantinople. They left behind them several ruins and deep sociological effects. The Maltese population fought alongside the Knights to protect the island and as a consequence of that, the Maltese felt closer to the Knights (though they had never been seen as enemies) and eventually "the siege experience had generated a sense of belonging and solidarity" (Cassar, 2000b).

THE MAKING OF THE CITY OF VALLETTA

In the aftermath of the Great Siege, de Vallette decided to fortify Fort St Elmo and repair the old fortifications. A few days after the victory over the Turks, he sent a missive to Fra Giuseppe Cambiano, the Order's ambassador in Rome, to advise all Christian Princes about the victory and ask for an economic contribution, and a consultation by military engineers. As Braudel argued, the loss of Malta to the Ottomans would have been a disaster for Christendom (Ganado, 2003).

De Vallette pressured the kings of Portugal and Spain and on Pope Pius IV, who sent his own engineer, Capitan Francesco Laparelli who was from Cortona and from noble and ancient lineage (Rocchini, 2009). In Rome, Laparelli had been commissioned to build the fortification of Castel St Angelo, Borgo Pio and the walls enclosing the Vatican citadel. Pius IV sent him to Malta to repair the damages inflicted during the siege. After a few months of consultations and hesitations by the Grand Master, the first stone was laid on March 28th 1566 (Vella Bonavita, 2009). The city of Valletta rose "on the slopes of Mount Sceberras in silent testimony of a tripartite achievement of a Frenchman, an Italian and a Maltese: Jean de Vallette, Francesco Laparelli and Girolamo Cassar – the founder, the military engineer, the architect" (Ganado, 2003). Three features were defined in the making of an urban structure spread over the hillside and overlooking the two branches of the port, Marsamxett on one side and Birgu on the other side.

Laparelli wanted to design a city layout able to block the strong winds of the island that would be traversed by a large street in the middle and smaller side alleys. However, in the end the Knights opted for a more conventional orthogonal structure (Vella Bonavita, 2009). The engineer exploited as much as possible the orography, especially the flat areas on top of the mount, making it a highly efficient and mathematically harmonious project. The "unique peculiarity of actually being, in the most strict and literally sense, one solid block of almost perfect building stone" (Flower, 1897) makes Valletta, and Malta, very similar to Naples where the tufa stone was actually dug from the underground and worked on above to build palaces. The limestone fortifications of Malta are an unusual combination of human and natural work where the graft of bricks onto the solid stone reminds of the tufa structure of Fort St Elmo in Naples. As, Brydone exclaimed in his letter dated 6th June 1773 "all the boasted catacombs in Rome and Naples are a trifle to the immense excavations that have been made in this little island".

After Grand Master de Vallette's death, the city grew owing to his successors Pietro Del Monte (1568-1672) and, especially, Jean l'Evêque de la Cassière (1572-1581) who ordered at his own expense the making of the Magistral Palace, the Sacra Infermeria and the Conventual Church of St John the Baptist. La Cassière also commissioned Girolamo Cassar to design the seven Auberges for the Knights (Ganado, 2003). Meanwhile, a dual social structure was taking shape in Malta especially after the siege and the building of Valletta. "This duality did not only exist at a social level, but it also pervaded the mental and cognitive structure of Maltese society. Two different cultural blocks, strictly separated from each other, formed two opposite camps, namely Mdina with its suburb of Rabat as the seat of the countryside; Birgu – and later Valletta - the seat of the urbanised harbour area" (Cassar, 2000a). This duality lasted through the whole age of the Hospitaller knights ending only in the French period. Indeed, until the Napoleonic period, Valletta was not the capital of Malta. Mdina was elected to be both political and cultural centre where the Grand Masters used to stay. Even the church of St John, as mentioned above, was the Conventual church of the Hospitaller Order and would later become co-cathedral of the island.

THE FRENCH PERIOD AND THE BRITISH GOVERNORS
As Carmel Testa stated, for 268 years the international chivalric Order dominated the fortunes and daily life of the local population who, in the majority, were happy to live under this unique institution which provided safety from Muslim peril, adequate means of employment and a fairly decent livelihood. The sudden arrival of Bonaparte with his army in June 1798 shattered the peaceful and staid way of life of the Maltese population (1997). More recently, Charles Xuereb focused on a crucial point in the relationship between Maltese population and occupying French troops: the religious power was so strong as to influence the masses and have control of their actions. A number of unpopular decisions taken by the new French government created a feeling of unrest and discontentment (Xuereb, 2014), which led to the brevity of French influence on Malta.

From correspondence between the General Bonaparte and Talleyrand, it was clear that the first step contemplated by Napoleon was the "reduction" of Malta whose inhabitants, according to him, were favourable to the French. Furthermore, the Order was aristocratic and on the

execution of Louis XVI a solemn requiem was performed in St John's at which Grand Master De Rohan presided. The latter also tried to reform the military forces of the Order but in 1778 his decline was complete (Glenfell, 1902). So, when General Bonaparte passed by the Island, in the direction of Egypt, he needed only four days to conquer Malta where he spent six days during which he dictated instructions to change the government of Malta to reflect French Republican ideals (Cassar, 2000b).

Again Testa, in his volume dedicated to the French in Malta, stated how after the sudden expulsion of the Order from Malta the 80,000 Maltese inhabitants were obliged to change their lives and way of thinking due to the radical innovations of a French republican administration example. However, hasty measures and ill-advised conduct on the part of that administration forced the Maltese countryside to erupt into spontaneous revolt within three months. Maltese insurgents, who were subsequently aided by the British and their allies, besieged the French garrison and their few local collaborators inside the Grand Harbour area. During those terrible years of warfare and hardship (that elapsed before the French finally had to surrender and depart from Malta) the Maltese for the first time in their history were masters of their own destiny. At this time, the first steps towards an independent nationhood were made, an arduous and often a heart-breaking task that eventually came to fruition in 1964 with Maltese independence (Testa, 1997).

Thanks to the intervention of King Ferdinand IV and Lord Nelson, Commander of the British fleet, the uprising in Malta was successful and the French capitulated on 5th September 1800. Malta was supposed to be given back to the Hospitaller Knights, but the population rose up against this possibility and asked to stay under the Crown of Britain. It actually became a crown colony in 1813 and was given to Britain as a possession only by the Treaty of Paris in 1814, a decision then ratified at Vienna in 1815 (Cassar, 2000b).

In the course of the nineteenth century Malta became increasingly important to the British. Especially after the opening of the Suez Canal, Malta appeared to be a perfect stronghold, both for the British fleet, and British trade. The Maltese economy depended heavily on the British navy, but most Maltese didn't take much benefit from it. There was much poverty, particularly amongst the rural population. On the 7th of June 1919 riots against the British took place because of a rise in bread prices. Since 1849 there had been a Government Council with a number of Maltese representatives, but they were in the minority. The new constitution of 1887 gave the elected members of the Council a majority, but in 1903 this was reverted. The influence of the Maltese in politics remained trifling, until the establishment of the Maltese parliament in 1921 (Mallia-Milanes, 1988).

The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw technical and financial progress in line with the Belle Époque that was revitalising the European social classes with the rise of the bourgeoisie. The following years saw the foundation of the Anglo-Egyptian Bank (1882) and the beginning of the Malta Railway set-up (1883). The first Maltese postage stamps were issued in 1885 and in 1904 a tram service was introduced. The building of the Royal Opera House began in 1888

and in 1912 Dun Karm Psaila, the "bard of Malta", wrote *Quddiem Xbieha tal-Madonna* his first poem in Maltese (earlier he had only written in Italian). All these innovations were leading towards the making of a national consciousness and identity (Mallia-Milanes, 1988).

THE GRANDMASTER'S PALACE
The Palace of the Grand Master was first planned at the back of the St James Cavalier in a safe position, although Baldassarre Lanci, the Engineer of the Grand Duke of Florence, suggested placing it in the centre of the city next to a large square (Ganado, 2001). Then the Magistral Palace stood in an area once occupied by the Auberge d'Italie and other private residences, one of which belonged to Eustachio del Monte, nephew of the Grand Master Pietro del Monte (1568-1572), and it "grew, sprawled and metamorphosed over a century and a half" (Bonello, 2001).

In his research on the Palace, Giovanni Bonello tried to retrace the architectural steps through the words of the first historians of the Order, Giacomo Bosio and Bartolomeo del Pozzo. They recorded the move from Birgu to Valletta in 1571, how at the time the new city was incomplete and uninhabited, and also how the Palace came about. In order to build the whole structure, four separate properties were united together: the former Auberge d'Italie, the house of Eustachio del Monte and the houses of Fra Bernardo Raimondo and Fra Giannotto Bosio, two individual knights. Another section, the back towards Merchant Street, already belonged to the state and this peculiarity of being two adjacent buildings explain the presence of at least two internal courtyards. This peculiarity also influenced the front façade that had been changed and modified at least eight times to give a more coherence to the whole section (Bonello, 2001).

The Grand Masters all gave much thought to the creation of the Palace and each of them contributed financially to the architecture and its decorative system. Thanks to Grand Master La Cassière (1572-1581) the Supreme Council Chamber was built and frescoed by Matteo Perez d'Aleccio with the historical frieze depicting the Great Siege. After this more additions were made to the design of the Palace and it was the main setting for large state gatherings.

At the time of Grand Master Verdalle (1582-1595), the summer residence and the *Sala d'armi* were built along the entire length of the palace back façade; but it is with Grand Master Pinto (1741-1773) that the Palace took on the appearance it has today (Vella, 2008). He carried out the major alterations to the Magistral Palace extending lavish patronage for the arts, also establishing printing (1747) and founding the University (1769). The Palace structure was especially modified in the lower loggias turning them into stables for the horses of the guard and visitors. Pinto also replaced the fountain in the upper courtyard with a more imposing one and opened a second portico leading from Palace Square to the main courtyard (Bonello, 2001). Lord Patrick Brydone, a Scottish traveller, visited Malta during his Grand Tour of Italy and Sicily at the time of Grand Master Pinto and edited a book in 1773, the first one dedicated to the Italian island. During his stay in Malta he visited the Palace and the modern reader can easily figure out the structure of the main building in Valletta through his words: "it is very noble though a plain structure, and the grand master (who studies convenience more than magnificence) is more comfortably and commodiously lodged than any Prince in Europe, with perhaps the exception

of the King of Sardinia. The great stairs is by much the easiest and best I ever saw" (Brydone, 1773, p. 318-319).

Bonaparte's arrival in Malta prefigured the end of the Order of St John in the Mediterranean Island followed by feeble resistance by Grand Master von Hompesch (1797-1798). General Bonaparte declined to take up residence at the Palace, choosing a private palace in Merchants Street (Testa, 1997). The French Commissioner Boresdon de Ransijat, instead, resided there as the new governor but he was not interested in the Palace and its contents and relevance. This is evident in the way they used the Archives of the Order that von Hompesch unsuccessfully requested to take away with him. An order was issued "whereby all papers, parchments and documents of the Order, except the documents dealing with titles of ownership were to be used … as cartridges for the artillery" (National Library of Malta, 2013). Soon after the Maltese people rebelled against the French and the Archives were providentially saved from dispersion and destruction thanks to the sense of duty of fra' Gaetano Bruno, *Uditore* of the Order (L'Arte, 1863, 16). Only two years later, in 1800, the French army withdrew from Malta.

As a consequence of the Treaty of Paris (1814), Malta became a colony of the British Empire and the Palace was designated for the residence of the British Governor and his family, involving substantial changes. In 1818 King George IV instituted the Order of St Michael and St George and consequently the Supreme Council Chamber was renamed after the new chivalric order. The British refurbishment altered the previous structure distorting and sometimes destroying traces of the Knights. The d'Aleccio frescoes were "savagely butchered" and were only partially saved and restored in 1908 by Vincenzo Busuttil (Bonello, 2001).

EUROPEAN TRAVELLERS AND THEIR PERCEPTION OF MALTA
The perception of the Palace in the nineteenth century was overshadowed by the sad obliteration of the Knights' heritage. The rooms were hung with portraits of Sovereigns and Princes, sent by the respective rulers and monarchs to Malta that the British did not care about (Freller, 2009). But even in a state of neglect, travellers were positively impressed by the architecture and collections, especially the Gobelins tapestries, the armoury in direct reference to the armour of Grand Master Aloph de Wignancourt and the pictures by Cavalier d'Arpino, Caravaggio, Guido Reni, Jusepe de Ribera (Angas, 1842). In any case it was seen by some as a "large plain building, equal to any of the royal monasteries of England" (Galt, 1812). Other travellers paid more attention to the architecture of the island by trying to define a specific style and Flower stated "it may be noticed that mention has been made of the third element which contributes largely to the special peculiarities of Maltese architecture. Besides the ethnological and geological conditions, which in the themselves make for an exceptional architectural development, there has been a political-religious influence of 'The Order' (Flower, 1897). In a certain sense Flower pinpointed a sort of chivalric architectural style that in Malta is embodied in the making of the Magistral Palace, which can be considered as the Order's cultural and political project. What about the Conventual Church?

The later architecture is practically all of one character and

> "all the principal examples of it were made within a space of two hundred years, during the palmy days of the Order. To be more precise, it may be said that the great building era extends from the last quarter of the Sixteenth century to the first quarter of the Eighteenth. During this comparatively short period an extraordinary series of public works were carried out, on such a scale of magnitude and solidity as to give the impression that, however circumstances may alter and particular methods of use may be changed, Malta has been sumptuously endowed with buildings for almost every purpose to the end of time" (Flower, 1897).

As Theresa Vella has recently argued, the Palace was the very heart of the new city's social, political and military centre. It came to be surrounded by the finest examples of Baroque architecture (Vella, 2008) and the square in front of it always drew the attention of the rulers as an attraction point and a showcase of the city: from the column of Verdalle to the fountain of Wignancourt, from the British parade ground to the public games as the *giostra* and the *cuccagna*. The Palace and the square acquired the sense and the symbol of the citizenship, the sense of belonging, which makes that specific area of the city the core of all public expression. Again, as in Rome and Naples, the making of the palace meant the reconfiguration of the city into a dynamic system of relations where the urban fabric is suddenly and permanently catalysed towards the renaissance city centre. In the case of Valletta the idea of building a new city and the morphology of the island led not only to the change of the political and religious core, but basically to a social and anthropological change. The philosophical assumption *Homo faber fortunae suae* seems to perfectly fit in the renovation expressing the intent of an ideal city designed according to the principles of classicism.

The plan of perpendicular streets and perfect geometry, makes Valletta and the Palace an example of "historical acting of man" where the utopic theories of Hippodamus of Miletus, Pythagoras and Plato are translated into a strategic and military scheme. The same city scheme is retraceable in Naples in the hippodamian plan of the ancient Roman city, but also in the military Spanish district built at the time of Viceroy Pedro de Toledo (who proposed the same planning). In Rome it was adopted only after Unification to build new residential areas, because the city was not subject to attack from the sea (being far from the coastline) and probably didn't need a military force as concentrated and organised as in Naples and Valletta.

The shaping of the urban space implies, more than the design of the physical space of the city, participation in the political and administrative processes related to urban transformation making more acute the "look" of the city and strengthening connections between aesthetics, knowledge and requests of the government.

THE VENUES OF HISTORICAL MEMORY

In this research the museum must be read as a venue where stories are gathered and summarised into a unique experience composed by the shaping of identity. The definition of culture and the ability of a community to put into effect the highest and most sophisticated ambitions of hegemony, where the political use of art turns into a declaration and a superior messenger of whoever is holding the power. The choice of a historical venue is also linked to its institutional authority. It becomes clear considering the common characteristic of noble palaces having crossed the centuries as witnesses and spectators of the most relevant events in their respective cities. The front *piazza* (square) is an extension of the palace and symbolically intended to represent the promotion and propaganda of the establishment. The palace and the square become fundamental elements for discussing social evolution and the cultural growth of each venue that can interpret the core of political signs and highlight the true nature of a city to its observer.

The Grandmaster's Palace in Valletta includes in its "genealogical tree" great historical events and simple stories of daily life, as well as artistic masterpieces and small details making it unique in his genre. With its presence, the Palace marks the passage of time having left behind remarkable traces of engineering, artistic and decorative skill from the end of the sixteenth century to today that have become cultural and historical palimpsests. The architectural and artistic traces inside and the urban traces on the outside, make this palace the focal centre of the city's development and change. It is, definitively, not only the witness but also the morphology maker of Valletta, becoming the venue from where to start and arrive at for an understanding of the modern and contemporary city. In fact, its location on a specific site in the city has determined the development along axes that were decided not only for geographical reasons, but rather political ones.

Centrality in the city of the sixteenth century, and influence in the development of the urban fabric in the following centuries, made this palace the centre of government expansion. Control at this time was both centripetal and centrifugal for culture and power. Centripetal because it represents the nucleus towards which all masters and artists in different ages gravitate, creating taste and forging style. Moreover, the palace was a catalyst of political interest, since in its making it acquires both collective imagination and role of command as the site of local authority.

Actually, the Grandmaster's Palace started as a palace of the Hospitaller Order of St John, it then became a British Governors' residence and in the end it was turned into the Maltese Presidential Palace and House of Parliament.

Thus the building, therefore, tells and preserves within its walls twists of events and personalities that make it a custodian of history and of collective and civic memory. In its centrifugal characteristics, the palace has projected the idea of government and even at the time of important and sudden transformation it has established a channel of communication with the city and has kept a strong symbolic value able to expand and reflect on the whole territory.

The interest in studying and comparing their parallel events started from this particular peculiarity, shaping the idea of identity that we still have today. A crucial moment in the reflection and awareness of the palace's role and function takes us back to the period between 1798-1799 when the winds of the French Revolution led to deep changes that represent in the nineteenth century the seed of a rift that would drive to unification and to the proclamation of a republican state (Poulot, 2001). The passage of the General Bonaparte via Malta towards Egypt is the moment when the centuries old hierarchical order imposed by the Knights of St John fractures. It marks the end of the Hospitallers and the start of a new historical era.

PAST AND PRESENT IDENTITIES
The main question of the paper is how to retrace the shift from past to present in order to allow the museum experience identity to emerge. Actually, the central point is the making of a definite identity, developed over time and orchestrated by several different historical episodes. The aim of this research is thus to know and define the idea of identity that has been taking shape in the institutional palaces, now partially turned into museums, and how these specific characteristics are experienced. The way to define it starts from the cultural history, intended as the basis for heritage codification, in order to recreate the *esprit du lieu* that defines history, function and identity (Nora, 1984).

The museum identity is a combination of components that have influenced and determined a venue both from a centripetal and centrifugal perspective. The making of a place identity, namely the *genius loci*, is a dialogue between the spirit of the venue and those who move and anthropomorphize the entire environment. Actually the identity of a specific place cannot be disconnected from the territory where it exists and grows, being a process in *itinere* and constantly in evolution. When we talk about museums we can relate to different identities, at least a past and a present one being the beginning and the current step of the evolution.

To trace the past identity historical research is needed in order to put in a chronological sequence the main events that characterised the evolution from a social, an architectural and an artistic point of view not forgetting an urban perspective enabling the comparison between the inside and the outside, the museum and the city. Once a historical breaking point has been found (as in the case of Valletta, the arrival of General Bonaparte and the end of the Hospitaller Order) it is then possible to start a comparison among the historical phases of the Palace to bring to light the different faces of power reflecting the concept of culture of the time. By examining the most representative palaces in the cultural and institutional terms, the idea of identity of the venue takes shape showing its complex structure in all its evidence.

While the past identity can be defined through historical research, the present identity needs a multi-level perspective (Ricoeur, 2006). This means consulting many of the participants involved in the making of the current identity, namely the museum curators and the audience. These two groups epitomize those who construct and those who enjoy the meaning of the museum. This multiple approach allows us to face the problem of the present museum identity, developed and enhanced as a living place of historical and collective memory.

THE ISSUE OF IDENTITIES

The attempt to categorise the identity of a location requires very careful attention and a meticulous study of historical, social, political and artistic characteristics, which have moulded its shape along the centuries. Pinpointing and clearly understanding the true nature of a venue also means to discover that current events are nothing but consequences of social and cultural factors so intrinsic in the urban fabric as to become foreseeable and typical of a specific nucleus in modern society. Basically, the research of identity corresponds to a research of ancestors, a type of genealogical tree whereby recognising one another and delving in the past in order to comprehend the future. This kind of genealogical tree could sometimes lead to faraway lands and conditions, which one had not considered until they appeared and took shape and form. From this perspective, the micro stories turn into the key for reading these complex and fascinating structures, guarding the identity of a community that is indeed a museum. The buildings that for centuries have housed and preserved the cultural expressions of a specific venue can tell an eloquent story about the historical, political and social connections that have shaped the experiences of all individuals. They contribute, in a different manner, to creating a living place of knowledge, a living place of historical and collective memory. Some museums have generated debates and comparisons in their approach to identity, while others have encouraged accepting the approach they have chosen, and nevertheless "the museum has had to address the questions of whose history is being constructed and whose memories are being negotiated by the museum, and ultimately whose voices will be heard and whose will be silenced" (McLean, 2005).

In reality in order to define the concept of identity of a venue one needs to start from memory. Yet one needs to specify the type of memory and Halbwachs (1997) argues that there are no purely private memories as that would lead an individual outside of his community and that each of us always takes with him a quantity of different people (Halbwachs, 1997).

We could combine this idea of plurality in the shaping of memory to the idea of development of a connective structure. Assmann (1997) identifies this as the link between the social and temporal dimension; these two dimensions together give rise to a common space of experience, attempts and actions. The narrative and normative modalities of the connective structure establish the foundations of belonging and identity, leading the individual back to a sense of community; therefore the repetition (*Wiederholung*) and the actualisation (*Vergegenwärtigung*) give a shape to tradition. The concept of cultural memory, at the base of cultural identity, relates to an external dimension of human memory that is divided into four areas: mimetic memory (referring to action), memory of things (referring to objects), communicative memory (referring to language and communication) and cultural memory, which is the summa of the three previous areas. When a mimetic routine assumes the status of a "ritual", that is to say it gets itself a meaningful value in addition to the functional one, it goes beyond the field of memory. Rites belong to cultural memory because they represent a form of transmission and actualization of cultural meaning. The same is true for objects when they remind us of a meaning and not only a practical purpose. Symbols, icons, representations (i.e. commemorative steles, funeral monuments, temples, idols, and so on) transcend the horizon of memory and things, because they make explicit the temporal and identity index that are usually implicit (Assmann, 1997). This

concept then becomes fundamental in the theories of social memory. Warburg developed this theory simultaneously to Halbwachs as one of cultural memory. Assmann compares and analyses the two theories arguing

> "the specific character that a person derives from belonging to a distinct society and culture is […] a result of socialization and customs. The "survival of the type" in the sense of a cultural pseudo-species is a function of the cultural memory. […] Humans must find a means by which to maintain their nature consistently through generations. The solution to this problem is offered by cultural memory, a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behaviour and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation" (Assmann, 1995, 125-126).

THE PLACE IDENTITY

Many topics arise when talking about the identity of a place and they involve many different influences such as geography, urban planning, architecture and heritage. They concern the meaning and the significance of these venues not only for their inhabitants, but also for all people passing through. Place identity basically regards the urban character considered as the look and the nature of a place that can grow and develop through the centuries. Sometimes the urban character can be linked to a single venue and is able to summarise in itself the history and the soul of a whole city. In a sort of ante *litteram* placemaking (Proshansky, 1978; Proshanky, Fabian, Kaminoff, 1985; Hague, Jenkins, 2005), from the sixteenth century some architects were commissioned to plan and shape the city of Valletta fulfilling the patrons' expectations of fame and grandeur. In these specific cases the construction of the Palace also meant the transformation and the movement of the urban fabric towards new institutional places.

Nowadays it is possible to talk about the significance in heritage of these venues, because they embodied the historical value and the cultural identity of their environment. To define historical value it is necessary to refer to Riegl, an Austrian art historian of the second half of the nineteenth century, who devoted his studies to establish art history as a self-sufficient academic discipline. In one of his last works, *The modern cult of monuments* (1908), he states that it

> "is apparently the more comprehensive and may therefore be elaborated on first. We call historical all things that once were and are no longer. In keeping with the most modern conception, we include therein another view as well; that everything that once was can never be again, and that everything that once was forms an irreplaceable and inextricable link in a chain of development. Or, in other words: everything that succeeds was conditioned by what came before and would not have occurred in the manner in which it did if not for those precedents" (Riegl, 1903: 70).

Then Riegl also provides a definition of artistic value that is relevant to this research in the perspective of an interpretation related to the collections that are exhibited at the museum. Thus, Riegl argues that

> "*artistic value* has to be defined differently, depending on the earlier or more recent point of view. According to the older definition, a work of art was considered to possess artistic value if it corresponded to the requirements of an alleged objective, but to date never clearly formulated, aesthetic. The more recent point of view assesses the artistic value of a monument according to the extent to which it meets the requirement of contemporary *Kunstwollen* (will to art), requirements that are even less clearly formulated and, strictly speaking, also never will be because they change incessantly from subject to subject and from moment to moment" (Riegl, 1903: 71).

It is then interesting the definition of monument given by Riegl to mean the way one is used to categorise artefacts and works according to personal sensitivity and taste. In fact, a sort of translation is accomplished every time one declares and defines a work made in the past as a historical monument. It is evident in so far as

> "the creators of these works, which we consider today as historical monuments, wanted primarily to satisfy certain practical or ideal needs of their own, of their contemporaries, and, at most, of their heirs, and certainly did not as a rule intend to leave evidence of their artistic and cultural life to future generations, then the term "monuments", which we nevertheless use to define these works can only be meant subjectively, not objectively" (Riegl, 1908: 72).

But, if a historical monument is just the result of a subjective process of making meaning, how can it turn into an emblem of cultural and collective identity?

Identity can be seen as the conception and expression of personal and group affiliation, especially in cultural identity. Referring to monuments and artworks, it is basically the distinctive characteristic belonging to any unique venue that becomes the symbol of a social category or group. In this sense, identity conceptualises in itself both relational and contextual aspects aiming to define and label a specific *milieu*.

From a psychological point of view, identity is "the totality of one's self-construal, in which, how one construes oneself in the present expresses the continuity between how one construes oneself as one was in the past and how one construes oneself as one aspires to be in the future" (Weinreich, 1986). Enlarged to a social or ethnic group, this definition also includes those dimensions that express the continuity between one's construal of past ancestry and one's future aspirations in relation to ethnicity. Consequently, identity is "a structural representation of the individual's existential experience, in which the relationships between self and other agents are organised in relatively stable structures over time […] with the emphasis on the socio-cultural milieu in which self relates to other agents and institutions" (Weinreich and Saunderson, 2003). It means that experiences and vicissitudes contribute in forming the identity and, as well as for

individuals and social groups, it can be applicable even for venues and places where the individuals and socials groups act, of which they constitute a vital and regenerating memory. This theory leads to a wider observation of the issue about identity including the social and cultural aspect.

Social identity is not to be intended as a categorization but rather as a general interpretation of self and group processes (Turner and Reynolds, 2010). An interesting point is the statement according to which social behaviour modifies along a continuum between interpersonal and intergroup behaviour; social identity thus focuses on the social structural factors that foresee the end of the continuum that will most influence an individual's behaviour, with the forms that behaviour may take (Turner, 1999). Instead, with cultural identity, the main focus is on identifiers that complete and permit the individual to be understood as a whole coherent subject. These identifiers may be found in different settings related to history, language, religious beliefs, aesthetics and other various expressions of culture that all participate in shaping identity. The complexity of cultural attitudes and traditions, on one side, and social components, on the other side, should be considered in the interpretation of a particular location especially a historical palace which is often associated with many historical meanings. These elements become essential in the interpretation of cultural heritage as the contemporary world tends to easily forget the past. In these terms, identity locations such as museums allow us to retrace the historical events and provide a remarkable set of information. The visual and tactile artefacts housed in museums can preserve the memory of a community, a place and a tradition, giving at the same time the opportunity to retrace and put together all the mosaic tiles that shape our identity.

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Local population's perceptions of the impact and potential of disaster tourism in Montserrat, West Indies

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ABSTRACT

Although dark tourism research has gained significant attention over the last two decades, very little research effort has, to this date, concentrated on investigating the impact of dark tourism practices on the local population of "disaster" sites. The current study examines the multidimensional effect of disaster tourism applications on a local community. The paper considers the island of Montserrat (West Indies) as the case study material. Both a quantitative as well as a qualitative field research have been conducted (through a survey on the local community and semi-structured interviews with tourism-related stakeholders respectively) in order to explore residents' perceptions with regard to the impacts of such practices on the community. The results revealed that the development of disaster tourism presupposes the adoption of practices that respect locals' emotions about the disaster and prevent unethical behaviors on behalf of tourists or tourist agents. Tourism practices that ignore such locals' feelings, especially in the relief and recovery stage of the disaster area, may cause negative locals' attitude towards further development of disaster tourism practices.

Keywords: dark tourism, disaster tourism, local community perceptions, Montserrat island

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been significant academic interest over the surge of Dark Tourism phenomenon, as visits to places associated with death, mourning or atrocities have risen (Foley & Lennon, 1996; Raine, 2013; Stone, 2013). This type of market niche has attracted global attention and controversy, despite its long standing origins (Biran & Hyde, 2013; Blom, 2000; Issac & Cakmak, 2013; Stone, 2013; Stone & Sharpley, 2008).

Dark Tourism or Thanatourism embraces a wide range of subcategories, many of which are subject to debate, since they overlap with motives of Danger or Extreme Tourism, among others (Stone, 2006). Dark tourism is a broad ranging and often-contentious consumer activity that can provoke debate about how death and the dead are packaged up and consumed within the modern

visitor economy as emphasized by Stone (2013). This tourism form represents a less widespread trend, with numerous limitations, both natural and ethical (Hystad & Keller, 2005; Kelman & Dodds, 2009; Lee & Hyun, 2016; Nagai, 2012; Sather-Wagstaff, 2011).

Over the last two decades, attention in the literature has been paid mainly towards two directions. On the one hand, researchers in the field have focused towards the development of a theoretical framework underpinning dark tourism activity. This theoretical framework is based on attractions' typology, that is, on the identification of places associated with recent or historical death and suffering (Blom, 2000; Royek, 1993; Sharpley & Stone, 2009; Stone, 2006). One the other hand, the literature has recently focused on the demand side of the phenomenon. In an effort to better understand and conceptualize the motivation behind visiting "dark" sites, researchers turned their attention towards the identification of demand characteristics and push and pull motivating factors (Bissell & Mackay, 2009; Biran et. al., 2011, Issac & Cakmak, 2013; Farmaki, 2013; Gaya, 2013; Raine, 2013; Stone & Sharpley, 2008; Yuill, 2003).

Disaster tourism, on the other hand, as a sub-category of dark tourism, has only recently attracted the interest of academics and researchers. As a result, there has been a significant number of recent studies proposing models for analyzing and developing disaster tourism management strategies (Faulkner, 2001; Faulkner & Vikulov, 2001; Gothan, 2007; Gould & Lewis, 2007; Miller, 2008; Hystad & Keller, 2005; 2008; Lee & Hyun, 2016; Ryan & Kohli, 2006). However, the above mentioned studies have mainly focused on planning issues and suggest strategies that would potentially reduce the impacts of crises and disasters on businesses and society. What has not been considered by the literature so far is the impact of disaster tourism practices on local society and economy (Wright and Sharpley, 2016).

The aim of this study is to fill this void in the literature by moving away from the examination of visitors' motivation factors, towards the identification of the impacts that disaster tourism practices would have on the local population. The paper maintains that the development of an appropriate theoretical framework for the examination of the impacts from disaster tourism activity could facilitate and expedite the social as well as economic recovery process. When it comes to the impact of disaster tourism practices on the local population, there are only a handful (if any) of attempts to identify the societal, economic and cultural effects of such activities on destinations that have suffered by a severe natural or man-made disaster. Moreover, there is no significant debate in regards to ethics and deontology associated with this kind of indiscreet and "morbid" form of tourism activity (Lennon, & Foley, 2000). Kelman and Dodds (2009) in an attempt to develop a "code of ethics", they initially identified the factors that "push" visitors towards disaster sites and then proposed an operational framework for destinations that tries to retain disaster tourism's advantages while limiting its disadvantages.

It is this void in the literature this study tries to fill in, by conducting a field research at the island of Montserrat, which aims to identify the impacts of disaster tourism practices on sites affected by natural or man-made catastrophes and propose directions towards utilization of such methods. The research took place on the volcanic island of Montserrat (West Indies), which has

suffered a number of eruptions between 1995 and 2010, with the Soufriere Hills volcano eruption in 1997 being the most severe one, that covered buildings and streets around the island and completely destroyed Plymouth, the capital of the island (Gaudru, 2014).

The paper begins by discussing the existing literature on dark tourism (literature review section), and presents the various dimensions that have been identified so far with respect to the supply-side and demand-side of this phenomenon. The subsequent section (Methodology) presents the study area of Montserrat island and discusses the methodology applied in this research. This is then followed by a section where the results are being presented and analyzed (Empirical Results). The paper concludes with a section on managerial implications (for practitioners and policy makers alike) and recommends potential directions for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

DARK TOURISM
Travel to and experience of places associated with dark tourism is increasingly common within contemporary society, and there has been documented a significant growth in the number of visitors to dark tourism sites (Issac & Cakmak, 2013). Dark tourism fanatics are usually driven by the eagerness to witness history and to experience a historical event that happened, not by their fascination with death (Biran, et.al. 2011). It is, in all its forms, a multi-dimensional experience that can have a deep impact and make people put their life in perspective from a comfortable distance, (Aicken, et.al., 2005). According to Daams (2007), dark tourism provides an intricate experience that can have profound relevance to our perception and critical ability. It also provides emotional and psychological benefits to the visitors, given that dark tourism related practices are often used as an educational tool and an instrument to externalize the effects that are associated to the situation (Walsh, 1992).Aside the non-pecuniary (psychological) benefits, dark tourism activity is also associated with pecuniary benefits, given that it contributes towards the restoration and reclamation of the area, as a result of the tourism income multiplier effect.

Nevertheless, the industry is surrounded with controversy, mainly due to a shortage of detailed reports, studies and expertise and has been criticized for being associated with voyeuristic and "morbid" (Blom, 2000) consumer behavior. Part of the criticism revolving dark tourism activities also stresses the pursuit of economic exploitation of human tragedy and violation of privacy, for supporting extreme political regimes, for amplifying the environmental footprint, for setting impediments to the provided humanitarian aid, as well as for superficiality and lack of interactivity (Coote, 2010). Bearing in mind all these sensitive morality dilemmas, such practices can reveal tensions in cultural memory, interpretation and authenticity (Stone & Sharley, 2009).

The conceptualization of dark tourism is based on the identification of the motives that drive tourists towards sites or experiences associated with death and suffering. So far, there has been extended literature that proposes a variety of motives and develops a typology of dark tourists (Bissell & Mackay, 2009; Farmaki, 2013; Raine, 2013 Stone & Sharpley, 2008) but also

discussing the broader context of the tourist experience and the individual interpretations in relation to "dark" sites (Issac & Cakmak, 2013; Johnston, 2013; Yan, *et.al*., 2016). When it comes to heritage sites, that are of particular historical meaning and importance to visitors, research has stressed both educational motives (Biran, *et.al*, 2011), as well as remembrance, i.e, "the imperativeness that current and future generations learn and memorialize the lessons so that such events never occur again" (Yuill, 2003; 208). Curiosity and novelty seeking have also been identified as "push" motivating factors for visiting a site of remembrance (Gaya, 2013). Furthermore, Issac & Cakmak (2013) challenge the view that dark tourism is defined by the characteristics of the site itself, and instead look at visitor experiences in order to define whether a site is 'dark'. Through a quantitative study on the visitors of the former transit camp of Westerbork, the authors concluded that there is no 'essence' of darkness that attracts visitors to a site. Their study revealed "self-understanding', 'curiosity', 'conscience', desire to visit a 'must see place' and 'exclusiveness" as visitors' main motives.

Other scholars and academics have directed their research towards the importance of developing a strategy and thus suggesting a planning framework that would assist "dark" places, as well as respective communities to manage dark tourism activity more effectively. Gaya (2013) identified several managerial implications with respect to marketing a heritage site, including the need to improve a site's interpretation and to enhance its authenticity, while Yuill (2003) asserted that understanding visitors' motivation could contribute to a site's sustainability through enhancing visitor's satisfaction, word-of-mouth promotion and thus increasing site's revenue. In addition, Yan, *et. al*. (2016) suggested that dark tourism sites promote themselves via a brand marketing approach from the perspective of consumption, especially in its early stage of development. Even at a micro-level, Cioccio and Michael (2007) examined the 2003 Victoria bushfires and more specifically they studied how local businesses prepared for, and recovered from that event, revealing how crucial it is that real-world operators rely on accumulated experience to manage their own recovery.

DISASTER TOURISM
The definition of a disaster that prevails in the academic and professional literature is the one proposed by UNISDR (2009; 9), according to which a disaster is "a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources" and as such it requires significant external assistance and resources towards community's recovery (Wright & Sharpley, 2016). Hence, disaster tourism is considered a subcategory of dark tourism that is specifically directed to tourism to destinations devastated by natural (e.g., earthquakes or volcanic eruptions) or man-made catastrophes (e.g. nuclear sites). Consequently, "disaster tourism" could be defined as traveling for predominantly recreational or leisure purposes to see areas affected by a disaster (Kelman & Dodds, 2009). It is also considered as a activity through which tourists can appreciate the present situation in the disaster area and can support the regional economy by spending money in the local market. It is indeed crucial that disaster tourism practices guarantee financial support for the visiting areas and cultural interaction with the local population as part of the reconstruction effort that is associated

to the damaging event. Moreover, it is a mechanism of resiliency, helping society to accelerate recovery after a tragedy (Korstanje, 2012). Although this type of tourism can be criticized for showcasing tragedy, the experiences are considered valuable to tourists, as it enhances their understanding of a society's social structure (Nagai, 2012).

According to Wright and Sharpley (2016), the distinctive issue of disaster tourism as opposed to dark tourism is that the local community usually becomes the focus of the tourist gaze, and as such it inevitably incorporates an element of fascination. Furthermore, in most cases, disaster sites are characterized by limited tourism-related infrastructure, since people will spontaneously visit and experience those sites as tourists. Consequently, it is important to understand the perceptions of the local community towards such tourism practices, as a means to introducing a more effective disaster management tourism plan. In addition, it is also crucial to identify the impact of disaster tourism activities at the local society and economy. With respect to the former, the study conducted by Wright and Sharpley (2016) in L' Aquila (Italy) a town that was severely hit by an earthquake back in 2009, revealed the importance of controlling the influx of tourists especially in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, as well as encouraging an appropriate behavior on behalf of the tourists. Several other studies have also suggested various frameworks towards improving disaster tourism management at a destination level, in an attempt to contribute to the destination's disaster recovery process (Faulkner & Vikulov, 2001; Gould & Lewis, 2007; Hystad & Kelller, 2008; Lee & Hyun, 2016; Miller, 2008; Ritchie, 2004; Yankorska & Hannan (2014).

Yet, when it comes to the impact of disaster tourism practices on the local population, there are only few (if any) attempts to identify the societal, economic and cultural effects of such activities on destinations that have suffered by a severe natural or man-made disaster. Moreover, there is not significant debate in regards to ethics and deontology associated with this kind of indiscreet, other called "morbid" tourism form (Lennon, & Foley, 2000). Kelman and Dodds (2009) in an attempt to develop a "code of ethics" they initially identified the factors that "push" visitors towards disaster sites and then proposed an operational framework for destinations that tries to retain disaster tourism's advantages while limiting its disadvantages. It is this void in the literature this study tries to fill in, by conducting a field research at the island of Montserrat, which aims to identify the impacts of disaster tourism practices on sites affected by natural or man-made catastrophes and propose directions towards utilization of such methods.

METHODOLOGY

MONTSERRAT AS A DISASTER SITE

Montserrat, an island in the Caribbean Sea and an overseas territory of the United Kingdom, is a unique case of Disaster Tourism destination, at its very early stage of development, compared to its pre-disaster era, when it used to be a vibrant spot of residential and eco tourism activity. The area has been devastated by all elements of nature, including long lasting droughts and the renowned Hurricane Hugo in 1989, which was followed by a series of volcanic eruptions. The

volcanic eruptions back in 1995 and 1997 were particularly devastating, leading to the evacuation of two thirds of the island's terrain and to the overwhelming reduction of its population to 5,100 inhabitants from 12,000 in the period prior to the eruptions (Worldmeters, 2015). Recently, a more structured tourism activity in the exclusion zone (area with restricted entrance marked as unsafe) has been achieved, with an authorization program for tour guides provided by the state.

Montserrat has always presented a very distinguished tourism product, especially in a Caribbean context. Between the early 70's to late 80's, the island had become a pole of attraction for a series of worldwide known artists. Indicatively, the AIR studios in Montserrat are where Sir George Martin had created some of the most recognizable music of his. As a result of this attention, came the flourishing of residential tourism, consisting mostly of North American and British 'winter birds'- expats, a tourism form that was partially sustained even during the volcanic crisis. By that time, the volcano and the nature surroundings had already left their mark in the regional 'soft adventure' tourism and the island had all the fundamental human, natural and physical resources to support the rapid growth of the field and was contributing to an approximate 20-36% of the islands GDP (Government of Montserrat, 2012).

However, during the first two years of high volcanic activity, the industry collapsed together with all the destination attributes that could make up to its dynamics. Nowadays, although not fully restored, tourism has a totally different status and importance. The latest data estimate that a 5% of the island's GDP can be associated with the tourism sector (Government of Montserrat, 2012), while other major economic sectors are now being prioritized at a policy level too, including the construction and energy (geothermal) sectors. The island still relies heavily on residential tourism, mainly due to repatriation of Montserratians, as well as on other outdoor activities (e.g. birdwatching, hiking and diving). Disaster tourism is a newly established element, which took a more structured form in 2014 with the designation of an official tour in the 'Buried Capital'. It can be argued that Disaster tourism has advanced beyond its experimental or 'break-through' stage of individual curiosity seekers, scientists and humanitarian aid workers visiting the island.

PRIMARY RESEARCH AIM AND METHODOLOGY
The aim of this study is to reveal the social and economic impacts disaster tourism practices have on local population, as well as to identify stakeholders' opinion regarding the future development of disaster tourism in Montserrat. More specifically, the objectives of the study are:

i) to identify and record disaster tourism practices in the island of Montserrat, considering the relevant lack of secondary information and data both in governmental sources, as well as in the relevant academic literature,

ii) to investigate the social and economic impacts of disaster tourism in Montserrat, as these are perceived by locals

iii) to explore stakeholders' opinion and record their proposals for future development of disaster tourism in Montserrat.

In order for the above mentioned objectives to be accomplished, a field research has been conducted in the island during the period of April to June 2016, enriched with a few existing prior secondary data.

The primary study took place in two stages. The first stage involved face to face distribution of structured questionnaires to local population. More specifically an effort was made to generate a sample that would include people directly or indirectly affected by tourism activity. This stage opted to capture the widest possible range of local views and opinions, inducing them to express additional aspirations and personal concerns. As a result, the sample consisted of hospitality employees, shop owners, museums, food and beverage managers/owners, expats and underprivileged social groups. The participants were given a bilingual questionnaire (both in English and Spanish) that consisted of 16 closed-ended questions. The population's mentality with respect to disclosing personal information and opinions posed difficulties during the data collection phase, resulting in a relatively small number of 117 usable questionnaires that represent an approximate 2.2% of the island's population (The World Fact book, 2016). Random sampling was not a feasible option, due to time constraints. Furthermore, the continuous influx of scientists, academics and consultants in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, which has lasted up until today, has created a negative attitude towards any communication and opinion exchange between the local population and the researchers. These have been the main factors that led to adopting a convenience sampling method.

The second step involved the deployment of face-to face in-depth interviews with local tourism stakeholders, including government officers, accessibility coordinators, external strategy advisors and international marketers, representatives of the Montserrat Development Corporation and Economic Chamber, tour operators, scientific organizations, including the Volcano Observatory, the Hospitality Association, the Disaster Management Corporation, British Governmental officers, i.e. the Department for International Development (DfiD) and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and other public, governmental or private institutions' representatives. Individuals with a wider, but related background (i.e. Ministers of Education, Agriculture and security) shaping Disaster Tourism status have also been included in the participants' list. In total, 38 interviews were conducted during May and June 2016.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

SURVEY FINDINGS

In brief, the socio - demographic characteristics of the survey participants can be summarized as follows: Sixty two percent (62%) of the respondents were female and the vast majority of the respondents (in total 89.5%) were economically active (17 to 60 years of age, of which 27.6% in the age group of 17-30 years, 32.4% between 31-45 years old and 29.5% in the age group of 46-60 years). More than half of the sample (57.4%) were natives, while 26.1% of the respondents came from the broader Caribbean Region (except Montserrat). The education level of the sample showed a high percentage of participants with university, college or post-secondary

degrees (79.8%), while one in four participants (19.3%) had a secondary education degree. The majority of respondents (77.6%) had no income generated from tourism-related activities, while only 15% of them earned up to 30% of their income from a tourism related activity. With regard to the personal experiences and feelings, almost six out of ten respondents had experienced the volcanic eruptions of 1995 and 1997. Almost half of those who experienced the volcanic eruptions (55.71%) had to resettle to another part of the island or abroad, as a result of the disaster.

Almost seven out of ten survey participants (67.5%) asserted that they agree and feel comfortable with the tourism activities that are being developed in the exclusion zone (volcano and former city of Plymouth), whereas the rest seem to have mixed feelings. In addition, half of the sample indicated its desire to engage in tourism activities, while only 12.3% declared to be completely negative to this prospect.

The impact of tourism development in several sectors of their personal life is valued differently from the locals. Respondents estimate the impact of tourism development as positive or very positive with respec to their interactions with foreigners (42.7%), their social life (38,3%), their mentality and personal views (38.0%), the community engagement (33.9%), quality of life (28.3%), their type of employment (24.7%), their income (22.8%), their training / educational opportunities (16.8%), and healthcare development (12.5%).

According to the above, it is not surprising that a minority of locals (13.4%) believe that tourism is now the most important economic sector of the island. They consider the constriction and the public sectors (with 31.9% and 26.9% respectively) as the driving forces behind economic development, while all other sectors (agricultural, services, etc) accumulate very low percentages. Nevertheless, almost three out of four respondents (74.8%) either agree or strongly agree that tourism will be developed significantly in the near future, while only 5.0% believe that tourism in the island will decrease in the future.

Concerning locals' opinion about the type of tourism that should be developed in the next few years, almost forty percent (40%) of respondents have identified ecotourism, as well as disaster tourism as the most dominant tourism forms. Residential and adventure tourism follow with almost one out of four participants indicating these forms. Other types of tourism (excursions, cruise, business, etc.) are mentioned only by 10.0-15.0% of the sample. Even disaster tourism is getting a significant percentage as a "should be" tourism type in the future, since 27.0% of the respondents suggest this to be the main form of tourism in Montserrat. However, the majority of the sample (47.0%) is negatively inclined to this option.

Finally, there are two important findings about locals' perspective of disaster tourism. First, the majority of them (68.4%) believe that the volcano catastrophe has strengthened the uniqueness and the identity of Montserrat as a tourism destination. Second, most of them conceive a negative or at least a neutral effect of disaster tourism on their social-economic life. Locals' perception about the impact of disaster tourism in several fields of the community life is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Positive or negative effect of disaster tourism according to Montserrat's residents

Field	Negative (%)	Neutral (%)	Positive (%)
1. Economic development	17.7	38.9	43.4
2. Employment – New job positions	19.3	33.3	47.4
3. Seasonality of employment	23.6	38.2	38.2
4. Wealth distribution equality	36.0	54.4	9.6
5. Living costs for locals	26.5	58.4	15.0
6. Infrastructure	26.1	50.5	23.4
7. Foreign investments	22.0	49.5	28.4
8. Quality of tourism	16.4	37.3	46.4
9. Disaster recovery process	20.4	53.7	25.9
10. Cultural exchange	18.8	36.6	44.6
11. Local pride	14.3	38.4	47.3
12. Community engagement	13.0	54.6	32.4
13. Quality of life	15.5	58.2	26.4
14. Criminality	21.3	63.0	15.7
15. Everyday habits	9.0	72.1	18.9
16. Education opportunities	13.6	48.2	38.2
17. Image of the island	14.4	29.7	55.9
18. Variety of recreational activities	22.0	44.0	33.9
19. Environment	19.6	50.5	29.9

INTERVIEWS' FINDINGS

The interviews conducted in situ were recorded and subsequently transcribed and analyzed. In-depth interviews reveal very interesting findings, which are presented in a combined discussion in two thematic areas: Perceived Impact of Disaster Tourism, and Future Perspectives of Disaster Tourism in Montserrat.

Perceived Impact of Disaster Tourism

Initially, respondents were asked about the local community's perceptions regarding the term dark or disaster tourism. Responses were split. On the one hand, most of respondents understand that dark tourism is a reality in Montserrat. On the other hand, they believe that the term "dark tourism" has strong negative connotations. They believe that connecting Montserrat with this term, leads only to a general underestimation of the "non-disaster" characteristics of the island, like the excellent natural resources and the authentic way of living. In the same direction,

interviews recorded a general dissatisfaction from dominant mottos for Montserrat ("Ash to Cash", "Green or Greet" and "Pompeii of the Caribbean") that associated the island only with the disaster. Some of the respondents proposed alternative names for the kind of tourism coming from volcanic disaster, such as "volcano tourism", "adventure tourism" and "geotourism".

Respondents' opinion about the general, existing benefits of disaster tourism also varies. They positively believe that disaster tourism in Montserrat is helping somehow local population to be familiar with the disaster, to accept the current situation but also to participate more to the post disaster reconstruction programme. But in parallel, they have a general negative attitude about disaster tourism because this kind of tourism cause "depression to a significant part of population" and commercialize personal experiences from the disaster. For example, according to some interviewees, there have been tourist guides in the exclusion area's guides which recite their experience from the disaster period, in a more exaggerated manner, in order to give a full package of services to tourists.

Interviewees indicate many kinds of impacts of disaster tourism in Montserrat until now. In an attempt to summarize them, they have been categorized in four broad categories, although all these categories should be considered as interdependent. Table 2 below presents the most important and frequently reported impacts of disaster tourism in Montserrat.

Table 2. Positive and negative impact of disaster tourism in Montserrat

Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
GENERAL OPERATION / ADMINISTRATION - Upgrading of crisis management systems - Upgrading of disaster prevention procedures (e.g. introduction of new safety rules, signaling) ECONOMY / TOURISM / EMPLOYMENT - Compiling professional and other skills - Introduction and establishment of new types of professions like specialized guides to the Zone - Strengthening free lancers and artisans - Encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship, especially the youth (this partially leads to a slowdown in the phenomenon of 'brain drain') - Enhancing foreign exchange earnings from strongest currencies like US dollar - Pushing the development of tourism infrastructure and superstructure	GENERAL OPERATION / ADMINISTRATION - Distracting time and resources from non-tourism institutions like Montserrat Volcano Observatory (MVO) - Challenging (often) the operational dysfunction of the community's everyday life – E.g. Full occupation of transport means at the slightest increase of incoming tourists (this impact is combined with the general discomfort for the inadequate quantity of transport means) ECONOMY / TOURISM / EMPLOYMENT - Little economic impact for the locals - poor limited distribution of Disaster Tourism turnover among locals - Attraction of low-quality tourism - Disorientation from most profitable forms of tourism (e.g. residential tourism)

- Encouraging funding institutions (like DfiD) to release resources for infrastructure (e.g. maintenance of footpaths)
- Indirect strengthening of the demand for other forms of tourism in Montserrat (e.g. ecotourism, scientific tourism, conference tourism)
- Enhancing Montserrat's destination brand

SOCIETY
- Familiarizing local people with the disaster and the current situation (recovery stage)
- Intercultural contact
- Encouraging volunteering
- Emotional reattachment of youngest locals with the southern part of the island, reconnection to homeland for migrated - returning Montserratians

ENVIRONMENT
- Exploiting more areas within and outside the exclusion Zone
- Small technological and environmental footprint

- Causing (often) problems in more profitable economic activities of Montserrat -Geographic overlap of areas of Dark Tourism with those who host the sand and geothermal energy extraction in Plymouth

SOCIETY
- Feeling for a disruption of the 'sanctity' of Plymouth
- Emotional charging especially from victims; feeling that their personal experiences from the disaster are commercialized
- Reinforcing the belief that the disaster does not represent the true nature and the real peculiarities of island

ENVIRONMENT
- Small but existed disturbance of the ecosystem in some accessible areas in the exclusion zone

With regards to the economic benefits of disaster tourism for the locals, interviews reveal that there is not a significant economic impact. Indeed, primary data confirms the few secondary data sources, indicating that tourism represents only a small percentage of the GDP breakdown with a relatively small growth rate (ECCU, 2015). Interviewees gave various reasons for the low economic impact of disaster tourism in Montserrat: attraction of low-quality tourism, lack of significant tourism industry infrastructure, limited distribution of disaster tourism turnover among locals.

In order to fully understand these reasons, someone should comprehend the general economic life and the disaster history of Montserrat. For instance, as indicated in interviews, nowadays Montserrat can be positioned at the ending phase of the recovery stage and disaster tourism is a "complementary product", since residential tourism is still the main form of tourism. Both tourism forms, but especially disaster tourism, presupposed the "normalization" of natural hazard in order to be developed enough. (Indeed, there has been a mild volcanic activity in Montserrat over the last 20 years.) In addition, the lack of large-scale tourism infrastructure (port, large hotel establishments, etc), as well as the unstable air and sea accessibility to the island, do not facilitate an increase of tourist arrivals. Other factors that have been associated to the low economic impact of disaster tourism are the limited visiting areas in exclusion zones, the

undeclared employment in disaster tourism (locals usually have at least two jobs / professions) which does not allow for income data recording, the helicopter tours in the disaster area that operate from Antigua, and thus do not contribute to Montserrat's taxation, etc. Concerning the limited distribution of disaster tourism turnovers among locals, an expert pointed out that "In such a segmented society (i.e. Montserrat), the profits or the intangible benefits would be distributed very unevenly, if visitors' arrivals increased. Due to the size of the island, money will spread quickly, the question is how".

Respondents were also asked to indicate practices already carried out in Montserrat that have positive or negative effect on the development of disaster tourism. Table 3 presents the most important and frequently reported practices.

Table 3. Existing practices that affect disaster tourism development in Montserrat

Positive Practices	Negative Practices
Actions for the enhancement of security in the exclusion zone – Fencing and patrols Criminalizing of unauthorized entry into the Exclusion Zone Preparation of communications and evacuation plan in emergency situations- Convenient and easy to understand manuals and regulations Cooperation initiatives among several tourism and development local authorities and institutions for a holistic approach (Police, Disaster Management Coordination Agency (DMCA), Montserrat Volcano Observatory (MVO), Rescue Teams, Tourism Division), Montserrat Development Corporation (MDC), Department for International Development (DfiD), tourism marketers, etc. The design and the implementation of a training program by MDC, which leads to the only legal license to practice the profession of tourist guides / drivers and to have authorized access to Plymouth The tourist route in Exclusion Zone (only in	Unauthorized entry to exclusion areas by untrained individuals such as journalists, returnees (expatriates) who claim their rights for their properties in exclusion zone, locals who paid by tourists in order to offer services like hiking in the zone. Unethical behaviors such as vandalism from some tourists by stealing objects as souvenirs from the abandoned houses and the existence of trade of stolen items and natural materials of the exclusion area by local vendors. Administrative failures such as imposition of entry payment for the victims who have property within the exclusion zone, impotence in safety protocols application and bureaucracy, ambiguity about the level of risk and about the division of responsibilities among authorities, lack of information to population of Montserrat before and during the implementation of the plan for Disaster Tourism. Lack of serious transportation infrastructure (e.g. a few tourist buses, improper port facilities) and unstable connectivity of Montserrat

Plymouth so far) which is strategically designed in order tourists to collect much information in short time, but also to see from the starting point of the route the modern and wealth area of Montserrat (promoting villas real estate and residential tourism)

Some dark tourism products beyond exclusive zone tour: autonomous tours in the outskirts of volcano area like Belham Valley and Foxes Bay, where the effects of the volcano is also visible, or tours for a panoramic view of exclusion section from Jackboy Hill, Corkhill and Richmont Hill.

(e.g. the boat line from Antigua is subject to weather conditions)

Poor international marketing efforts, especially web and social media marketing, and poor mechanisms / procedures for collecting quantitative data related to dark tourism evolution in Montserrat

Unexploited tourism potential since the majority of tourists are coming from Antigua with all inclusive packages and there is a difficulty in organizing independent tours (bureaucracy and absence of the proper information to tourists)

The majority of respondents asserted that Montserrat has not adapted any good practices from other countries. Only in few cases interviewees indicated knowledge transfer from abroad that was related to disaster management and more specifically to natural disaster management and prevention practices that have been applied by rescue teams in Dominica, St. Lucia and Martinique (although the first two islands are not associated with volcanoes). Moreover, although the history and type of Soufriere Hills is rather unique, scientists reported several visits abroad prior to the development of the Geopark. More specifically they visited Lanzarote (Spain) for advisory purposes and Saint Maarten (Netherlands) in order to record communication systems during a hurricane event. With respect to good practices in the marketing field, experts mentioned Pompeii (Italy), the famous buried city due to the eruption of mount Vesuvius; Pompeii was the inspiration for the Montserrat motto 'Pompeii of the Caribbean'. A few interviewees also referred to Hiroshima (Japan) and Hawaii (USA) as noteworthy examples of how a disaster has been converted into a tourist product. At this point it is worth noting that Montserrat administration services (in all fields, including tourism) invite external consultants for advices on local issues, as it is the case in all Caribbean Overseas Territories.

Future Perspectives of Disaster Tourism in Montserrat
The majority of interviewees support the use of the volcano as the basis of the island's differentiation strategy for destination competitiveness, since the volcano nowadays is connected with other exploitable opportunities, such as geothermal energy. According to an expert "the volcano is the only ready-to-use product of Montserrat". Nevertheless, almost all the participants declared in various ways that the volcano should not be the only element connected to Montserrat's identity. More specifically, since there are several volcanic islands in Caribbean like Martinique, Montserrat is and should be promoted as unique destination for several other treasons, such as its black sand, the beautiful green hills, the lack of industrialization and consumerism and the authentic way of life.

Concerning the strategic planning of tourism in Montserrat, the majority of respondents were familiar with the Tourism Development Plan (TDP) for the period 2012-2022, but only few of them knew that this plan is being reviewed from the current government in order to create a new Master Plan, the "Strategy for Tourism 2015-2025". This Master Plan has not been presented to the public yet (as of September 2016). According to those who knew the contents of both, these two tourism development strategies adopt different approaches. The current plan (TDP 2012-2022) emphasizes on Disaster Tourism and on that base certain actions have been applied so far, such as tourist guides trainings in the Plymouth area. On the contrary, those who are familiar with the new Master Plan revealed that this forthcoming strategic plan embraces several tourism forms, and thus underestimates disaster tourism and merely refers to Plymouth and to the exclusion area.

The results also indicated a common discontent towards the inability of the Government to implement their strategic plan. Respondents suggested that creating new plans is a waste of public money and time, since current plans have not been given adequate time to achieve their goals. Furthermore, a vast majority of the interviewees stated that TDP seemed mimetic and completely inappropriate for Montserrat because it included suggestions   that are given by the Montserrat Development Corporation (MDC) projects, such as the construction of a large luxury hotel, the building of 300 villas, etc. The size of the required investments is considered by respondents as unrealistic, without having seured any public or foreign private funding. The size of the required investments is also a restriction for the new Master Plan, and only the commitment on behalf of the Department for International Development (DfiD) to release development funds could assist with the plan's implementation.

There was a mutual agreement among the interviewees, with respecto to the direction that should be followed by the local tourism industry. The tourism forms to be developed in Montserrat should be "multilevel and multiform", without any of tourism forms destroying the others. The participants argued that Montserrat should highlight some underestimated destination attributes (peacefulness, natural beauty and authenticity), enhance disaster tourism or other new forms of tourism and further develop the already established tourism forms (i.e. eco-tourism, excursion, cruise, festival, residential tourism). The new forms of tourism that were suggested by the participants (besides disaster tourism) included heritage tourism, adventure tourism and various forms of dark tourism (e.g. tourism based on black magic monuments and superstitions, since these are still common beliefs in East Caribbean). In other words, the participants suggested that disaster tourism be part of a more "holistic" tourism product, that would secure sustainable development. As one interviewee mentioned "disaster tourism could be the bait".

The last part of interviews referred to the restrictions faced by future development of disaster tourism in Montserrat, as well as to the identification of experts' proposals. There are four main obstacles th the development of disaster tourism in Montserrat. First, it is the volcano itself. On the one hand, a potential risk from the volcano still exists, causing a certain degree of uncertainty to stakeholders. On the other hand, the low level of volcano activity deprives the element of adrenaline that attracts most of the tourists. As one of the participants pointed out: "The hill

(Soufriere Hills) was once very impressive; we felt awe watching the gray, burnt area and the continuous vents of ash. Now, most of the area is green, almost graphic, and continues to be regenerated rapidly. The same happens with the memories that fade. I doubt it if within a decade from now we will be able to sell any disaster tourism product".

Second, the inaccessible rings (areas) within the exclusion zone provide a major limitation, since currently all tours focus on Plymouth, leaving out key locations that would reveal the island's identity. Back in 2014 the administration and DfID made a hard decision for opening the ring V (accessible part of exclusion area), but now there is a pressure for many stakeholders to expand the accessible area in order to extend the tourist product. Third, the issue of accessibility to the island often becomes a more serious problem due to long periods of wind turbines. Thus, there is a huge population variation throughout the year (due to residential tourism) that leads to very high seasonality. The forth basic obstacle for disaster tourism is the inhospitable investment environment. The majority of the interviewees asserted that foreign investors have to face not only the perceived risk by investing in an "unsafe" place, but also bureaucratic procedures and legal issues posed by Montserrat's system, which is often characterized as non-meritocracy. Additionally, the recent abolition of Montserrat Development Corporation (MDC) has left Montserrat without any agency in charge of attracting investments in the island.

The participants' suggestions for the enrichment and further development of disaster tourism differ considerably in nature. The most common suggestions include planning and development of infrastructure and practices, such as:
- The Volcano Interpretation Center, which is an approved idea that has not yet been applied;
- The Higher School of Disaster Management, that would assist Montserrat in becoming a center of excellence in this field;
- Acceleration of the Montserrat Volcano Observatory's (MVO) plan for the development of the Geopark, which could then be included in World Heritage catalogues;
- Re-establishment of the world-class golf site, as well as the visitors' information center;
- Construction of a memorial park in Little Bay;
- Renovation and reopening of the famous View Point Hotel in Richmont Hill (outskirts of exclusion zone);
- Construction of small tram lines along the perimeter of the exclusion zone, for the observation of the Soufriere Hills;
- Opening of more green areas in the exclusion zone, many of which have not been accessible for almost 20 years and include attractions such as Air Studios and the public cemetery;
- Enhancement of learning objectives for the training courses that are available to tourist guides;
- Revival of the "Volcano Half Marathon", which had been organized by MVO in the past;
- Mild recreational activities such as hiking, horseback riding and bird watching in the exclusion zone, since there is biodiversity of a great value;
- Actions that would promote Volunteer Tourism, like the establishment of work-camps for volunteer tourists;
- Promotion and exporting of handicrafts made by ash and pumice.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the current study has been to identify the impacts of disaster tourism practices on local population in the island of Montserrat, as well as to identify stakeholders' opinions on future development of disaster tourism in Montserrat. Through adopting a qualitative methodology, the first objective was to identify and classify disaster tourism practices that have been applied in the disaster site of Montserrat island. Furthermore, the field research conducted on the local community sought to investigate population's perceptions and opinions with regard to the social, economic and even cultural impact such practices have on their every day life and well-being. Thirdly, due to disaster tourism's increasing popularity, there has been an attempt to explore stakeholders' opinions towards the development of disaster tourism and thus to suggest potential implications for administrators at sites that have suffered severe disaster(s).

As far as the first objective is concerned, it seems that a few positive practices have been implemented or adopted in Montserrat, which could be classified in the following categories: a) practices that enhance safety and hazard prevention in the exclusion zone (e.g. emergency situations plans), b) practices towards the development of a tourism product in the exclusion zone (e.g. creation of a tourist route in the exclusion zone and training courses for tourist guides), c) development of certain disaster tourism products in the perimeter of the exclusion zone. In addition, several practices that are perceived to have a negative effect in Montserrat have been recorded, including certain illegal or unethical behaviors, a few administrative failures, the lack of reliable transportation, and poor marketing efforts.

With respect to the second objective of this study, i.e. the perceptions of local population and stakeholders over the impacts of disaster tourism in Montserrat, it can be concluded that there is a neutral (moderate) opinion regarding disaster tourism impacts. More specifically, local population perceive the term "dark or disaster tourism" as having a strong negative connotation, since they feel that the island's fundamental characteristics (e.g. excellent natural resources and the authentic way of living) are underestimated through the application of disaster tourism practices and that the disaster experience is unethically commercialized. On the other hand, local population identifies a positive impact of disaster tourism with respect to cultural exchange, extroversion of the island and to some extend to community engagement. However, the economic impacts of disaster tourism have not been recognized yet, and that is probably one of the reasons disaster tourism has not yet been perceived as the main tourism form in Montserrat. A possible reasoning could be related to the multicultural composition of the current population in the island (natives, western expatriates and other Caribbean nationals) having different perspectives, while the disaster history could also provide a possible explanation in regards to the limited development of disaster tourism.

As for the third objective of this paper, local stakeholders' in-depth interviews reveal a significant number of factors that can boost disaster tourism in Montserrat. Foreign investments in tourism, enhanced destination marketing and coordination, development of tourism and transportation infrastructure and additional activities that would enrich the disaster tourism product of Montserrat, have been mainly proposed.

Although Montserrat is a disaster site with quite distinctive characteristics (i.e. a very recent disaster area, an overseas interdependent territory, with multicultural population and decision making) compared to other disaster sites, some useful managerial implications could be derived from this research. Firstly, besides the consideration of all necessary actions towards safety and risk prevention in the area, the development of tourism in disaster sites presupposes the adoption of practices that respect locals' emotions about the disaster and prevent unethical behaviors on behalf of tourists or tourist agents. Tourism practices that ignore such locals' feelings, especially in the relief and recovery stage of the disaster area, may cause negative locals' attitude towards further development of disaster tourism practices. This implication is in line with the study by Wright and Sharpley (2016; p. 14), which suggested that "visitor management is not only imperative, but is key to highlighting a potential benefit of such tourism...". Second, disaster tourism could present an opportunity as long as it is combined with other (pre-disaster) characteristics and advantages of the affected areas. In this way, the transition from relief to development stage could be psychologically and economically smoother. Third, possible overall impacts of disaster tourism could not be easily perceived by the locals, unless there is a significant economic impact on the majority of population. To this direction, a well organized plan and a strong will towards facilitating and implementing investments should accompany the efforts of the tourism related public and private sectors.

This study provides a preliminary exploratory review of the current situation and the development of disaster tourism in the island of Montserrat (West Indies). Extended future research could be directed towards the investigation of locals' perspectives in other disaster areas in order to reveal common crucial factors that affect disaster tourism practices and application in areas that have suffered by severe disasters. Another possible research direction could be related to the deontology and ethical issues that are raised by the application of disaster and dark tourism methods in the affected areas, an issue that has not yet been addressed by the academic literature.

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Main Central European cities and tourists with motor disabilities

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ABSTRACT

Free-barrier tourism has been developing in recent years throughout Europe, since the scope and financial potential of the market of motor disabled tourists has been noticed and appreciated. Their needs have been identified and special programmes have been introduced. Four Central European capitals of the Visegrad countries have also been developing as urban destinations, so they also should attract this new segment of the tourist market. Therefore, the aim of the authors was to analyse what Bratislava, Budapest, Prague and Warsaw offer as far as provision of information about their accessibility for motor disabled visitors is concerned. The main groups of elements which constitute a city's tourist profile have been identified and the information provided has been evaluated. The analysis concerns firstly the information given separately by providers and then the collective range of tourist options on offer for a given city.

Keywords: barrier-free tourism, collaborative offer, accessibility of urban destinations

INTRODUCTION

In order to remain the world's largest and fastest growing industry, travel and tourism has to constantly address new challenges. One of them is free-barrier tourism. It is generally estimated that one in six Europeans suffers from a disability. In addition, an ageing European population means that there will be a continuously growing number of passengers who need special assistance because of a disability or reduced mobility (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/doc/com_2011_166_report.pdf). Facilities that do not cater adequately for the needs of people with disabilities, including infants and the elderly, exclude many destinations from this promising market (UNESCAP, 2007).

Little research has been published so far on the subject of the mutual relationship between disability and tourism . While some important studies date back to the late 80s and 90s (Darcy, 1998; Smith, 1987), there have been some more recent ones as well (Eichhorn, Miller, Michopoulou and Buhalis, 2008; Smith, Amorim and Umbelino, 2013; Yau, McKercher and Packer, 2004). Both political and economic attention to the problem have been stimulated by the

adoption of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* in 2006, the 30th Article of which asserts the rights of disabled people to access all areas of cultural life, including tourism. The European Commission quickly adopted a strategy to break down the barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating in society, complying with the UN Convention (*European Disability Strategy 2010-2012*, 2010). Tourist organisations have followed the same path, with the first Annex to the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization resolution already being added in 1991 and then updated in 2005 in Dakar (*Accessible…*, 2005). So far, some special programmes for accessible tourism have been implemented, such as the European Network for Accessible Tourism or OSSATE (One-Stop-Shop for Accessible Tourism in Europe) (Duda-Seifert and Zajączkowski, 2011). Accessible tourism is understood here as one that enables people with access requirements to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services and environments (Darcy and Dickson, 2009). However, although the definition above includes mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access, the authors decided to focus on tourists with physical impairments and who use wheelchairs, since that group has very precise requirements.

The demographics of people with disabilities proves that it is an interesting and profitable market (Chan, 2010), with prospects of growing significantly in the nearest future (Yau et al, 2004), although still a disproportionally small number of people with disabilities participate fully in mainstream tourism (Darcy, 1998). This is due to three types of barriers, which are : environmental, interactive (social communication) and intrinsic ones (Smith, 1987). When they are overcome, there is one last factor which seems to be the most effective immediate and indispensable solution for expanding tourism opportunities for disabled people (Darcy, 1998; Eichhorn et al, 2008; Yau et al., 2004). This is the provision of information on accessibility to scenic spots, toilets, hotel accommodation, and transportation (Yau et al., 2004). The lack of this information forces disabled tourists to either stay in a region with which they are acquainted or abandon the idea of vacationing altogether (Eichhorn et al., 2008). It is the Internet in particular which provides unique opportunities to disseminate and promote such information (Buhalis, 2003; Eichhorn et al, 2008). Internet websites are the second most important source of tourism information (46%), after recommendations of friends, colleagues or relatives (56%) (*Flash Eurobarometer…*2014).

The aim of this research is to evaluate the collaborative accessible tourism opportunities in Central European capitals such as Prague, Budapest, Warsaw and Bratislava. The authors decided to analyse the information concerning the physical accessibility of places constituting the tourist product of the selected cities using the data provided on the Internet. The researchers stress the importance of specialised public bodies as appropriate mediums for reliable information dissemination (Cavinato and Cuckowich, 1992). However, this information can also be provided by the group of tourism product providers. The question remains whether the whole geographical area is accessible, including routes and connections between the tourist spots. Therefore, following the first phase of research, which considered individual products providers, the next step was to take a wider view by studying how the city presented information about its accessible tourism. All the Internet sites used in the study were in English, because the analysis was

intended for international tourists. The number of international tourist arrivals in the Visegrad Group countries being considered in the text is increasing from year to year, except in the Czech Republic. However, the four countries receive only 7.2% of the European tourist arrivals in total (UNWTO, 2015). The cities of the East Central European region attract large number of tourists eager to experience their architectural, archaeological and artistic values. The most visited cities are Budapest, Prague and Krakow, while some of the cities, like Bucharest, Belgrade, Warsaw or Sofia, are of less interest due to their less aesthetic character (Smith, 2007).

METHODOLOGY

First of all, the group of elements constituting the tourism product of a given destination tourism product had to be selected. For the majority of these elements the authors decided to use the TripAdvisor website as a starting point. It is the second largest travel site after booking.com according to *The eBusiness Guide* (http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/travel-websites). It constitutes one of the largest travel communities in the world, operating in 48 markets worldwide, reaching 38 million individual visitors monthly with millions of reviews and opinions covering more than 6.5 million lodgings, restaurants, and attractions (TripAdvisor, 2016).

As far as tourist attractions are concerned, two basic categories were selected which are likely to be most important in urban destinations, namely monuments and museums, including art galleries. In the case of the former, these were ten monuments selected from the top twenty sites and landmarks listed by TripAdvisor[1]. For the latter group, these were the top ten museums and galleries listed on TripAdvisor[2]. Additionally, two other groups of attractions were added: cultural venues and other tourist attractions. The former included the most important music and performance venue the city according to the TripAdvisor rankings. The latter encompassed one example from each of the following categories: zoo, botanical garden, national stadium and aqua park or swimming pool.

One of the most basic facilities from the point of view of a visitor to a city is its transportation accessibility. Therefore, this was considered regarding both main railway stations, which are transportation hubs for all incoming visitors, and the network of public communication through a city, facilitating the circulation of tourists between its points of interest . City airports were taken into consideration since each Visegrad capital city has r one national airport, except Warsaw, where there are two airports. The main railway station and the bus station are equally important, not only for receiving international visitors, but also being usually conveniently located close to the city centre. The urban transportation systems as a whole was then taken into consideration, including buses, trams and the underground. Additionally, water transportation and funicular railways, if present, were included. All these transport options are important, as they ensure access to the main attractions and facilities within the city.

After transportation, accommodation and food service outlets play an important role in receiving tourists that come to a city. For the former, the authors included the top twenty accommodation

establishments as listed by TripAdvisor. Although most of them are luxurious and high standard hotels for which disabled tourists are not the target group, the authors decided to treat them as trend setters in hospitality management. In the case of the latter, the top twenty restaurants according to the rankings by TripAdvisor were selected for the research.

After the representative attractions and facilities had been chosen for every city in the same manner and number, the authors aimed at evaluating the information content on their accessibility as provided through Internet. First, the information provided either independently by service providers or on separate elements but by other reliable sources was appraised. The second tier of information provision was analysed in the next step as the collaborative tourism profile offered by the city authorities on the accessibility of its tourist attractions and facilities. It was understood as collaborative tourism information and advertising. Therefore in order to evaluate its quality, the following sources were analysed . The first was a website managed by the city, then a website managed by collaborating units, including brochures and guides for disabled tourists available for downloading.

The evaluation of the collaborative accessible tourism offered by Central European capitals for physically disabled wheelchair users was based on the combined information regarding the data provided through Internet. This evaluation can be a starting point for a more detailed and specific analysis in the future.

The methodology is based on the point range method to attribute points to particular element according to the following scale:

      0 – no information about accessibility for disabled travellers,

      1 – information dedicated to disabled travellers.

All the information was gathered and compared during the period of June to July of 2016.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned restrictions, twenty five attractions have been recognised in Prague, whereas the three other cities had twenty four each. The categories of monuments and museums/galleries included the top ten of each category in each city analysed, while the cultural venue, zoo and stadium were also present in each of them. However, in Budapest the Botanical Garden was treated together with the Zoo since this is one attraction, while neither Bratislava nor Warsaw had an aqua-park recommended in the TripAdvisor listing, so it was not included in the analysis of those two cities.

The majority of monuments in the cities under consideration were made up of sacral buildings, including the main Catholic cathedral or basilica in the city and synagogues in Budapest, Praque and Warsaw. There were 24 of them out of the total group of 40. The 16 secular buildings

included castles, the Town Hall in Bratislava, the Parliament building in Budapest, Lobkowitz Palace in Praque and the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw. In the museum category, the top places listed on TripAdvisor were both held both by modern institutions (such as the Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum in Bratislava, the Museum of Terror in Budapest or The Warsaw Uprising Museum) and traditional National Galleries and Museums. In the category of cultural venues, these were the most prominent national stages (the Slovak National Theatre, the Hungarian State Opera, the State Opera in Praque and the Polish National Opera).

Although the nature and character of some of these attractions does not allow them to be adapted fully for disabled tourists, newly built or newly reconstructed ones, which often go up in the ranking by TripAdvisor because of their high attractiveness for visitors, seem to answer the needs of physically disabled people better.

Altogether the information about the accessibility of the attractions is not provided very well on their own websites, they are complemented by other web sources (Fig.1). It is Prague that seems to be the most prepared to welcome physically-impaired visitors as far as the information about accessibility of its main attractions is concerned (Fig. 2). The capital of the Czech Republic has the highest number of attractions analysed that provide information about their accessibility for disabled visitors, namely eleven out of twenty five.

Fig.1. Share of websites delivering information for disabled tourists in the case of tourist attractions.
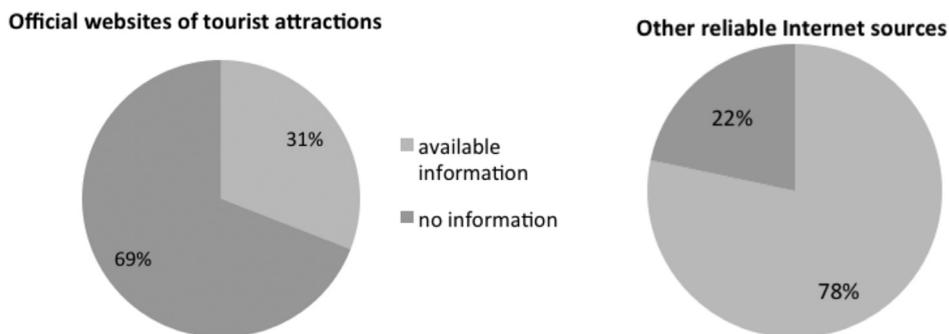
Source: authors' own research.

Fig.2. Availability of information about accessibility in the case of tourist attractions – all analysed Internet sources.
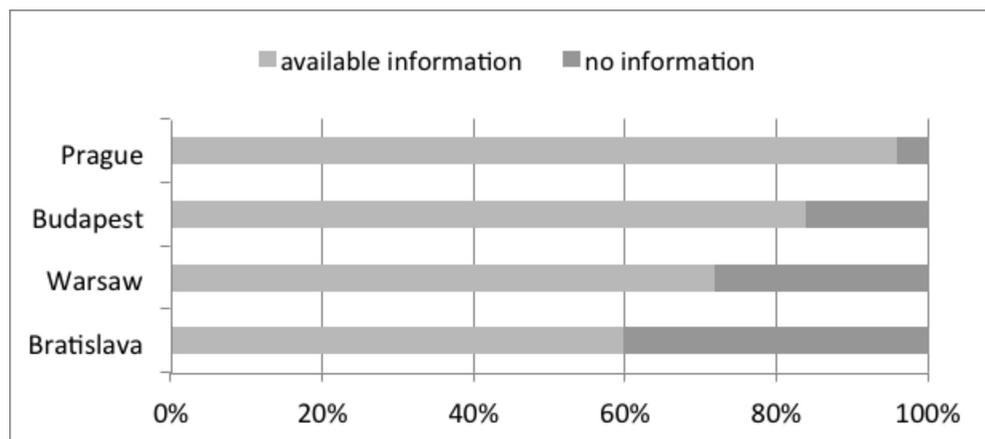
Source: authors' own research.

Table 1. Availability of information about accessibility in the case of tourist attractions.

Type of attraction		Total Number	Bratislava			Budapest			Prague			Warsaw		
			info on the official website	info in other www sources	no info	info on the official website	info in other www sources	no info	info on the official website	info in other www sources	no info	info on the official website	info in other www sources	no info
Monuments		40	2	4	4	2	6	2	3	7		1	6	3
Museums		40	1	6	3	5	4	1	5	4	1	4	3	3
Cultural venue		4			1		1			1			1	
Other	Zoo	4	1				1[1]			1			1	
	Botanical Garden	3			1					1			1	
	Stadium	4		1			1			1			1	
	Aquapark	2[2]					1			1				
Total number of attractions in every category		97	4	11	9	8	13	3	11	13	1	7	11	6

[1] - in the case of Budapest, the Zoo and Botanical Garden are treated together as they are linked.

[2] - there is no aqua-park cited by TripAdvisor for either Warsaw or Bratislava.

Source: authors' own research.

At the same time, no information was found on the Internet for only one attraction from the group. Budapest is in second place, with eight attractions offering information on their own sites, thirteen with information provided on other websites (making 21 out of 24 analysed) and only three with no information (Tab.1). Warsaw is in third place with eighteen out of twenty with information to be found either on their own or other websites and six without any available information. The least information can be found about the main attractions in Bratislava, with only four attractions displaying information on their own websites, eleven with information found on other websites (altogether fifteen out of twenty four) and nine with no information available on the Internet.

MODES OF TRANSPORT AND STATIONS

All airports in the European Union are required to respect EU regulations concerning the rights of disabled people and people with reduced mobility (Regulation No 1107, 2006). According to the law, the only condition under which special assistance is provided is when notification of a passenger's special needs is given at least 48 hours before departure. Four out of the five airports in our research display information for physically disabled passengers. This information is very well presented and concerns facilities marked with appropriate signs, call points equipped with cameras and microphones, selected check-in and information desks as well as transfer desks, toilets, accessible lifts and dedicated seats. The information is available by phone on a 24/7 basis, and is also displayed online using pictures and instruction movies, e.g. in the case of Budapest Ferenc Liszt International Airport. Moreover, there are documents available on web-sites such as "Code of Good Conduct in Handling Disabled Persons and Persons with Reduced Mobility Travelling by Air" or "Quality standards". Only M. R. Štefánik Airport in Bratislava offers very poor and t insufficient information for disabled tourists, although some information about its accessibility is available on other Internet sites (Tab.2).

Despite the fact that there are legal requirements very similar to those binding the airports (Regulation No 1371, 2007), there is an obvious lack of information for disabled travellers pro-vided by railway stations. None of those in our research offer an official and dedicated website, whereas information is available on the websites of national rail operating companies. Even if a railway station such as Praha hlavní nádraží is accessible for disabled passengers, there is insufficient official information about it provided in English.

A similar lack of information characterises three out of the four main bus stations, the only ex-ception being The Prague Florenc bus terminal, which offers brief information in English on its website that it is if fully adapted for the needs of disabled passengers. Moreover, there is also no information about the availability of coaches offered by both domestic and international trans-port operators from particular bus terminals. In some cases, such as Warszawa Zachodnia Bus Station (http://pkspolonus.pl/pl/kontakt/osoby-niepelnosprawne) there are claim forms avail-able for disabled passengers to fill in if they need assistance during their bus journey. However, the lack of information in English is noticeable, even if there is some in Polish.

Much better information about accessibility is provided by the city public transportation providers. All the systems investigated, composed mostly of buses and trams, do offer it on their websites. The noticeable progress in adapting road infrastructure and public transportation to meet the needs of the disabled, including low–floor buses, modernised tram stops and the development of traffic light systems can be emphasized here. The website of the BKK Centre for Budapest Transport is worth mentioning since it provides full, detailed and clear information about accessibility of public transport services in the city including buses, trolleybuses, the metro, suburban trains, trams, taxis, boats and the funicular railway for physically disabled clients (http://www.bkk.hu/en/accessible-public-transport-in-budapest/). A similar information system functions in Prague, although it is not as sufficient and detailed as the one in Budapest. The site concerning "barrier-free-travel around Prague" is run by The Prague Public Transit Co. Inc. and it encompasses the metro, trams and buses (http://www.dpp.cz/en/barrier-free-travel/). It is surprising that some facilities are fully accessible for the disabled, but no information is provided on the official websites and neither is anything translated into English (e.g. Warsaw underground). None of the capital cities offer any information about parking spaces for disabled travellers either on their official sites or other trusted sources of information. However, other amenities are sometimes available in the cities, e.g. handbike renting in Warsaw.

Table 2. Availability of information about accessibility of transportation systems for physically disabled people in the cities being researched.

	Transport facilities	Bratislava	Budapest	Praha	Warsaw
Stations	Airports				
	Main train station				
	Main bus station				
Modes of transport	City public transportation				
	Underground system	none			
	Water transportation				
	Adapted taxi				
	Funicular railway	none			none
Facilities for private car	Parking areas in the Old Town district				

	info on the official website
	info in other www sources
	no info

Source: authors' own research

ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS AND FOOD SERVICES

The top twenty on the TripAdvisor listings of accommodation establishments and food services were taken into consideration. Although each lodging and food service outlet, since they offer a service to the public, is obliged to provide facilities for the disabled (at least one room in the

case of a hotel), accessibility is not standardised in the tourist industry and can therefore be easily interpreted in different ways by the facility's management and employees (http://www. hotelarze.pl/hot/bl-niepelnosprawni.php).

Fig. 3. Share of websites delivering information for disabled tourists in the accommodation establishments being researched.
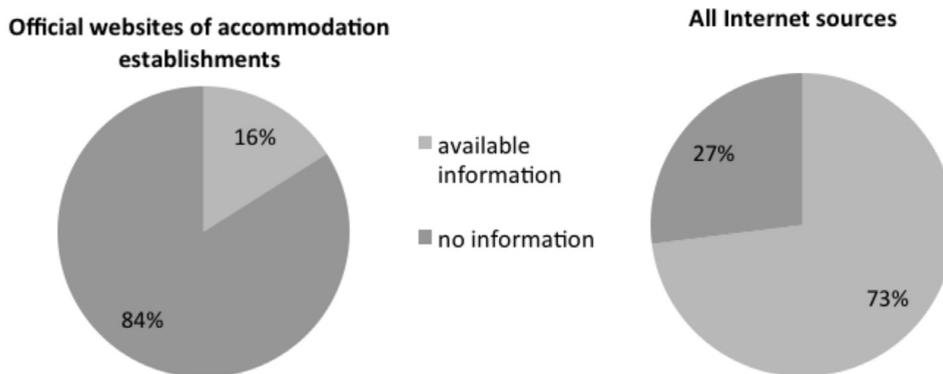
Source: authors' own research

Information about the accessibility of particular hotels provided by their official websites is very weak. Only eighteen out of eighty hotels that were investigated offer some basic information about their accessibility on their websites. There is no clue where to find this information, which is available either through the booking system of a particular hotel's chain, such as Mercure or Marriott Hotels, or in different tabs, e.g. "rooms", "facilities", "offers", "about the hotel" etc. For information about their accessibility, the information delivered by the most popular online accommodation booking websites may be helpful, such as booking.com or hotels.com and travel reviews website, e.g. Tripadvisor. However the information is not precise and it only concerns the fact of the hotel having or not having wheelchair access, while no further details are provided regarding e.g. entry ramps, automatic doors, parking places. elevators and the location of rooms and bathrooms adapted for people with reduced mobility. The fact that they are trustworthy and comparable to the official data available on the national statistical websites is promising. For example, while the Polish Statistical Office states that from among one hundred and twenty four accommodation establishments in Warsaw, seventy six have wheelchair access (https://bdl.stat.gov.pl), according to Tripadvisor there are sixty eight such establishments out of one hundred and nineteen (Fig.4).

Fig. 4. Availability of information about accessibility of ALL accommodation establishments according to TripAdvisor.
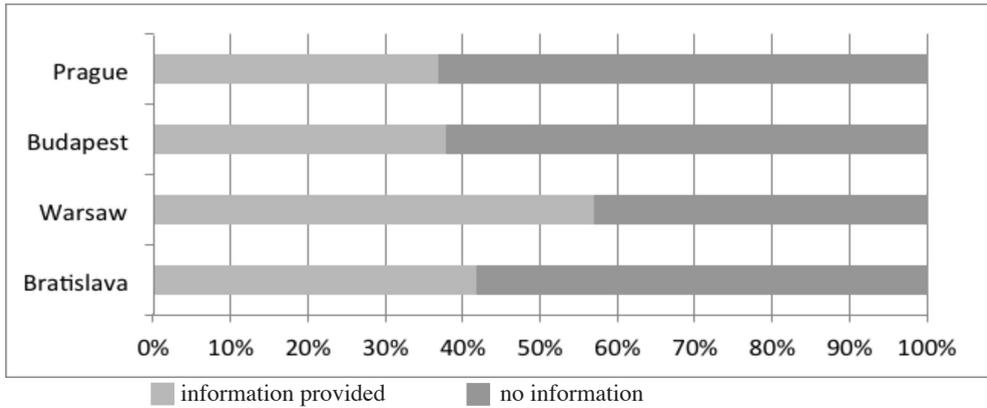
Source: own research based on www.tripadvisor.com.

All available Internet sources provide information about 73 per cent of accommodation establishments being researched (Fig. 3). However, based on this data, the accessibility of information varies between the capital cities. For example, Prague's top accommodation establishments are definitely the worst as far as their readiness to welcome guests with physical disabilities is concerned, since only 28 per cent of them provide information for disabled tourists. The main reason may be due to their character, because they are mainly boutique hotels adapted from old buildings which are difficult to adapt to the needs of such clients (Fig.4).

Fig. 5. Availability of information about accessibility of researched accommodation establishments for physically disabled people – according to all Internet sources.
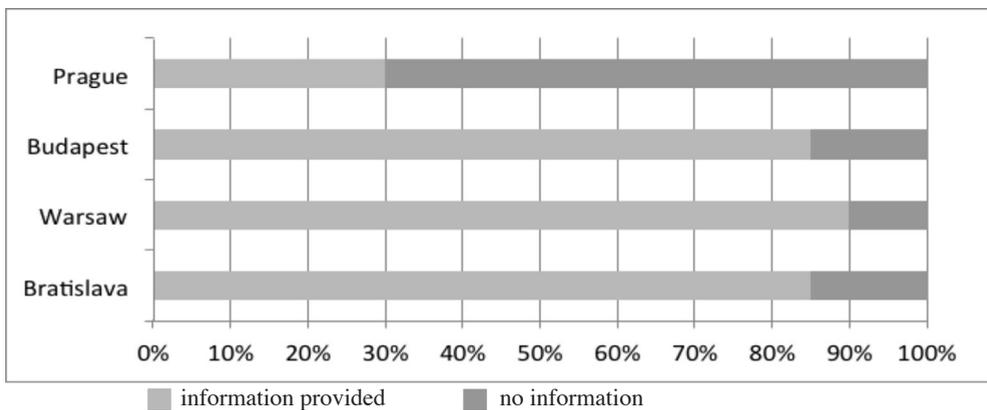
Source: authors' own research

Similarly, information about accessibility of particular food service outlets provided on their websites is even weaker, if there is any. None of the researched restaurants have any information about wheelchair accessibility. The basic information ("wheelchair accessible: yes-no") is displayed on travel reviews websites like TripAdvisor instead. On average, 40 per cent of restaurants are mentioned as wheelchair accessible (Fig.6).

Fig. 6. Availability of information about accessibility for disabled tourists in food service outlets researched.

Official websites of food service

■ available information

■ no information

100%

All Internet sources

40%

60%
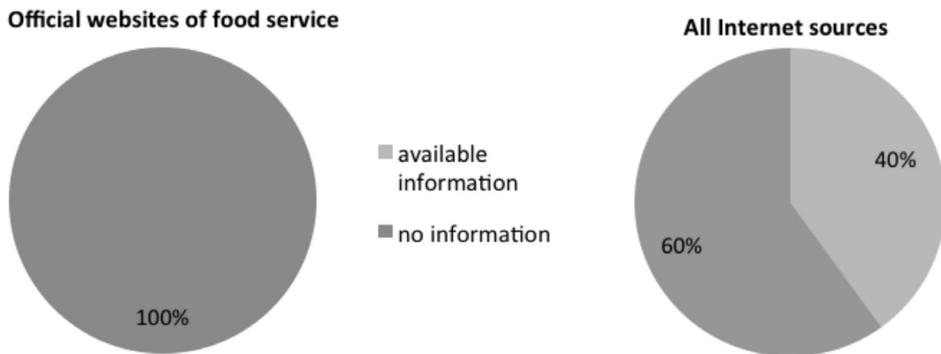
Source: own research

The proportion of information about accessibility of restaurants in these cities that varies from 40 per cent in Bratislava to 63 per cent in Budapest (Fig.7).

Fig. 7. Availability of information about accessibility for physically disabled clients of food service outlets – in the case of all Internet sources.

Prague	
Budapest	
Warsaw	
Bratislava	

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ information provided   ■ no information
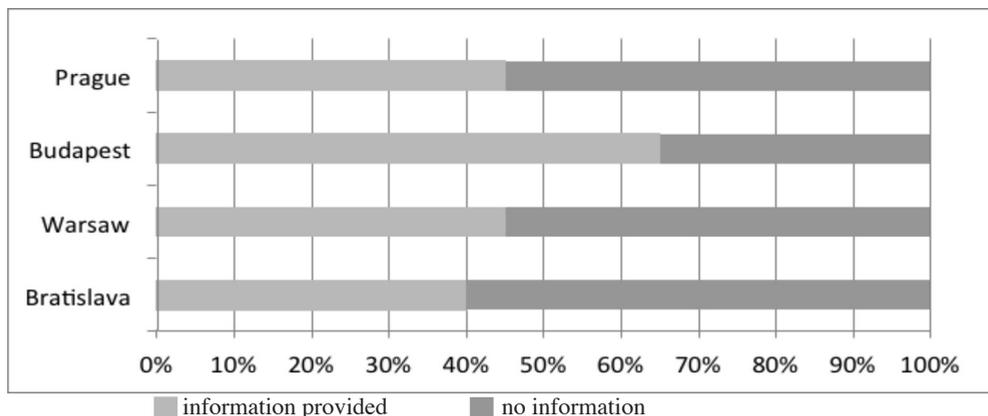
Source: authors own research.

COLLABORATIVE TOURISM INFORMATION AND ADVERTISING

After the first phase of research considering individual products providers, a wider view of the organisation of information for disabled tourists was also studied, being the collective view of what a given city offers the accessible tourism market.

An analysis was made of the official websites of the cities under consideration, managed by their city authorities. Three out of four, namely Budapest, Prague and Bratislava (www.budapest.com, www.prague.eu[3] and www.visitbratislava.com), offer no concise information on their accessibility for physically disabled visitors in the travel guides and tourism information provided. Only the official website of Warsaw (www.warsawtour.pl) provides some tips on the city's accessibility. In the brochure which is available to download called "Warsaw Top 10", offering a description of the most important landmarks in Poland's capital city. Although information is not available on the first website that opens or as a special subpage and only the top attractions are described, the guide is well prepared and very precise descriptions of the amenities for all kinds of disability are available there.

Only in the case of one city was a special website created that is dedicated to disabled tourists, and this is http://www.accessibleprague.com. However, the website does not display a systematic approach in the way it provides information and the information available is not detailed enough.

Furthermore, all the cities provide a website or subpages managed by collaborating units such as national tourist agencies. In two cases the information about accessibility for disabled visitors is offered there. The best solution has been developed for Budapest as a site which encompasses practical information available for disabled tourists about the main tourist attractions , prepared by the National Federation of Disabled Persons' Associations (MEOSZ) (http://budapest.gotohungary.com/accessible-budapest). Another example is offered for Warsaw, but via the national site (www.poland.travel), where a developed search engine is provided. This makes it possible to find information about all the facilities, like historical sites, museums, accommodation establishments etc. together with their description in the form of pictograms showing if the place is accessible for disabled tourists. Two other cities, Prague and Bratislava, have no information about their accessibility for disabled visitors provided through the national tourist organisations' sites (www.czechtourism.com/pl/a/prague, http://slovakia.travel or https://bratislava-slovakia.eu).

As mentioned earlier, only Warsaw offers a brochure to download with its "Top 10 tourists attractions". There are no such brochures and maps available to download about Prague, Budapest or Bratislava offering concise information about the accessibility of the city for physically disabled tourists.

CONCLUSIONS

The authors' aim was to analyse the availability of information on the barrier-free potential for tourists with disabilities of the capital cities of the four Visegrad countries in Central Europe. As the research field, the needs of physically disabled international visitors were taken into consideration. Therefore, the information provided on different basic elements of the tourist product of the cities concerned was evaluated. The categories of elements were selected and the methodology for choosing the representatives for each category elaborated. Finally, the accessibility of information provided by means of the Internet was appraised; firstly that displayed by individual providers, and secondly, in the form of the collective information available for every destination individually. The conclusions are as follows.

Generally, the information about the accessibility of the cities concerned for visitors with physical disabilities is very difficult to find on the Internet, both in the case of individual service providers or attractions and in a collective form for a particular city. If there is any information, it seems insufficient, inconsistent or just incoherent. Very rarely is it available on the first website that opens, while it is also rare for accessibility to be presented on a specific subpage. Due to the lack of detailed descriptions, the comments of the travellers are often to be found, complaining that they could not find e.g. a parking place or the right entrance because of the lack of information provided. In the rare instances when there are specially designated websites, they most often offer only a selection of the top tourist attractions. Only one of the cities in this study has already developed a collection of information about what is on offer on a special dedicated page, but it still lacks coherence and a systematic approach to the subject. It is often travellers themselves that offer the most valuable information, but in that case it depends on what they have visited themselves and if they provide this information in a transparent form. Since the Internet is becoming one of the basic media for potential tourists, this shortcoming can constitute a significant obstacle to the development of free-barrier tourism in these evolving urban tourist destinations.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to provide better information for disabled tourists. First of all, a sort of model or systematic approach should be developed concerning the provision of this kind of information. Such an approach should indicate "the place" – the specific area on the official websites of both individual providers and destination tourist organisations where information would be located, the types of pictograms used (proposals for these already exist) and "the scope" of the data, which should be precise and consistent (parking, entrance location, type of access, interior obstacles, elevators, toilets etc.). The easiest solution is to offer a motor disability logo (a wheelchair, which is an internationally recognised symbol) on the main website, which after entering could open to a subpage with detailed information about the accessibility of the place. Ultimately it seems easier for a traveller to find the necessary information on sites that are specially designated for disabled tourists.

Although this research concentrated on the needs of people with physical disabilities, there are also other types of disabilities that create obstacles for such potential tourists to visit the cities

that were analysed. During the research, some examples were found of such information being provided for physically disabled travellers, as in the case of the Warsaw pdf brochure, but, generally speaking, information for disabled tourists was almost nonexistent on the websites offering tourist information . Therefore ,the conclusion is that there are huge shortcomings in the field, which should be investigated and remedied.

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[1] Only monuments included on the official registers of National Monuments of the countries were considered, and this information was checked based on the following institutions: Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa in Poland; Národní památkový ústav in the Czech Republic; Pamiatkový úrad Slovenskej republiky in Slovakia; Kulturális Örökségvédelmi Hivatal in Hungary. Only buildings were taken into account, excluding statues, view sites and streets or squares. Also only those buildings with interiors open to the public.

[2] Here also a second condition was required; namely a listing in the official registers of Museums as acquired from the following institutions: The National Institute for Museums and Public Collections (NIMOZ) and Contemporary Art Galleries in Poland; the Czech Association of Museums and Galleries (AMG); the Union of Museums in Slovakia; Hungarian Museums

[3] There is a little and insufficient information in the downloaded brochure: "Prague in Your Pocket. Your Essential Guide"

Managing cultural tourism in post-conflict areas: the Kurdistan Federal Region, Iraq

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ABSTRACT

Conflict and post-conflict areas often suffer several challenges regarding tourism development owing to poor infrastructure, low investment, a lack of appropriate tourism management planning, and poor implementation mechanisms. Much research has been undertaken regarding cultural tourism management issues, challenges and sustainability, yet there is a lack of knowledge on how post-conflict issues affect cultural tourism planning and management. The aim of this paper is to understand the challenges posed in post-conflict regions, for cultural tourism development and to propose solutions and recommendations for successful, competitive and sustainable cultural tourism sectors. The context for the research is the Kurdistan Federal Region (KFR) in Iraq. The study revealed several challenges facing cultural tourism in KFR. The paper reports data from a series of focus groups conducted with residents and tourists, and a number of in-depth interviews with tourism policymakers and experts in KFR. (141 words)

Keywords: Cultural Tourism Policy; Cultural Tourism Development; Tourism Development; Tourism Destination Image; Post Conflict; Kurdistan Federal Region

INTRODUCTION

Tourism within the Kurdistan region of Iraq was until recently almost impossible to imagine. The ethnic conflict between the Iraqi government and Kurdish opposition, in particular, the armed conflict from 1961 to 2003, caused major challenges to society and the economy of the region, including the tourism industry. The Iraqi government had deliberately not invested in transport infrastructure within the Kurdish region or in links to connect it to other regions and nations, whereas other regions of Iraq had benefited from good infrastructure including modern motorways and rail networks as well as a number of airports. The absence of these essential facilities in the Kurdistan Federal Region (KFR) had severely restricted the development of a tourism industry from 1991 to 2007.

However, in 2006, after the new (unified) cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)" new investment in infrastructure has led to the development of two international airports and hundreds of miles of motorway between Kurdish cities in addition to investment in a number of tourist projects and facilities. Consequently, tourism in the KFR has grown rapidly during a period of stability and investment in infrastructure from 2007 to 2013. Despite huge progress in the development of a viable tourism industry sector in recent years, the KFR could further expand the sector into international tourism particularly around its cultural heritage resources, of which there are a number of unique assets, such as the Erbil Citadel that was listed on UNESCO's World Heritage Site list (WHS) in 2014, and which have the potential to attract significant international tourism demand in the future. However, the KFR until recently has not given serious consideration to the potential for cultural tourism. The aim of this study is therefore to assess the potential barriers to cultural tourism development in post-conflict regions and to suggest recommendations for sustainable tourism development both generally and specifically for the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

CULTURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN POST-CONFLICT REGIONS

Tourism is a global phenomenon that has grown consistently over the past six decades, and is considered to be one of the fastest growing economic sectors (Muchapondwa & Stage, 2013; UNWTO, 2013). The number of international tourist arrivals dramatically increased from 25 million in 1950 to over a billion by 2014, increasing at a rate of 26% over the previous 5 years (UNWTO, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016). Cultural heritage plays an essential role in attracting tourism and accounts for a large share of the overall tourism market. Cultural tourism accounts for a large proportion of tourist arrivals globally. It accounted for approximately 40% of all tourism in the world in 2007 (OECD, 2009). The World Tourism Organization forecasts that cultural tourism will grow at a rate of 15% per year due to the changes in social life, the increase of education levels, and trends in the tourism industry, which have led to increased demand for cultural offers (Iwuagwu, Alex-Onyeocha, & Lynda, 2015).

The tourism sector generally presents a useful opportunity for economic development and growth contributing approximately 10% of global GDP in 2014, and providing 9.1% of total global employment in 2014 (WTTC, 2015, 2016). Therefore developing regions such as the KFR are tempted by the opportunities offered through the tourism sector. However, the great potential benefits are sometimes not quite as expected and the pace of growth not as consistent in many developing countries. Tourism demand can often drop as a result of political instability and particularly fluctuations in political power structures, especially in those countries dealing with local or regional conflict. There are a number of cases that provide useful illustrations. For example, in the Middle East as a whole international tourist arrivals declined by 8% in 2011 as a result of the numerous uprisings in the region, known as the 'Arab Spring', compared to the 7% increase in the same period in the Asia-Pacific regions (UNWTO, 2012). Another example is provided by Sri Lanka, where tourism increased 21% between 1970 to 1980, but the civil war of the 1980s between the Tamils and Sinhalese led to a huge drop in tourist arrivals (Richter, 1999).

KFR in Iraq has seen a similar pattern, where the total tourist arrivals reached 2.95 million in 2003, only to decrease to 1.53 million in 2014 and 1.11 in 2015 (General Board of Tourism of Kurdistan Regional Government, 2015; Rusti, 2016). The impacts of such instability on these tourist destinations may vary and are highly dependent on the nature of the particular situation. In general, various external factors influence tourism development such as economic, political, environmental, technological, demographic and social factors (Dwyer, Edwards, Mistilis, Roman, & Scott, 2009). However, the tourism industry is particularly sensitive to political volatility (Dwyer et al., 2009). More precisely, it is believed that tourism only grows in stable societies (Richter, 1999). Instability could turn thriving tourist destinations into non-attractive destinations (Seddighi, Nuttall, & Theocharous, 2001).

Political instability brings multiple negative challenges to the tourism industry such as poor or damaged infrastructure, lack of services, and declines in investment (Dwyer et al., 2009; Novelli, Morgan, & Nibigira, 2012; Richter, 1999; Seddighi et al., 2001; Winter, 2008). These challenges may vary from one country to another, but all require some form of tourism policy and planning to respond to tourism management issues that occur as a result of conflict. In the case of Cambodia, for example, Winter (2008) cites that conflict caused major challenges, including inappropriate governmental, administrative and legal structures in parallel to a lack of expertise related to conservation, community development, tourism planning and deficiencies in infrastructure. Moreover, Causevic and Lynch (2013) identify legislative issues that posed administrative challenges between federal regions, negatively impacting on the tourism sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the Balkan conflicts. Additionally, Novelli et al. (2012) claim the volatile political situation and weak governmental institutions in Burundi undermined tourism development and brought economic, environmental and social challenges to the country.

Whilst countries are in the midst of sustained conflict, there is virtually no opportunity for tourism activity, rendering policy and planning instruments somewhat redundant. However, concrete tourism policy and planning is required to tackle issues arising after conflict. One example of the issues that may occur post-conflict is a negative image of the destination, which often leads to an exacerbation of the problems and delays in a return to growth (Gertner, 2007; Mansfeld, 1999; Seddighi et al., 2001; Vitic & Ringer, 2008). Negative destination image has become one of the main challenges facing the tourism sector in countries during and in post-conflict situations. For example, negative destination images of Israel during the conflict with the Palestinian people from 1967 to 1999 led to significant and prolonged effects on tourism demand (Mansfeld, 1999). Another example is Montenegro, which lost tourism market share after a decade of civil war in the former Yugoslavia (Vitic & Ringer, 2008). The presence of specific policy and marketing planning could make the difference in an ability to restore confidence in the market and recover positive destination image.

On the other hand, after conflict, when peace is restored, the tourism industry may see a sudden period of growth, which equally necessitates sound policy and planning. A sudden surge in tourism can have negative impacts on communities, environment and cultural identity, and thus public policymakers should take sustainability into account when devising plans for the tourism

industry. An example of sudden mass development is provided by Angkor in Cambodia, which recorded a 10,000% increase in international tourists from 1994 to 2005, just a decade following the conflict (Winter (2008). KFR in Iraq is another example of how tourism can boom in the aftermath of armed conflict, since tourism demand rose approximately by 800% between 2007 and 2013 (see figure 2). This tourism growth was accompanied by a massive increase in the number of hotels, motels and tourist villages as a response to market demands, where the number of beds rose by roughly 650% in 2015 compared to 2007 (see figures 3 and 4). However, growth in developing countries is often not based on structured and long-term planning, which can lead to several management challenges related to environment, society and culture. For example, unplanned, rapid tourism development in Shaqlawa in KFR led to many natural attractive areas being urbanised and consequently, a decrease in the number of green areas which would have provided important tourism resources (Alkurdi, 2013). In Cambodia tourism growth created several issues including damage to social, environmental and cultural sites as a result of poor governance and a lack of institutional planning and management (Winter, 2008). Uncoordinated tourism development has become a prevailing situation in many developing countries, which can lead to environmental degradation and compound existing socioeconomic problems such as poverty and debt (Robinson & Picard, 2006). Conversely, coordinated management of the tourism industry underpinned by sound planning could provide a sustainable means of generating income and protection of environmental and cultural resources.

There is an abundance of research on cultural tourism management issues, challenges and sustainability, but there is a lack of studies undertaken to understand how post-conflict issues affect cultural tourism planning and management. This paper aims to address this gap and explore potentials and issues for developing cultural tourism in post-conflict areas and in new autonomous regions such as KFR, and prepare number of recommendations for the government to develop the tourism sector in KFR to make it successful, competitive and sustainable. This study highlights the issues related to cultural tourism in Kurdistan, the potential of developing cultural tourism, and the following section outlines the rationale for the focus on cultural heritage in Kurdistan as a source of tourism development in the future.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN KURDISTAN FEDERAL REGION – IRAQ

The Kurdistan Federal Region is located in the north and northwest of Iraq with a population of 5.2 million. The Region is known for its diverse climatic conditions, which distinguish the region from Iraq, from the cooler mountainous areas, with natural springs and where snowfall is common, to hot and dry plains (Kurdistan Regional Government, 2016).

Figure 1: Iraqi Kurdistan

Source: adst.org

In general, all cities in the KFR, without exception, were subjected to policies of exclusion and neglect during the successive Iraqi governments between 1925 and 2003. For example, in the KFR there were no airports, motorways, and railways constructed in the region until 2003. The KFR was already demographically devastated by the Al-Anfal Campaign (genocide) of 1986-1989, and its underdeveloped infrastructure was also destroyed (O'Leary, 2002).

However, after the overthrow of the regime of Saddam Hussein in 2003, and the formation of the new "(unified) cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, tourism in the KFR has grown rapidly, in particular following the creation of two international airports and a motorway connecting Kurdish cities, alongside huge investment in tourism facilities including accommodation (see Figure 3 and Figure 4). The number of tourist arrivals increased by 48%, 42% and 66% for 2008, 2009 and 2010, respectively (see in Figure 2); less dramatic increases (but increases nevertheless) of 30% were recorded for 2011 and 2012. In 2013, the number of tourists reached 2.95 million, while in 2014 and 2015 it decreased to 1.53 million and 1.12 million respectively (General Board of Tourism of Kurdistan Regional Government, 2015; Rusti, 2016).

Figure 2: The number of tourist arrivals in Kurdistan- Iraq from 2007 to 2015
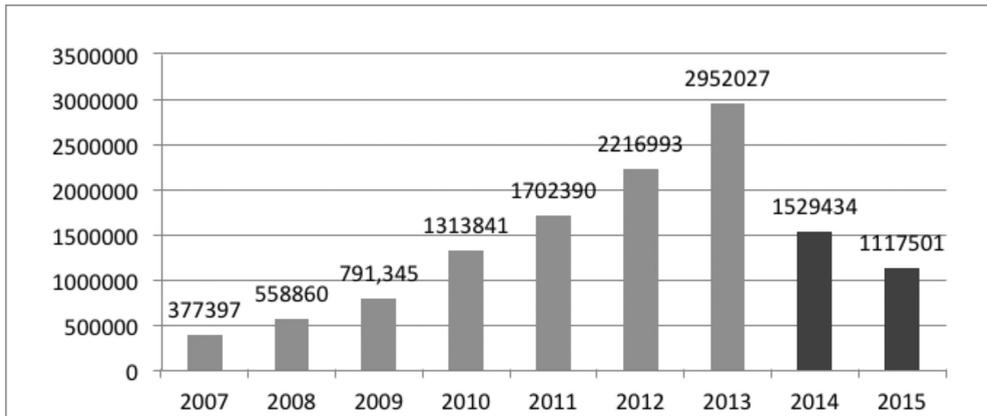
Source: created by author based on data from (General Board of Tourism of Kurdistan Regional Government, 2015; Rusti, 2016)

Figure 3: The chart shows the growth of accommodations in Kurdistan - Iraq from 2007 to 2015
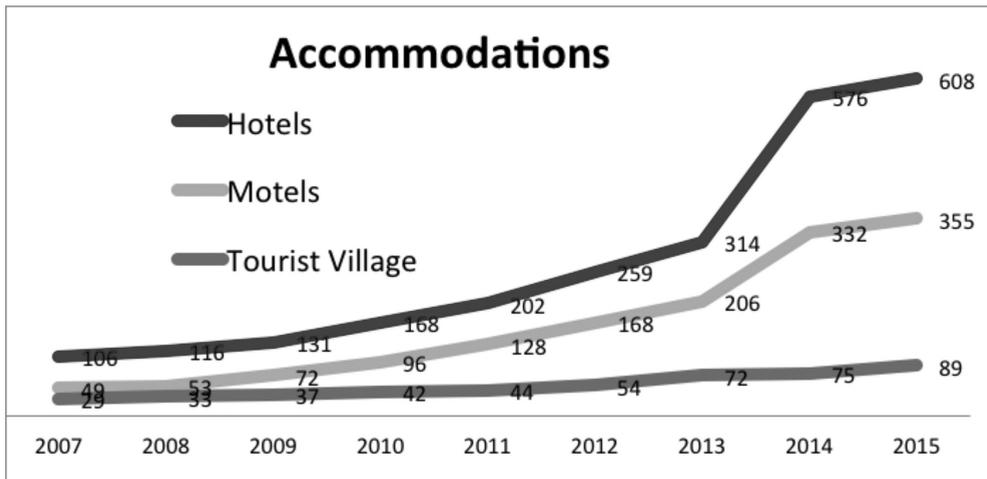
Source: created by author based on data from (General Board of Tourism of Kurdistan Regional Government, 2015; Rusti, 2016)

Figure 4: The chart shows the number of beds in all accommodation in Kurdistan - Iraq from 2007 to 2015
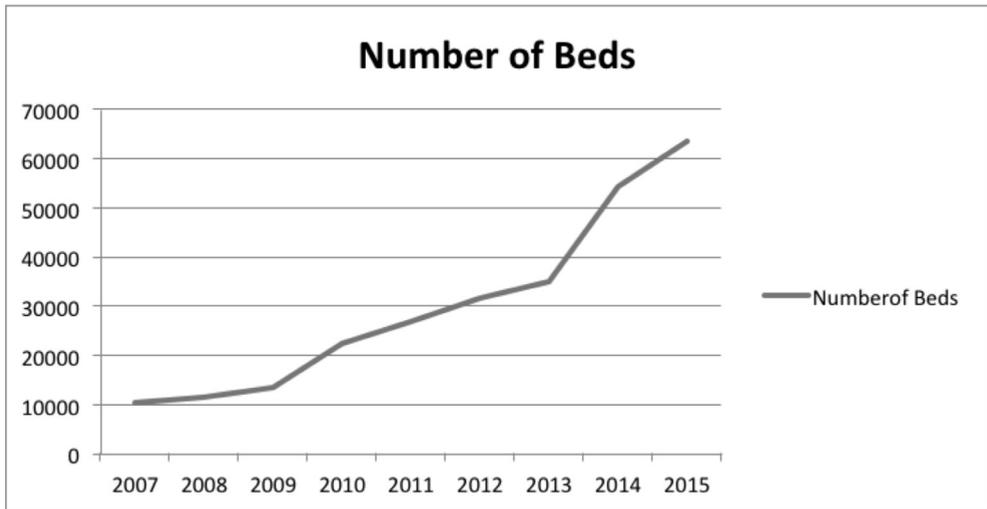
Source: created by author based on data from (General Board of Tourism of Kurdistan Regional Government, 2015; Rusti, 2016)

Regarding the cultural heritage assets and the potential for developing cultural heritage tourism, the KFR of Iraq is considered one of the richest archaeological sites globally, which includes ancient cave dwellings, sites from the Neolithic era, settlements of the great empires of antiquity, castles and bridges, mosques and bazaars (Kopanias, MacGinnis, & Ur, 2015). The Kurdistan Regional Statistics Office estimates the number archaeological sites in the Kurdistan Region to be 1,307 sites (Ismael, 2015). However, our study discovered these figures to be grossly underestimated, and total greater than 3000 cultural assets. In addition to cultural heritage sites, Kurdistan is also rich in diversity of intangible cultural assets including; customs, traditions, religious traditions and events, Kurdish clothing and textile products, agricultural tools and home tools. These vital cultural heritage sites and multiple cultural resources in KFR can play a major role in the development of the tourism industry if used to attract tourists in a sustainable manner.

METHODOLOGY

The KFR would have an even greater opportunity for further development in the tourism sector if it were to set up an appropriate plan to manage all potential tourism resources, including cultural heritage attractions. This study attempts to identify the major challenges that face cultural tourism and the potential of developing the tourism industry in the KFR.

To address these issues a qualitative data method was employed using focus groups and in-depth interviews to elicit perspectives of different stakeholders. In-depth interview sessions were held with government representatives in antiquities and tourism field, and with local business operators including staff/managers/owners from tourism enterprises agencies, hotels, restaurants and cultural gifts shops. All in-depth interviews sessions were held in Erbil and the researcher travelled to the locations of the case study to recruit participants. The study recruited 12 government representatives and 7 local business operators for individual in-depth interviews in Erbil. All participants were recruited by personal visits to their offices to make appointments, following local community traditions, and data were gathered in Kurdish language then translated to English. The aims of conducting in-depth interviews with government representatives in this study were; firstly, to elicit their opinions regarding the challenges that they face, or might face, with tourism growth in general and cultural tourism in particular in Kurdistan. Secondly, to understand their perspectives regarding the barriers and strengths of using heritage resources for tourism purposes, and anticipated solutions to these barriers. Finally, to identify the current level of cultural tourism and conservation programs for cultural assets. On the other hand, the basic aims of the in-depth interview sessions with local business operators were the same as those of the focus groups for the same category, namely to explore: What they expect the government to do in order to help them to make their business more successful? How cultural tourism could help develop their business? What are the barriers to developing their business?

The focus groups were carried out in Erbil in April 2015, with the recruitment of 4-10 people in each of the three categories: tourists, local residents and business operators. Firstly, focus groups held with local residents aimed to explore the influences of tourism growth (or the change in the number of tourist arrivals) on their quality of life and understand how they value their cultural resources. Questions focused on identifying the negative and positive impacts of increasing the number of tourists, understanding what they expect from the government to reduce negative impacts, investigating how they value their culture, and how they are willing to preserve their cultural resources. Secondly, the focus groups with tourists were to understand their motivations in visiting the city of Erbil, their level of satisfaction, the factors that might increase their level of satisfaction, and to explore their preferred tourism resources.

RESULTS

Following the introduction of the new Kurdish autonomous status in 2003, the Kurdistan Regional Government has started to recover and invest in different sectors including the tourism industry. However, so far, there has not been enough consideration of cultural tourism, as discussed in the following subsections.

LACK OF INVESTMENT

Cultural heritage sites in KFR have not yet been properly developed to attract visitors except for special cases like Erbil Citadel. Even here, the flagship of the Kurdistan cultural tourism

industry, still requires much funding and an additional five years of maintenance and development, as stated by participant 6 (p6):

> *"I can confirm in the next five years the Citadel will become a destination if all things are going well, but our work, our process of restorations now is stopped because of lack of funding" (p6)*

Another example of a lack of governmental investments in cultural tourism is the lack of governmental support to allocating enough spaces and appropriate locations for museums. Currently, many of the materials are not well organised or displayed in museums because of the lack of space.

> *"This building for Erbil Museum is too small. We need a wider place to allow us to show our resources properly…there are many resources that have not been exhibited because we do not have enough space. Even the current resources on display are not organised to standard exhibition or museum standards"* (p4 the head of Erbil Museum)

POOR IMPLEMENTATION AND INAPPROPRIATE PLANNING

There is a strategic plan (2007 - 2025) for the tourism industry in KFR. However, it is not an integrated plan, as it only partially includes some small projects for developing cultural tourism, and these have not yet been implemented.

> *"The government have not used cultural resources properly and using it was not based on appropriate planning and programs. We have a plan, but we have not implemented it yet. We have a master plan, a strategic plan until 2025. One of the points in the master plan is cultural and historical resources, and we support these kinds of resources" (p12)*

Several participants referred to issues related to the funding crisis, which has reduced government investment. However, it seems that a lack of investment in cultural tourism goes back to inappropriate planning, poor implementation, and poor management, because the budgetary issues only became problematic in 2014. The KRG suffered a financial crisis from 2014 due to cut backs in transfers from the Iraqi government to the KRG, increases in security and defence spending due to the conflict with Daesh, and a rapid fall in oil prices (DeWeaver, 2015; World Bank Group, 2016).

> *"The second barrier is funding. In the beginning, we did not have this barrier, it came in 2014" (p6)*

Another reason related to the shortage of planning is that the government neglected the tourism sector and took a narrow focus on investment for the national economy, prioritising the production of oil.

> *"I can say just a limited number of historical sites are ready for visitors, you can count them on your hands, and all other cultural resources are not ready for visitors, because the government is only focused on producing oil" (p3)*

PROLIFERATION OF BUREAUCRACY

Long bureaucratic procedures are considered to be one of the administrative challenges facing the Directorates of Tourism and Antiquities, as they have to follow these procedures to make decisions for their daily work.

> *"Another thing that is very important, we do not have authority to make decisions. We are always subject to different ministries, and when we need to make decisions we have to follow long bureaucratic procedures that delay our work" (p10)*

Participants complained of bureaucratic impediments amongst directorates as the most influential administrative challenge. For instance, the General Board of Tourism does not have any direct connection with the Council of Ministers for making decisions and also does not have direct responsibilities for managing all tourism assets. A number of cultural assets are run by different parties, such as the Ministry of Culture and Youth. To develop a cultural tourism industry, Directorates must have the authority to make decisions concerning investment and agreements with local, private, and/or other cultural tourism developers.

FACILITIES AND PREPARATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR VISITORS

The lack of tourist facilities at heritage sites and cultural attractions is considered to be one of the main challenges hindering cultural tourism. Tourists in focus group 1 who visited Erbil Citadel complained of a lack of basic facilities. To make the site more attractive, tourists in focus group 1 suggested opening a restaurant, cafe, and making a folklore festival, singing concerts, antique shops and gift shops in the Citadel. In addition, tourists in focus groups 1 and 2 complained also of the lack of public transport and lack of signs directing tourists to the attractions. This was all in addition to the restrictive length of visas for them to stay in Erbil (normally around 15 days). On the other hand, they were satisfied with some of the services and facilities such as hotels, restaurants, roads, airports, security, tour guides and hospitality. This suggests that tourism attractions and accommodations are valuable in Erbil, yet supporting services need further attention and development.

MARKETING AND DESTINATION IMAGE

The lack of marketing and advertisement is one of the challenges that face the entire tourism industry in the KFR, as participant 7 believed that the region had not been successful in tourism marketing until now. In addition, participant 12 mentioned that poor marketing is due to the political situation in Iraq, which gave the KFR a negative image.

> *"In 2013, we started to work on marketing abroad. Many countries abroad, they do not know Kurdistan is a safe place for tourism, because Iraq is recognized as an unstable area" (p12)*

Indeed, international tourists in focus group 1 claimed that they had not seen promoting for cultural attraction at TV channels or even in the hotels, restaurants, airport and roads.

It can be concluded that there are a number of reasons behind the lack of cultural tourism in the KFR: the shortfall of investments, poor implementation, absence of an integrated tourism policy, proliferation of bureaucracy, facilities and preparation of cultural heritage for visitors, negative destination image, and dearth of experience in dealing with heritage attractions. A number of these challenges can be overcome through targeted management and organisation, whilst external challenges regarding reputation can be mitigated over time.

OPPORTUNITIES

In response to the above challenges to cultural tourism in the KFR, there are clear opportunities. First of all, focus groups reported positively in regards to hospitality amongst the local community, which can serve to mitigate negative destination image through word of mouth accounts. The motivation behind a high level of hospitality amongst the residents and other stakeholders comes from the economic benefits of tourism and pride in national identity. Residents in both focus groups 3 and 4 agreed that the advantages of tourism growth are far greater than the disadvantages and they feel they would benefit from cultural resource attractions developed for sustainable tourism.

Relatedly, another opportunity comes from the government's focus on increasing the levels of tourist satisfaction. Government representatives support combining cultural heritage sites with some intangible cultural resources, such as using historical buildings to present music and traditional singing to increase the experiential qualities of the site.

> *"I think using historical buildings to present intangible cultural resources like music and classic singing will increase the level of enjoyment and satisfaction for tourists or visitors " (p1)*

However, they prioritise historical representation of these resources, as government representatives suggest that the preparation or process of combining cultural assets should not undermine the history of buildings and the materials used should correlate with the heritage assets.

> *"But this valorising should not affect the naturalistic appearance and history of the building, and should not use modern materials" (p7)*

There are number of opportunities related to cultural tourism development in the KFR such as high levels of hospitality, governmental vision to increase levels of tourist satisfaction and protection and restoration of heritage sites. However, comprehensive plans are required to tackle the above challenges and encourage and initiate these opportunities.

DISCUSSION

The study highlights several reasons behind the underdevelopment of cultural tourism in KFR, for example, the lack of investment to develop cultural assets for tourism purposes, neglect of the tourism sector and prioritisation of oil production, poorly implemented tourism plans and lack of comprehensive planning, a growth of bureaucracy without attention to collaboration amongst directorates, lack of basic tourist facilities within current heritage attractions, and poor marketing to counteract the negative destination images and reputation of the KFR in Iraq. Indeed, all these challenges, with the exception of destination image, can be classified under the main three problems: poor implementation, planning, and organisation.

POOR IMPLEMENTATION AND LACK OF INVESTMENT

Although suitable tourism policy is essential for sustainable cultural tourism, implementation is crucial to achieve desired goals. Unfortunately, poor implementation has become a common issue and one of the major challenges of tourism policy and planning (Berry & Ladkin, 1997; Buckley, 2012; Dinica, 2009; Logar, 2010; Mycoo, 2006; Tosun, 2001), and in particular this is a common issue in the developing world (Mycoo, 2006; Tosun, 2001).

In practice, tourism development may not be sustainable, as it is often subjected to poor implementation of tourism planning (Buckley, 2012). In addition, Mycoo (2006) claims the practical achievements of sustainable tourism development do not match with the theoretical context, as there are often problems in the implementation. Berry and Ladkin (1997) argue that poor implementation is a fundamental challenge for successful sustainability in developed and developing countries where typically there is a significant gap between tourism policy and its application. The main reason for poor implementation of many of the policies and tourism plans is that public authorities do not take into account the sustainability performance of tourism seriously. This is due to fact that political ideologies dominate the public authorities when deciding which policy instruments are eligible to be operationalized for sustainable tourism (Dinica, 2009).

However, it seems that poor implementation is most common in developing countries, as a result of unstable socio-economic and political conditions. Further, the concepts associated with sustainable tourism development are designed by developed countries, which might be incompatible to developing countries' circumstances (Tosun, 2001). Thus, considering these potential challenges for KFR, it is crucial that tourism planners and managers involve community and stakeholders in setting plans and decision making procedure and seek collaboration and cooperation optimize the potential for success.

Community participation in tourism planning, decision making, and tourism projects helps to obtain community acceptance of tourism development and achieving sustainable tourism (Cole, 2006; Hung, Sirakaya-Turk, & Ingram, 2011). The involvement of a wider range of stakeholders in the decision-making process and preservation of heritage attractions can help in achieving sustainable tourism development of cultural attractions (Garrod & Fyall, 2000). From these

considerations, Dinica (2009) cites that public authorities' actions are important for sustainable tourism development, including multi-stakeholder involvement being necessary for addressing knowledge gaps and to enable the formulation of common visions for sustainable tourism which can obtain buy-in to regulation and governance. Moreover, according to Aas, Ladkin, and Fletcher (2005), involving the local community in the decision making process by giving equal opportunities in discussions may help to build a consensus and deeper collaboration in the future. This can also add depth to the perspective of planners by introducing a richer understanding of the challenges that could face tourism development based on the perspectives of all stakeholders, enabling development in a way that benefits everyone involved in or affected by the growth and development of tourism.

DESTINATION IMAGE

Destination image plays a core role in tourist preferences when they choose a destination. Whenever the destination records a high level of security, stability, hospitality, and so on, it will attract a greater number of tourists and vice versa. In this regard, Gertner (2007) states that positive branding increases an ability to attract investment, which is also reflected in successful tourism businesses and an increase in visitor numbers. On the other hand, destinations that suffer from image problems (as a result of either inaccurate reports circulated by the media or widespread issues such as political unrest, natural disasters, violence and economic downturns) may undermine their competitive efficiency in the market. For instance, (Mansfeld, 1999) reports that Israel faced several fluctuations in tourism growth from 1967 to 1999 due to the negative image that occurred after the 1967 conflict, which led to a decline of tourism growth, spreading uncertainty amongst tourist stakeholders.

Destinations require a marketing strategy that ensures maintenance of a positive image, where managing destination brand depends on local people, products, policies, and organization factors (Angelkova, Koteski, Jakovlev, and Mitrevska (2012). This strategy relies on investment in tourism advertising and marketing and cooperation among stakeholders. In this regard, Mansfeld (1999) suggests that recovering and revising a positive image requires the cooperation and integration of all stakeholders involved in tourism industry, including government agencies, tourism operators and the media, in order to reform the negative image of the tourist destination. This is especially applicable to post-conflict destinations, as marketing and advertisement play a major role in recovering the destination image following conflict (Mansfeld, 1999; Vitic & Ringer, 2008).

For the KFR, the conflict with Daesh in recent years has left the region with a reputation of danger, instability, and damaged infrastructure. This has impacted on destination image and visits to the region. The literature suggests a number of tools to address the negative destination images. In the case of Haiti, Seraphin, Gowreensunkar, and Ambaye (2016) believe that the pre-visitation information policy based on truthful and realistic information making potential tourists knowledgeable about the place could reduce the negative images of destination. Moreover, a strategic approach for recovering a negative destination image could be achieved by involving residents,

enhancing local pride, vision formation, tourism master plan, defining long- and short-term goals could also be effective (Hudson, 2016). To increase tourists confidence and reducing risk perceptions, in destinations that have been affected by negative destination images, such the case of Jordan, Liu, Schroeder, Pennington-Gray, and Farajat (2016) suggest that the government could increase security cameras and provide information related to tourist destinations prior to travel, en route, and in situ through travel agencies, airports, hotels, restaurants, and tourist information centres. Bassols (2016) claims that the factors that led to the recovery of the tourism industry in Colombia were a diminishing of militia activities, general widespread peace and security in the region, an ending of travel advisory notices against visits to Colombia, and promotional initiatives that focused more on international rather than domestic tourists.

Due to the lack of funding, the KFR could rely on tools that do not require much funding. Konecnik and Go (2008) claim that destination marketers should identify strengths and weakness of their competitors and take further strategic action to attract greater number of tourists in targeted marketing, use of marketing tools such as public relations, and sales promotion, and Internet based activities. The KRG needs to encourage cooperation between all stakeholders in the design of the marketing strategy, and focus on marketing in selected international markets, focusing on building positive destination image. Provision of pre-visit information through travel agencies, airports, hotels, restaurants, and tourist information centres is also essential to reduce risk perception. Travel to and within the KFR is relatively safe, and so at the government level, pressure needs to be applied to remove the travel advisory notice against travel to the KFR

FACILITIES AND HOSPITALITY

The more residents have a positive perspective of tourism development and its economic and socio-cultural and environmental impacts, the more support for tourism grows among the local community (Stylidis, Biran, Sit, & Szivas, 2014). In general, residents' support is very important for increasing the level of hospitality and consequently increasing the level of tourists' enjoyment (Aas et al. (2005). In the case of KFR, the perceived level of hospitality is very high amongst residents and other stakeholders such as restaurants, hotels, and tourism operators. This is considered to be a strength of tourism development in KFR.

On the other hand, services and tourist facilities require more investment or need better organisation. First and foremost, the process of obtaining visas to visit KFR needs to be made easier and the maximum length of stay should be increased. Secondly, an appropriate number of hotels and restaurants are needed, as at present they are not distributed appropriately in relation to destination needs and according to a comprehensive plan. Thirdly, some tourist services and facilities need to be improved, such as taxi drivers, public transportations and tour guides.

To tackle these challenges, KFR requires a suitable plan for developing cultural tourism in a sustainable manner in a way that maximizes revenue while reducing negative impacts on the environment and community. However, this plan should be based on a number of principles, as discussed in the following sub-section.

TOURISM POLICY AND PLANNING

The attention to sustainable tourism and sustainable cultural tourism has increased widely in governmental policy and planning, as economic growth related to tourism can have a number of negative impacts to environment and society (Girard & Nijkamp, 2009). In this regard, Logar (2010) argues for the need tourism policy based on a set of economic, regulatory and institutional instruments to be able to drive the tourism industry to more sustainable tourism development. Moreover, Elliott (2002) claims that the government is the primary stakeholder that can influence the tourism nature and extent of impacts such as stability, security, legality and legitimacy, monetary and exchange services, services and basic infrastructure requirements, immigration and visa procedures, air travel, and other essential tourism facilities. The government is responsible for utilising all tourism resources to improve the quality of life of the community and sustain these resources for the next generation (Nasser, 2003). Dinica (2009) argues that appropriate cultural tourism policy should be based on international organisation guidance and debate between the public authorities and other stakeholders. This means cooperation between decision makers and stakeholders is essential to setting and implementing sustainable tourism policy.

In line with this, Throsby (2009, p. 20) has developed three golden rules for sustainable cultural tourism for public authorities and decision makers when undertaking cultural tourism projects and tourism planning. First, 'get the values right'. This involves assessing the actual value of heritage as a cultural capital, including economic and cultural value (Economic value might refer to any financial creation and revenue return from utilising the assets, while cultural value refers to aesthetic value, spiritual value, social value, historical value, symbolic value, and authenticity value). The second golden rule is 'get the sustainability principles right' where the tourism project or tourism strategy should ensure satisfying the six principles of sustainability (continuity, intergenerational equity, intra-generational equity, diversity, balance in natural and cultural ecosystems, interdependence. The third golden rule is 'get the analytical methods right', which means adjusting both above golden rules to assess the positive and adverse effects of heritage tourism projects or tourism policy for the immediate and long term from the perspective of different stakeholders. This involves assessing different values, outcomes, income creation and income distribution, local engagement, identity, preservation of natural and cultural environment.

The above golden rules consider the general principles of successful tourism policy and planning to ensure sustainability and can aid decision makers in choosing the most suitable instrument (or group instruments) of cultural tourism policy. In this regard, Logar (2010) has developed three tourism policy instruments as a strategy for sustainable tourism development which are economic, regulatory and institutional instruments. Economic policy instruments include tourist eco-taxes (e.g. tourist tax when paying for accommodation), user fees (payments when tourists use services and resources such as beaches), financial incentives (lowering taxes to improve the quality of accommodation facilities, or increase/ reduce the prices of particular services such as raising building permit costs for regulating further urbanization), and a tradable building permits

system (e.g. limiting a construction quota would reduce further urbanization). The regulatory or control instruments include quotas (setting maximum visitors to destinations) and zoning (the regulation for reducing construction in particular areas). The institutional instruments provide eco-labels to encourage maintaining the environment and increasing competitiveness (gives according to tourist facilities that meet particular environmental criteria for accommodation, hotels, restaurants, tour operators), and changes in property rights (privatization for state-owned facilities that need urgent investment). All the instruments' policies should be assessed prior to implementation in terms of efficiency (for improving sustainability), acceptability (by relevant stakeholders), and feasibility (economically and technically). However, each country has their own circumstances which requires choosing a certain instrument (or groups of instruments) for designing tourism policy to achieve desired objectives.

While the KRG suffers from budgetary challenges, it can be instrumental in leading tourism policy for the region based on Throsby's three golden rules and Logar's tourism policy instruments. The KRG could apply the following initiatives for creating funding and protection of heritage tourism resources. User fees could be applied to tourists visiting attractions. Eco-tax on accommodation could also be applied. Financial incentives could then be provided such as favourable tax rates for developers in peripheral destinations, and increasing building permit costs and development tax in regions that have over-capacity of products and services. Establishing eco-labels for projects, accommodations, and restaurants based on the level of services provided, environmental protection, which will increasing competitiveness. All above tourism policy instruments should be assessed in terms of sustainability, economic feasibility, technical adaptability, and acceptability for relevant stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Tourist arrivals in KFR have been increasing during the last decade by approximately 25% each year before the decline in 2014 due to war against Daesh militias. Tourism industry in the KFR mainly relies on leisure tourism, but there is a great opportunity for further tourism growth in KFR based on its diversity of culture and cultural heritage sites. These valuable and attractive tourism assets have so far not been managed or organised very well to attract international tourists. In addition, there is not enough consideration for sustainable tourism development, as the government is overly focussed on increasing the number of tourists without due consideration of sustainability issues.

There are several problems hindering cultural tourism in the KFR. Firstly, there is a proliferation of bureaucracy without an effort to foster intra-governmental communication. To overcome this issue, the administrative structure of the tourism ministries requires a reorganisation to be able to manage all tourism assets properly. The Ministry (or High Council Board for tourism industry) needs to be established and linked directly to the Council of Ministers to manage and supervise all tourism assets including natural sites, tangible and intangible heritage assets, and all other tourist activities that attract tourists in order to protect, maintain, and manage tourism

development sustainably. This will give authority to the tourism industry operators to enable them to make decisions with appropriate timeliness. Secondly, there is poor implementation of policies and a lack of investment. This comes as a result of a lack of comprehensive tourism planning. Thus, the government requires a set of proper plans for developing cultural tourism in such a way that all stakeholders should cooperate and be involved in decision-making to drive cultural tourism in a successful, competitive and sustainable way. Thirdly, there are several other challenges that face the tourism industry that directly or indirectly impact on cultural tourism. Examples include negative images of the destination brand, a lack of investment in marketing and advertisement, dearth of tourist facilities such as public transport, signage to tourist attractions and the restrictive length of visas to stay in the KFR. This could be overcome by allocating appropriate budgets and involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the debate and discussion for setting a tourism policy.

On the other hand, there are a number of strengths in the KFR. Firstly, there is a positive vision to support cultural tourism amongst government representatives, particularly to attract international tourists, to protect cultural resources from damage, to create revenue in a general form, and to diversify sources of income. Another positive point is the support of cultural tourism by the local residents, which might lead to sustained increases in the level of hospitality.

The role of government is crucial for driving the tourism industry towards sustainability because of tourism's impact on community and environment. However, a diversity of stakeholders are affected by tourism. Therefore, successful planning occurs when it meets the objectives of all stakeholders' needs. In addition, tourism planning should be based on guidance provided by respected international organisations to develop cooperation and strong relationships between policy makers and all tourism stakeholders.

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Investigation of career choice determinants, the case of Chinese tourism & hospitality students

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on the social cognitive career theory and the theory of planned behavior, this study investigated tourism and hospitality students' career choice determinants. Based on a survey of 446 Chinese students, this study identified four factors which contributed significantly to Chinse students' career commitments, which are Outcome Expectation and Personal Interest, Social Value or Respect, Self-efficacy, and Significant Others' Understanding and Support'. In contrary, Working Conditions had no significant influence on students' career commitments. This study revealed that students' career perceptions may vary over time, students' gender, majors and work experience can also make an impact on their career perceptions. Implications of the findings to tourism/hospitality educators and employers were discussed.

Keywords: career commitments; tourism and hospitality; Chinese students

INTRODUCTION

As the scope of tourism and hospitality education has been expanding rapidly, not underestimated is the importance of understanding students' perceptions of their work and careers in the tourism and hospitality industry. Made up of many interlinked and competitive sectors such as packaged travel, accommodations, food and drink, transportation and recreation, culture and sporting events; the need for tourism students entering the job force to have positive, flexible and proactive perceptions of careers and their development becomes increasingly important (Theobald, 2005). Understanding the perceptions of students' commitments to career choices is central for tourism and hospitality educators to attract and recruit talented students, which enables the educators to design realistic and effective courses for students, and to some extent, to prevent their future job dissatisfaction (Wang & Huang, 2014).

Past research defined career choices "as choosing one profession over another" (Orndorff & Herr, 1996). According to Blustein, Ellis and Devenis (1989), commitments to career choices can be explained as the ability of an individual to determine his or her job preferences, as well as to have a strong affiliation with specific occupational goals. Introduced by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994), social cognitive career theory (SCCT) has been applied in defining factors that influence one's career choices (e.g., Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2002, Wan, Wong, & Kong, 2014).

SCCT focuses on the inter-relationships among various personal, contextual and behavioral variables, which are assumed to impact performance outcome, career interests and choices. Personal factors mainly refer to one's perception of self-efficacy, outcome expectation, and personal interest. According to Lent and Brown (1996), individuals who had a higher self-efficacy and anticipated positive outcomes would support higher goals. Bandura (1986) defined self-efficacy as an individual's ability to judge his or her capabilities to perform specific actions or designated functions through their beliefs about their capabilities. Applying self-efficacy theory, SCCT posits that individuals were more likely to pursue and be successful in occupations for which they had a high self-efficacy (Lent, et al., 1994). Outcome expectations, in response to career behavior, helps determine career goals and interests (Gore & Leuwerke, 2000). According to Lent, et al. (2002), outcome expectations described an individual's beliefs concerning the consequence or outcome of completing a specific action. Bandura (1986) described outcome expectations as one's beliefs concerning the probable outcomes of particular actions. In addition, a large body of research applying the SCCT indicate that self-interest has a large impact on career choices (Bandura, 1986; Lent et al., 1994). In the context of the tourism industry, it is assumed that students' personal interests have significant impacts on their commitments to career choices in the industry.

SCCT's personal and contextual variables reflect intrinsic and extrinsic reasons, respectively, leading to one's career behavior. The contextual variables, in the context of the tourism industry mainly include working conditions and social status or respect of a job. The nature of work or working conditions may be considered to be a critical factor influencing students' career commitments; an individual's career prospects often depend on one's perceptions of the job and the industry (Richardson, 2008). Social status could be evaluated by whether an individual had pride in his/her career, and if the job was perceived as a respected and an important occupation in society (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000). In a study on Chinese tourism students' perceptions of tourism careers, Wang and Huang (2014) observed that the students' perceptions of 'nature of work' and 'social status of work' have significant on their overall perception of the industry.

Besides the two contextual variables, it is considered that other people's understanding and support may exert important influence on one's career commitments in the industry. Significant others' support is considered important in influencing students' career commitments to tourism/hospitality industry; this may be especially true in the context of Chinese culture where 'service' such as working as tour guides or hotel/restaurant receptionists is considered an inferior occupation. It is argued that it would be essential for students who intend to work in tourism/hospitality industry to get their family and/or friends' understanding and support. The importance of others' support can be explained by the theory of planned behavior (TPB). TPB has been widely applied based on three core determinants - attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1985). Subjective norm refers to the perceived social pressure from important others to perform or not to perform a behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). People are more likely to perform a behavior when they get support from their referents than when they do not (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Previous studies found that the perceptions and expectations of parents, friends and teachers regarding their students' abilities in academic major's influenced one's perception

(e.g. Bleeker & Jacobs, 2004). Based on the above, it is considered that SCCT's contextual variables should include 'others' support' as an important factor in predicting one's career behavior; what remains unclear is how the factor of 'others' support' may work together with the other variables to influence one's career behavior.

In addition to personal and contextual variables, some categorical variables such as work experience, year of study and gender are stressed in tourism literature in terms of their impacts on students' perceptions of the industry. For instance, Kozak and Kizilirmak (2001, cited in Roney & Öztin, 2007) observed that Turkish tourism undergraduate students' work experience as a trainee in the industry affected their perceptions in a negative way; Jenkins (2001) noted that, in the UK and the Netherlands, hospitality students' perceptions of the industry tended to deteriorate as they progressed in their studies; similar to work experience within tourism sectors, year of study has been found to be related to negative perceptions of a career in tourism (Blomme, Van Rheede, & Tromp, 2009); females have a tendency to be more positive in their outlook on a career and intentions to work in tourism (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000; Chuang & Jenkins, 2010). It is debated that, due to each country's various cultures and career prospects, the patterns of the categorical variables' impacts may vary in each specific country, which should be addressed and treated separately. In addition to these categorical variables, this study suggests that, due to the distinctive nature of each major, students of different majors may consider the personal, contextual, and career behaviro variables differently. Considering that students concentrating on tourism management versus hospitality management pursue different career paths, their commitments to career choices may vary.

Tourism students' perceptions of careers have been widely discussed in tourism literature (e.g., Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000; Jenkins, 2001; Richardson, 2008; Wang & Huang, 2014), lacking is a comprehensive understanding of what factors may significantly contribute to students' commitments to career choices. Given the importance of understanding students' perceptions of their career commitments, yet rare studies have ever been conducted to include all the important factors, this study is designed to explore and identify the salient career-related factors in terms of their impacts on students' commitments to career choices, in an effort to increase an understanding in this field, and to recommend educational strategies that would encourage tourism/hospitality students to make career plans more effectively and efficiently. In addition, this study also aims to examine the impacts of the categorical variables of major, gender, year of study, and work experience on students' perceptions of career commitments as well as the predictors of their career commitments. Based on the above discussion, a research framework is developed to guide this study (see Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Research Framework of This Study
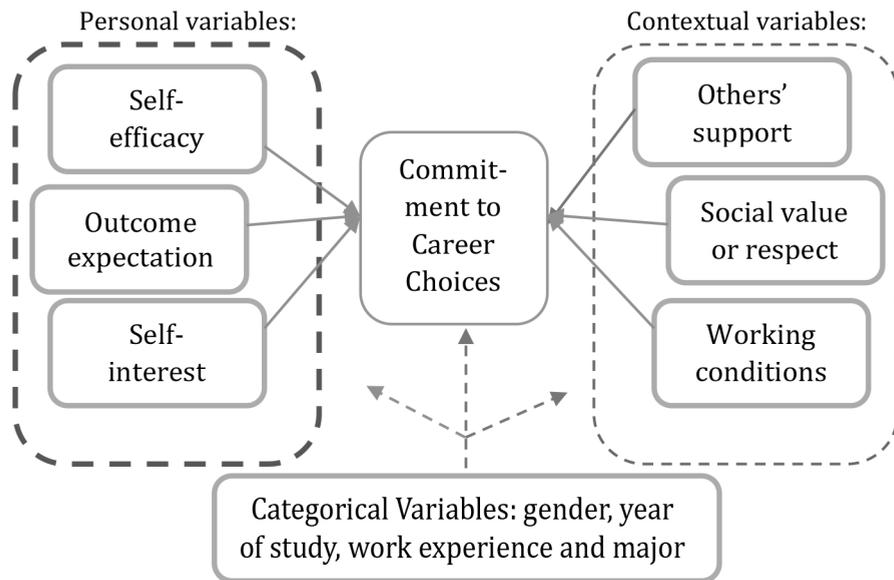
Most of the previous studies focusing on tourism career perceptions have been undertaken in western countries (Europe and Australia/New Zealand), very few have dedicated to students in the other parts of the world, leaving an incomplete picture of students' career perceptions of the tourism industry. Such imbalance may deter a comprehensive and holistic understanding of undergraduate tourism and hospitality students' career behaviors across the world, given the different cultures and values of different countries. For instance, China's early tourism education studies discussed both the overall situation of China's higher education in tourism and the major problems facing China's tourism education (Chen, 1990; Zhao, 1991; Lew & Yu, 1995; Xiao, 2000); recent studies were more about Chinese students' career perceptions as well as factors affecting students' perceptions (e.g., Jiang & Tribe, 2009; Wang & Huang, 2014). It is noted that few has ever been attempted to examine the influential factors affecting students' career commitments. This study focuses on the undergraduate tourism/hospitality students in China, in a hope to understand how the personal variables and contextual variables as well as the categorical variables influence Chinese students' commitments to career choices. More specifically, this study is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1) To identify a set of underlying factors contributing to tourism and hospitality students' career commitments in the context of China;
2) To detect the important underlying factor(s) contributing to tourism and hospitality students' career commitments;
3) To examine the influence of the categorical variables (i.e. gender, major, work experience, and year of study) on tourism and hospitality students' commitments to career choices.

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

The questionnaire was developed with inclusion of perceptual items measuring the constructs of self-efficacy, outcome expectation, self-interest, perceived nature of work, others' support, and perceived social status or value of the careers. The items used to measure each construct are mainly gleaned from previous studies (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000; Taylor & Bentz, 1983; Wang & Huang, 2014). For instance, Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000) employed a multi-dimensional attitude scale in their study of Turkish tourism students that addressed factors such as nature of work, social status, and outcome expectations; the items representing these constructs were included; five self-efficacy items were adopted from Taylor and Bentz (1983); the measurement scale of 'self-interest' was derived from the study of Wang and Huang (2014); measurement of the items comprising the construct of 'significant others' support' is referring to the support of parents, friends/classmates, and teachers. As a result, a total of 29 predicting variables were included in the questionnaire; a single-item variable was used to measure students' intentional career commitments after graduation.

The first part of the survey addresses students' profile information including gender, year of study, major, and work experience; also included in this part is the variable used to measure students' commitments to career choices, based on a 7-point scale (1=definitely no to 7=definitely yes). The second part of the questionnaire measures students' career decisions and self-efficacy measured with a 7-point scale (1=not confident at all to 7=completely confident). The remaining questionnaire measures the constructs of outcome expectations, perceived self-interest, social recognition, significant others' support and nature of work, all utilizing a 7-point scale from 1=extremely disagree to 7=extremely agree.

The survey instrument was initially written in English and was translated into Chinese, by the researcher who is fluent in English and Chinese. A pilot survey was conducted prior to implementing the formal survey. Thirty students were randomly selected and asked to fill out the survey and encouraged to make comments about the survey. The questionnaire was distributed in November, 2014, to all tourism freshmen, sophomores and juniors studying at the selected university in China. Related information was provided to the students beforehand to ensure they had full knowledge of the purpose of the research. Students were informed that participation in this survey was entirely voluntary and confidential, with no coercion or pressure of any kind to participate, and there were no penalties if students decided not to participate. Students' names and identifiers were not recorded ensuring their identity would be anonymous. To secure a high response rate and accurate sampling without bias, the questionnaire was self-administered and hand-delivered by student coordinators to each class.

A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed and 446 usable surveys were collected providing a response rate of 74.3%, the respondents were comprised of the following student rankings: 33.8% freshmen, 42.1% sophomores and 24.1% juniors. Female respondents represented the majority of the participants in the study (69.9% females over 30.1% males). Cronbach's reliability test was performed to measure the internal consistency of each of the scales used in this

study; based on the reliability test, three items were removed due to their negative contribution to the scale's overall reliability score.

Analyses of data were conducted through a four-step approach. First, descriptive statistics analysis (frequency, central tendency and dispersion of data) on the 26 items was run to report the basic descriptive information of the items. Second, exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the 26 items, to delineate the underlying dimensions of these items. Based on Kaiser's (1974) suggestion, only factors with an eigenvalue greater than one were accepted and only items with factor loadings and commonalities greater than 0.4 were included in the final factor structure. In the factor analysis, Cronbach's alpha within each domain was computed to confirm the factor's internal consistency. Third, multiple regression analysis was conducted to measure the predicting power of each of the underlying dimensions delineated from the 26 items on the variable of students' commitments to career choices. Independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA were conducted to detect perceptual discrepancies between students of different categories.

RESULTS

Perceptual Items and Underlying Factors
The mean ratings of the perceptual items are demonstrated in Table 1, ranging from 3.59 to 5.04. Overall, the ratings are generally moderate, with most of the mean ratings scattered around the midpoint of 4. The most favorably-rated items are the self-efficacy items such as 'In terms of goal selection, how much confidence do you have in choosing a career that will fit your preferred lifestyle,' and the least favorable items are more related with working conditions such as 'Need to start with lowest position,' 'There are no regular working hours.' The mean of the dependent variable 'Do you intend to work in the tourism/hospitality industry after graduation?' is 4.25, slightly bigger than the midpoint of 4.

Table 1. Mean Ratings of the Perceptual Items

	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Need to start with lowest position.	445	5.04	1.177
In terms of goal selection, how much confidence do you have in choosing a career that will fit your preferred lifestyle.	445	4.92	1.053
In self-appraising your ability, interest and values, how much confidence do you have in determining what your ideal job would be.	445	4.86	1.063
In looking for occupational information, how much confidence do you have in describing the job duties of the career/occupation you would like to pursue.	445	4.84	1.059
In career planning, how much confidence do you have in determining the steps you need to secure your ideal job.	445	4.74	.999

There are no regular working hours.	445	4.66	1.136
Work pressure is too high.	445	4.66	1.093
Working hours are too long.	444	4.64	1.117
One can make good money by working in tourism and hospitality.	445	4.54	1.060
Promotion opportunities are satisfactory in the tourism and hospitality industry.	445	4.41	1.011
Tourism and hospitality jobs are interesting to me.	444	4.34	1.245
Working in the tourism industry is enjoyable to me.	445	4.28	1.135
In general, the advantages of working in the tourism and hospitality industry outweigh the disadvantages.	444	4.25	.933
Do you intend to work in the tourism/hospitality industry after graduation?	442	4.25	1.13
To study tourism and hospitality management at the university level is a correct investment in career development.	445	4.13	1.100
Working in the tourism industry is not valued in society.	445	4.07	1.246
My parents are supportive to my career goal in tourism industry.	445	4.07	1.267
My teachers encourage me to choose a tourism career after graduation.	445	4.03	1.211
One can make more money in tourism and hospitality than in other sectors.	445	3.94	1.082
I talk to my relatives/friends about my major in the tourism industry with pride.	445	3.94	1.340
Relationship between managers and staff is poor.	445	3.89	.997
I feel enthusiastic about starting my first job in the tourism industry following graduation.	441	3.88	1.351
People working in the tourism industry are not respected by other people.	445	3.84	1.214
Most T&H jobs are low skilled.	445	3.79	1.447
My friends and/or classmates are supportive to my career goal in tourism industry.	445	3.75	1.126
My family is proud of my profession in the tourism industry.	444	3.64	1.289
Working in tourism industry has long been my dream.	444	3.59	1.333

The exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the 26 items through SPSS. The coefficient of internal consistency of the total scale reliability (Cronbach's alpha) was calculated as .873.

According to Sekaran (2003), coefficients less than .60 are considered 'poor', those in the .70 range 'acceptable', and those over .80 'good'. Thus, the internal consistency of the statements used in this study is considered to be a good indication of reliability. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin (KMO) statistic which measures the proportion of variance among the variables that might be common variance is 0.879. The test statistic for sphericity is large (5452.3) which is statistically significant at 0.001. As a result, five underlying factors were identified through the principal component factor analysis of the 26 perceptual statements; eigenvalues of all the five factors are higher than one with high reliability alpha coefficients ranging from 0.768 to 0.897 (see Table 2).

Table 2. Factor Analysis of the Items Used to Predict Students' Career Commitments

Perception items	Factor Loadings					Commu-nalities
	1	2	3	4	5	
F1. Outcome Expectation and Personal Interest						
Promotion opportunities are satisfactory	.442					.434
To study T&H is a correct investment	.570					.533
One can make good money by working in T&H working in tourism	.591					.535
One can make more money in T&H than in other sectors	.728					.568
The advantages of working in T&H outweigh the disadvantages	.625					.471
T&H jobs are interesting to me	.822					.714
Working in T&H is enjoyable to me	.788					.683
Working in T&H has long been my dream	.776					.669
I feel enthusiastic about starting my first job in T&H following graduation	.822					.696
F2: Significant Others' Understanding and Support						
I talk to my relatives/friends about my major with proudness		.673				.669
My family is proud of my profession in T&H		.737				.740
My parents are supportive to my career goal in T&H		.695				.645
My teachers encourages me to choose a T&H career		.624				.453
My friends/classmates are supportive to my career goal in T&H		.638				.583
F3: Sense of Self-efficacy						
In self-appraising your ability, interest and values			.825			.704
In looking for occupational information			.816			.676
In terms of goal selection			.768			.596
In career planning			.788			.624

F4: Perceived Social Value or Respect of the Job

Working in T&H is not valued in society			.702		.627
People working in T&H are not respected by other people			.771		.702
Relationship between managers and staff is poor			.680		.573
Most T&H jobs are low skilled			.728		.591

F5: Working Conditions of the Job

There are no regular working hours				.691	.554
Work pressure is too high				.747	.607
Need to start with lowest position				.733	.544
Working hours are too long				.781	.680

Factor mean	4/15	3.89	4.84	3.90	4.75
Eigenvalue	7.478	3.282	2.538	1.368	1.202
Variance explained (total: 61%)	28.76	12.62	9.76	5.26	4.62
Cronbach's alpha	.897	.847	.824	.776	.768

The delineated factors from Factor One to Factor Five are labeled as follows: 'outcome expectation and personal interest' (28.76% of variance); 'significant others' understanding and support' (12.62% of variance); 'sense of self-efficacy' (9.76%); 'perceived social value or respect of the job' (5.26% of variance), and 'working conditions of the job' (4.62%). Combined, these five factors explained 61% of the variance; in terms of construct validity, the items' communalities range from .434 to .740, their factor loadings range from .442 to .825, indicating a reasonably high correlation between the delineated factors and their individual items; with regards to the loading of each item, all seem to be loaded meaningfully. Based on summated mean scores, the most favorably-perceived factor is 'self-efficacy' (4.84); two factors were perceived negatively – 'Others' support' (3.89) and 'working conditions' (3.25. note: the negatively-coded values were reversed).

Significant Factors Influencing Students' Career Commitments

As illustrated in Table 3, the regression equation model for predicting the students' intentional career commitments indicates an adjusted R square of 0.538, meaning that 53.8% of the total variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables in the model. The F-ratio of 56.255 is significant (Prob. < 0.001), indicating that the result of the equation model could hardly occur by chance. All the t values for the partial correlations between the dependent variable and Factors One, Two, Three and Four are statistically significant at the level of 0.05. As a result, these four factors are found significant in predicting the students' intentional career choices. Factor Five ('working conditions'), however, is found insignificant.

Table 3. Important Determinants Contributing to Students' Overall Career Perceptions

R Square = 0.544, Adjusted R Square = 0.538, F= 56.255, Significance level= 0.001

Model	Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Std Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	4.257	.044		97.733	.000
F1	.530	.043	.477	12.187	000
F2	.280	.043	.252	6.444	.000
F4	-.239	.044	-.215	-5.487	.000
F3	-.097	.044	-.087	-2.237	.026

Based on the standardized coefficients Beta, it shows that the most influential factor in the model is Factor One – 'outcome expectation and personal interest' (Beta=0.477), followed by Factor Two 'others' support' (Beta=.252), Factor Four 'perceived social value and respect' (Beta=-.215) and Factor Three 'self-efficacy' (Beta=-.087). The standardized coefficients indicate that the predicting power of Factor Three is much smaller than the other three factors. Among the four predictors, Factors One and Two influence the dependent variables positively, while Factors Three and Four have negative impacts.

Impacts of Categorical Variables
Independent-sample t-tests and one-way ANOVA were implemented to examine perceptual differences of students' career perceptions with regards to students' major, work experience, grade, and gender. The results are presented in Table 4 (only displayed are the variables showing significant differences). A summary of the results is: Perceptions of Factor One and Factor Two differ between tourism major and hospitality major, between the experienced and the non-experienced, and among different years of study; perceptions of Factor Three diverge between male and female students; with respect to perceptions of Factor One and Factor Two among Freshman, sophomore, and junior, post-hoc multiple comparisons showed the main differential perceptions were mainly between the 1st years and 2nd years.

Table 4. Mean Comparisons of Students' Career Choice and the Significant Career Choice Determinants

Categorical variable: major

Factors	Categories	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	Sig.
Career Choice	Tourism	330	4.18	1.13	-2.43	.016
	Hospitality	109	4.48	1.08		
F1	Tourism	327	4.05	.84	-4.07	.001
	Hospitality	108	4.42	.81		
F2	Tourism	332	3.78	.94	-3.51	.001
	Hospitality	109	4.18	1.05		

Categorical variable: work experience?

Factors	Categories	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	Sig.
Career Choice	Yes	151	4.40	1.04	2.23	.026
	No	281	4.15	1.17		
F1	Yes	150	4.26	.80	2.23	.026
	No	279	4.09	.87		
F2	Yes	151	4.09	.98	3.12	.002
	No	283	3.78	.98		

Categorical variable: Years of Study (one-way ANOVA)

Factors	Categories	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	Sig.
F1	1st year	145	4.01	.78	5.42	.005
	2nd year	186	4.30	.85		
	3rd year	106	4.07	.89		
F2	1st year	150	3.67	.99	7.51	.001
	2nd year	187	4.08	.97		
	3rd year	106	3.84	.94		

Categorical variable: gender

Factors	Categories	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	Sig.
F3	Male	132	5.00	.89	2.61	.009
	Female	311	4.77	.82		

Note: Only the results of significant tests were displayed.

As shown in Table 4, students' career commitments were perceived differently between tourism and hospitality majors, and between students with work experience versus without work experience; students' perceptions of 'outcome expectation and personal interest' and 'others' support' were different between tourism and hospitality majors, with work experience versus without work experience, and the 1st year versus the 2nd year; 'self-efficacy' was perceived differently by male and female students. No significant perceptual differences were observed between the categorical groups in terms of the 'perceived social value or respect of the job.'

DISCUSSION

The summated mean scores of the four important dimensions are generally around the middle point of the 7-point scale, indicating that tourism and hospitality students' career perceptions are not very positive. This could be a serious signal for tourism/hospitality education providers and the industry, that, if potential students do not feel committed to tourism and hospitality career, the tourism and hospitality industry would find it difficult to hire qualified employees to meet

high expectations and challenges of the industry. One suggestion for the educators and employers is that learning the actual circumstances of the tourism industry early may prevent drastic flux in career perceptions or discouragement from a tourism/hospitality career in the future. If they do not try to gain a better understanding of the characteristics of the current students, Chinese tourism programs and industry organizations may eventually lose the highly motivated students and skilled employees. Factor One is actually composed by two dimensions - 'outcome expectation' and 'personal interest,' implying a strong collinear relationship between the two dimensions. Among the five factors, Factors One and Three are intrinsic factors and Factors Two, Four and Five are extrinsic factors. In contrast, the intrinsic factors are perceived more favorably over the extrinsic factors, indicating much more needs to be improved by tourism educators and employers in terms of the contextual factors.

'Outcome expectation and personal interest,' 'significant others' understanding and support,' 'social value and respect,' and 'self-efficacy,' in order of importance, turned out to be salient in contributing to students' commitments to career choices. Factor Five – 'working condition of the job' was found insignificant in predicting the dependent variable and thus excluded from the predicting model. This study indicates that, though working conditions is negatively perceived, this is not a significant determinant to students' career commitments, much less important than the other influential such as 'outcome expectation' and 'significant others' support.' However, working conditions, featuring low pay, unsociable working hours, seasonality, low skill requirements, and poor physical working environment, often led to meager job prospects and a poor image of the tourism industries (Roney & Öztin, 2007), future studies should consider examine working condition's indirect impact on students' career commitments mediated by the significant variables identified by this study.

Among the salient determinants of students' career commitments, Factor One - 'outcome expectation and personal interest' turned out to be the one with the biggest predicting power (Beta=.477), literally meaning there is a direct, positive association between students' career commitments and their outcome expectation and personal interest. This result indicates that students' own prospects and interests in the industry play a major role in students' career choice process. Factor Two – 'significant others' understanding and support' (Beta=.252) proved to be the second important determinant, indicating the important role this variable in the career commitments predicting model. The third predictor, 'perceived social value or respect of the job' (Beta=-.215), indicating tourism/hospitality students' are sensitive to how the career is sensed by the society. The factor of 'sense of self-efficacy' was found to generate the least predicting power (Beta=-.087); besides, it shows a negative relationship with the perception of 'career commitments,' meaning the higher sense of self-efficacy one holds, the less likely he or she wants to pursue a tourism/hospitality career, which is found to be contradictive to the findings of similar studies (e.g., Chuang et al., 2009). This may indicate that, one, working in tourism/hospitality job in China is perceived to be less skillful or less competent profession; two, compared with one's self-efficacy, 'Guangxi' (relationship) in Chinese culture may still be perceived to play a more predominant role in one's social activities (Wang & Huang, 2014).

The results of t-tests and one-way ANOVA indicate that perceptual discrepancies exist between the tourism management majors and hospitality management majors, in terms of their commitments to career choices, outcome expectation and personal interest, and their significant others' understanding and support. In contrast, Chinese hospitality management majors seem to be more likely to choose to work in the industry after graduation, who feel more positive about their 'outcome expectation and personal interest' and 'significant others' understanding and support.' With the completion of the survey, the researchers interviewed some of the respondents and noted that hospitality management majors seemed to be better informed of their career paths after graduation, while tourism management majors seemed to be more perplexed by what might be awaiting them after graduation. For instance, some of the complaints made by some students were: there were few attractive jobs available in the job market for tourism majors; the job of tour guide was much less respected than before. Besides, quite a few students are thinking of continuing postgraduate studies as a means of escaping from working in the industry.

Between the students with work experience and without work experience, perceptual discrepancies exist in students' commitments to career choices, outcome expectation and personal interest, and their significant others' understanding and support. Examination of the mean ratings of the two groups shows that students with work experience hold more favorable perceptions than students without work experience with regards to the above mentioned variables. This result implies that provision of internship and work experience is conducive to enhancing students' interest and expectation, increasing the understanding and support of the students' parents, friends and teachers, and consequently improving their sense of commitments to career choices. Contrary to tourism literature which stated that work experience might be a negative catalyzer (Kozak & Kizilirmak, 2001, cited in Roney and Öztin (2007)); this study proves that, work experience is a booster to Chinese students' commitments to career choices.

Analysis of the impact of 'year of study' was found to be significant on Factor One – outcome expectation and personal interest and Factor Two – significant others' understanding and support, which results seemed to be mixed: based on the mean ratings, sophomores perceived the two factors more favorably than freshmen, and the 3rd years' perceptions were less favorable than sophomores, indicating that the relationship between students' career perceptions and their progress of study might not be linear. According to Jenkins (2001) and Blomme, Van Rheede and Tromp's (2009), students' career perceptions tend to decline as they progressed in study. This study did not echo the previous studies' notions, showing that tourism/hospitality students in different countries may perceive these factors differently.

Tourism literature indicates that female students majoring in tourism and hospitality tend to be more positive when considering their careers in tourism than male students (Baum 2013, Wang & Huang, 2014). In terms of students' perceptions of commitments to career choices and the determining factors, this study did not show significant perceptual difference between male students and female students except on Factor Three – 'sense of self-efficacy,' where male students' sense of self-efficacy showed to be higher than female students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous studies on students' perceptions of the industry help tourism and hospitality educators and employers better understand how the industry is viewed in the eyes of students, in order to identify communication gaps and areas for improvements, and to provide students with the accurate and righteous image of the industry, in a hope to make the industry more attractive to talented students. This study, built on the basis of previous studies on students' perceptions of the industry and aiming to identify important factors influential to students' career choice commitments, will make the educators and employers better informed of students' intentional career choices as well as how their career commitments are influenced by the identified factors.

SCCT personal factors – outcome expectation, self-interest, self-efficacy – proved to be significant in predicting students' commitments to career choices; while the external factor – working conditions – was found insignificant, but may have indirect impacts on students' career commitments instead. The factor of significant other's understanding and support, grounded in TPB, proved to be a significant predictor of Chinese students' commitments to career choices and, as one of this study's main contributions, it is suggested that study of tourism and hospitality students' career commitments should include the factor of others' support. The educators and employers should consider providing orientation and up-to-date information about the industry and career opportunities not only to the students, but also to their parents, relatives and friends. This study further reveals that students' perceptions of their career choice determinants as well as intentions may vary, subject to their year of study, work experience, and gender. Another main contribution of this study is to detect the perceptual differences between tourism management majors and hospitality management majors, suggesting that future studies on tourism/hospitality students' perceptions of the industry and career choice commitments should better study the perceptions of the two majors separately.

In reality, there will be a number of influences, interactions, turning points and transformations which can affect an individual's choice of career or career path throughout their lifetime (Öhman, Stenlund, & Dahlgre, 2001; Tanova, Karatas-Özkan, & Inal, 2008). Tourism/hospitality educators and employers should work closely to address these changes and improve student retention, success and career satisfaction. Becoming more aware of changes in students' perceptions, understanding students' outlook towards entering the job force and taking proactive measures together to make students competitive and satisfied with their career choices, would make those turning points and transformations much more positive not just for the individual, but for all the parties involved.

From the perspective of education providers, tourism educators and administrators must take care to ensure courses provide directions towards careers that are preconceived by students, or to educate students on precisely what career path options they will be prepared for upon graduating especially with a tourism degree. There is a need to identify the students who perceive the determinants negatively and formulate methods to enhance the interest of these students based on whether or not and how much the negative perception has affected their future career

commitments. Further research focusing on students who are positive may provide insight on how to encourage more positive perceptions among students that do not have a positive career commitment. From the perspective of the industry, this study highlights the need for the creation of more accurate information and awareness of the tourism and hospitality industry and career opportunities which are conducive to underpinning students' perceptions of the underlying and predicting factors.

This study provides a good foundation in terms of measuring tourism/hospitality students' career commitments, however, future empirical studies are recommended to further test the generalizability and validity of the measurement scale as well as the predicting model in order to better understand how to assess undergraduate tourism and hospitality students' career commitments. The sample of tourism and hospitality students was collected from a single university in China. Concern must be taken, as the findings may not be entirely representative of other regions across China. However, this study is significant as this university is currently a national tier-one university in China, located in one of China's most developed regions. Like all the other Chinese top universities, the students come from all the different provinces of the country. As a result, the findings will shed light on the tourism and hospitality education issues in China. In addition, the findings of this study tend to be a good supplement to other career commitments studies, as such studies on China's students have rarely been reported or discussed in literature.

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The impact of TV shows and video blogs on tourists' destination choice

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ABSTRACT

The travel TV shows and video blogs give the information not only about the destination but also about the tourist services provided. The travel programs not only promote the destination but also the tourist services provided such as accommodation, F&B outlets, entertaining outlets and etc. Tourist companies use travel TV shows and video blogs as promotional channels because the number of viewers is larger than in the usual types of channels. Through the viewing process of travel TV shows and video, blogs create the image of the destination and services. The paper discusses the impact of travel TV shows and video blogs on destination image and destination choice. The aim of the paper is to identify how the travel TV shows and video blogs influence on the tourists' service choice among the citizens of Kazakhstan. The data were collected through the online survey among citizens of Kazakhstan older 18 years old. The sample of 168 responses was analysed by descriptive analysis (mean, standard deviation), correlation analysis and hypothesis testing (Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis chi-square test) in order to understand the attitude of respondents towards the travel TV shows and video blogs and tourist services. As a result, male respondents showed more interest to the video content of the travel TV shows and video blogs but female respondents used more tourist services shown in the video content than males. Moreover, the younger respondents aged 18-30 did not show interest in travel TV shows and video blogs. Foreign content of the programs is appeared to be more attractive to respondents. In conclusion, the viewers of travel TV shows and video blogs are affected by the content and travel TV shows and video blogs influence the tourist service choice of citizens of Kazakhstan. The findings of the paper could be applicable for the producers of travel TV shows and video blogs.

Keywords: travel show, video blog, tourist service, destination image, image perception, viewers' preferences.

INTRODUCTION

Television shows based on the reality of experience are considered as one of the most popular television programs which may influence the consumer behaviour of viewers (Lindsay, 2004) and their perception of the destination. Television shows and video blogs do not only promote the destination or tourist attractions but also the services provided in the region such as

accommodation, F&B outlets, entertaining outlets and etc. Some touristic companies use the opportunity to promote the services through the travel shows and video blog because the number of viewers is larger than in the usual advertising (Terrero, 2012). Reality shows compared to the traditional television programs or films have a different influence on the viewers' behaviour, perception and attitude (Tan, Chang, 2013). While the different researchers find out the way or reason reality shows influence the viewers in different countries, the situation in the Republic of Kazakhstan is still unclear. Different researchers show that the image of the destination influences the perception and the final decision of viewers (Liou, 2010) and that the positive image ensures selection of the destination for travelling while media content influences the viewers' travel preferences (Gong, Tung, 2017). This article examines the way travel TV shows and vlogs influence on the viewers and attracts to the distinctions and tourist services.

Travel television shows have attracted many viewers recently because from the standard travel shows the tendency moved to more entertaining content. Nowadays, some of the travel shows include not only travelling content but also different games, competitions and so on such as "New Journey to the west", "Battle trip" and etc. Moreover, the younger generation, who spend most of their time on the internet, finds travelling vlogs very interesting. Vlogs attract viewers' attention due to the similarity with real travelling experiences and include the personal opinion of vloggers about the destination and services including the different travelling situations in which they were and how they deal with them. The travel vloggers tend to inspire and motivate the viewers but also give tips and advice. The most popular travel vloggers tend to have the YouTube channels with the large number of subscribers such as FunForLuis (1 917 897 subscribers), Mr Ben Brown (676 550 subscribers), Ney Nadine (328 041 Subscribers) and many others.

The Republic of Kazakhstan is a country with an access not only to the local television channels but also to the international ones which include the travel television channels. The range of travel shows includes the local and international ones. The travel shows available on the local channels such as "MIR", "Sedmoi kanal", "NTK" and "Pervii kanal Evrasia" as well as on the international ones such as "BBC", "BBC1", "Travel Channel" and etc. Those channels are broadcast the travel shows such as "Bizarre Foods With Andrew Zimmern", "Stephen Fry in America", "By Any Means" and etc. However, the travel vlogs are available only on the internet, on such platform as YouTube.

The aim of the research is to determine whether the travel TV shows and video blogs influence the service choice among the citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The paper identifies the attitudes of tourists towards the travel TV shows and video blogs, their video content preferences and predisposition.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Travel shows have a special impact on the audience' perception of the destination and the final decision to visit it. Through travel shows and vlogs, destinations create a special image that

helps attract more tourists and advertise the services provided. The destination image itself plays an important role in the decision-making process to make an actual visit (Whang, Yong, Ko, 2016).

Destination image and image formation
The destination image itself influence the selection process of destination and tourist services while the perception of destination image influence on the image of tourist services provided in the destination. The tourists perceive the image of the destination and services altogether and it shows how important the marketing of the destination is. (Bolan, Williams, 2008). The destination by itself could be associated not only with the tourists' attractions but also with the celebrities, events, local beliefs, products and etc. (Ram, Björk, Weidenfeld, 2015). Image of the destination and services is firstly set by the tourism organisations and secondary by the films, television programs and video blogs. The image of the destination has to be well developed to attract the tourists and differentiate destination among the others that is why the destination marketers have the difficulties in the process of destination image creation. In some countries, tourism organisations cooperate with the media to create a better image (Cynthia, Beeton, 2009). The image formation of the destination is an opportunity for the destination to have a competitive advantage among other destinations. The competition between the tourist destinations is based on the image perceived by the tourists (Jiang, Ramkissoon, Mavondo, Feng, 2017). At the beginning of destination image formation process, important to know what are the preferences of tourists which they want to see in the destination. In order to create the positive image important to know that image has to be easy to understand, sincere and memorable to create the interest and maintain the tourists' attention to the actual visit of destination. The destination image formation includes such elements as identity, experiences and expectations (Kesic, Pavlic, 2011). The information and personal factors influence on the supply-side of the destination image where the information sources include the experiences and perception of the experiences and the personal factors include the socio-demographic characteristics and motivation. The tourists create the destination image by themselves using the cognitive and affective components. Cognitive assessment is based on own travelling knowledge while the affective assessment based on tourist's feelings during the travelling. The cognitive and affective factors create an overall evaluation of the travel experience (Beerli, Martin, 2004). Moreover, the destination image formed by personal factors and stimulus factors. Personal factors include the social and psychological characteristics of the tourists while the stimulus factors are an external influence of factors and previous experience. Perception of the destination image firstly affected by the recommendation of the family and friends and word-of-mouth because such communication channels considered as trustworthy and reliable. Moreover, on the perception of the destination image also influence the media and film industry (Ishida, Slevitch, Siamionava, 2016).

The destination image is formed by different sources of information. Tourists could create the image in their minds even if they have never been to the destination. In such case, the image of the destination is based on previous knowledge such as historical events, the political and economic situation in the country and information about social life and previous image. The preferences and the country of origin of the individuals also influence on the image of the destination

and selection process. Lopes (2001) used the framework proposed by Lubbe (1998) to explain the creation of a primary image of the destination with a use of push and pull factors (Figure 1). Moreover, Lopes discussed the process of global destination image formation (Figure 2). For destination image created in the tourists' mind, an important role is playing such factors as age, literacy level, previous experience and race. The literacy level and motivation influence on the feelings and emotions. That means both, the perceptual-cognitive and affective assessment form on the overall image of the destination.

Figure 1. The process of primary destination image creation (Lopes, 2011).
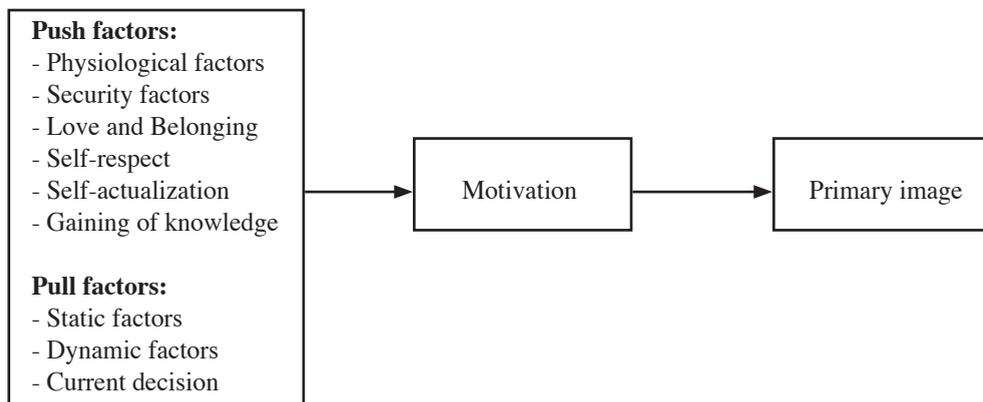

Figure 2. Determinants of the destination image. (Lopes, 2011)
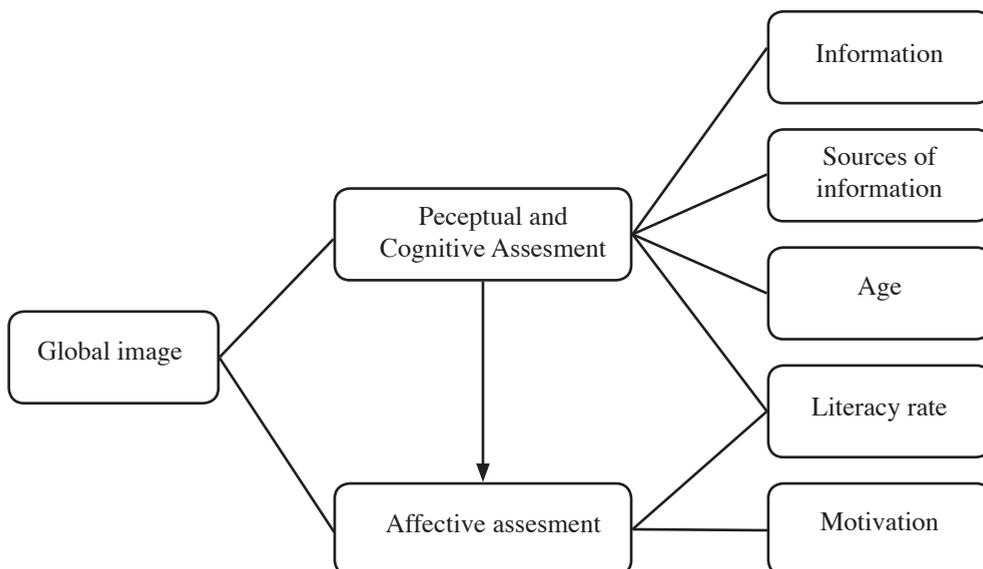
The personality of the tourists is an important factor which influences the selection process of the destination (Govers, Go, & Kumar, 2007). Moreover, such factors as physiological characteristics, perceptions, marketing, literacy rate, experiences, media, social and economic factors and motivations also influence on the destination image formation. According to the Gunn (1972), the destination images have different identities based on the sources they formed from. The organic images form on the information from television, radio, books, journals, newspapers and local people while the induced images based on the promotions of tourism organisations. The development of the destination image consists of several stages. The vague and unrealistic image is a marketing promotion and word of mouth which create the image before actual travel. Distortion of the image is a first stage where the tourists choose the travel characteristics (time, destination, services). During the second stage, the image of the destination is becoming clearer. Improved image is an actual vacation time when the tourists have real experience in the destination. During the third stage, the image of the destination receives the real perception. Resulting image is a memory connected to the travelling time which affects the future decisions about the destination.

The impact of travel TV shows and vlogs on destination image and destination choice
Individuals depend on the contextualised knowledge, visual pictures and ideas from the different sources to learn and experience the given information (Kim, 2012). Created image of the product or service influence on the customers regardless the unreality and hype of the content (Lee, Ha, Widdows, 2011). The perception of the tourist destination before the actual visit differs from the perception after the actual visit of destination. The image of the destination and services created in the media content of travel shows and vlogs gives the pre-taste of it (Beeton, 2001). Travel shows and vlogs introduce viewers to the destination and tourist services provided in the destination but also influence on the viewers' perception of new culture, traditions, beliefs and values. The movie and television industry believed to have an ability to arouse the interest of viewers to the destination and tourism services (Hyun, O'Keefe, 2012).

In the theory, the process of TV shows and vlogs influence on the viewers called reflection. Reflection is an effect on the viewers by the media sources where the viewers perceive the information by the integration of the video content to the real life. Reflection could be divided into two parts the referential reflection and critical reflection. The referential reflection shows the level of viewers' association of the video content of shows and films to the viewers' personal experience while the critical reflection shows how the viewers estrange or engage themselves in the construction of the video content of shows and films. The involvement of viewers determined by the high levels of referential reflection and critical reflection (Hung, Petrick, 2012). Vicarious experience happens during the viewing process but audience involvement happens during and after effect of the media. Vicarious experience determines the level of commitment of the viewers and audience involvement determine the links between the viewers and the process of critical analysis of the video content during and after it influence on the viewers. Viewers' reflection towards the film and shows may influence on the identification of viewers to the people who are taking part in the video (Sood, 2002). The identification with the character or real person influence on the viewers' perception of the filming set. The level of cognitive involvement is

getting higher when the viewers of travel shows and vlogs receive the image of the destination and services as a reliable and trustworthy information. The information from reality travel shows positively influence the viewers' knowledge and feelings towards the destination and services. Moreover, the viewers who re-watch the videos on other platforms have a high level of involvement. Multiple viewing of the television shows and films influence on the positive perception of the destination and services (Macionis, Sparks, 2009). High level of viewers' involvement means that viewers are not satisfied with a provided information and search for more related information and consume the products or use the services and visit the destinations from the shows and movies. The actual searching of the information about the destination means that viewer has a passion for knowing more about the destination and actual visit. The viewers' involvement could be interpreted as a positive impression and attitude towards the destination or tourist services, such as recommendations, online review and comments and spreading word-of-mouth (Alcaniz, García, Blas, 2009).

The media tools such as films, television programs and vlogs which are not directly connected with the promotion of the destination or services have a stronger power to increase the interest of viewers than traditional tourism advertisement tools. (Iwashita, 2008). Some of the contents influence positively the awareness of tourists about the particular destination. For examples, films are not focused on the attraction of tourists to the particular destination but may influence the tourists indirectly and attract them (Juskelyte, 2016). Among researchers connected to the product placement, none have a direct connection between destinations and placement of the destinations and its influence on the tourism development (Hudson, Wang, Gil, 2011). The travel shows and vlogs influence on the viewers' preferences due to the amusement and entertaining content of the video. Moreover, the presence of the celebrities or public persons with a positive image creates trust from the viewers and influence on the level of interest and final decision to visit the destination or experience the tourist services (Lee, Bai, 2010).

Since the appearance of the product and service attract the customers, use of visual effects increased in the market. The influence of visual effect on the consumers and potential customers is a well-developed topic in the field of marketing, brand awareness and retailing. Vision has a unique feature among the human senses, which influence the decision making process. Information gained through the visual method remains longer than through textual or verbal methods. Moreover, through the visual content, media increase the interest and awareness among the tourists about the destinations and tourist services. The process of viewers imagining of participation in the travelling stimulate the viewers to visit the destination and use the tourist services (Fu, Ye, 2016). Product placement in the television shows considered as a threat to the television advertising because of the availability of video recorders and online video resources which allow skipping the television advertisement. Product placement is banned in some countries but the tourist destination and tourist services are not considered as a direct product placement in the television shows and films what make the tourist service providers take part in the travel shows (Lee, Sung, Choi, 2011).

METHODOLOGY

The research has a positive philosophy because it gathers information about the human behaviour and sense and aimed to explain the information in an objective way. Also, research has a quantitative research approach in order to receive more objective information (Barnham, 2015) and gather the information from the large size samples to receive as much information as possible (Al Marzooqi, 2015). The quantitative research is used in order to understand the different views and perceptions of the travel shows and vlogs from the citizens of Kazakhstan. For the data collection is used the online survey in order to widen the demographical characteristics of the sample and make it easier to the respondents to answer from preferable places and on preferable time (Pecakova, 2016).

Data collection and Sampling
The sample is convenience sample which is a part of non-probability sampling methods due to self-selection of participants to participate in research. Data were collected during the 4-month period from the beginning of December till the end of March. The participants of the research include the citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan who are older than 18 years old. From the 203 fully completed questionnaires only 168 are applicable for the analysis. 35 respondents haven't watched the travel shows and vlogs and were removed from the further analysis. All the participants voluntarily took part in the research and allowed to use the given information. The distribution of the questionnaire was through the social network "Vkontakte". The questionnaire was distributed to numerous social media groups in order to achieve maximum exposure of the questionnaire to people with different demographic characteristics. The questionnaire was posted online twice after the main post (middle of January and beginning of March 2017) in the interest groups connected to the tourism in Kazakhstan.

Questionnaire
The data was collected via the questionnaire. The questionnaire was created in the online platform - Google Forms. The questionnaire consists of a number of closed questions with several options of answers to choose from and includes the questions about respondents' perception of the travel TV shows and vlogs, their attitude and travel behaviour. The questionnaire was translated to the Russian language in order to make participants fully understand the questions and answers were translated into English without any changes to remain as original as it possible. The scales used in the questionnaire is dichotomous scale and rating scales. The dichotomous scale is used in order to identify the respondents who watched the travel TV shows and video blogs. The 5-point Likert scale is used to identify the level of agreement and disagreement with a certain statement. In order to protect the participants' confidentiality and anonymity, they were not asked questions revealing any personal information such as names, date of birth, address, email or else. A pilot testing of the questionnaire with 10 respondents was performed to check the clearly of questions in order to assess the validity. Participation in the research was voluntary and entirely anonymous. The participants were informed about the aims and risks of the research before they agreed to participate.

Data analysis

The data analysis is performed with SPSS. The descriptive statistics are used to describe the summary of the research. Such as mean and standard deviation. Furthermore, other statistical methods like correlation analysis and hypothesis testing (Kolmogorov-Smirnov z-test, Mann-Whitney U-test, Kruskal-Wallis Chi-square test) are used. The correlation analysis is used to find out how much the travel TV shows and vlogs influence on the viewers in the Republic of Kazakhstan and who are more affected by the media content. The hypothesis testing is used to find out more specific information.

RESULTS

Descriptive analysis

The major part of the respondents is in the age between 18-30. Female respondents accounted for 56% of all respondents. The respondents mostly used the tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs. The mean of question "Do you watch the travel TV shows or vlogs before going to the certain destination?" shows that frequency of the viewing of shows before the actual visiting is the middle. Respondents sometimes watch the travel TV shows and vlogs before going to the certain destination. Citizens of Kazakhstan know more travel TV shows than travel vlogs. Viewers agree to spend their time to watch travel TV shows and vlogs. They do not have certain preferences to watch the travel TV shows or travel vlogs but have a preference to watch the foreign travel TV shows and vlog than the local ones. Viewers show strong willingness to try the tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs. Positive and negative comments influence on the decision-making process of viewers in Kazakhstan. Viewers think that the information provided in the travel TV shows and vlogs are useful and trustworthy. At the same time majority of respondents feel attracted to the tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs.

Correlation analysis

The correlation analysis between the willingness to spend the time to watch the travel TV shows and vlogs and the feelings to be attracted to the tourist services shown in the TV shows and vlogs shows that there is a significant correlation at the 0.01 level (r=0.477, p= 0.000). The increase in willingness to watch the travel TV shows and vlogs increases the attractiveness. The increase in the level of attractiveness to the tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs increase the willingness to try the tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs (r=0.735, p= 0.000). The analysis shows the strong relationship between the two variables and statistically significant correlation at the 0.01 level. The correlation analysis between trustworthy and usefulness of information in the travel TV shows and vlogs shows that there is a significant correlation at the 0.01 level (r= 0.760, p=0.000) and the strong relationship between the two variables. The correlation between the attractiveness of tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs and the actual use of tourist services shows in travel TV shows and vlogs have a significant correlation at the 0.001 level (r= 0.374, p=0.000): the increase in attractiveness of tourist services means the increase in the actual use of them.

Hypothesis testing

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test z-test is conducted in order to determine the normality of data distribution. The p-values of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test z-test are <0.05 it means that the answers of the respondents are statistically different from normal. That is why the nonparametric tests such as Mann-Whitney U-test and Kruskal-Wallis chi-square test are used.

Mann-Whitney U-test is used in order to find out the difference in answers between the male and female respondents (Table 1). Females are used the tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs more than the males and it has statistical significance (U = 3089, p = 0.141). Females are more likely watch the travel TV shows and vlogs before going to the certain destination than males and there is no statistical significance between variables (U = 3338, p = 0.642). Male representatives know more travel TV shows and vlogs than the female representatives and it have the statistical significance and for TV shows (U = 2944.5, p = 0.081) and for vlogs (U = 2380.5, p = 0.000). Females show more willingness to spend time watching travel TV shows and vlogs and it has no statistical significance (U = 3285, p = 0.510). Males show more willingness to watch travel TV shows than vlogs and at the same time, males show more willingness to watch the vlogs than the travel TV shows than the female representatives. Both of the variables have the statistical significance, where the preferences to watch travel show have U = 3007.5 and p =0.120 and preferences to watch travel shows have U = 2833 and p = 0.032. Males prefer to watch foreigner travel TV shows and vlogs more than the local ones and it has statistical significance (U = 2612, p = 0.004). Females show the preferences to watch local travel shows than the foreign ones and it has a statistical significance (U = 3051, p = 0.151). Females have more willingness to try the tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs than males but it has no statistical significance (U = 3454, p = 0.935). The positive and negative comments of the hosts influence more males than females and it has statistical significance and for positive comments (U = 3157.5 p = 0.277) and for negative comments (U = 3124 p = 0.238). Females trust more to the information given in travel TV shows and vlogs and it has statistical significance (U = 2965, p = 0.084). Females agree that the information in travel TV shows and vlogs are useful more than the males but it has no statistical significance (U = 3299, p =0.539). Females feel more attracted to the tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs than males but it has no statistical significance (U = 3451.5, p= 0.929). The t-test is used in order to find out the male and female respondents' mean and standard deviation for every question.

Table 1. Differences between respondents: the role of gender

Question	Females		Males		Mann-Whitney U test	p
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation		
Age	2.11	1.159	2.12	1.216	3458	0.946
Have you ever used tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs	1.14	0.499	0.32	0.471	3089	0.141

Do you watch travel TV shows or vlogs before going to certain destination	3.12	1.243	3.04	1.053	3338	0.642
How many travel TV shows do you know?	2.54	1.267	2.99	1.539	2944.5	0.081
How many travel vlogs do you know?	1.65	1.776	2.55	1.665	2380.5	0.000
I am ready to spend my time to watch travel TV shows and vlogs	1.93	0.997	1.80	0.860	2385.5	0.510
I prefer to watch travel TV shows than vlogs	2.46	1.241	2.68	1.061	3007.5	0.120
I prefer to watch travel vlogs than TV shows	2.76	1.309	3.12	1.006	2833	0.032
I prefer to watch foreign travel TV shows and vlogs	2.32	1.193	2.80	1.033	2612	0.004
I prefer to watch local travel TV shows and vlogs	3.38	1.237	3.14	1.051	3051	0.157
I would like to try tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs	2.06	1.025	1.99	0.749	3454	0.935
The positive comments of hosts influence on my decision	2.01	1.011	2.12	0.875	3157.5	0.277
The negative comments of hosts influence on my decision	2.15	1.145	2.27	0.911	3124	0.238
The information in travel TV shows and vlogs is trustworthy	2.49	1.013	2.26	0.861	2965	0.84
The information in travel TV shows and vlogs is useful	2.15	1.005	2.00	0.759	3299	0.539
I feel attracted to the tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs	2.17	1.123	2.07	0.782	3451.5	0.929

Table 2. Differences between respondents: the role of age

Question	Kruskal-Wallis chi-square test	p
Have you ever used tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs	4.882	0.003
Do you watch travel TV shows or vlogs before going to certain destination	9.535	0.890
How many travel TV shows do you know?	21.097	0.391
How many travel vlogs do you know?	22.883	0.295
I am ready to spend my time to watch travel TV shows and vlogs	24.159	0.086
I prefer to watch travel TV shows than vlogs	15.401	0.495
I prefer to watch travel vlogs than TV shows	10.055	0.864
I prefer to watch foreign travel TV shows and vlogs	9.506	0.891
I prefer to watch local travel TV shows and vlogs	13.579	0.630
I would like to try tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs	15.169	0.512
The positive comments of hosts influence on my decision	24.896	0.072
The negative comments of hosts influence on my decision	28.375	0.029
The information in travel TV shows and vlogs is trustworthy	17.374	0.363
The information in travel TV shows and vlogs is useful	20.514	0.198
I feel attracted to the tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs	16.454	0.422

Kruskal-Wallis chi-square test is conducted in order to find out if the age of the respondents has a statistical significance of the variables. Kruskal-Wallis chi-square test shows that the age has the statistical significance for the use of tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs where $\chi2 = 4.882$ (p = 0.003). Age and preferences to watch the travel TV shows and vlogs before going to the certain destination have no statistical significance ($\chi2 = 9.535$, p = 0.890). Age have the statistical significance with the number of known travel TV shows ($\chi2 =21.097$, p =0.391) and also with the number of known travel vlogs ($\chi2 =22.883$, p = 0.295). The willingness to spend the time to watch the travel TV shows and vlogs and the age variable have a statistical significance ($\chi2 =24.159$, p = 0.086). The preferences of respondents to watch the travel TV shows and age have no statistical significance ($\chi2 = 15.401$, p = 0.495). The preference of respondents to watch travel vlogs and age have no statistical significance ($\chi2 = 10.055$, p = 0.864). The preferences to watch foreign travel TV shows and vlogs and age have

no statistical significance ($\chi 2 = 9.506$, p =0.891). The preferences of respondents to watch local travel TV shows and vlogs and age have no statistical significance ($\chi 2 = 13.579$, p =0.630). The willingness to try the tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs and age have no statistical significance ($\chi 2 = 15.169$, p = 0.512). The positive comments of hosts, negative comments of hosts have the statistical significance where $\chi 2 = 24.896$ (p = 0.072) for the positive comments and $\chi 2 = 28.375$ (p = 0.029) for negative comments of hosts. The trust for the information given in travel TV shows and vlogs and age have statistical significance ($\chi 2 = 17.374$, p = 0.363). The usefulness of information and age have statistical significance ($\chi 2 = 20.514$, p = 0.198). The feelings to be attracted to the tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs and age have statistical significance ($\chi 2 = 16.454$, p = 0.422).

DISCUSSION

Mostly the respondents used the tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs what means that the travel TV shows and vlogs influence the choice of tourist services among the citizens of Kazakhstan. Also, it is connected with the trend among citizens to create a trip by the tourists without the use of travel operators or travel agencies. Since 2014 the number of tourists who use the services of travel agencies decreased about 20-25% (Kovaleva, 2016). In order to create the own tour or schedule tourists looking for information in the travel TV shows and vlogs where they can find all the necessary information about tourist services in a certain destination. Females used the tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs more than males. It means females are more likely to organise the trip in advance. According to Salman Yousaf and Li Huaibin (2013), females buying behaviour is more influenced by the external environment what may explain the use of tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs. The major part of respondents who used the services is in the age of 41-50.

Even if respondents do not show strong positive or negative attitude towards watching the travel TV shows and vlogs before going to the certain destination the number of people positively predisposed to viewing the travel TV shows and vlogs exceed the number of negatively predisposed ones. It means that after a final decision is done not all of the travellers prefer to watch the media content about the same destination. This behaviour of viewers may be due to the fact that they anticipate seeing everything with their own eyes than through the screen.

In general, respondents know at least 2 travel TV show. Even if the respondents do not watch the programs with the purpose to travel in the destination, as viewers they have an opportunity to watch the travel TV shows broadcasting on the local TV channels and also on the cable TV. The wide use of the Internet is also an opportunity to watch online or download the travel TV shows after it was broadcasted on the TV. Male representatives are more aware of the travel TV shows than females. It means that males are more interested in the information and video content of travel TV shows. Mostly the respondents who know at least 2 travel TV shows or more than 5 are in the age of 31-40. In the case of a number of known travel TV shows, the greatest numbers of respondents were between the 2 or 3 known travel TV shows. But in the case of

known travel video blogs, the majority of respondents know 0 travel video blogs. Respondents do not search travel vlogs on the internet what means that they are not interested in it. It could be connected to the video content, hosts and the actual filming process. Male representatives are more aware of the travel vlogs too. It means that the males could watch the travel TV shows and vlogs for the different purposes such as entertaining and informative content while the female representatives watch them with a purpose to travel because the females use the tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs more often than males. According to Garlin Francine and Robin McGuiggan (2002) if the viewers have a motivation to watch the video content the way of viewing is not important and the purpose of watching the videos could be completely different. In other words, individuals may watch the videos, not because of the content or information included. The people between 18-30 and 61+ are unaware of the travel vlogs while the people between 31-40 know more travel vlogs than others. According to Yu-Chen Chen, Rong-An Shang, Ming-Jin Li (2014) the blogs and real experience of other people do have an influence on the decision making process. It may influence in a positive and negative way on the tourists' perception of the destination and services provided in the destination. The tourists who are looking the information in blogs consider it as a subjective and limited information.

The respondents show the strong willingness to spend their time watching travel TV shows and vlogs. The willingness to watch the travel TV shows and vlogs mean that the respondents are interested and have a positive perception of the video content. The strong willingness shows the people between 51-60 and 61+. Among all ages only people aged 18-30 have a not significant negative attitude towards the viewing process.

Respondents do not show the categorically positive or negative choice between the preferences to watch travel television shows or vlogs and mostly relate to the neutral answer. Male representatives show more attachments to the travel TV shows and vlogs when the female representatives do not. This is also confirmed by the fact that males know more travel TV shows and video blogs. Since the travel TV shows are more preferable, the tourist services shown in travel shows are more likely to attract the citizens of Kazakhstan.

The respondents show a strong preference to watch the foreign travel TV shows and video blogs. It means that the foreign travel TV shows and vlogs have more influence on the viewers in the Kazakhstan and the services show in the foreign travel TV shows and vlogs are more likely to attract the viewers in Kazakhstan than the local ones. Male respondents viewing the foreign media more than female respondents. The local travel TV shows and vlogs are not popular among the respondents. Respondents show neutral or negative attitude toward the local media content. Female respondents prefer to watch local travel TV shows and video blogs. It means that if the foreign shows want to attract tourists from the Kazakhstan they need to focus more on the male representatives while the local ones need to focus on the female representatives.

Citizens of Kazakhstan as viewers of travel TV shows and vlogs have a strong willingness to try tourist services shown in the travel TV shows and vlogs. It means that the services shown in video attract the viewers and may influence the further decision to use the services.

The positive comments of the hosts influence the decision of viewers. The comments of hosts could be interpreted as a comments or advice from the friends and relatives what is an influence on the image creation of the services provided or destination. Males are more influenced by the comments of the hosts in travel TV shows and vlogs. The positive comments of hosts influence the most people older 61 and between 31-40. The negative comments of hosts also influence the decision-making process among the viewers in Kazakhstan. Every individual has a unique perception of the hosts' comments. Different comments may be interpreted as a negative one depending on the preferences and interests of the individuals. It means that even if the hosts do not make a negative comment it can be interpreted with a negative side. Males are more influenced by the comments of the hosts. The most influenced respondents are in the age of 18-30.

The viewers consider the information given in the travel TV shows and vlogs trustworthy. It means that the tourist services could reach the tourists through the travel TV shows and video blogs. The trust of viewers to the information provided in travel TV shows and vlogs means the involvement of viewers into the video content. Viewers' trust to the information provided in travel TV shows and vlogs means the high level of cognitive involvement. The age of respondents influences the perception of the information. People older 61 and between 31-40 are consider the information given in travel TV shows and vlogs trustworthy, while the people at the age between 18-30 and 51-60 shows some doubts about the trustworthiness of information. Viewers consider the information provided in the travel TV shows and vlogs useful. Since the information includes the tourist services characteristics, viewers pay attention to the services provided in the destination. The fact that the viewers consider the information provided useful means that there is an involvement of the viewers into the media content. Mostly people of all ages consider the information useful but people at the age between 18-30 and 51-60 shows some negative perception.

Viewers of travel TV shows and vlogs feel attracted to the services shown in the videos. The structure, content and visual and sound aesthetics create an attractiveness for the viewers (Hsiao, Lu, Lan, 2013). If the viewers feel attractiveness of the services it may stimulate them to use the services in the future. Individuals of all ages agree that they feel attracted to the tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlog but respondents at the age between 51-60 gave a few number of negative answers.

The correlation analysis shows that the more individuals view the travel TV shows and vlogs the more they feel attracted to the tourist services. It means that the viewing process influence on the decision to use the services in future. When viewers feel more and more attracted to the tourist services, the willingness to try the tourist services increases too. It means that the viewers are affected by the video content of the travel TV shows and vlogs. The attractiveness of tourist services influence on the actual use of them. If the tourist services attractive to the viewers, the possibility of use of tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs increases.

The conclusion based on Gunn's book "Vacationscape: Designing Tourist Regions" is that the citizens of Kazakhstan receive the organic image of the destination and services provided because it based on the information form the travel TV shows and vlogs. It also influences the image creation image of the certain destination or service before the actual visit or use.

The results of Macionis and Sparks (2009) research also support that the level of cognitive involvement is high due to the perception of the information as a reliable and trustworthy. The research of Chithra and Kothai (2015) shows that the viewers are affected by the video content and its influence on their decision to purchase the product what supports the findings of the influence of travel show viewers to use the services after the viewing process. The male respondents showed the strong attraction to the video content of the travel TV shows and vlogs what supports the findings of the Kinjo and Ebina (2015) that the male viewers are more interested in the variety shows than females and they do not pay attention to the viewers rating of the programs and more concentrates on the personal preferences of video content. Also, the older the viewers are the more they show the loyalty to the particular programs. According to the Papyrina Veronika (2015) the females are more likely to perceive the information for the further use while the males are more likely to ignore the advertising information and perceive it in a heuristic manner what support the findings that female respondents used the tourist services shown in travel TV shows and video blogs more than males.

CONCLUSION

The research finds out how the travel TV shows and vlogs influence on the tourists' service choice among the citizens of Kazakhstan. It is impossible to find out the exact level or percentage of the actual influence of travel TV shows and vlogs but it is possible to indicate that the travel TV shows and vlogs influence the choice of tourist services among citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The findings of the paper could be useful for the travel TV show and vlogs producers as well as for the tourist travel services. The findings present the preferences, attitude, perception and involvement of the viewers among the citizens of Kazakhstan older 18 years old.

The main findings are:
✔ Travel TV shows and vlogs influence the tourists' service choice.
✔ The needs of information presented in travel TV shows and vlogs increased during the last years. Tourists prefer to create an own trip and view the videos containing travel information.
✔ Male respondents are more interested in the travel TV shows and vlogs and show more attachment to the video content. Females used the tourist services shown in travel TV shows and vlogs more than males. It means that the male representatives are interested because of entertaining content and interesting viewing process.
✔ The younger generation aged between 18-30 is not interested in the content of travel TV shows and video blogs.
✔ Foreign content is more interesting and attractive for the citizens of Kazakhstan than the local one.
✔ The positive and negative comments of the hosts influence the decision-making process among the viewers.
✔ The viewing process of travel TV shows and vlogs influence on the final decision.
✔ The viewers are affected by the content of travel programs.

The limitation is the focus on the particular programs such as travel TV shows and video blogs. Those types of video performance were chosen due to direct contention to the tourism and hospitality industry. The video content of those programs contains the information about tourism and especially the tourist serves provided at a certain destination. The essence of the limitation is that in addition to these programs, people also receive information about the destination and services provided from various sources such as blogs, movies, the Internet and etc. Those sources of information are also could influence the destination image perception and tourist services choice among tourists. The limitations could be overcome in the further research papers. The further research papers may be oriented to:

- The film induced tourism and celebrity presence as a promotional tool for the destination
- How travel blogs create the image of the destination and services

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